

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN GABON: ADVANCING OR REPRESSING DEMOCRACY?

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.



President of Gabon Ali Bongo attends a roundtable event at an EU Africa summit in Abidjan, Ivory Coast on Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2017. (Source: AP Photo/Diomande Bie Blonde.)

LARGE-SCALE PROTESTS PERSIST IN TOGO

By Dr. Alexander Noyes

On January 14, 2018, thousands took to the streets in Togo to [protest](#) against President Faure Gnassingbé (known as Faure) of the ruling Union for the Republic (UNIR, *Union pour la République*). Led by a coalition of 14 parties, the opposition has staged a series of large-scale protests since August 2017. The protestors are demanding a return to the 1992 constitution, which included term limits, and that Faure, in power since 2005, step down. [Sixteen](#) people have died in clashes with security forces during demonstrations, including two soldiers. How will the current standoff between Faure and the opposition end? [more...](#)



Togo's President Faure Gnassingbé, center, during a group photo at an EU Africa summit in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, on Wednesday, November 29, 2017. (Source: AP Photo/Geert Vanden Wijngaert.)

Dr. Alexander Noyes is an Adjunct Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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.

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Gabonese Politics and the Bongo Family

Gabonese politics have been dominated by the Bongo family virtually since independence from France in 1960. Ali Bongo's father, Omar Bongo, ruled the oil-rich country from 1967 until his death in 2009. Bongo's son took over after a controversial and [violent](#) election in 2009.

Omar Bongo's [close relationship](#) with French interests reportedly allowed him to enrich himself and his family by selling oil to a French state-owned oil company at a reduced rate while sharing in the revenue. It is alleged that Gabonese state coffers received no more than 25 percent of the oil revenue because of this arrangement. While in office, the Bongos have amassed a fortune. They own [33 properties](#) in France alone, including a \$27 million villa.

After more than 50 years of near-dynastic control of the Gabonese state, many political elites have ties to the Bongo family. Former African Union commissioner and current opposition leader Jean Ping held a variety of ministerial posts under the elder Bongo. He also [fathered](#) two children with Pascaline Bongo, daughter of Omar Bongo and half-sister of Ali. Marie Madeleine Mborantso, who, as the head of the Constitutional Court, oversaw the proceedings validating Ali Bongo's 2016 election, is the [mother](#) of Ali Bongo's three half-siblings. She had a long-term relationship with Omar Bongo. (The French government is currently [investigating](#) Mborantso for financial impropriety and money laundering.)

President Ali Bongo won reelection in August 2016 by a narrow margin in an election observers claim was [flawed](#). Out of nearly 350,000 votes cast, only about [6,000](#) separated Bongo and his nearest rival, Ping. According to the official results, Bongo received 95 percent of the votes in his home constituency, with more than 99 percent turnout. The opposition protested the results, and Ping declared himself the winner, but the Constitutional Court ultimately [upheld](#) Bongo's victory. Violence broke out shortly after the election results were announced, primarily in Libreville, the capital, and Port Gentil, with protesters setting the National Assembly on [fire](#). Ping's party headquarters was [bombed](#), killing two. The opposition claims at least 50 people were killed by security forces in post-election violence. Government officials insist there were only three fatalities. More than 1,000 were arrested.

Reforming the Constitution

Periodic election-related demonstrations and arrests have taken place in the roughly 16 months since the poll. Some members of the opposition still refuse to recognize the results. In March 2017, President Bongo launched a two-month-long [national dialogue](#) to discuss political reform and social cohesion. The talks included representatives from around 50 political parties and more than 1,000 civil society groups. At the opening of the dialogue, Bongo described the post-election crisis as a "[family quarrel](#)." Ping and his supporters declined to participate. On May 26, the dialogue concluded with several [recommendations](#) in a report given to President Bongo. Presidential term limits, which the opposition had been advocating, were not among them.



President of Gabon Ali Bongo attends a roundtable event at an EU Africa summit in Abidjan, Ivory Coast on Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2017. (Source: AP Photo/Diomanche Bie Blonde.)

The cabinet [approved](#) proposed changes to the constitution in late September 2017, and the National Assembly approved the changes in [December](#). The Senate approved its version in early January 2018. The full legislature approved a reconciled final version on January 10. The reforms will now be sent to the Constitutional Court for its assent.

The main [provisions](#) of the reforms relate to the presidency. Presidential elections will now require the winning candidate to receive more than 50 percent of the vote or face a second-round runoff. The runoff system was used for elections before reforms in 2003. In that year, while Omar Bongo was still president, the government reduced the threshold so that the winner needed only to receive a simple plurality of votes. In theory, this change will require the winning candidate to have broad appeal to reach the 50 percent-plus-one threshold. The opposition had been advocating for executive term limits, which were also scrapped in the 2003 reforms, but the new version allows the president to serve an unlimited number of seven-year terms. Polling data indicate that the vast majority of Gabonese would prefer term limits. A 2015 nationwide [survey](#) found that 92 percent agreed that the constitution should limit the president to serving a maximum of two terms in office, with 69 percent stating that they very strongly agreed with the adoption of term limits.

The changes also remove language in the constitution that states the president determines policy “in collaboration with the government.” Ministers and military commanders will now be subject to “obligations of loyalty and loyalty to the head of state,” which the opposition claims is akin to a loyalty oath. A new court to hear charges against government officials will be established. Because the president is assured immunity both while in office and after serving, it is unclear what jurisdiction over the president the court will have.

The opposition argues that the changes render Gabon a [functional monarchy](#), with power concentrated in the hands of the president. The vice president of the Senate, Jean-Christophe Owono Nguema, [fought](#) against the changes, claiming that it would establish [Bongo](#) as king.

Government Crackdown

While pursuing constitutional reform, the Gabonese government has also been cracking down on the opposition. Shortly after the approval of the constitutional reforms was announced, Ping was [legally barred](#) from leaving the country as he was attempting to board a flight to France. His testimony is reportedly required in a legal proceeding against another opposition leader, Pascal Eyougou. Ping was similarly prevented from leaving the country in [September 2017](#). On January 11, Gabonese civil society [launched](#) a “committee for the liberation of political prisoners.” The committee released a list of 29 people who it claims are being detained for political reasons. Violence against opposition members has also been [increasing](#) in recent months.

Conclusion

The process governing the constitutional revision has been [secretive](#). There has been no public debate of the changes and, while several drafts of the reforms have been circulated on social media, the full text became publicly available only after the changes were approved by the legislature in January. While constitutional reform was initially undertaken to appease the opposition, the manner in which the constitutional reforms were approved seems inimical to reconciliation. Many of the reforms approved also do not appear to reflect popular sentiment. As a result, the country appears no closer to ending its current crisis than it was before the national dialogue began.

Legislative elections are tentatively scheduled for April 2018. They were originally scheduled for December 2016 but have been postponed twice, once for “[financial](#)” reasons and once by the Constitutional Court to [allow](#) the reform process to conclude. Bongo’s party, which is not popular, could lose its majority in upcoming legislative elections. In 2015, only 16 percent of those [polled](#) identified with the ruling party, and almost 70 percent reported no party affiliation. Indeed, several of the reforms that are being enacted may be designed to protect an unpopular president from a legislature that he cannot control.

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Background

Togo is a [low-income country](#) located in West Africa with a population of 7.6 million. The country shares borders with Ghana on the west, Benin on the east, and Burkina Faso on the north. Faure was installed by the military after his father, Gnassingbé Eyadéma (known as Eyadéma), died in office in 2005. Eyadéma, a former soldier, took power in a bloody military coup in 1967. Regional and international actors deemed Faure's 2005 ascension unconstitutional, forcing him to step down and hold elections later in 2005. Although Faure won, the poll was disputed by the opposition and was [extremely violent](#), leaving 500 dead. The electoral crisis was resolved through a power-sharing agreement with the opposition that was facilitated by the European Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In 2010 and 2015, Faure again won disputed but less violent elections. In total, Eyadéma and his son Faure have ruled Togo for over 50 years. The 1992 constitution included term limits, but Eyadéma removed this provision in 2002. Togo is the only country in the West African region without presidential term limits.

Widespread Deadly Protests and the Government's Response

As outlined in earlier [editions](#) of *Africa Watch*, Togo's opposition has a long history of splits and factionalism. But this latest protest movement appears to be bringing the various factions together. As noted above, the protests are being staged by a [coalition](#) of 14 political parties. Tikpi Atchadam, of the Panafrican National Party (PNP, *Parti National Panafricain*), is the driving force behind the protest movement. The PNP is a new party that was relatively unknown until the recent protests. Atchadam is from the [north](#) of the country, which has historically been a stronghold of the ruling party. Opposition stalwarts such as Jean-Pierre Fabre of the National Alliance for Change (ANC, *Alliance Nationale pour le Changement*) are also playing an active role in the movement. The coalition's [demands](#) include the return of term limits, which they want to apply retroactively, meaning that Faure would have to step down; a two-round voting system; and judicial reforms.

The government's response to the protests has been heavy handed. Sixteen have died, and scores have been injured and detained in clashes between demonstrators and security forces. Last October, the government [banned protests](#) during the week, having cut off [internet access](#) in September in an effort to stifle demonstrations. Both these measures were subsequently lifted. The opposition has complained about the government's harsh tactics—Ouro Akpo Tchagnaou, an ANC representative in Sokodé, Atchadam's hometown, [noted the brutality](#): "Uniformed men are conducting punitive expeditions in houses. They're hitting everything that moves."

Mediation Attempts

Faure and the UNIR government have offered some political concessions. In September 2017, they [proposed](#) reinstating term limits but only if the measure would not apply retroactively, meaning that Faure could run in 2020 and 2025. The opposition rejected this idea and walked out of parliament in protest. UNIR then announced that the question of term limits would be put to a referendum, but a date has not yet been set.



Togo's President Faure Gnassingbé, center, during a group photo at an EU Africa summit in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, on Wednesday, November 29, 2017. (Source: AP Photo/Geert Vanden Wijngaert.)

International and regional bodies have called for a mediated solution to the standoff. Last September, United Nations Secretary-General [António Guterres](#) called for “constructive dialogue.” A number of mediation efforts have been discussed since then, but none have been agreeable to all parties. A United Nations mediation was proposed, but the opposition rejected the suggested mediator. Because Faure is currently the chair of ECOWAS, the body has remained largely silent on the matter. The Togo situation was [not discussed](#) at an ECOWAS summit this past December. But a current effort under the auspices of President Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana and President Alpha Condé of Guinea appears to be gaining steam. On January 14, Fabre, of the ANC, [said](#) that an opposition delegation would go to Ghana and Guinea to discuss a mediated solution. Faure also has [pledged](#) to resolve the impasse through dialogue: “I have faith in our ability to transcend our differences to evolve the institutional and political framework, while preserving the social fabric. I remain convinced that the only outlet that allows us to find the way back to progress is dialogue.”

Conclusion

The current protest movement in Togo is the most organized and sustained to date. But Faure, at least at the moment, maintains the support of the military and, through his position as the current head of ECOWAS, has been able to avoid strong censure from Togo’s neighbors. While the situation on the ground remains fluid, it appears that some degree of political reform is possible in Togo. Term limits appear likely to be reinstated, either through a referendum (85 percent of Togolese [support](#) term limits) or a negotiated compromise. The question remains whether term limits will apply retroactively. In the interim, continued protests and low-level violence are likely to continue.

Dr. Alexander Noyes is an Adjunct Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

ZIMBABWE – NEW PRESIDENT FACES CHALLENGES OF POWER

By George F. Ward, Jr.

In [Africa Watch](#) on November 30, 2017, the author outlined four challenges for the new president of Zimbabwe, Emmerson Mnangagwa. They were: dealing with opponents within the Zimbabwe African National Union – Popular Front (ZANU-PF), securing the loyalty of all the security services, managing urgent economic problems, and maintaining ZANU-PF political dominance. During his first two months in office, Mnangagwa has begun to address all of these challenges. Will he be able to both consolidate his power and improve the fortunes of the citizens of long-suffering Zimbabwe? [more...](#)



Emmerson Mnangagwa, president of Zimbabwe attends the opening session of the World Economic Forum, WEF, in Davos, Switzerland, Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2018. (AP Photo/Markus Schreiber)

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

AN EMERGING EXTREMIST THREAT IN MOZAMBIQUE?

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On January 13, 2018, an attack on a government building in Cabo Deleado province in northern Mozambique [killed](#) five and injured eleven. Two days later, another [attack](#) on a medical center in Palma, located in the same region, left two dead. The government of Mozambique has been engaged in a number of [skirmishes](#) with a local Islamist extremist group since an attack in October 2017 killed 16 in Mocimboa da Praia, also in the north. While the government has not confirmed that the same group, referred to as “Al-Shabaabs,” is behind the latest attacks, it is the main suspect and locals are convinced that the group is responsible. Are these isolated incidents? Or is there an emerging extremist threat in Mozambique? [more...](#)



Filipe Nyusi reacts after being sworn in as newly-elected Mozambican president in Maputo, Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015. Nyusi, a former defense minister, won the post in Oct. 15 elections that saw the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, or Frelimo, retain its parliamentary majority. AP Photo/Ferhat Momade/AP

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Managing the Ruling Party

Mnangagwa has solidified his leadership of the ZANU-PF. He provided former President Robert Mugabe with an ample [retirement package](#) that includes a retirement bonus, an official residence, a large staff, a fleet of cars, and private air travel. The package pays tribute to Mugabe, who is still revered by many as the father of Zimbabwe, while giving both the former president and his wife incentives not to engage in intra-party intrigues.

Within the party and the government, Mnangagwa has moved skillfully. Using his campaign against corruption as justification, he purged leaders of the G-40 faction that had coalesced around Grace Mugabe. Initially, only two former ministers were [arrested](#) and charged with corruption. Other arrests followed, but fewer than might have been expected. In fact, only three of the 22 members of the last Mugabe government cabinet were [excluded](#) from Mnangagwa's cabinet.

Mnangagwa has also had to accept an increased political role for the military as the price of power. He has given senior military leaders prominent roles in government. He initially [named](#) as ministers two senior military officers. General Sibusiso Moyo, who had served as spokesman for the armed forces during the military intervention, became foreign minister. Air Force chief Perrance Shiri, who commanded forces involved in the so-called Gukuruhundi massacre in 1983, was named minister of lands, agriculture, and rural resettlement. More importantly, following the ZANU-PF congress in December 2017 Mnangagwa named the former chief of the Zimbabwe Defense Force (ZDF), Constantino Chiwenga, as vice president of both Zimbabwe and the ZANU-PF and as minister of defense. Chiwenga, who planned and orchestrated the military intervention in November 2017, is seen as Mnangagwa's heir apparent.

Support of the Security Services

With the support of the military, Mnangagwa has addressed issues of loyalty on the other two sides of Zimbabwe's security triangle – the police and intelligence service. Both the Zimbabwe Republic Police and the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) were [viewed](#) by the military as supporting the G40 faction during the November 2017 events. Indeed, the police had planned to [arrest](#) General Chiwenga on his return to Zimbabwe from his visit to Beijing in early November 2017. Military forces thwarted that plan. The police commissioner was placed under house arrest. He was brought in to witness Mnangagwa's inauguration and was [loudly booed](#) as he sheepishly pledged allegiance to the new president. The commissioner was later [fired](#). When the police returned to service after a five-week suspension, their patrols were accompanied by soldiers of the ZDF, leaving little doubt of who was in charge. Most recently, the government carried out more wholesale changes, retiring [30 senior police officials](#).

The situation at the CIO seems less clear. Isaac Moyo, the former Zimbabwean ambassador to South Africa and veteran ZANU-PF leader, has been brought in as director. Whether Moyo will be able to transform the organization into one responsive to the new president is an open question. The fact that Moyo's deputy, Nixon Chiranda, died on December 30, 2017, in a car accident that has been characterized as "[suspicious](#)" adds an element of doubt.

Dealing with the Economy

Turning Zimbabwe's troubled economy around may become Mnangagwa's toughest test. He has made positive pledges – openness to outside partners, commitment to root out corruption, willingness to modify the much-criticized "indigenization" statute (requiring 51 percent Zimbabwean control of enterprises), compensation for expropriated farmers, and reduction of government expenditures. He touched on all of these themes in a wide-ranging [interview](#) with the *Financial Times* on January 16, 2018.

In response, Zimbabwe's partners have been forthcoming. [China](#) provided a loan of \$153 million. In the *Financial Times* interview, Mnangagwa stated that the African Export-Import Bank had agreed to provide a \$1.5 billion credit facility. He claimed to see a "green light" from most western countries, including Britain, Germany, Spain, and France. (Mnangagwa omitted mention of the United States during his two-hour interview.) A few days after the interview, Mnangagwa flew off to Davos, Switzerland at the head of a large delegation to the World Economic Forum. Before departure, he [said](#), "I am going there to learn what is happening and to talk about my country that it is open for business."

Mnangagwa's problem is that if he is sincere in his fulfilling his economic pledges, he will need to take on deeply rooted ZANU-PF interests. Corruption and bloated government payrolls have been major buttresses of ZANU-PF rule. Party and defense force leaders have benefited from land expropriation and the indigenization laws. If he loses party and ZDF support, he will not long remain in power.

Staying in Power

Although Mnangagwa ruled out sharing power in his government with the political opposition, he has [promised](#) "free, credible, fair, and indisputable" elections in "four to five months." In the *Financial Times* interview, he said that he would be willing to admit electoral observers from the United Nations, the European Union, and, perhaps, the Commonwealth.

Looking toward the elections, the ZANU-PF remains in a commanding political position. Although the ZANU-PF and the ZDF would likely use force if necessary to achieve a positive electoral outcome, according to some observers it is "[possible, and even probable](#)," that Mnangagwa could win a free and fair election. Opposition leaders have papered over their divisions to form a coalition. But the leader of that coalition, Morgan Tsvangirai, is hardly a new face and is suffering from cancer, and internal divisions within the MDC remain. Joice Mujuru, who formed an opposition party after her ouster by Mugabe from her role as vice president, has never succeeded in solidifying her role, and many of her supporters may be tempted to rejoin the ZANU-PF. Although some in the ZANU-PF reportedly favor [delay](#) in holding elections, it is understandable that Mnangagwa may welcome a poll, and the sooner the better.

Conclusion

So far, Mnangagwa must be given credit for a positive start, but it is only a start. He has consolidated his grip on power, and he has made pledges regarding economic and public sector reform. In return, China, South Africa, and some western countries have signaled support. The elections will be the litmus test. If Mnangagwa wins, as is likely, and outside observers are able to characterize the poll as free and fair (and the bar may be set fairly low) then he will have a mandate and freer hand to deal with issues, such as corruption and government bloat, that engage core ZANU-PF interests. As uncertain as this outlook is, it is better than past prospects, which meant for Zimbabwe only more of the same misery and misrule.

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Background

Mozambique is a [low-income](#) country located in southern Africa with a population of 28 million. President Filipe Nyusi heads the ruling FRELIMO (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*) party, which has been in power since 1994. Afonso Dhlakama leads the main opposition party, RENAMO (*Resistência Nacional Moçambicana*). FRELIMO and RENAMO, which fought a long and brutal civil war that ended in 1992, relapsed into a low-level conflict in 2013 but agreed to a [ceasefire](#) in May 2017. Despite a long history of political conflict, the country has avoided the type of violent Islamic extremism that West and East Africa have experienced. The October attack was Mozambique’s [first](#) experience with violent Islamist extremism. Mozambique’s largest religious [population](#) is Catholic, at 28 percent. The country’s second largest religious group is Muslim, at 18 percent, and the rest are Zionist Christian, Protestant, other, or non-religious.

Spate of Attacks over Past Three Months

The Islamist group thought to be behind the recent attacks is known as [Ansar al-Sunna](#) (Defenders of Tradition), but locals call the group “Al-Shabaabs.” Despite the moniker, the group does not appear to have any clear links to Somalia’s al-Shabaab extremist group. However, the area where violence has taken place is located close to Mozambique’s northern border with Tanzania, and the group is believed to [consist](#) of Mozambicans, Tanzanians, Somalis, and Sudanese, some of who have been [schooled](#) in Saudi Arabia and Sudan. The group wants the imposition of Sharia law and the removal of their children from the national education system. They [reportedly](#) refer to traditional Muslim preachers in the area as “kafir,” meaning “unbeliever.”

Since the October 2017 attack, the extremist group has launched a spate of raids in the north of the country. These include an attack in November in which over [30 houses](#) and shops were set on fire, another attack that left two dead and a church destroyed, and a December [attack](#) that left a police officer dead and five others injured. Given the previous lack of Islamist violence in Mozambique, the recent attacks have surprised many in Mozambique. [According](#) to the Institute for Security Studies, the series of attacks has: “caused shock and bewilderment in the country and the region.” The insecurity has the potential to impact global economic engagement. Both Eni SpA, an Italian oil and gas company, and the Texas-based Anadarko Petroleum Corporation, have gas projects in the region. In June 2017 Eni SpA started construction on a \$7 billion gas [project](#) on the coast. Anadarko reportedly [evacuated](#) personnel after the October attack.



Filipe Nyusi reacts after being sworn in as newly-elected Mozambican president in Maputo, Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015. Nyusi, a former defense minister, won the post in Oct. 15 elections that saw the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, or Frelimo, retain its parliamentary majority. AP Photo/Ferhat Momade/AP

Government and Regional Response

The Mozambican government has reacted swiftly and forcefully to the threat. They have arrested [300 suspects](#) since the October attack, including the arrest last week of 24 who were traveling from Nampula, located south of the attacks, to Mocimboa da Praia. [According](#) to police spokesman Inacio Dina, the 24 suspects were likely “going to Mocimboa da Praia to reinforce the insurgents that are creating panic since October of last year.”

In addition to the arrests, the government has also taken more forceful action. Following the attack on police on December 23 and 24, the government used two helicopters and a navy ship to [shell](#) the village of Mitumbate—which the government views as an Islamist base—leading to 50 casualties. In response to the January attacks, Dina [announced](#): “Defence and Security Forces are on the ground, pursuing the group. . . . They intend to arrest the attackers, hold them responsible for their acts, and recover the stolen property.” Last week, the Mozambican and Tanzanian governments signed a memorandum of understanding to [jointly fight](#) crime and terrorists in the border region. This will allow both countries to launch a combined response to the extremist threat.

The government has also shuttered three mosques in the area and offered an [amnesty](#) period for extremists to come forward on their own accord, which expired in December 2017. Local Muslim groups have [condemned](#) the attacks and asked extremists to turn themselves in. Abdul Assane, of the Islamic Council, a religious association, [said](#) that extremists must, “be held accountable for the crimes they have committed. If they had been good people, they should have given themselves up.”

Conclusion

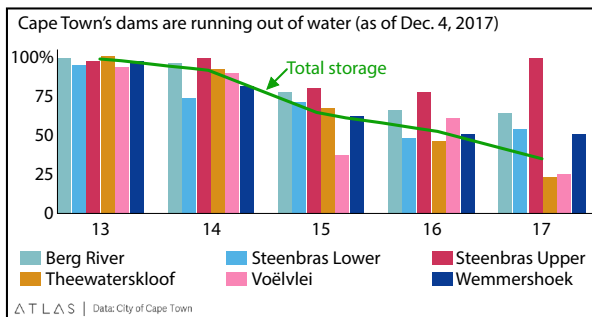
While the threat of violent extremism in Mozambique is currently relatively small scale and contained to the north, the array of attacks attributed to Islamist extremists over the past three months suggests that the incidents are not isolated and that the emerging threat should be taken seriously. The available evidence suggests that the threat at the moment is domestically driven and not linked to international extremists. But if the government response is handled in a heavy-handed fashion, the threat could metastasize. Indeed, a 2017 United Nations Development Program report, drawing on interviews with former extremists in Africa—mostly from Somalia, Nigeria, Kenya, and Sudan—found that government repression was the primary tipping point pushing individuals to join extremist groups. The [report](#) found that “a striking 71 percent pointed to ‘government action,’ including ‘killing of a family member or friend’ or ‘arrest of a family member or friend,’ as the incident that prompted them to join.”

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WATER CRISIS IN CAPE TOWN: NATURAL DISASTER OR MAN-MADE?

By Dr. Stephanie M. Burchard

Cape Town is facing an unprecedented water crisis. By mid-April, officials estimate that the city, South Africa's legislative capital and its second largest metropolitan area, will effectively run out of water. If this happens, the city plans to turn off the water supply for all but essential services. Water will be rationed and made available at dedicated pickup spots around the city. The government says that climate change is [responsible](#) for the crisis, while many residents are blaming the water shortage on government mismanagement. [more...](#)



Percentage of total capacity of water stored in dams serving Cape Town.
(Source: <https://www.theatlantic.com/charts/rk0S3k7-M>.)

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JANUARY WAS A ROCKY MONTH FOR EGYPT-SUDAN RELATIONS

By Sarah Graveline

The month of January marked a low point in diplomatic relations between Egypt and Sudan. Tensions flared over three critical issues: a territorial dispute along the countries' shared border, pressure caused by the ongoing Saudi Arabia-Qatar split, and disagreement over the Renaissance Dam project in Ethiopia. While Egypt and Sudan appear likely to be able to reduce tensions in the short term, it is unlikely the countries will agree on long-term solutions. [more...](#)

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Map of Hala'ib Triangle between Egypt and Sudan. (Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Halaib_Triangle-en.png.)

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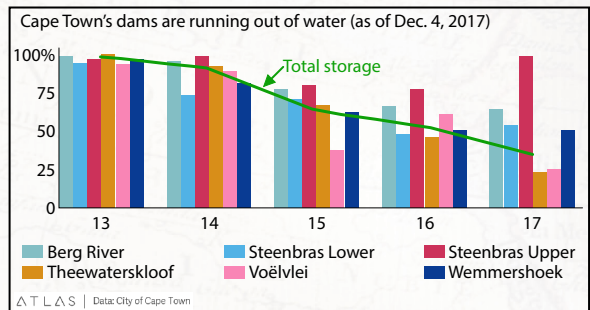
IDA's three federally-funded research and development centers provide objective analyses of national security issues and related national challenges, particularly those requiring scientific and technical expertise.

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

WATER CRISIS IN CAPE TOWN: NATURAL DISASTER OR MAN-MADE?

By Dr. Stephanie M. Burchard

Cape Town is facing an unprecedented water crisis. By mid-April, officials estimate that the city, South Africa's legislative capital and its second largest metropolitan area, will effectively run out of water. If this happens, the city plans to turn off the water supply for all but essential services. Water will be rationed and made available at dedicated pickup spots around the city. The government says that climate change is [responsible](#) for the crisis, while many residents are blaming the water shortage on government mismanagement.



Percentage of total capacity of water stored in dams serving Cape Town.
(Source: <https://www.theatlantic.com/charts/rk0S3k7-M>.)

Crisis Looming

Experts say that climate change and the increasing size of the region's population are to blame for the crisis. The city's current approach to water management relies almost exclusively on surface water, which renders the city heavily dependent on rainfall. Due to three consecutive years of drought-like conditions, the coastal town has seen its water reservoirs rapidly decrease. According to Dr. Kevin Winter, a senior lecturer in environmental and geographical science at the University of Cape Town, the rainy season in Cape Town is [occurring](#) later and later every year, and rainfall is also less frequent. What typically used to begin in April, now doesn't start until late June or July. Coupled with increases in consumption due to [population growth](#) over the past few decades, the city is increasingly unable to match its dwindling supply with its growing demand.

Countdown to Day Zero

Officials say they will be forced to turn off the water when the city's reservoirs drop to [13.5 percent](#) of their total capacity, an event many are terming "Day Zero." At that level, most of the remaining water will be silt and other detritus that are not fit for use. Close to [4 million](#) residents will be affected. Day Zero was initially forecast for some time in May, but in late January, city officials revised their estimate to [April 16](#). After Day Zero, residents will be allotted a maximum of 25 liters (roughly 6.6 gallons) of water per day, which they will be able to pick up from one of the city's 200 municipal water points.

Anticipating the possibility of a shortage, the city began [reducing](#) water pressure in March 2017. In May, Cape Town Mayor Patricia De Lille created a drought crisis team composed of experts and city planners to help draft a new plan. The city also adopted a variety of voluntary and mandatory water restrictions over the past several months to stave off Day Zero. In September, Cape Town officials approved "[level five](#)" water restrictions, limiting residential water usage to 87 liters per day (about 23 gallons) to help prolong the supply. In January 2018, official approved "[level six](#)" water restrictions, banning additional new activities related to domestic water consumption and imposing fines for those found to be in excess of the water limits.

On January 18, Mayor De Lille informed residents that the measures to reduce water consumption to date had not worked. More than [60 percent](#) of residents were believed to be in violation of the restrictions. She said the city had "reached a point of [no return](#)" and as of February 1 further reduced water consumption to 50 liters per day. Officials are hoping the upcoming winter season (June through August), which is typically when the region receives the most rain, will help to alleviate the shortfall.

Early Signs and Government Response

Although the situation is critical now, the potential for a water shortage in Cape Town is not new. In 2007, the national Department of Water and Sanitation issued a warning, based on projected water demands and rainfall trends, that Cape Town would need to identify additional water sources by 2015. City officials took several steps to address the projected water shortage, and by the early 2010s, it appeared that Cape Town was in good shape to manage its upcoming water needs. In 2013, the deadline for identifying new water sources was even [extended](#) to 2019. But, in 2015 at the earliest signs of the current drought, the provincial government requested funds from the national government to search for water. That request was [rejected](#) as premature. The local government also asked for disaster relief funding in 2016. That request was similarly [denied](#). (It should be noted that the national Department of Water and Sanitation was [accused](#) of substantial financial mismanagement and fraud during this same period.)

There are complicated partisan political dynamics at play in the water crisis. Both the national government and the local government are pointing fingers. Cape Town is the capital of the Western Cape Province, the only province controlled by the opposition Democratic Alliance (DA). The city government is also controlled by the DA. The DA is currently besieged with infighting, calling into question its ability to lead. Mayor De Lille was suspended from all DA party activities in December due to allegations of [divisive leadership](#), favoritism, and [corruption](#). The city council is now considering a [motion of no confidence](#) against her. Deputy Mayor Ian Neilson was given responsibility for [handling](#) the water crisis in mid-January. National DA party leader Mmusi Maimane claimed he took “[political](#)” control over the water crisis in late January. Maimane also said that, constitutionally, the national government was ultimately [responsible](#) for water provision. In response, the national Water and Sanitation Minister, Nomvula Mokonyane, said that Maimane and the DA were attempting to shield themselves from blame for the crisis.

Many residents allege that [government](#) at all levels has not done enough to prepare for this crisis. De Lille [disbanded](#) her drought crisis team quietly in January without issuing a final report or any recommendations. Residents are also critical of local officials’ failure to share timely information about preparations for Day Zero. In fact, six of the seven “alternative water sources” projects, including desalination plants, are [reportedly](#) running behind schedule. None of the projects are expected to be complete by Day Zero.

Impact

Because this is such an extraordinary event—no other major city has [ever run out of water](#)—the impact of the crisis is hard to predict. The severity of the impact will depend on how long it takes for the water supply to return to normal levels and how the city manages the water-rationing process. It is believed that there will be at least some [negative impact](#) on the local economy, which depends largely on tourism and agriculture. In a worst-case scenario, water-collection points could become the locations for fighting and riots the longer water remains scarce. There are also public health issues related to contaminated water, poor sanitation, and hygiene practices that could accompany the water shortage. Communal taps in townships will continue to run to help [prevent](#) the transmission of diseases.

Cape Town’s extreme income inequality, already one of the [highest in the world](#), could add fuel to an already combustible situation if scarce water resources are not shared fairly and equitably. The potential for conflict during this crisis is great and successful mitigation will require a coordinated and transparent effort by all levels of government.

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

JANUARY WAS A ROCKY MONTH FOR EGYPT-SUDAN RELATIONS

By Sarah Graveline

The month of January marked a low point in diplomatic relations between Egypt and Sudan. Tensions flared over three critical issues: a territorial dispute along the countries' shared border, pressure caused by the ongoing Saudi Arabia-Qatar split, and disagreement over the Renaissance Dam project in Ethiopia. While Egypt and Sudan appear likely to be able to reduce tensions in the short term, it is unlikely the countries will agree on long-term solutions.

Halayeb Triangle Exacerbates Long-standing Tension

Egypt and Sudan have long had a rocky diplomatic relationship. Egypt blames Sudan for a 1995 [assassination attempt](#) on then-president Hosni Mubarak. More [recently](#), Egypt accused Sudan of harboring Muslim Brotherhood members, while Sudan accused Egypt of [providing weapons](#) to rebel groups in its western region of Darfur.

This underlying mistrust colors both countries' approach to the Halayeb (or Hala'ib) Triangle, a 20,500-square-kilometer territory on the Egypt-Sudan border that has been under [dispute](#) for a half century. The disagreement has grown particularly tense over the past two years as overall relations between Egypt and Sudan worsened.

In [2016](#), Egypt negotiated a deal with Saudi Arabia over two Red Sea islands that led Egypt to re-demarcate its maritime border, including its southern border with Sudan, resulting in Egypt's [claiming sovereignty](#) over the entire Halayeb territory. While Sudan initially responded by pushing for negotiations, in April 2017, it formed a [committee](#) to unilaterally demarcate the border and began requiring that Egyptians have visas to enter the country.

In December 2017, Sudan continued to press the issue by sending a [letter](#) to the UN objecting to Egypt's claims to the Halayeb Triangle, which Egypt [dismissed](#). In response, Sudan [withdrew](#) its ambassador from Egypt on January 4, 2018. The same day, Sudanese press reported that Egyptian [troops](#) arrived at a UAE base in Eritrea, which borders Sudan. While the troop movement was likely not in direct response to the Halayeb Triangle dispute, the presence of troops further [elevated tensions](#) between the two countries.

Saudi-Qatar Crisis Puts Egypt and Sudan on Opposing Sides of Regional Discord

Saudi Arabia's [June 2017](#) decision to cut diplomatic ties with Qatar pulled Egypt and Sudan onto opposing sides of a regional dispute. While Egypt followed Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain in cutting diplomatic ties with Qatar, Sudan maintained its ties, perhaps [calculating](#) it had built enough goodwill with Saudi Arabia by sending troops to Yemen and cutting ties with Iran. Since June 2017, Sudan has grown closer with Turkey, which also supports Qatar.

In December 2017, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited Khartoum and signed several agreements with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. Among them was a controversial agreement to give Turkey [temporary control](#) of a Sudanese Red Sea Island, ostensibly so that Turkey could overhaul its port. Egypt and Saudi Arabia harshly [criticized](#) the agreement, arguing that Turkey would establish a military base on the island.

The same week that Turkey and Sudan signed their agreement, Qatari and Russian military leaders met in [Khartoum](#) with their Sudanese counterpart to discuss Red Sea security issues. This, combined with the announced deal with Turkey, may have been the driving force behind Egypt's decision to move troops to Eritrea.



Map of Hala'ib Triangle between Egypt and Sudan. (Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Halaib_Triangle-en.png.)

Nile Dam Project Affected

The recent flare-up between Egypt and Sudan put further strain on a long-running source of tension: the [Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam](#) (GERD). The GERD, which when completed will have cost an estimated \$5 billion, is currently under construction in Ethiopia and will control water flow along the Nile, upstream of both Sudan and Egypt.

While the GERD has the potential to transform Ethiopia's economy, Egypt views its construction as a threat to agricultural production and urban livelihood. The Nile currently supplies [90 percent](#) of Egypt's water, of which 60 percent originates in Ethiopia. Egypt claims rights to over [two-thirds](#) of the water from the Nile under agreements it signed with Ethiopia and Sudan in 1929 and 1959, notably while both Ethiopia and Sudan were under British colonial control.

Egypt has always opposed the GERD. [Construction](#) of the dam began in 2011, when Egypt was politically weakened and distracted by the Arab Spring. By 2015, Egypt appeared prepared to accept the inevitable, signing a [preliminary agreement](#) with Ethiopia and Sudan on management of the GERD. The agreement soon [stalled](#), however, over disagreement on how to measure the GERD's impact and the speed at which the dam should be filled.

Sudan's recent push to [increase its use](#) of Nile water to boost its agricultural sector contributed to the breakdown of the 2015 agreement by sparking Egyptian fears that Sudan could team up with Ethiopia to pressure Egypt to relinquish some of its water rights. While the dispute must be resolved soon, as the dam is already 60 percent complete, Egypt's turbulent domestic politics [may limit](#) its president's ability to make any concessions on what the country deems a vital interest.

Conclusion

Despite many long-running points of contention, Egypt and Sudan have proven able in the past to put aside their disputes when convenient. In [October 2016](#), Sudanese president Bashir visited Cairo and signed a partnership agreement with Egyptian president Sisi. Currently, it seems likely both countries will reach for a short-term solution to the recent discord, as true conflict is in neither nation's strategic interest.

On [January 26, 2018](#), Egyptian and Sudanese ministers met on the sidelines of meetings to prepare for the African Union Summit, and on [January 29](#), the presidents of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan met to discuss Nile issues. While these overtures will not resolve the deep-seated issues driving Egypt and Sudan apart, they may lead to reduction in the tension that built up over the past month and bring the relationship back to its usual state of uneasy peace.

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

Key Dates:

April 2011 – Nile dam (GERD) construction begins

March 2015 – Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan sign preliminary agreement on Nile dam

April 2016 – Egypt announces territory deal with Saudi Arabia and demarcates maritime border to include all of Halayeb Triangle territory in the south

April 2017 – Sudan committee demarcates border, claiming Halayeb for Sudan

December 21, 2017 – Sudan sends letter of complaint on Halayeb to UN, Egypt objects

December 26, 2017 – Turkey, Sudan sign agreement on Red Sea territory

December 27, 2017 – Qatar, Russia attend military summit in Sudan

January 4, 2018 – Sudan withdraws Ambassador from Egypt

January 4, 2018 – Egyptian troops reportedly arrive in Eritrea

January 26, 2018 – Egyptian and Sudanese ministers meet to discuss disputes

January 27, 2018 – Egyptian, Ethiopian, Sudanese Presidents meet to discuss Nile river issues

CAMEROON'S ANGLOPHONE CRISIS WORSENS AND WIDENS

By Richard J. Pera

After Cameroon's English-speaking leaders declared an independent "[Republic of Ambazonia](#)" in October 2017, the government response was swift. Scores of civilians have been killed, at least 1,000 have been arrested, property has been destroyed and looted, and at least 15,000 have fled to neighboring Nigeria. In January 2018, Ambazonia's leaders were arrested in Nigeria and extradited to Cameroon, where they will stand trial as terrorists. What are the origin and recent developments of this crisis? How has it been internationalized? And what is the outlook going forward? [more...](#)



UNHCR staff and local authorities assist recently arrived Cameroonians seeking refuge in Obanliku, southeast Nigeria, October 2017. (Source: "UNHCR Condemns Forced Returns of Cameroon Asylum-Seekers from Nigeria," UNHCR/Jacob Pahar. <http://www.unhcr.org/5a731fc4.html>.)

Richard J. Pera is a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

EXPECTATIONS ARE LOW FOR THE SECOND ROUND OF SOUTH SUDAN PEACE TALKS

By Sarah Graveline

On February 5, 2018, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) opened the second round of talks between the South Sudanese government and rebel groups under the High Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF). The HLRF's first round concluded in December 2017 with a ceasefire that was almost immediately violated by both sides. Since December, the international community has increased pressure on the government of South Sudan through an arms embargo and sanctions. While South Sudan's objections to these policies suggest they have successfully increased diplomatic pressure, the government maintains a military advantage on the ground that will likely prevent meaningful progress through the HLRF talks. [more...](#)



A demonstrator holds a placard during a rally protesting the U.S. unilateral arms embargo on the country, in Juba, South Sudan, Tuesday, February 6, 2018. (Source: AP Photo/Sam Mednick.)

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

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Origins of the Crisis

[Cameroon's Anglophone crisis originated with](#) League of Nations political decisions following Germany's defeat in World War I. The League mandated parts of German "Kamerun" to Britain and France. In 1960, France granted independence to its colony, "French Cameroons" (French-speaking and mostly Roman Catholic). British-controlled "Northern Cameroons" (English-speaking and mostly Muslim) became part of Nigeria. British-controlled "Southern Cameroons" (English-speaking and mostly Protestant) voted to join "French Cameroons" and form the Federal Republic of Cameroon in 1961. The country was renamed United Republic of Cameroon in 1972 and Republic of Cameroon in 1984. Today, the former "Southern Cameroons" is divided into two Anglophonic regions—Southwest (capital: Buea) and Northwest (capital: Bamenda)—with nearly 3.5 million residents, comprising about 20 percent of Cameroon's population.

As *Africa Watch* has [reported, since 1961](#), Cameroon's Anglophones have disagreed with what they perceived as increasingly centralized rule under French-majority control. Despite constitutional guarantees, many Anglophones believe the central government in Yaounde has intentionally eroded English-speaking traditions. They also resent that national resources have not been shared fairly.

The current [crisis](#) began in October 2016 when lawyers and teachers went on strike to oppose French-speaking lawyers and teachers in Anglophone courts and schools, respectively. Protests spread to cities in both regions. The government reacted in heavy-handed fashion by applying an anti-terrorism law (originally focused on Boko Haram) against protest organizers. In blocking internet access when opponents used social media to organize protests, the government's actions caused [financial hardship and angered many Anglophones](#).

The Crisis Enters a New Phase

On October 1, 2017, Anglophone leaders [declared](#) an independent "Federal Republic of Ambazonia," encompassing Southwest and Northwest Cameroon. Ambazonia (demonym: "Amba") refers to Amba Bay on the Gulf of Guinea, whose 19th century British colony was home to freed slaves. The declaration was preceded by sporadic violence by separatist groups and violent repression by security forces. Their leader [proclaimed](#): "We, the people of Southern Cameroons, are slaves to no one... Not now, not ever again. It's time to tell Yaounde that enough is enough."

In early October 2017, tens of thousands of Anglophones began peaceful marches in Bamenda, Buea, and other towns. Police, reinforced by soldiers, responded by firing live ammunition at demonstrators, killing at least 40 and injuring more than 100. Security forces arrested about 1,000 people without warrant, burned and looted homes, and tortured and sexually abused residents. [According to Amnesty International](#), police made arbitrary mass arrests during October, and



UNHCR staff and local authorities assist recently arrived Cameroonians seeking refuge in Obanliku, southeast Nigeria, October 2017. (Source: "UNHCR Condemns Forced Returns of Cameroon Asylum-Seekers from Nigeria," UNHCR/Jacob Pahar, <http://www.unhcr.org/5a731fc4.html>.)

prisons were described as being “packed like sardines.” The government deployed the elite Special Forces unit known as the “BIR” (French acronym for Rapid Intervention Battalion) to the Anglophone regions; this was significant because the BIR, used extensively against Boko Haram, reports directly to the president.

The government claimed that secessionists torched schools and businesses, attacked police and Gendarmerie facilities, and killed 19 soldiers and police officers. The government also claimed militants produced and deployed improvised explosive devices, not only in Anglophone areas, but in Douala, Cameroon’s business capital and largest city.

Crisis Is Internationalized in 2018

Cameroon’s fall 2017 crackdown has forced at least [15,000 Anglophone refugees](#) to flee for Nigeria. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 8,500 of them have registered in Nigeria’s neighboring [Cross River State](#), a region that tried unsuccessfully to secede from Nigeria during the 1960s Biafran Crisis. The UNHCR representative in Nigeria described the refugees as “mostly children, women, and the elderly, with very few men . . . they are coming daily. It is a crisis.”

Members of the Southern Cameroons National Council that formed The Interim Government of Ambazonia were [arrested](#) at a hotel in Abuja, Nigeria, on January 5, 2018. Among those arrested was Sisiku Ayuk Tabe, the self-proclaimed President of the Federal Republic of Ambazonia. Cameroon authorities announced that [Ayuk Tabe](#) and other “terrorists” were [extradited to Cameroon](#), where they “will answer for their crimes before the Cameroonian courts.” The UNHCR [criticized](#) the extradition because members of the group had requested asylum: “Their forcible return is a violation of the principle of non-refoulement, which constitutes the cornerstone of international refugee law.” Amnesty International [warned](#) they could be threatened with torture and given an unfair trial in Cameroon.

Motives of Cameroon and Nigeria

The Cameroonian government likely will follow through on its stated intention to prosecute Ayuk Tabe and other Amba leaders. The secession movement is viewed as traitorous by most Francophones. President Paul Biya likely views the secessionist movement not only as a threat to the integrity of the state but also to his own rule (he is the longest serving non-royal national leader in the world). We can expect the government crackdown to continue, especially in advance of presidential elections late this year. Biya, however, likely will appear conciliatory to appeal to the international community as he did in his recent [New Year’s speech](#): “I should make it clear that . . . dialogue has always been and will always be the best means of resolving problems, so long as it is strictly in line with republican legality.”

On February 5, 2018, the Nigerian National Security Advisor [publicly backed Cameroon](#) on the issue of Anglophone secession. This position was already manifest by Nigeria’s decision to extradite Ayuk Tabe in the absence of an extradition treaty between the two countries. Some observers hold that the rationale behind Nigeria’s decision was that if the Anglophone secession were allowed to succeed, it might rekindle the Biafran secessionist movement ([according to a 2017 poll](#), that movement is gaining support among young people). Nigeria can continue to count on the Cameroon government’s cooperation in the war against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin.

Conclusion

Cameroon scored a tactical victory by imprisoning Ambazonia’s entire leadership at once. That event, and the government’s violent crackdown in the Northwest and Southwest Regions, however, may encourage more Anglophones to join the independence struggle.

In the long term, though, the outlook for Anglophone independence is not good. Financial and political support for the secession movement is lacking. Nigeria has chosen to support Cameroon. The [African Union](#) has been largely silent, and the European Union has [emphasized dialogue](#) to respect “the unity and integrity of the country.”

Richard J. Pera is a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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A demonstrator holds a placard during a rally protesting the U.S. unilateral arms embargo on the country, in Juba, South Sudan, Tuesday, February 6, 2018. (Source: AP Photo/Sam Mednick.)

From ARCSS to HLRF: A Background to Negotiations

Since gaining independence in 2011, South Sudan has had only three years of relative peace. In 2013, conflict broke out when President Salva Kiir [ousted](#) Riek Machar, his then vice president, citing his suspicion that Machar was plotting a coup. IGAD, a regional bloc comprising Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda, stepped in to lead [negotiations](#) to resolve the conflict. In August 2015, Kiir and Machar signed the resulting Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS), which laid out a path to power-sharing.

ARCSS held for only a year before fighting between Kiir and Machar's forces in the capital, Juba, reopened the civil war. As [Africa Watch](#) reported, Machar was ultimately forced to flee and is currently in South Africa, [reportedly](#) under house arrest. The opposition fractured in his absence, and the conflict is increasingly being fought along ethnic lines.

In June 2017, IGAD launched another attempt at negotiations by announcing it would facilitate the HLRF talks. From its inception, the HLRF has been politically delicate. Technically, its [mandate](#) is to strengthen the ARCSS process, because Kiir has made clear he will [not renegotiate](#) ARCSS. The situation on the ground has, however, changed dramatically since ARCSS was negotiated due to Machar's absence and the continued fracturing of opposition groups. The HLRF has attempted to bridge this gap by widening [participation](#) to eight armed groups, the government of South Sudan, and some civil society organizations.

The HLRF has achieved mixed results so far. Following its first meeting in December 2017, the government of South Sudan and eight South Sudanese armed groups signed a [cessation of hostilities agreement](#) that entered into force on December 24. The agreement was [criticized](#) for its weak enforcement mechanisms, and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism, the monitoring body tasked with assessing violations, [accused](#) both sides of breaking the agreement almost immediately after it was signed.

International Community Signals Greater Willingness to Intervene

In the lead-up to the second round of HLRF talks, the international community tightened pressure on South Sudan's government. On February 2, 2018, the United States announced it was imposing an [arms ban](#) on South Sudan that would prohibit American companies from exporting defense materials to the country. South Sudan [recalled](#) its ambassador to the U.S. in response.

Although the United States imposed the arms ban unilaterally, U.S. government officials [framed](#) the ban as part of a larger push for international cooperation in limiting arms transfers to South Sudan. The same day the European Union

imposed [sanctions](#) on two current and one former South Sudanese government officials, following similar sanctions imposed by the United States in September 2017.

The U.S. and European actions will have limited impact without broader regional support given that the majority of small arms and light weapons in South Sudan were [transferred](#) from Kenya and Uganda, not as a result of direct sales from the West. On [January 29](#), however, the head of the African Union (AU) Commission announced that the AU supported imposing sanctions on leaders who violate the ceasefire in South Sudan. AU pressure may signal increasing regional willingness to address ongoing violence.

Despite Pressure, South Sudanese Government Maintains an Upper Hand

Although the South Sudanese government has expressed frustration with growing international pressure, sanctions have done little to alter facts on the ground. The South Sudanese government continues to retain the upper hand militarily, having pushed a key opposition group out of its headquarters in Equatoria in [December](#). Currently, the government controls most urban areas while the opposition is fractured and [reportedly](#) struggling to procure weapons.

The government has shored up its military victories by tightening control over civil society and the media. The [Committee for the Protection of Journalists](#), an advocacy group, has accused the government of undertaking a “campaign of intimidating journalists” by denying accreditation and jailing journalists who report stories critical of the government.

Humanitarian Crisis

Years of fighting have created a protracted humanitarian crisis in South Sudan. The [conflict](#) has displaced 1.9 million people within South Sudan, while an additional 2.4 million are currently seeking asylum in neighboring countries. In total, the UN estimates that [7 million](#) South Sudanese, over half the country’s population, will require humanitarian assistance in 2018.

Conclusion

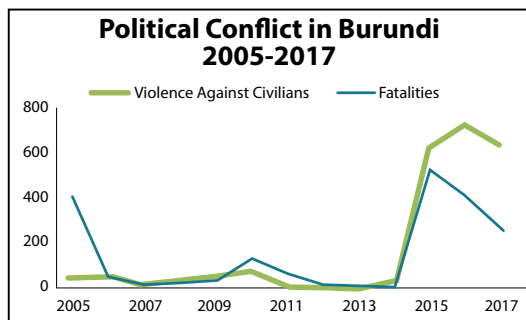
The scale of the crisis argues for near-term peace talks. The HLRF is, however, a weak mechanism to negotiate peace. If talks do not go the way the government wants, there is little to stop it from continuing its military campaign. Similarly, a leading [opposition group](#) has stated its intention to continue fighting should the talks fall through. International efforts to exert pressure, through sanctions, are an important step in support of compliance. Also, South Sudan’s neighbors could become more active in blocking arms transfers to increase incentives for all sides to seek peace.

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

BURUNDI: REFERENDUM ON AUTOCRACY?

By Dr. Stephanie M. Burchard

In a new report, a prominent human rights group in Burundi claims that over the past year, the government was responsible for the deaths of more than 500 people and the imprisonment of 10,000 citizens. Attacks on civil society and the opposition have increased since President Pierre Nkurunziza decided to run for a controversial third term in July 2015. A constitutional referendum scheduled for May would allow Nkurunziza to run for an additional two terms, keeping him in power until 2034. Violence could increase in the lead-up to the vote as the government moves to ensure approval of the changes. [more...](#)



Source: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project.

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

LIBERIA'S FORMER PRESIDENT SIRLEAF AWARDED IBRAHIM PRIZE

By Dr. Alexander Noyes

On February 11, 2018, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation [awarded](#) its \$5 million African Leadership prize to Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the former President of Liberia. Sirleaf, Africa's first female head of state, was elected in 2005 and won reelection in 2011. She stepped down in January 2018 after serving two terms. She was replaced by former soccer star [George Weah](#), who won the second round of presidential elections in December 2017. Sirleaf is only the fifth former head of state to win the Ibrahim prize, which [recognizes](#) those who respect their constitutionally mandated terms and demonstrate exceptional leadership, since the prize's founding in 2006. [more...](#)



Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia's former president, after the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government summit in Abuja, Nigeria. (Source: AP Photo/Olamikan Gbemiga, File December 17, 2016.)

Dr. Alexander Noyes is an Adjunct Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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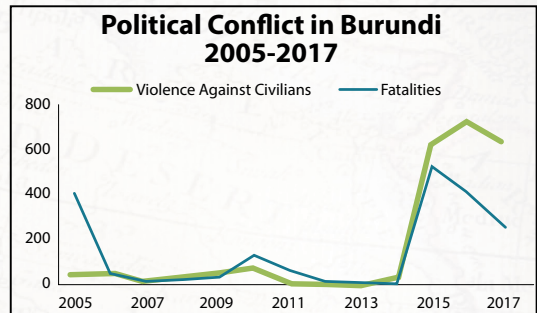
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Source: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project.

Clinging to Power

Nkurunziza, a charismatic former Hutu rebel leader who fought in Burundi's civil war, came to power in 2005 after the country's 12-year conflict ended. The [Arusha Accords](#), a series of agreements between the major rival groups negotiated by former South African President Nelson Mandela and former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere over the course of several years, was the framework ultimately agreed upon to end the conflict. The accords include provisions to ensure over-representation of the minority Tutsi ethnic group, to ensure ethnic integration of the armed forces, and to prevent the centralization of power.

Per the agreement, parliament elected the country's first post-conflict president in 2005 to a five-year term. After winning re-election handily in 2010, Nkurunziza announced his intention to run in the 2015 election, arguably in contravention to the Constitution's two-term limit on the executive, and certainly contrary to the spirit of the Arusha Accords. To bolster Nkurunziza's position, the government [introduced](#) an amendment to remove presidential term limits, but it was narrowly defeated in parliament in March 2014. When that maneuver failed, Nkurunziza still went forward with his campaign for a [third term](#), arguing he was not directly elected in 2005 and thus should be allowed to run again in 2015 for a second directly elected term.

[Protests](#) over Nkurunziza's candidacy broke out after he was formally nominated, and in May 2015 an unsuccessful coup was [attempted](#) by General Godefroid Niyombare, former army chief and ally to Nkurunziza. An [estimated](#) 70 people were killed in the lead-up to the election. Despite frequent violent protests, an opposition boycott, and [international condemnation](#), the government went forward with the vote, and Nkurunziza won re-election in July 2015. Nkurunziza's power grab, however, sparked a political crisis that has been simmering ever since.

In October 2015, the government established the 15-member National Commission for the Inter-Burundi Dialogue, ostensibly to address the political turmoil. The opposition claimed the commission was a [sham](#) and [refused](#) to participate. On November 24, 2017, the government approved recommendations made by the commission, [including](#) a review of the ethnic quota established by the Arusha Accords, reducing the supermajority required to pass bills to a simple plurality and extending the presidency to a seven year term, once renewable. These provisions, among others, will be put to a popular referendum in May 2018.

Increasing instability

Politically motivated attacks have increased substantially since 2015. Over the past three years, the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) has recorded almost 2,000 incidents of violence committed against citizens and

at least 1,200 fatalities. The Association for the Protection of Human Rights and Detained Persons (APRODH) alleges that the government has been systematically targeting its political opponents. Almost all the violence is believed to have been committed by the military, the police, and the [Imbonerakure](#) (“those that see far” in Kirundi), the ruling party’s youth league. The *Imbonerakure* have been accused of torture, illegal detainment, and targeted killing of opposition members. In April 2017, a video of the *Imbonerakure* [chanting](#) about raping women to get them pregnant so that they “give birth to *Imbonerakure*” went viral. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights condemned the chant, saying that it “was not an isolated incident, but rather the tip of the iceberg. . . .” A January 2018 [report](#) by the UN accused the government of human rights abuses, including repression, torture, sexual violence, and extrajudicial killing. Burundi has [repeatedly](#) refused to grant access to the UN to conduct an inquiry into allegations of abuse.

The violence has also led to a regional refugee crisis, with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees [stating](#) that more than 400,000 have fled to neighboring Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania. The government has downplayed the refugee situation. In December 2017, the government [said](#) that the crisis had ended, and it expected 60,000 refugees to return in 2018. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees [disputed](#) this claim: “The political situation in Burundi remains unresolved,” noting its concern over continuing human rights abuses by the regime.

International Response

In response to the crisis, several international donors have withheld assistance to Burundi. In 2015, the U.S. [suspended](#) peacekeeper training programs to Burundi but [continued](#) support of two rotational battalions deployed to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). In 2016, the European Union, which funds about half the Burundian government’s budget, suspended direct financial support to Nkurunziza’s administration. To make up the shortfall and to pay for the 2020 elections, the government began [garnishing](#) civil servant wages by approximately 10 percent in February 2018.

The international community has also tried to broker peace talks between the government and opposition groups, but the government has [rebuffed](#) attempts at external intervention. In 2016, the East African Community [appointed](#) former Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa to help mediate the crisis after peace talks led by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni in 2015 stalled. Unfortunately, Mkapa’s [attempts](#) have been unproductive. The government has refused to participate, [insisting](#) that there is no problem. Now, the government is claiming that the constitutional referendum will help move the country forward. Given the intransigence with which the Nkurunziza government has approached this situation, however, the crisis does not appear to be ending anytime soon. Rather, the constitutional referendum is likely to inflame an already combustible situation.

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

LIBERIA'S FORMER PRESIDENT SIRLEAF AWARDED IBRAHIM PRIZE

By Dr. Alexander Noyes

On February 11, 2018, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation [awarded](#) its \$5 million African Leadership prize to Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the former President of Liberia. Sirleaf, Africa's first female head of state, was elected in 2005 and won reelection in 2011. She stepped down in January 2018 after serving two terms. She was replaced by former soccer star [George Weah](#), who won the second round of presidential elections in December 2017. Sirleaf is only the fifth former head of state to win the Ibrahim prize, which [recognizes](#) those who respect their constitutionally mandated terms and demonstrate exceptional leadership, since the prize's founding in 2006.

The Ibrahim Prize

In 2006, the British-Sudanese telecommunications businessman Mo Ibrahim launched, through his foundation, the Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership, known as the Ibrahim prize. Recipients of the prize receive a sum of \$5 million over 10 years and thereafter an additional \$200,000 annually for the remainder of their lives. [According](#) to the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, the prize "recognizes and celebrates African executive leaders who, under challenging circumstances, have developed their countries and strengthened democracy and human rights for the shared benefit of their people, paving the way for sustainable and equitable prosperity."

The prize also aims to offer an incentive to African leaders to leave office peacefully and not cling to power beyond their mandates. To be [eligible](#) for the prize, former African heads of state must have left office within the past three years, been democratically elected, served their constitutionally mandated term, and demonstrated exceptional leadership. The prize is only awarded when the Mo Ibrahim Foundation prize committee decides that all criteria have been sufficiently met; it is not awarded every year. Previous [recipients](#) of the Ibrahim prize are Joaquim Chissano (Mozambique) in 2007, Festus Mogae (Botswana) in 2008, Pedro Pires (Cabo Verde) in 2011, and Hifikepunye Pohamba (Namibia) in 2014. Nelson Mandela was awarded as an honorary laureate in 2007.

Lack of Past Winners

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation's decision not to award the prize in years past has generated [discussion](#) about the quality of African leadership. According to the Foundation, this is by [design](#): "The significance of the Prize lies not only with its winners but also with the conversation around leadership that it generates." When the prize committee decided against awarding the prize in 2017, committee chairman Salim Ahmed Salim [responded](#) directly to critics of the prize: "We recognize and applaud the important contributions that many African leaders have made to change their countries for the better. . . . But the prize is intended to highlight and celebrate truly exceptional leadership, which is uncommon by its very definition."

Liberia's Controversial Sirleaf

Sirleaf, only the fifth winner of the prize, is the first woman to take home the accolade. With an MBA from Harvard and previous prominent positions in international companies and organizations, she was celebrated internationally after her election in 2005. Donors and capital flowed into Liberia, and Sirleaf won a variety of other international awards and prizes, most notably the [Nobel Peace Prize](#) in 2011, which she shared with fellow Liberian Leymah Gbowee and Tawakkul Karman of Yemen. She was reelected in 2011 and stepped aside to make way for Weah after her term limit was up in 2018.



Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia's former president, after the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government summit in Abuja, Nigeria. (Source: AP Photo/Olamikan Gbemiga, File December 17, 2016.)

But her tenure as president of Liberia was not without controversy. Sirleaf was arguably more popular internationally than she ever was domestically. She faced repeated allegations of nepotism after she [appointed](#) three of her sons and a sister to high-level government positions. She was also accused of turning a blind eye to [corruption](#) during her presidency; in her first term alone, more than 20 ministers were accused of corruption by the General Auditing Commission but were not prosecuted. During last year's election, she fell out with her own party (Unity), refused to campaign for her successor, and was accused of interfering in electoral processes. The Unity party [expelled](#) her in January 2018.

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation appeared to acknowledge such controversies in its announcement of the 2018 award, but viewed her successes in the areas of post-war reconciliation and building democratic institutions as deserving of the prize. As Salim [said](#) this week, "Throughout her two terms in office, she worked tirelessly on behalf of the people of Liberia. Such a journey cannot be without some shortcomings and, today, Liberia continues to face many challenges. Nevertheless, during her twelve years in office, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf laid the foundations on which Liberia can now build."

Conclusion

While Liberia faces a number of acute challenges, including a [slumping](#) economy, rampant corruption, and a worrying resurgence of some of the major political players from the country's brutal civil wars, the country has also made progress over the past 10 years. Indeed, as [noted](#) by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation: "Since 2006, Liberia was the only country out of 54 to improve in every category and sub-category of the Ibrahim Index of African Governance. This led Liberia to move up ten places in the Index's overall ranking during this period." Despite Liberia's progress, for which Sirleaf surely deserves some credit, accusations of corruption and her missteps in office are likely to cast a shadow over her legacy and this year's Ibrahim award. Nevertheless, the Ibrahim award continues to provide an incentive for good governance and generates useful discussion on the state of leadership in Africa.

Dr. Alexander Noyes is an Adjunct Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

THE ALLIANCE FOR THE SAHEL—AN ESSENTIAL ACCOMPANIMENT TO THE G5 SAHEL JOINT FORCE

By Dr. Ashley N. Bybee

In February 2017, the Permanent Secretariat of the G5 Sahel regional body announced the creation of a multinational joint counterterrorism force, called the [Force Conjoint du G5 Sahel](#) (FC-G5S). Although there has been significant interest and reporting on this multinational force, the G5 Sahel's activities not related to security or defense have received significantly less attention. These nonmilitary activities are deserving of local, regional, and international attention along with the FC-G5S. The areas that these non-military activities support – infrastructure, governance, education, and economic development – are important for building the resilience of local populations and reducing the appeal of violent extremism in West Africa. [more...](#)



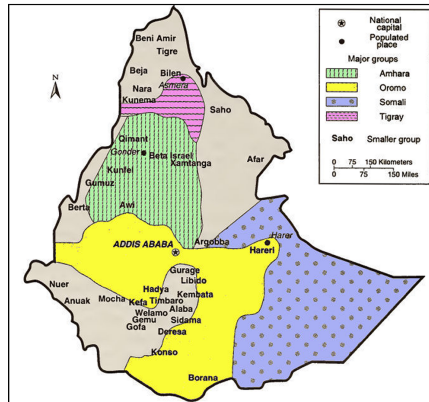
French President Emmanuel Macron, third left, participates in a group photo during the opening session of G5 Sahel force summit in Bamako, Mali, Sunday July 2, 2017. From left, Burkina-Faso President Roch Marc Christian Kabore, Mauritania President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, Macron, Mali President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, Chad president Idriss Deby, and Niger President Mahamadou Issoufou. (Source: AP Photo/Baba Ahmed.)

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ETHIOPIA AT A CROSSROADS

By Sarah Graveline

On February 15, 2018, Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn, announced his [resignation](#) in response to ongoing protests by Ethiopia's two largest ethnic groups – the Oromo and Amhara. While the demonstrations have pushed Ethiopia's minority-controlled government to make concessions, including releasing some political prisoners, the government is still attempting to consolidate power through a state of emergency declared on February 16. While the [state of emergency](#) may quiet opposition in the short term, the duration and scale of protests suggest the government will need to make greater concessions to avoid further instability. [more...](#)



Major Ethnic Groups in Ethiopia. (Source: Globalsecurity.org, "Ethiopia – Ethnic Groups," accessed 20 February 2018.)

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

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.

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Background on the G5 Sahel

The G5 Sahel was established in [February 2014](#) in Nouakchott, Mauritania, by the Presidents of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger with the aim of being an institutional framework to strengthen regional cooperation in the areas of development and security in the Sahel. It adopted a [convention of establishment](#) on December 19, 2014, and is permanently headquartered in Mauritania. Reinforcing peace and security is a common theme throughout the convention document and related materials, but Article 5 describes a wide array of non-security-related activities, among them developing infrastructures for transportation, water management, energy distribution, and telecommunications; creating conditions that foster good governance in member countries; and building the resilience of populations by ensuring sustainable food security, human development, and pastoralism. The G5 Sahel is composed of five organs to effectively coordinate these initiatives: the Conference of Heads of State; the Council of Ministers; the Permanent Secretariat (supported by the [World Bank](#)); the Defense and Security Committee; and the National Coordinating Committees for G5 Sahel Actions.

From the outset, the G5 Sahel sought opportunities to convene donors to coordinate financial support to these initiatives. In [July 2014](#), at its second ministerial meeting, which included donors, the Council of Ministers adopted an ambitious regional investment program called the Priority Investment Program (PIP), estimated at \$14.8 billion. The PIP for the period [2017–2019](#) comprises 19 programs and includes 101 projects, at a total cost of approximately \$12.3 billion. These figures, however, reflect donors' pledges and therefore remain aspirational until fully funded.

Alliance for the Sahel

On July 13, 2017, the president of the French Republic and the German chancellor launched the [Alliance for the Sahel](#) in Paris. The alliance includes the main multilateral and bilateral development partners of the G5 Sahel member states (France, Germany, the European Union, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and the United Nations Development Program), and it serves as a venue for more efficient coordination of donor assistance. The alliance focuses on five sectors: (1) youth employability (education and training); (2) agriculture, rural development, and food security; (3) energy and climate; (4) governance; and (5) decentralization and support for the deployment of basic services. The alliance also announced the establishment of [advisory centers for migration](#) to support returned refugees in domestic job markets. In addition to its support to the FC-G5S, France has pledged an additional \$247 million to member states over the next six years. One of French President Emmanuel Macron's top foreign policy priorities is known to be the Sahel, which he views as



French President Emmanuel Macron, third left, participates in a group photo during the opening session of G5 Sahel force summit in Bamako, Mali, Sunday July 2, 2017. From left, Burkina-Faso President Roch Marc Christian Kabore, Mauritania President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, Macron, Mali President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, Chad president Idriss Deby, and Niger President Mahamadou Issoufou. (Source: AP Photo/Baba Ahmed.)

an important contributing factor to France's own [migration crisis](#). He may therefore view this forum as a means to elicit the international support necessary to address the root causes of insecurity in the Sahel and thus reduce the burden on French troops in the region.

A More Holistic Approach to Insecurity in the Sahel

Unemployment, illiteracy, poor governance, and other underlying conditions have structural roots that cannot be overcome with a military approach alone. In fact, a military-only approach could have significant unintended consequences. For example, if the FC-G5S were to succeed in its mission of disrupting illicit trafficking networks without providing alternative sources of income for the populations that rely on illicit trade for their livelihoods, the conflict might continue and possibly expand.

The alliance considers addressing these structural challenges as an essential component of a successful strategy for countering insecurity in the Sahel. France's UN envoy François Delattre, for example, referred to long-term economic development and an enhanced security presence as "[absolutely inseparable](#)." Addressing the structural sources of insecurity will also deflect [suggestions](#) that France's and Europe's support to the FC-G5S is largely self-serving, aimed at addressing their own domestic terrorist threats.

Conclusion

The purpose of G5 Sahel is to foster peace through the implementation of programs that support economic and human development, develop infrastructure necessary for the region to be relevant on the global stage, create conditions that foster good governance, and build the resilience of local populations. The G5 Sahel has positioned itself as a key regional interlocutor on issues of Sahelian security, and the EU's recent [doubling](#) of its funding for the FC-G5S will ensure that it continues in that role. While a heightened regional security posture is responsive to the continued insecurity in the region, any military solution should be accompanied by a concomitant emphasis on improving the livelihoods of local populations and reducing the appeal of violent extremism.

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Ethiopia Struggles with Minority Control

Ethiopia has long struggled to balance ethnic and political power. As Africa's [oldest](#) independent country, Ethiopia was historically governed by a monarchy controlled by its second-largest ethnic group, the [Amhara](#). In 1974, mutinying soldiers overthrew the monarchy and formed the [Derg regime](#), plunging Ethiopia into costly border wars, economic collapse, and starvation.

In [1989](#), the regime was overthrown by the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), a rebel movement of the minority Tigrayan population. In 1991, the TPLF adopted ethnic federalism, forming a coalition government called the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which governs Ethiopia today. While the EPRDF coalition includes parties representing major ethnic groups, including the Amhara, Oromo, and southern nationalities, the [TPLF](#) remains in control of government policy.

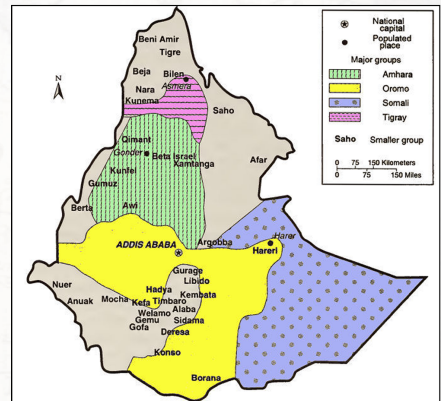
Tigrayan control of the government has long proven a source of tension. In 2005, after opposition parties performed particularly well in national elections, the EPRDF became more [authoritarian](#), imprisoning opposition leaders and exercising increased control over civil expression. Although the government has made symbolic gestures toward power-sharing, such as appointing [Hailemariam Desalegn](#), a southerner, as Prime Minister in 2012, the TPLF has made few real concessions despite increasing opposition.

Protests Get Results

As [Africa Watch](#) previously reported, the most recent protests began in response to a 2014 announcement that the government would expand the capital, Addis Ababa, into land held by the country's largest ethnic group, the Oromo. The resulting protests spread throughout 2015, notably bringing both Oromo and Amhara to the streets to challenge their lack of political representation and government brutality. The government responded harshly, declaring a [state of emergency](#) in October 2016 and arresting an estimated 20,000 people.

When the state of emergency was lifted in August 2017, protests and strikes continued. Although the government continued to arrest organizers and members of opposition parties, the [Oromo People's Democratic Organization](#) (OPDO), which is part of the EPRDF coalition and has historically been seen as under TPLF control, began to position itself as a quasi-opposition party and press for reform.

As protests continued, the government was forced to make significant concessions. In January, Hailemariam [announced](#) the government would be releasing prisoners. Despite some confusion, the government followed through in February, [releasing](#) nearly 6,000 political prisoners, including leaders of the opposition Oromo Federalist Congress.



Major Ethnic Groups in Ethiopia. (Source: Globalsecurity.org, "Ethiopia – Ethnic Groups," accessed 20 February 2018.)

Although Ethiopians have celebrated the prisoners' releases, protestors [continued](#) to push for further concessions, including Hailemariam's resignation and the appointment of an Oromo prime minister. Given Hailemariam's increasingly fractious relationship with Tigrayan leadership and pressure from Oromo protestors, his resignation was [expected](#), although the [timing](#) came as a surprise as most analysts expected him to stay in office until the EPRDF Congress planned for March 2018. The Ethiopian government is now under pressure to meet protestors' demands to appoint an Oromo politician to replace Hailemariam. [Some view](#) the newly declared state of emergency as an effort to control public discontent if the EPRDF Council selects a successor favorable to continued Tigrayan influence rather than a reformer as protestors want.

International Community Pushes for Peaceful Reform

Hailemariam's resignation and the announcement of the state of emergency have caused concern among the international community. The [United States](#) and the [European Union](#) released statements urging peaceful reform and criticizing the state of emergency. Ethiopia is a key [partner](#) in counterterrorism efforts in East Africa, providing forces in Somalia and South Sudan. Internal instability therefore threatens the international community's regional interests. As Bronwyn Bruton of the [Atlantic Council](#) has suggested, however, the Ethiopian government does not have a strong track record of responding positively to international criticism. It seems therefore unlikely that current international outreach efforts will have decisive impact.

Conclusion

Ethiopia's legacy of authoritarianism has made the path to political reform complex. Having dominated political and economic life for nearly 30 years, the TPLF has much to lose in any move toward power-sharing. The newly declared state of emergency suggests the TPLF intends to use traditional hardline tactics to maintain political control. Given the failure of the 2016–2017 state of emergency to dampen protests, however, this approach seems unlikely to be successful. Further, should the TPLF wait too long to make good-faith efforts toward reform, the resulting backlash may grow too strong for the government to manage, putting Ethiopia at risk for even more internal instability.

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

LEADERSHIP CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA: A NEW DAWN?

By Dr. Alexander Noyes

On February 14, 2018, the embattled president of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, [resigned](#) due to pressure from his ruling African National Congress (ANC) party. Cyril Ramaphosa, Zuma's deputy president, who in December 2017 won the party's leadership race to succeed Zuma, was [sworn in](#) as South Africa's president the following day. Ramaphosa's assumption of the presidency ended a drawn-out battle within the ANC to persuade Zuma to leave his post before his term was up in 2019. Ramaphosa has pitched himself as a reformer and has promised to tackle the widespread corruption that Zuma came to personify. Does Ramaphosa represent a [new dawn](#) for South Africa, as he proclaimed in his recent State of the Nation speech? [more...](#)

Dr. Alexander Noyes is an Adjunct Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.



In this February 11, 2018, file photo, Cyril Ramaphosa delivers a speech at the Grand Parade in Cape Town, South Africa. (Source: AP Photo.)

ZIMBABWE—NEW PRESIDENT'S FIRST 100 DAYS

By George F. Ward

As Emmerson Mnangagwa, Zimbabwe's president, completes his first 100 days in office, he may find both reason for satisfaction and cause for concern. The new president has maintained his position within the ruling Zimbabwe African Peoples Union – Popular Front (ZANU-PF), signaled policy changes that could foster economic revival, and reached out with apparent success to international partners. Looking toward elections this summer, he stands to benefit from fissures within the political opposition. Nevertheless, Mnangagwa faces challenges. Chief among these are the prominent role of the military in government and the question of whether the upcoming elections will be judged by international observers as free and fair. The roles played by former President Robert Mugabe and former first lady Grace Mugabe and their allies may also be grounds for concern. [more...](#)



Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa, center, talks to the press after paying his respects to the family of Morgan Tsvangirai, in Harare, Sunday, February 18, 2018. (Source: AP Photo/Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi.)

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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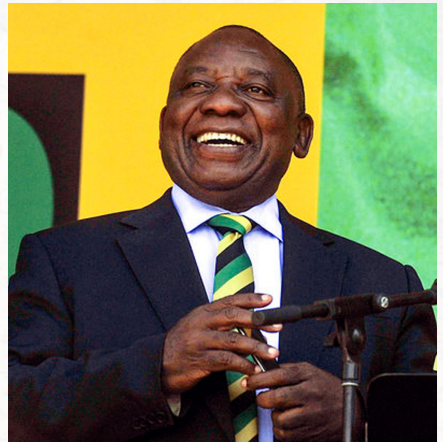
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Background

Ramaphosa, a former labor leader, was rumored to be Nelson Mandela's [preferred choice](#) for deputy president when Mandela became South Africa's first president after the end of apartheid. (Thabo Mbeki was chosen for the post.) In the late 1990s, Ramaphosa went into the business world but maintained close ties with the ANC. As a businessman, he became one of the [wealthiest](#) people in Africa. He made a return to politics in 2012, when he assumed the position of deputy president of the ANC. Ramaphosa defeated Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Zuma's preferred successor and ex-wife, at the ANC's National Conference in December 2017.



In this February 11, 2018, file photo, Cyril Ramaphosa delivers a speech at the Grand Parade in Cape Town, South Africa. (Source: AP Photo.)

Zuma versus Ramaphosa

As highlighted in [Africa Watch](#), over his nine-year presidency Zuma was implicated in variety of corruption cases and other political scandals and survived eight previous no-confidence votes in parliament. After Ramaphosa's victory in December, he and his allies in the ANC pressured Zuma to leave office early, in an effort to reverse the party's slumping political support in the run-up to [elections](#) scheduled for 2019. Over the past several years, the ANC has lost major cities to the opposition in local elections, including Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Mandela Bay. Zuma refused to stand down until it became clear that he would lose a looming no-confidence vote scheduled for mid-February. In his resignation speech, Zuma [admitted](#) that he had not been "the epitome of perfection" but made it clear that he disagreed with the decision of the party to recall him: "Even though I disagree with the decision of the leadership of my organization, I have always been a disciplined member of the ANC."

Ramaphosa claims to be a pro-business reformer who will clean up the ANC from within. He opened his recent State of the Nation speech by promising a [new dawn](#) for South Africa, claiming he will tackle South Africa's rampant corruption, referred to as "state capture." Attempting to chart a new direction for the party and the country, in his speech Ramaphosa [promised immediate action](#): "This is the year in which we will turn the tide of corruption in our public institutions." He added, "We are determined to build a society defined by decency and integrity that does not tolerate the plunder of public resources, nor the theft by corporate criminals of the hard-earned savings of ordinary people."

A Compromise Cabinet

On February 26, Ramaphosa announced his new cabinet, which he [described](#) as "transitional." The cabinet included both a number of well-reputed technocrats and some Zuma allies. Nhlanhla Nene, a widely respected former finance minister who was sacked by Zuma in 2015, returned to that post. Pravin Gordhan, who also enjoys a solid reputation, takes over the Ministry of Public Enterprises. But Ramaphosa's selection for deputy president of David Mabuza, a Zuma ally who has faced allegations

of corruption, has drawn [criticism](#). Ramaphosa also gave the ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation to Dlamini-Zuma, his former rival and Zuma's preferred successor. Announcing his cabinet, Ramaphosa [said](#): "In making these changes, I have been conscious of the need to balance continuity and stability with the need for renewal, economic recovery and accelerated transformation."

Mmusi Maimane, the leader of the opposition Democratic Alliance, strongly [disagreed](#) with the cabinet choices: "The cabinet remains filled with compromised ministers." He went on to [say](#) that Ramaphosa "is beholden to the very ANC factions that protected Jacob Zuma for a decade, and brought our country and the economy to its knees."

Conclusion

Having attained the presidency, Ramaphosa faces a delicate balancing act in seeking to placate competing factions in the ANC. Ramaphosa won only [52 percent](#) of the ANC's vote in December, and Zuma loyalists are still in powerful positions within the party leadership. Ramaphosa's cabinet picks suggest that he will remain beholden to Zuma-aligned interests while attempting to implement his change agenda and reshape the ANC's sinking political fortunes. The pick of Mabuza has garnered the most criticism. Indeed, Ralph Mathekga, a South African analyst, [asked](#), "How can Ramaphosa claim to be anti-corruption when he is standing next to such a morally compromised figure as David Mabuza?" Time will tell if Ramaphosa will be able to thread the needle between implementing change while simultaneously appeasing the Zuma faction of the ANC. If he is able to win presidential elections in 2019, which seems likely despite flagging ANC support, he will be better placed to fully implement his agenda.

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ZIMBABWE—NEW PRESIDENT'S FIRST 100 DAYS

By George F. Ward

As Emmerson Mnangagwa, Zimbabwe's president, completes his first 100 days in office, he may find both reason for satisfaction and cause for concern. The new president has maintained his position within the ruling Zimbabwe African Peoples Union – Popular Front (ZANU-PF), signaled policy changes that could foster economic revival, and reached out with apparent success to international partners. Looking toward elections this summer, he stands to benefit from fissures within the political opposition. Nevertheless, Mnangagwa faces challenges. Chief among these are the prominent role of the military in government and the question of whether the upcoming elections will be judged by international observers as free and fair. The roles played by former President Robert Mugabe and former first lady Grace Mugabe and their allies may also be grounds for concern.



Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa, center, talks to the press after paying his respects to the family of Morgan Tsvangirai, in Harare, Sunday, February 18, 2018. (Source: AP Photo/Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi.)

Davos Man

The [World Economic Forum](#), which convenes annually in Davos, Switzerland, bills itself as engaging “the foremost political, business and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.” So it was a meaningful gesture when President Mnangagwa flew to Davos and [proclaimed](#), “Zimbabwe is open for business.” He said that “trade and economics would be my priority . . . rather than politics, in order to catch up with the region.”

Returning home, Mnangagwa continued his focus on bolstering both international and domestic business confidence. On January 31, 2018, his government announced that white farmers would, like their black counterparts, be eligible for [99-year land leases](#). Up to now, the 400 white farmers remaining in Zimbabwe after the eviction of more than 4,000 were issued only five-year renewable land leases. In addition, the government is considering establishing a special tribunal to consider compensation for expropriated white farmers. Even as daunting economic challenges remain, the government's 2018 budget, which emphasizes fiscal rebalancing, restructuring of state-owned companies, a sustainable debt strategy, and international re-engagement, has received [positive reviews](#).

Foreign Reaction Positive

Mnangagwa's approach has garnered international support. *Africa Watch* previously [reported](#) that China had provided a significant credit facility. The European Union (EU) has also welcomed Mnangagwa's efforts. On January 22, the EU Council adopted a set of [conclusions](#) regarding the political transition in Zimbabwe, including:

- Its availability to engage with the new Zimbabwean government and civil society in a structured political dialogue;
- An offer to favorably consider electoral observation, providing that the Zimbabwean government issues an invitation and the conditions are in place for a peaceful, inclusive, credible, and transparent election;
- Its affirmation of willingness to support the planning and implementation of needed economic structural changes and reform;
- Its support for the establishment of constructive re-engagement by Zimbabwe with the international financial institutions based on a clear program of political and economic reform.

More recently, others have moved to support Zimbabwe. The South African government has facilitated the transfer of rolling stock needed for the revitalization of the Zimbabwean rail network. This transaction was presented as emblematic of the [South African commitment](#) to strengthening economic ties with Zimbabwe. The African Union pledged to provide

financial and technical assistance to help ensure [credible elections](#) this year. Finally, the new government in Harare hosted its second high-level visitor from the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office since coming to power. Harriett Baldwin, the newly appointed minister for Africa, arrived at the end of January for [wide-ranging talks](#) on "issues relating to re-engagement with the international community and macro-economic stabilization."

A Divided Political Opposition

As he looks toward the elections, President Mnangagwa faces an opposition that remains divided despite attempts at coalition building. The death from cancer on February 14 of Morgan Tsvangirai, the iconic leader of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai (MDC-T), left that party without a strong leader. A party leadership body's designation of [Nelson Chamisa](#) as acting president of the party is contested.

The National People's Party (NPP), led by Joice Mujuru, a former vice president purged from the ZANU-PF by Mugabe in 2014, is riddled with factionalism and divisions. With the fall of Mugabe, some NPP leaders have reportedly [rejoined](#) the ZANU-PF. During her three years in opposition, Mujuru has not been able to consolidate her power, and she is unlikely to do so in the short time available before elections.

ZANU-PF Still the Key

The political bottom line may be that the principal threat to Mnangagwa's tenure as president will not come from the opposition; possible threats within the ZANU-PF may be of greater concern to the new president. Vice President Constantino Chiwenga, the former army chief who engineered the ouster of Mugabe, has assumed a high profile, acting like the strongman he may aspire to be. He caused a [storm](#) in parliament with personal attacks on opposition legislators. In a speech on February 17, Chiwenga took a tough line even in urging [peaceful elections](#), saying that "there shall be no fighting and we shall all agree that who does not abide by that must be chastised by the society." NPP leader Mujuru has alleged that [thousands](#) of military personnel are already engaged in electoral campaigning for the ZANU-PF. [Press reports](#), persistent but unsubstantiated, speak of tensions and mistrust within the government over Chiwenga's role.

Another intra-party concern for Mnangagwa is the continuing effort by the defeated G40 faction within the ZANU-PF to discredit the new president. [Patrick Zhuwao](#), a nephew of the former president, appears to be leading the G40 effort from exile in South Africa. G40 leaders have reportedly formed a new political party, the New Patriot Front, which has [petitioned](#) both the African Union and the Southern African Development Community to renounce the takeover by the Zimbabwe military in November 2017 as illegal.

Perhaps the most interesting of recent developments within the ZANU-PF is a [reported speech](#) delivered on February 24 to friends and supporters by former President Mugabe at a private 94th birthday celebration. In his address, Mugabe complained of slights delivered by the new government (withdrawal of vehicles and staff), but also denounced the November 2017 military intervention as "illegal and detrimental to democracy." Mugabe reportedly said that he had requested an urgent meeting with Mnangagwa and that the latter had agreed to meet after returning from his current visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. If this report is correct, it would appear that Mugabe, despite his [dependence](#) on the Mnangagwa government for his lavish retirement package, feels emboldened enough to criticize his successor.

Conclusion

In the complicated game of Zimbabwean politics, President Mnangagwa still has a decent hand to play. He heads both the government and the ruling party, and he is likely to win an election held in 2018, if only because of the weakness of the opposition. On the other hand, his position is less than fully secure. Unlike former President Mugabe, who regularly fired his vice presidents, Mnangagwa has, in Chiwenga, a deputy to whom he is beholden and whom he cannot purge. As Mnangagwa moves to address Zimbabwe's urgent economic problems, he will need to be careful to do so without endangering the considerable commercial and financial interests of the military leaders who put him in office. This is a challenge on which President Mnangagwa's fate may hang.

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

AN END TO KENYA'S POLITICAL CRISIS?

By Sarah Constantine

On March 9, 2018, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta [met](#) with opposition leader Raila Odinga, bringing an end to months of escalating rhetoric in the wake of Kenya's controversial 2017 elections. At the conclusion of the meeting, the leaders announced their intention to work toward greater national unity. While dialogue is necessary to bring the ongoing political crisis to a close, further reforms are needed to address the weaknesses within Kenyan institutions that enabled the crisis. [more...](#)

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



Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta, left, shakes hands with opposition leader Raila Odinga, right, outside Harambee House in Nairobi, Kenya Friday, March 9, 2018. (Source: AP Photo/Brian Inganga.)

AMBAZONIAN SEPARATISTS FIGHT ON IN CAMEROON: NO PEACE IN SIGHT

By Richard J. Pera

The Anglophone crisis in western Cameroon remains violent, with no peaceful solution in sight. The government of the self-proclaimed Republic of Ambazonia appointed a second interim president, who [described](#) current circumstances as "the era of self-defense." Armed separatists have targeted Cameroonian security forces and civilian officials, and they are raiding government positions from Nigerian territory. The Cameroonian government crackdown continues, as security forces are alleged to have killed large numbers of civilians and destroyed private property. Thousands of Anglophones continue to flee to neighboring Nigeria. [more...](#)

Richard J. Pera is a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.



Map showing regions of Cameroon. (Source: CC BY 2.5, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=488825>.)

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2017 Election Cycle Places Kenya in Crisis

Kenya's 2017 election was both historic and concerning. Incumbent President Kenyatta was initially declared the victor over opposition coalition leader Odinga, but the August vote was nullified in a surprising decision by Kenya's Supreme Court. As [Africa Watch](#) reported, tensions mounted in the lead-up to the rescheduled elections in October 2017. An [estimated](#) 92 people were killed and 247 injured in election-related violence between August and October. Ultimately, Odinga's opposition coalition called on its supporters to boycott the poll. Due to the boycott, Kenyatta [won](#) 98 percent of the vote, but with only 39 percent voter turnout.

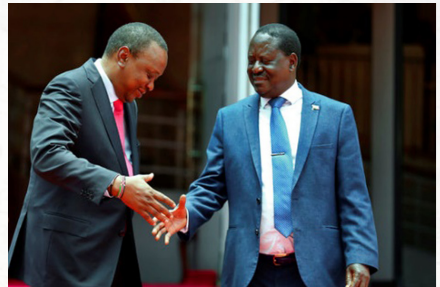
Following the election, Odinga declared the poll invalid and, in [January 2018](#), held an unofficial "swearing in" ceremony to appoint himself "the people's president." The Kenyan government [reacted](#) harshly, first attempting to forbid television broadcasters from covering the event, and later taking several stations off the air. The government also [declared](#) the opposition's newly formed "National Resistance Movement" to be a criminal group and [charged](#) an opposition politician with treason.

Kenya's Institutions Show Signs of Strain

The political crisis resulting from the election exacerbated institutional weaknesses in Kenya's electoral commission, judiciary, and police. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), which oversees Kenya's polls, failed to follow procedural rules during the August 2017 vote, leading Kenya's [Supreme Court](#) to declare the vote null. In the lead-up to the October vote, the [IEBC chairman](#) stated that the IEBC could not guarantee the credibility of the election due to political interference. Roselyn Akombe, a senior member of the IEBC, [fled](#) to the United States a week before the elections, claiming the IEBC was "under siege" and that she was afraid for her life.

The Kenyan judiciary's independence has also been challenged throughout the election cycle. Although the Supreme Court set a precedent in throwing out the August 2017 election results, Kenya's courts continue to face [widespread](#) political interference. In the lead-up to the October vote, a Supreme Court bodyguard was shot, but the government [denied](#) the judges' request for additional security. Just a few days later, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court David Maraga [stated](#) that the court could not hear a petition to postpone the October election because only two of the seven justices showed up and it could not form a quorum. Many [attributed](#) the court's decision to political interference.

Kenya's police are also accused of inflaming tensions through politically motivated violence. As [Africa Watch](#) previously reported, Kenya's internal security organizations have long been dogged by allegations of extrajudicial killings. In the August [election period](#), Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International accused the police of killing 33 people. [Human Rights Watch](#) also found that police were responsible for 23 deaths, primarily of opposition protestors, between November 2017 and January 2018. The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights places the number of election-related fatalities closer to [100](#).



Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta, left, shakes hands with opposition leader Raila Odinga, right, outside Harambee House in Nairobi, Kenya Friday, March 9, 2018. (Source: AP Photo/Brian Inganga.)

Will Odinga and Kenyatta's Reconciliation Lead to Reform?

The meeting of Odinga and Kenyatta was needed to address the immediate crisis, but it is unclear if their rapprochement will become a foundation for broader reform. While the leaders released a joint [statement](#) citing nine issues they intended to address to promote national unity, neither described in significant detail how they would accomplish this goal.

Politically, the meeting furthered the power disparity between the ruling party and opposition by highlighting [fractures](#) within the National Super Alliance (NASA), the leading opposition coalition. The meeting allegedly took other opposition leaders by [surprise](#), and NASA quickly released a [statement](#) noting that Odinga was acting in a personal capacity at the meeting. By alienating other opposition leaders, and without extracting clear concessions from the ruling party, Odinga undercut NASA's ability to negotiate with the ruling party during the current administration and its ability to organize for the 2022 elections.

Conclusion

The political crisis resulting from the 2017 election cycle has been costly to Kenya. The disruption to Kenyans' daily lives and political turmoil have weighed on the [economy](#). The unrest is seen as partly responsible for a [downturn in economic growth](#), which slowed from 5.8 percent in 2016 to 4.8 percent in 2017. While Kenyatta and Odinga's attempt to de-escalate the crisis is important, without more significant institutional reform their rapprochement is likely to prove a brief respite before political conflict breaks out again.

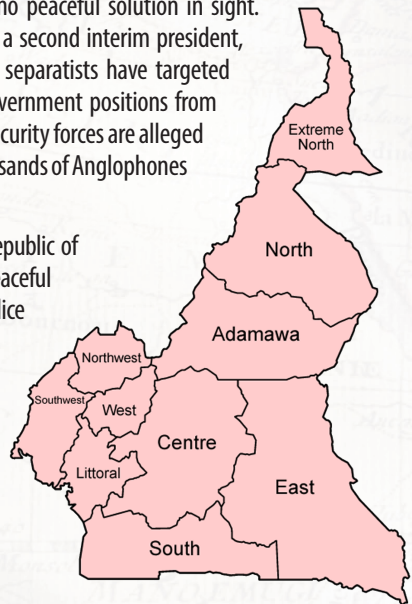
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On October 1, 2017, Anglophone leaders declared an independent “Republic of Ambazonia,” encompassing Cameroon’s Northwest and Southwest regions. Peaceful marches celebrating independence were met with violent repression by police and soldiers, including [alleged summary executions](#). Cameroon’s president, 85-year-old Paul Biya, [described](#) separatists as “terrorists” and vowed to crush them. Mass arrests were [confirmed](#) by Amnesty International, and [according to the United Nations](#) (UN), between October 1, 2017, and March 8, 2018, over 20,000 Anglophones, mostly women and children, sought refuge in Nigeria. The then interim president of Ambazonia, Sisiku Ayuk Tabe, and his “ministers” were arrested in Abuja, Nigeria, on January 5 and deported to Cameroon. The government has provided no information on their whereabouts or legal status. Nigeria continues to support Cameroon. ([Africa Watch](#) has more details on the origins of the crisis.)



Map showing regions of Cameroon. (Source: CC BY 2.5, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=488825>.)

Ambazonian Political Maneuvering

Despite intense military pressure and political isolation, Ambazonian resolve appears to have hardened. In early February, the interim government of Ambazonia appointed a [theologian](#) and humanitarian advocate, Dr. Samuel Ikome Sako, to replace Sisiku Ayuk Tabe, the missing former interim president. During a 20-minute [speech on YouTube](#), Sako addressed his “fellow Ambazonians” and made the following points in an attempt to rally followers and legitimize the cause:

- Despite the abduction of his predecessor, he reassured the “nation” that “the revolution did not die.” There is still an interim government, governing council, and now an interim president and vice president.
- Sako said that self-defense is required to stop the wanton destruction of lives and property. He called Cameroonian security forces “terrorists in uniform” and referred to “marauding gendarmes.” He claimed that Yaoundé’s actions had fueled the revolution instead of quelling it.
- He accused the governments of Cameroon, Nigeria, and France of conspiring to abduct President Ayuk Tabe and his counselors and demanded their release. He said his government was conducting an investigation into the “illegal” abduction and suggested that Anglophone traitors supported it.
- Sako appealed to other countries for succor, but vowed to fight on regardless. He acknowledged that funding was critical, and asked Ambazonians to “sell our jewels and deny ourselves every comfort . . . to pay for our freedom.” He declared the 15th of every month a day of fasting and prayer.
- He affirmed, “We are engaged in nothing less than an existential battle.”

Ambazonian leaders continue to make effective use of social media, which because of severe internet restrictions is not accessible in Anglophone regions. While they have been unable to gain political or financial support from the United States, France, the UN, or the African Union, they have appealed to members of the Cameroonian diaspora. For example, they claim to have [orchestrated demonstrations](#) in South Africa, Australia, South Korea, the U.A.E., Brazil, several Western European countries (but not France), Canada, and the United States (Nevada; New York; Ohio; Texas; and Washington, DC). It is unclear how much money was garnered from this outreach.

Ambazonians Resort to Guerrilla Warfare

Because of the overwhelming military superiority of the Cameroon Armed Forces (CAF), some Ambazonian groups are resorting to guerrilla-warfare-style attacks against security forces. [According to one source](#), “militants have adopted the guerrilla philosophy of freedom fighters in Eritrea as well as that of Nelson Mandela’s anti-apartheid movement in South Africa.” The [military goal of the secessionist forces](#) is to ambush the CAF, not to engage the CAF directly. Fighters train in rural areas on both sides of the Cameroon-Nigerian border and blend in with refugees. [Militants are armed](#) with homemade rifles, Kalashnikovs, grenades, and improvised explosive devices. Lack of funds prevents many Ambazonians from obtaining arms, although some separatists obtained weapons when police stations were overrun last fall.

Rebels, [reportedly disguised as Cameroonian soldiers](#), kidnapped the Sub-Prefect (Cameroonian regional authority) of the Northwest region from his home in early February. Rebels released photos of their captive, and the CAF is searching for him. Rebels also attacked Cameroonian soldiers at a school in the Northwest region last week, killing one soldier. Small-scale rebel attacks against security forces have resulted in at least [26 government personnel killed](#) so far.

The four largest militias account for about 300 fighters. Several smaller groups are also engaged in the struggle. The largest militia is the Ambazonian Defense Forces (ADF), headed by Cho Ayaba Lucas, who has taken credit for attacks against security forces and political leaders [and issued a threat](#): “You kill my people [and] we will chase you to the gates of hell.” Indeed, many militia members are marginalized, angry young men whose family members have been arrested or killed. The militias do not seem to be subordinate to the political leadership, and the link between armed fighters and political leaders is tenuous.

The Government Is Fighting an All-Out Battle

The central government in Yaoundé appears resolved to exercise military control over the Anglophone provinces. Its actions reflect a strategy to identify, arrest, or kill militants wherever they are located. Reports indicate that CAF [gendarmes are conducting raids](#) inside Nigeria in search of rebels. Employment of the *Batallion d’Intervention Rapide*, a special forces unit that reports directly to the president, suggests that President Biya views the secessionist movement as a direct threat to his 35-year-old regime. To battle Anglophone militants more effectively, [Biya recently reorganized the structure](#) of the military by establishing a 5th Joint Military Region for Northwest and Southwest Cameroon. The ADF has [claimed](#) that the CAF is employing remotely piloted vehicles to surveil the Anglophone regions. Finally, [a curfew remains in force](#) in North West and South West regions: movement of private vehicles, persons, and goods is forbidden between 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., and motorcycle traffic is completely suspended.

The Anglophone crisis probably influenced the government’s [decision](#) to ban political debate in print and broadcast media in advance of March 25 senatorial elections.

Cameroon is already battling Boko Haram in the Extreme North region and militias along the border with the Central African Republic. A third “front” against Anglophone militias in the west is costing Cameroon, especially at a time when low oil prices have driven down government revenues, and the [economy is slowing](#).

Conclusion

A negotiated settlement of the Anglophone crisis seems doubtful in the near term. No country or political organization (e.g., the African Union) has voiced a desire to broker peace negotiations or even a cease-fire. Ambazonian political leaders may be willing to negotiate, but militant organizations, [whose ranks are growing daily](#), seem unlikely to go along.

The government probably will not release Ayuk Tabe, who most countries and the UN believe was deported illegally from Nigeria. [Some believe](#) he is a bargaining chip in future negotiations, while [others have opined](#) that he will face the death penalty.

The Cameroon government has resisted [calls for insertion of UN human rights monitors](#) to investigate allegations of abuse. As long as Nigerian support continues and international public opinion is muted, President Biya is unlikely to negotiate.

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THE COUNTERFEIT PHARMACEUTICAL TRADE IN AFRICA: A COMPOUND THREAT

By Dr. Ashley Neese Bybee

The trafficking of substandard, unlicensed, and falsified medical products (commonly referred to as counterfeit pharmaceuticals) is one of the fastest growing illicit trades in the world. This trade has profound economic and health effects for many African countries. [more...](#)

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



David Nahamya, Chief drug inspector for the Uganda National Drug Authority, shows how close fake malaria drugs mirror the real thing. The medication on the left is authentic; the right, fakes that may contain little or no active ingredients. (Source: Image by Kathleen E. McLaughlin, Uganda, 2012, <https://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/counterfeit-medicine-asia-threatens-lives-africa>.)

DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN LIBERIA: PROGRESS, GOVERNING CHALLENGES, AND CORRUPTION

By Timothy D. Mitchell

On December 28, 2017, the Liberian National Election Commission declared George Weah, opposition party presidential candidate from the Congress for Democratic Change, the winner over the incumbent Unity Party's candidate, Vice President Joseph Boakai. After a presidential campaign in which 20 candidates vied for office and first-round fraud allegations led to a [delay](#) in the runoff election, Liberia peacefully transitioned power via the ballot box for the first time [since](#) 1944. This transition represents a success for both Liberia and President Weah. Now the question is: how effectively can he govern a poor country still recovering from the effects of civil war? [more...](#)

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Liberia's recently elected President George Weah arrives for a conference at the National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts in Paris, France, Tuesday, February 20, 2018. (Source: AP Photo/Francois Mori.)

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Background

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the sale of counterfeit drugs reached [\\$75 billion](#) in 2010, representing a 90 percent increase since 2005. In West Africa [in 2010](#), the value of imported counterfeit pharmaceuticals was \$1.5 billion, with sales reaching almost \$3 billion. While this profit undoubtedly strengthens criminal networks, another important effect is the impact on public health. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates that at least 10 percent of imported drugs circulating in West Africa are in some way falsified and that this number may be as high as 35 percent in some countries. The illicit trade in counterfeit pharmaceuticals represents a compound threat with financial, security, economic, and health implications for national governments.



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Why the Proliferation of Counterfeit Pharmaceuticals in Africa?

The trade in counterfeit pharmaceuticals in Africa thrives for many of the same reasons that other illicit trades prosper. Weak law enforcement, the absence of effective regulatory procedures, a cash-based informal economy, and endemic corruption provide a permissive environment for criminals to traffic their illegal goods. Yet unlike many illicit trades for which Africa is mainly a source or transit hub (e.g., drugs, humans, illegally extracted natural resources), there is a large and growing market in Africa for affordable medicines. For most Africans, the cost of brand-name medications is prohibitive. One [study](#) sponsored by the WHO found that duties, taxes, markups, distribution costs, and dispensing fees may constitute between 30 and 40 percent of retail prices and in some cases 80 percent or more of the total.

Implications

The implications of this illicit trade in Africa are manifold. First, as an illegal product, counterfeit pharmaceuticals are not taxed by the governments of the countries in which they are imported or sold. Given the estimated sales of \$3 billion, this represents a significant loss of potential tax revenues to national governments. Throughout Africa, these revenues are needed for investment in economic development.

Second, the gains received from the sale of these products flow into the legitimate economy through extensive [money laundering](#) operations. At the same time, the illicit proceeds from other criminal activities, such as drug trafficking, flow into the counterfeit pharmaceuticals trade. Both fund flows have the effect of undermining legitimate economies.

Third, although there is no conclusive evidence that violent extremist organizations (VEOs) operating in Africa have engaged in the trafficking of counterfeit pharmaceuticals, it is logical to assume that an illicit trade conducted by an organized crime syndicate could also be exploited by terrorists. [Hezbollah](#), for example, has been linked to counterfeit medicine. As trafficking of illegal substances continues to be an important source of funding for VEOs operating throughout Africa, the low-risk nature of the counterfeit pharmaceuticals trade could make this an appealing option for those organizations as well.

Last, these drugs cause a significant, negative public health impact, including widespread loss of life. Whereas in developed economies counterfeit pharmaceuticals may account for less than [0.2 percent of the market](#), in Africa's developing markets this may be as high as 30 percent. Since these medicines may contain no active ingredient (or a very small amount that does not produce the desired medicinal impact) or even poisonous products, they are highly dangerous to the user. The WHO estimates that more than [120,000 people](#) a year die in Africa as a result of counterfeit anti-malarial drugs alone. The full scope of the threat can be understood by comparing this total with the approximately [30,000](#) people who have been killed by Boko Haram since May 2011.

Some Successful Solutions

The Nigerian National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) is considered to be a [pioneer](#) in the fight against counterfeit pharmaceuticals in West Africa. According to a [case study](#) examined by the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, in 2001 an estimated 80 percent of medicines in circulation in Nigeria were counterfeit and 68 percent were unregistered. At that time, the NAFDAC implemented a policy that restricted the importation of pharmaceutical products to two airports and two seaports, both of which they closely monitored. It also negotiated contracts with the regulatory authorities in China and India to oversee exports to Nigeria after it was discovered that several Chinese and Indian drug manufacturers had been exporting counterfeit pharmaceuticals into Nigeria. Two years following these new policies, there was an estimated 80 percent reduction in the number of unregistered medicines. In 2015 NAFDAC and Cameroon's National Agency for Standards and Quality established a [partnership](#) to collaborate in the fight against the circulation of counterfeit drugs between Cameroon and Nigeria.

International law enforcement has also sought to address counterfeit pharmaceuticals. In 2011, INTERPOL led a regional operation in West Africa called [Operation Cobra](#), which sought to identify, investigate, and disrupt networks involved in counterfeiting, illicit production, and unauthorized sales of medicines. This operation resulted in the seizure of 170 tons of counterfeit pharmaceuticals and more than 300 different medical products. Outlets unauthorized to sell medicinal products were closed, and more than 100 street sellers, unlicensed dealers, and suppliers were arrested.

Chinese companies are also strengthening cooperation with African governments to help disrupt the distribution networks and reduce importation of counterfeit pharmaceuticals, using new recognition and tracing technologies. Startup companies are experimenting with [SMS-based solutions](#) that place an encrypted code on medicine boxes that may be used to [verify](#) the contents. More sophisticated technologies such as [TruScan](#) allow non-experts at airports and border posts to perform quick and reliable analysis of a drug's ingredients, identifying counterfeit pharmaceuticals immediately.

Potential Responses

The growing illicit trade in counterfeit pharmaceuticals presents a multifaceted threat in Africa that deserves a similarly multifaceted response, which could include:

- Increasing the capability of law enforcement to detect counterfeit pharmaceuticals while enhancing their capacity to disrupt and defeat organized crime networks, enforcing the rule of law, and resisting opportunities for personal enrichment.
- Strengthening regulatory institutions and ensuring their ability to operate effectively with regional neighbors.
- Raising awareness through public relations campaigns and information dissemination regarding the dangers of counterfeit pharmaceuticals.
- Addressing the high cost of certain drugs, especially lifesaving ones. Government subsidies might be one possible solution to reduce costs for ordinary Africans.

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Signs of Progress

While progress toward democratic governance may have [slowed](#) in parts of Africa, West Africa has proved to be an exception. Recent elections in Ghana and Liberia resulted in peaceful turnovers of executive power from one party to another. In Liberia optimism abounds not only because of the peaceful transition of power, but also because newly elected President Weah is seen to be a man of the people. One of many children raised by his grandparents in a poor suburb of Monrovia, and later a famous soccer player, President Weah claims to understand the struggles and frustrations of the average Liberian. Soon after his election he declared a policy of "[pro-poor](#)" public governance as the singular mission and focus of his presidency.

Governing Challenges

The biggest near-term challenge to effectively governing the country is filling the vacancies in government with talented, qualified people, a task made more difficult by the pervasiveness of a culture of [patronage](#) that exists in Liberia. While President Weah has publicly stated his desire to fill his government with the most qualified people, his supporters, many of whom have been out of power for years, expect to be rewarded for supporting his rise to power. For example, a youth group from Grand Gedeh county, a Weah stronghold during the election, is demanding that some of the youth from their region be included in the government, claiming, "we don't need an overseas [Grand Gedean](#) to occupy government positions." In many cases, local Liberians lack the [education](#) required to work in government, a byproduct of the war that ravaged the country throughout the 1990s. At the same time, in a country in which the "[Congo](#)" people, a term used to connote Americo-Liberians, have historically dominated the indigenous Liberians, Weah's decision to hire educated professionals from abroad is considered a sellout.

On the other hand, President Weah has also been criticized for hiring [non-maritime technocrats](#) to the top two posts at the Port of Liberia, a decision that was allegedly driven by [patronage](#). President Weah is faced with the problem of how to find the talent required to run the government when Liberia has few nonpolitical bureaucrats and historically almost all ministerial positions have been awarded through patronage. At best, government activities may slow awaiting the new ministers to be appointed and to learn their jobs; at worst, the hiring of unqualified people could inhibit the new president's ability to implement his agenda.



Liberia's recently elected President George Weah arrives for a conference at the National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts in Paris, France, Tuesday, February 20, 2018. (Source: AP Photo/Francois Mori.)

Corruption

President Weah's biggest challenges remain corruption and a limited government budget. On a recent [trip to Nigeria](#), Weah encouraged skilled Liberians from the diaspora to return to Liberia; at the same time, he complained that the outgoing government officials were leaving their posts and taking government vehicles and property as their own. Further, the Liberian government's annual budget continues to decline. For the past 10 years, the government has experienced budget shortfalls; in the past three years, the annual budget dropped by almost 14 percent, falling from \$623 million in [2016](#) to \$536 million in [2018](#).

Conclusion

Liberia has come a long way since its civil war ended in 2003. The past 15 years have brought peace and democracy to a country that had not seen either since 1980. Liberians are optimistic about their future, but they'd be wise to temper their expectations. Despite President Weah's best intentions, progress will be slow. The challenges of forming a talented government and fighting a culture of corruption, while addressing the myriad challenges facing a country operating on a small and declining annual budget, will take time to resolve.

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TANZANIA: CRACKDOWN ON DISSENT CONTINUES

By Dr. Alexander Noyes

On March 28, Freeman Mbowe, the leader of *Chadama*, the main opposition party in Tanzania, was detained and [charged](#) with rebellion. Before that, on March 21, 2018, two Tanzanians were [arrested](#) for supporting nationwide demonstrations planned for April 26, Union Day, a public holiday that celebrates the unification of the country with Zanzibar in 1964. The arrests come on the heels of a [spike](#) in political violence that has been met with a forceful response by President John Magufuli of the ruling CCM (*Chama Cha Mapinduzi*—Party of the Revolution), who came to power in 2015. [more...](#)



President John Magufuli of the ruling CCM. (Source: Magufuli's Twitter page, <https://twitter.com/MagufuliJP>.)

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GROWING REGIONAL CONFLICT HIGHLIGHTS TREND IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

By Sarah Constantine

Since December 2017, over 100 people have been killed and 200,000 displaced in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's northeastern region of [Ituri](#). The region was the site of significant intercommunal violence during the Second Congo War, from 1998 to 2003, but has been relatively peaceful for the last decade. The recent outbreak of violence is due in part to ongoing political instability at the national level, which is enabling local militias to again mobilize over existing grievances. As seen a decade previously, this growing local conflict will likely prove difficult to pacify. [more...](#)



Ituri Region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. (Source: Adapted from Henning Tamm, "FIN and FRPI: Local Resistance and Regional Alliances in North-Eastern Congo," Rift Valley Institute, 2013.)

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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.

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Background

Tanzania is a [low-income](#) country in East Africa, with a population of 55 million. It has a growing economy, with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$47 billion. In 2016 its growth rate of 6.9 percent made it the eighth-[fastest](#) growing economy in the world. Magufuli's CCM party, in power since 1977, [is](#) currently the longest ruling party in sub-Saharan Africa, winning consecutive elections since the country moved to a multiparty democracy in 1992. Tanzania, which has a relatively peaceful history, is often viewed as an island of stability in an unstable region scarred by civil wars and military coups. Recently, however, the country has faced an extremist threat and increasing political violence accompanied by democratic backsliding, as [outlined](#) in the October 12, 2017, edition of *Africa Watch*.



President John Magufuli of the ruling CCM. (Source: Magufuli's Twitter page, <https://twitter.com/MagufuliJP>.)

Recent Political Violence and Repression

Magufuli campaigned on an anti-corruption ticket and was [praised](#) for his early performance on that front. But over the last two years, he has faced rising dissent and criticism for his strongman tactics, which have included the arrest of senior opposition figures, the closing of critical newspapers, and the [banning](#) of political demonstrations and certain popular songs. In September 2017, Tundu Lissu, a senior official of *Chadema*, was [shot](#) in Dodoma. He had previously been [arrested](#) in July for calling Magufuli a dictator. In February 2018, Daniel John, also of *Chadema*, was [killed](#) during a local election campaign. Godfrey Luena, the *Chadema* head of the Namawala municipality in the Morogoro region was also [killed](#) in February. Police investigations are ongoing, but opposition figures blame CCM party youths for the recent violence. At the end of February, two *Chadema* officials, one a Member of Parliament, were [sentenced](#) to five months in prison for defaming Magufuli.

Crackdown on Planned Union Day Protests

The arrest of *Chadema* leader Mbowe and Magufuli's response to an online campaign to hold public demonstrations on Union Day is the latest illustration of the Tanzanian government's heavy-handed treatment of dissent. Mange Kimambi, a Tanzanian activist based in the United States, has been using social media to advocate that large public [demonstrations](#) be held on April 26 against Magufuli and his restrictions on democratic rights. In addition to last week's arrests of Manchali and Mbata in connection with the planned protests, Magufuli and his officials have labeled the demonstrations as treasonous and have pledged to squash any contravention of the protest ban. On March 9, Magufuli [threatened](#), "Some people have failed to engage in legitimate politics; they would like to see street protests everyday ... Let them demonstrate and they will see who I am." Mwigulu Nchemba, Magufuli's Interior Minister, has [vowed](#) to arrest "even those who protest at home." The police chief in Dodoma [warned](#) prospective protestors that they would end up with "a broken leg and go home as a cripple."

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Domestic and International Response

Opposition leaders in Tanzania have refused to be cowed, vocally protesting Magufuli's increasingly authoritarian tactics. After Luena's murder, John Mnyika, Chadema's deputy secretary, characterized the crime: "This is a political assassination," and part of a crackdown "from all sides by the government of President Magufuli and the police." He also added, "The time for self-defense has come!" The chairman of Chadema, Freeman Mbowe, [said](#) in February that the "party in power wants to get everything by force." Even some former CCM officials see Magufuli as going too far and taking the country in an undemocratic direction. As Salva Rweyemamu, communications director for Tanzania's previous president, Jakaya Kikwete, [pointed out](#): "We cannot call it a full-blown dictatorship, but we are getting very close to one-man rule."

A number of Western embassies, including those of the United States and the European Union, also [expressed](#) concern about political violence and government repression. On February 15, the U.S. Embassy [issued a statement of concern](#): "The rise in politically-related confrontations and violence is concerning, and we call on all parties to safeguard the peace and security of the democratic process, the country, and the Tanzanian people." [Human Rights Watch](#) and [Freedom House](#) have also recently expressed concern about human rights issues and suppression of dissent in the country. Earlier this month [The Economist](#) [warned](#) that "Mr. Magufuli is fast transforming Tanzania from a flawed democracy into one of Africa's more brutal dictatorships."

Conclusion

Despite domestic and international concern, Magufuli appears set to continue his crackdown on dissent in Tanzania, which would further push the country in an undemocratic direction. One explanation for Magufuli and the CCM's increasingly authoritarian direction is the [rising](#) fortunes of opposition parties in Tanzania. In the 2015 elections, the opposition garnered 40 percent of the vote, its best showing ever. [According](#) to Dan Paget, a doctoral candidate at Oxford University, the "root cause of CCM's new authoritarianism lies in the shifting balance between the governing party and the opposition." The planned protests on April 26 could be a flashpoint. If protests proceed as planned and the government does not back away from its current stance, low-level violence between security forces and opposition supporters seems likely.

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Ituri Region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. (Source: Adapted from Henning Tamm, "FIN and FRPI: Local Resistance and Regional Alliances in North-Eastern Congo," Rift Valley Institute, 2013.)

Violence in Ituri Rooted in Colonial-Era Policies

The current violence in Ituri is driven by conflict between the region's [Lendu and Hema](#) ethnic groups. This ostensibly ethnic-based conflict has economic and political roots. The conflict dates back to the [colonial era](#) when the Belgians, in a divide-and-conquer strategy, elevated the Hema at the expense of their Lendu neighbors, leading to slight economic differences between the populations.

In the post-colonial period, land tenure became a point of conflict. In 1973, the national government adopted the [General Property Law](#), which declared state ownership over all land in the country. The law allowed the state to grant land concessions to private citizens following a two-year contestation period. Under the law, land not actively controlled by the state could remain under customary law.

Given the government's limited reach within many regions, after the law's passage, most areas in the country continued to operate under customary law. This led to a dual system of land ownership in which the state technically owned the land, but inhabitants remained largely unaware of this change and continued to follow usage rights laid out by customary law.

Hema elites took advantage of this [dual system](#) by "buying vast concessions [and] waiting until two years later to inform the people living on the land—mostly Lendu, but also some Hema—that such a transaction had taken place."

Land Conflict a Driving Factor in Congo Wars

Existing frustration over land tenure intensified during the First Congo War in the 1990s. [Hema landowners](#) paid Ugandan soldiers stationed in Ituri to protect their holdings. When aggrieved Lendu villagers attacked Hema in a mixed-population town, the Hema relied on Ugandan soldiers to retaliate, thus beginning [lasting hostilities](#) as both communities formed self-defense militias to protect against reprisal attacks.

[Academics](#) argue that both UN and French peacekeeping missions failed to quell conflict in the region in part because they misunderstood the roots of the conflict and focused on resolving ethnic enmity without addressing underlying economic grievances. Although violence diminished in the years following the close of the Congo wars, grievances between Hema and Lendu neighbors remained unresolved.

Is the DRC's National Political Crisis Enabling Local Conflict?

As [Africa Watch](#) previously reported, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is undergoing a political crisis within the national government due to President Joseph Kabila's refusal to leave power despite the expiration of his term in office

in December 2016. Claiming logistical and financial difficulties, Kabila has been able to remain in power beyond his constitutionally mandated two terms by repeatedly postponing elections. It was announced in November 2017 that the country's next elections would be held in [December 2018](#).

Kabila's struggle to remain in power has focused attention on the capital, and his administration has been challenged by [domestic](#) protests and [international](#) sanctions. His political fragility seems to have contributed to the outbreak of conflict in other previously peaceful regions, such as in [Kasai](#), where local militias have cited Kabila's failure to step down as a grievance.

This same trend may now be occurring in Ituri. While the conflict is being perpetrated along ethnic lines, [observers](#) suggest the obvious frailty of the national government is encouraging regional power brokers to stoke conflict for political gain. Where the national government has been involved, its impact has been negative. On March 24, the Congolese military [spokesman](#) reported soldiers had killed 13 militants in the region.

Conclusion

With observers focused on the national scene, little outside attention has been paid to the conflict in Ituri. While the international community has drawn attention to the [humanitarian impacts](#) of the crisis, which are severe, few actors are attempting to address the roots of the conflict. Without a focus on conflict resolution, the current level of violence could increase. This is what occurred in Ituri a decade ago, resulting in [widespread](#) loss of life and a humanitarian disaster.

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