

The Continent

with Mail & Guardian

A photograph of a man with a rifle standing next to a cow with large horns. The man is shirtless and wearing a red patterned cloth draped over his shoulder. The cow is brown and has large, curved horns. The background is a dry, open landscape with some structures in the distance.

The cattle wars

In South Sudan, conflict and climate change are exacerbating old tensions

(Photo: Stefanie Glinski/AFP)



Nigerian protests go global

On Friday, the most trending term on Twitter – worldwide – was #EndSARS. This caused some confusion in South Africa, where the acronym stands for the South African Revenue Service. No, South Africans, you still have to pay your taxes. In Nigeria, SARS stands for the Special Anti-Robbery Squad. They are meant to be the country's elite police unit, but have been repeatedly implicated in intimidation, harassment, extortion, assault and murder (see our report on p6). In protests and sit-ins across the country – pictured above – Nigerians have made it clear that enough is enough. So far, however, even the police minister has been unable to shut SARS down.

Inside:

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The Week in Numbers



60,000

The capacity of the new National Stadium in Côte d'Ivoire, built on the outskirts of Abidjan, which will host the Africa Cup of Nations in 2023. The stadium, financed by China, was opened on Saturday by President Alassane Ouattara, who is seeking a controversial third term in office in elections later this month.

1

The number of African candidates still in the running to be director general of the World Trade Organisation. Former Nigerian finance minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is in the final two, alongside South Korean trade minister Yoo Myung-hee.

10 years

The period of economic growth in Africa erased by the pandemic, by the World Bank's reckoning. It predicts that the continent's economy will contract by 3.3% this year, but will rebound in 2021, while the GDP per capita will "regress to its level in 2007".

3-million

The number of pilgrims expected to travel to Touba, Senegal this week for the country's biggest religious festival. This is despite the main ceremony being cancelled as a Covid-19 precaution. Authorities have distributed face masks, hand sanitiser and rapid testing kits across the city in an effort to prevent the spread of the virus.

13-trillion

The number of naira in Nigeria's proposed budget for next year, equivalent to \$34-billion, as unveiled this week by President Muhammadu Buhari. The proposed budget is both bigger and smaller than this year's budget: although the naira amount is larger by more than 3-trillion, it is lower in dollar terms due to a higher exchange rate.

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Malawi

Controversy over 'racist' Gandhi statue

Refiloe Seiboko

Almost exactly two years ago, a statue of civil rights activist Mahatma Gandhi was supposed to be erected in Blantyre. But local activists weren't happy. They believe Gandhi was a racist.

Although he was celebrated later for his positions against racism, there are several instances from his early life, in South Africa, when he supported white people being "the predominating race". He once said that black people "are troublesome, very dirty and live like animals".

Gandhi wrote: "Ours is one continual struggle against a degradation sought to be inflicted upon us by the Europeans, who desire to degrade us to the level of the raw Kaffir [a derogatory word used against black South Africans by the oppressors] whose occupation is hunting, and whose sole ambition is to collect a certain number of cattle to buy a wife with and, then, pass his life in indolence and nakedness."

The 2018 decision to erect the statue



Bust-up: The new Gandhi statue in Lilongwe (Photo: Embassy of India in Malawi)

by the Malawian government was part of a \$10-million deal with India involving the construction of a convention centre.

In response, petitions were signed and an application to prevent the erection of the statue was submitted by a group called Gandhi Must Fall. "As citizens of Malawi born out of black African descent, we are appalled with Blantyre City Council's decision to erect Gandhi's statue," the group said at the time.

Fast-forward two years to just over a week ago, when a statue of Gandhi was unveiled in Malawi's capital Lilongwe, at the Indian High Commission.

At the event, Minister of Foreign Affairs Eisenhower Mkaka urged people to accept Gandhi's human faults and appreciate him as an international icon and catalyst for change. ■

Nigeria

Bid to rein in police's rogue SARS unit falls flat – again

Tolu Olasoji

Last Saturday, a young man died in suspicious circumstances in Ughelli, a town in Delta State. Video footage showed members of the Nigerian police's Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) fleeing the scene, driving the young man's white Lexus SUV away with them.

According to eyewitnesses, the victim was shot and killed by the policemen. The Delta Police Command tells a different story, saying he died after attempting to escape from a moving police vehicle.

The death sparked outrage in Delta State and nationwide, and renewed focus on SARS, a much-feared tactical unit that has never been far from controversy.

In theory, SARS – formed in 1992 – is supposed to be an elite force dedicated to combating armed robbery, kidnapping and other high-profile crimes.

In practice, however, it has been repeatedly implicated in committing crimes of its own, and has a reputation for harassing, assaulting and extorting

young Nigerians.

In response to public pressure, political leaders have repeatedly tried to clamp down on SARS. "SARS banned, fourth time in 4 years," read the front page of the *Daily Tribune*, a Nigerian national newspaper, on Monday.

This came after the inspector general of police, Mohammed Adamu, issued new instructions to the unit which prevent them from carrying out routine patrols, setting up roadblocks and carrying out stop and search duties. Members of the unit have also been instructed to wear uniforms at all times while on duty.

Similar edicts have made little difference in the past, and this one appears to be no different. A Twitter account (@SARS_Watch) dedicated to providing details about the locations of SARS operatives – so that people can avoid them – has continued to document examples of harassment and extortion this week.

Speaking to *The Continent*, the account's anonymous handler said: "I can't even count the number of stories I've heard firsthand and I myself have been a victim a couple of times; it's not something I would want to relive again. So the motivation has always and will forever be to fight the oppression Nigerians face every day at the hands of these SARS operatives."

The handler added: "The idea that young Nigerians have to think twice

(Image: Amnesty Nigeria)



before putting on a certain outfit or worry about carrying their smartphones or laptops when heading out for the day doesn't make any sense."

Joan – whose surname is withheld to protect her identity – is one such young Nigerian. She's a second-year student at the DS Adegbenro ICT Polytechnic in Ogun State. On Tuesday, she was on her way to an exam when she was stopped by a SARS patrol, who invaded her privacy and called her a prostitute.

"They saw my exam pass, but asked for my phone. One of them started checking to see the type of app I have on my phone, when they didn't see anything, they asked me to open my Whatsapp and asked for my boyfriend's number. I told them I don't have one. They made other enquiries and asked why I'm dressed in an expensive

manner and said that I could be arrested for 'runs,'" she told *The Continent*.

"I had a huge delay and they deliberated on where to take me to but luckily I was eventually let off."

Amnesty International is not impressed with the authorities latest attempt to reform SARS.

"This is yet another lame attempt to rein in this unit of the Nigerian police which is notorious for the widespread torture and other ill-treatment of Nigerians," said Osai Ojigho, the group's Nigeria director. "We have seen from bitter experience that past investigations into violations were either never carried out or marred by irregularities. To date, the Nigerian authorities have yet to show a genuine commitment to ending the lawless activities of SARS." ■

South Africa

The decline of the southern right whale

Sheree Bega

It's the best part of Dr Els Vermeulen's year: three days, up in an Airbus ECI20B, counting southern right whales in South Africa's coastal waters.

"The views are beautiful," said the research manager of the whale unit at the University of Pretoria about the annual aerial survey.

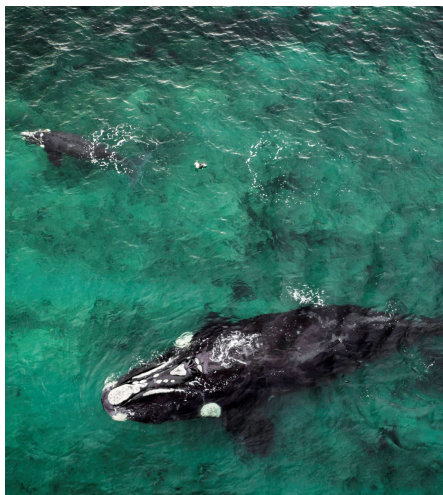
But it's also depressing work.

The numbers this October are the second-lowest they have been in 32 years, after the extremely low numbers of 2016 (55 pairs).

This year, 136 females and calves (68 pairs) were counted and photographed, along with an "extremely low" number of 29 adult whales without a calf, bringing the total to 165.

The unit's data indicates strong correlations between southern right whale prevalence along South Africa's shores, climate conditions in the Southern Ocean, and fluctuations in food availability.

South African southern right whales have drastically changed their feeding locations in the past 20 years, "suggesting



Few rights left: Climate change has driven whales into uncharted waters.
(Photo: Emiliano Lasalvia/Nurphoto)

their previously productive feeding grounds have changed over time".

The shift, according to Vermeulen, could be an attempt to keep up with the changing ocean, but these changes in location might not be enough to ensure adequate body condition is obtained, which then in turn hinders calving and migration.

Similar trends are being recorded in South America and Australia.

"It's worrying because southern right whales have come back from the brink. But we're now looking at issues not as easily solved as whaling," she said. ■

Uganda

The return of Buganda's luxurious royal Phantom

Sixty years ago the Kabaka of Buganda's Rolls-Royces were seized by Idi Amin. Now the Kabaka's successor has brought a 'survivor' home

Andrew Arinaitwe

Sir Edward Mutesa II was the first president of an independent Uganda. He was also, as Kabaka of Buganda, the new country's most significant king. The tension between these two roles – as servant of a democratic republic on the one hand, and leader of East Africa's largest monarchy on the other – would ultimately force him into exile. He was unseated in the 1966 coup orchestrated by Milton Obote, and died just three years later in his flat in London.

During the coup, Obote dispatched one of his most trusted lieutenants, a young Idi Amin, to ransack Mengo Palace, the royal compound in Kampala.

Among the items seized were the Kabaka's collection of luxury vehicles, including four Rolls-Royces and a Bentley.

Three of the Rolls-Royces have disappeared. The Bentley was sold, allegedly to a buyer in South Africa, although its exact whereabouts are unknown. One Rolls-Royce – A 1961 Phantom V – languished for decades in State House in Kampala, before being transferred to the Uganda Museum in 2013, where it was parked on display alongside Idi Amin's Mercedes Benz 600 and a Model-T Ford used by the last British governor of Uganda.

Earlier this month, after nearly six decades, the last Rolls was finally returned to the royal family. "It's a good feeling," said Charles Peter Mayiga, the Katikiro of the Buganda Kingdom — a role equivalent



Driving home: The Kabaka's Rolls-Royce has been returned after spending decades at State House. (Photo: Nicholas Bamulanzeki)



My kingdom, my Rolls: Sir Edward Mutesa II in a Rolls-Royce on his return from exile in 1955

to prime minister – in an interview with *The Continent*. “Vintage cars are special cars – especially if they were driven by kings.”

Mayiga was just three years old when the royal palace was ransacked, but the wounds inflicted on that day remain fresh. “The paraphernalia of the kingdom, most of it was lost ... the iconic objects, the artefacts ... it was a malicious thing ... The assault on the kingdom created a scar on the hearts of the people of Buganda and it destabilised the country as a consequence. I think as Ugandans we need to reconcile, and it can be done in many ways. Returning the car is one of those gestures.”

The Rolls-Royce Phantom V was especially significant, according to Mayiga. In 1953, Mutesa II had been exiled by the British authorities after voicing support for an independent Buganda state. When he returned in 1955, to a hero’s welcome, it was this vehicle that ferried him from Entebbe airport to the Mengo Palace. “Because the crowds were so big, the journey took so many hours and so many cars got choked up, heated up. But then in reference to the Rolls-Royce, [the king] said: ‘My Rolls-Royce

managed to weather that challenge,’” said Mayiga.

The ownership of the vehicle has been in dispute for years. The government has argued that the vehicle belongs to the state, and that it was in the possession of Mutesa II in his capacity as president. But the current Kabaka, Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II, has been arguing forcefully for its return, both in personal meetings with President Yoweri Museveni and through a team of lawyers.

Analysts suggest that it is in an effort to prevent messy legal proceedings — and possibly with an eye on the presidential election next year — that Museveni decided to return the vehicle. “We hope that the kingdom will keep it as a very important memorial treasure and it will be accessible to the rest of Ugandans for viewing and enjoyment,” said tourism minister Tom Butime.

First, however, the royal family intends to restore the Rolls-Royce to its former glory, at an estimated cost of nearly \$200,000. And then, according to Mayiga, the current Kabaka might just take it for a spin himself. “Old is gold,” he said. “We are talking about a Rolls-Royce Phantom!” ■



(Photo: Stefanie
Glinski/AFP)

Until the cows come home

In South Sudan, cattle herders and farmers are fighting over who gets to use the land

David Monodanga

For Otto Washington Okwera, a South Sudanese farmer, cattle bring only destruction. “The cattle come and destroy all the things in the garden,” he said.

Okwera is the chief in Agoro Payam, a village in Magwi County in South Sudan’s Eastern Equatoria State. His people are farmers. They grow maize and vegetables on small plots. But their livelihood is under threat from an influx of cattle herders, who have been forced out of their traditional grazing territory and are now competing for access to the land.

Disputes between farmers and herders are nothing new, nor are they unique to South Sudan. In much of Africa’s central belt, across the breadth of the Sahel Desert – a region encompassing Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Sudan, South Sudan and Ethiopia – the constant tension between land and cattle has, for generations, shaped how societies develop.

In South Sudan – where an estimated 80% of the population rely

on cattle to some degree, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation – this ancient conflict has been exacerbated in recent years by both civil war, which displaced nearly two million people, and climate change, which has dried out or flooded areas that were previously fertile grazing lands.

Now, villages like Agoro Payam find themselves on the front lines. And Chief Okwera does not know what to do. He has tried approaching the herders directly, but this can be dangerous. “The owners of the cattle give us a hard life. When the cattle have eaten the crops in the garden, and you go and follow up, they will say that you want to steal their cattle and you will be beaten thoroughly,” he said.

He has also tried approaching local authorities, but they are equally powerless.

Growing insecurity

Joseph Oryem is the administrator of Agoro Payam. This makes him the most senior government official in the village. He has also attempted to raise the issues of the farming community with the cattle herders. But whenever he does, he encounters an even more powerful force: South Sudan's military.

“Actually, I was not beaten by the cattle keepers but by these soldiers who are brought here to defend the cattle,” he says. In many regions in the country, soldiers have been deployed to accompany cattle herders – supposedly to keep the peace between herders and farmers. But in Agoro Payam, the soldiers have taken sides, says Oryem.

The presence of the military comes with problems of its own. One afternoon in July, a group of soldiers drank 45,000 Sudanese pounds (\$813) of alcohol brewed by a local woman. They attempted to pay for the alcohol with ammunition. When she asked for cash instead, they assaulted her.

Oryem witnessed the assault. When he tried to intervene he was beaten too – so badly that he had to be taken to hospital. The soldiers were also angry with him because he has refused to allocate grazing land to the cattle herders. “This has brought insecurity to my people,” he says.

Other local officials, including an officer at the Agoro Payam police station, say the arrival of cattle herders has coincided with an increase in crime in the area, especially rapes and abductions.

The state governor Louis Lobong echoes these concerns. He has warned of further confrontations between the state's residents and the cattle herders unless something changes quickly. “People will die, and we



Beat it: Tensions between crop farmers and cattle herders have turned violent in South Sudan. (Photo: Stefanie Gliniski/AFP)

don't want that. We need to talk, we need to understand why they are here, how long they will be here and when they will go back," he said. "These cattle keepers, they came and there was no information, they have never asked the host communities that 'can you allow us to graze?', nor we the state government."

In the meantime, he says, some farmers are fleeing the state for uncertain and possibly dangerous futures in other parts of the country, or even to refugee camps in neighbouring Kenya and Uganda. "Our people are running."

On the run

Patience. That's what Abraham Makur, the secretary general of the Magwi County cattle-keeper's association, is calling for. He understands that the arrival of tens of thousands of head of cattle in the area has placed new burdens on the local community. But what other choice do the cattle keepers have?

"At the moment, there's no way we can tell the cattle keepers to go back to Jonglei, because there's nowhere people can settle," he says.

South Sudan's seven-year-long civil war ended officially in February, when the government signed a peace deal with the main rebel movement. But that has not ended conflict. In May this year, for example, more than 300 people were killed when fighting erupted in Jonglei State. Dozens of homes were raided and destroyed, and women and children were

abducted by fighters.

The fighting was centred on the town of Pieri, and it was driven by the same tensions that are straining the peace in Magwi County: the competition for land between cattle herders and farmers. Except this time the tensions boiled over, with devastating consequences.

In the wake of the violence, some herders took their herds and searched for new pastures. They were soon followed by others who were fleeing the floodwaters that devastated much of Jonglei during this year's rainy season.

In total, more than 157,000 people were displaced from Jonglei. They too have been running, driving their cattle in front of them. Some went south to Bor, or even further south to Juba, the capital. Others headed south-east, ending up in Eastern Equatoria State – where they have received a decidedly frosty welcome.

When the flood waters recede, the herders will take their livestock home, says Makur. But, in the meantime, the cattle must eat.

Executive orders

In 2017, President Salva Kiir – who owns one of the country's largest herds of cattle – issued an executive order: he commanded all pastoralists to leave the Equatoria region and return to their place of origin. Most communities in Equatoria grow crops, he said.

According to army spokesperson Lul Ruai Koang, the executive order worked. "At the time, all those who came from neighbouring states were ordered to go back with their livestock. Those who came from the Lakes



(Photo: Daniel Garang Deng)



Herd impunity: Sudanese men with their cattle camp in Mingkaman, Lakes State, South Sudan. During South Sudan's dry season between December and May, pastoralists from the highlands move to the lowlands and close to the Nile. (Photo: Stefanie Glinski/AFP)

went, all those who came from Western Equatoria went, and those from Jonglei went,” Koang says.

But now that cattle herders have come back to Eastern Equatoria, the president needs to issue a new edict, he says – only then can the army implement their return.

Not everyone is convinced that the president’s executive order worked in the first place, however. Other communities in Eastern Equatoria, such as the M’adi in Pageri County, say it was never enforced, and that tensions with cattle herders continued.

Nor is it clear where exactly the cattle herders should go back to, given that their traditional grazing lands are shrinking thanks to climate change. It feels, at times, like an intractable problem – for which no one has yet found a workable solution.

“I’m not an administrator of animals,” Oryem, the local government official in Agoro Payam, said despondently. “I’m an administrator of human beings.” ■

This story is co-published with South Sudan’s The Insider. Additional reporting by Daniel Garang Deng.

Cattle, conflict and climate change

FEATURE ANALYSIS

Simon Allison

South Sudan's President Salva Kiir owns a cattle farm about 15 kilometres south of Juba. He is, at heart, a rancher, and is rarely pictured without his distinctive black cowboy hat, which was a gift to him from former US president George W Bush.

In July 2016, as Riek Machar's rebels edged closer to the capital, they launched a daring raid against the president's ranch. They did not succeed in capturing it, but they did make off with more than 2,000 head of cattle – a humiliating defeat for Kiir, who prides himself on the size of his herd, thought to be the largest in the country.

The incident underscored the central role that cattle played in fuelling the conflict in the country. While the high-profile politicians involved may have had their eyes on cabinet positions or a share of lucrative contracts, the reward for ordinary fighters was often measured in cows – which is why no battle report was complete

without mention of the number of cattle that were stolen.

But the conflict had a devastating impact on the cattle too. As South Sudanese were forced to move from their homes – some 4.3-million of the 11-million population was displaced – they took their herds with them. In new geographies, the animals were exposed to new diseases, to which they had no resistance, and they died in their hundreds of thousands or even millions (the insecurity means it is very difficult to measure accurately).

As cattle became more scarce, so they became more valuable – and therefore even more likely to be fought over.

President Kiir and Machar, now vice-president, signed a peace deal last year. But the end of the war has not made life any easier for cattle herders, who face what is possibly an even greater threat: climate change and the disappearance of traditional grazing lands. This is forcing herders to keep moving, bringing them into new conflicts with settled farmers. ■



SO, YOU THINK YOU'RE A REAL PAN-AFRICAN?

Take this quiz to find out how well you really know our continent

1. Liverpool wing Sadio Mané is from which country?
2. Which country's capital is Luanda?
3. What is the continent's largest country by area?
4. The Volta river runs through which country?
5. How many countries are there in Africa?
6. True or false: Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world.
7. Which American poet and activist, born in 1928, lived in Egypt and Ghana in the 1960s?
8. How many countries are members of the African Union?
9. This week, the UN

Human Rights Council said it could not investigate rights violations in strife-torn Libya this year. What was the reason?

10. In which months do southern right whales migrate to the coastal waters of South Africa?

11. Which country's name is a derivative of the name of an Arab Sheikh who ruled the area at the time when the Portuguese arrived.

12. The Bight of Benin has a long association with the transatlantic slave trade. Finish this rhyme: Beware, beware the Bight of the Benin...

How did I do?

WhatsApp 'ANSWERS' to +27 73 805 6068 and we will send you the answers immediately.

0-4

"I think I need to start reading more newspapers."

5-8

"I can't wait to explore more of this continent."

9-12

"I am the Da Vinci of the African renaissance"

Will Africa's best shot at a Covid-19 vaccine be enough?

The Covax Initiative is meant to guarantee access to potential vaccines for poorer countries. But rich countries have already bought up more than 4.2-billion doses, and there is no provision to change or challenge restrictive patent laws

Laura López González

In an era of “vaccine nationalism,” there is a plan to secure an equitable share of the eventual Covid-19 vaccines for countries that could otherwise not afford the prices “rich” nations are prepared to pay. But there is no guarantee the plan will be successful, experts warn.

In April, the vaccine alliance Gavi and others launched the Covax initiative aimed at pooling countries’ purchasing power to secure a minimum of affordable vaccines for participating countries. Donor funding would ideally allow the poorest nations to receive jabs for a heavily subsidised price.

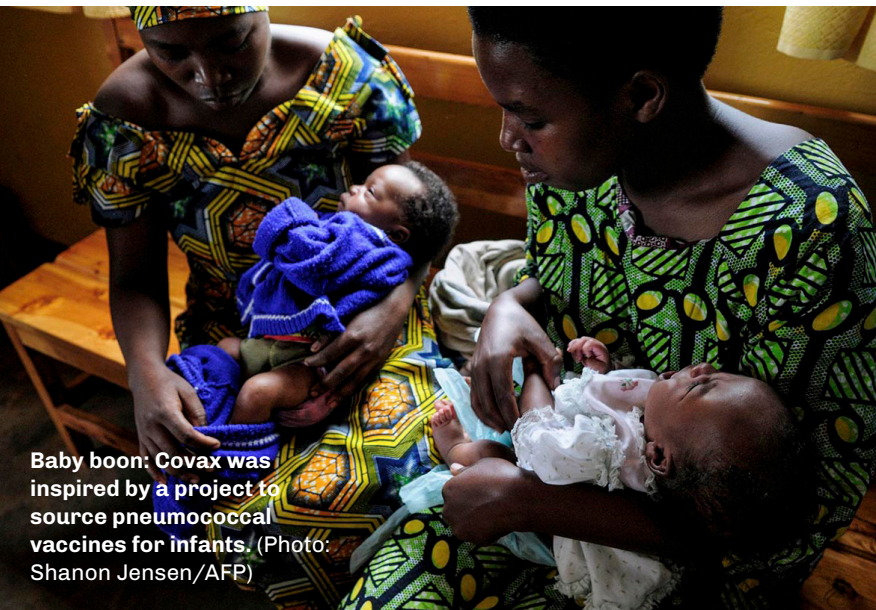
But late last week, Indian and South African representatives penned a letter to the World Trade Organisation (WTO). What they wrote in the note is at the centre of the single biggest question of the world’s latest pandemic: Will Covid-19 vaccines reach the world’s poor?

Covax draws on Gavi’s success with

a similar 2005 initiative to introduce the pneumococcal vaccine to prevent childhood killers such as pneumonia and bacterial meningitis. The project rolled out the jabs quickly in Gavi-supported countries and saved lives. Still, independent reviews of the project point out it was not designed to spur the kind



Job lab: A vaccine from Oxford is one of 42 contenders to have reached human trials (Photo: Satish Bate/Hindustan Times via Getty Images)



Baby boon: Covax was inspired by a project to source pneumococcal vaccines for infants. (Photo: Shanon Jensen/AFP)

of market competition or local vaccine production in the Global South that would have lowered vaccine prices.

Doing either would have involved pharmaceutical companies sharing intellectual property around the pneumococcal vaccine, including patents and manufacturing technology, humanitarian organisation Doctors Without Borders (MSF) has pointed out.

Data from the US's International Vaccine Access Center shows that, more than a decade after Gavi's pneumococcal vaccine project, almost one in four countries still does not have access to the vaccine, largely because of the cost.

Meanwhile, South Africa and India say in their letter, no pharmaceutical company has committed to sharing intellectual property with the Covid-19

technology access pool of the World Health Organisation (WHO). The WHO is hoping companies will step up to voluntarily license drugs, equipment and vaccines to other manufacturers to meet global demand.

MSF has asked Gavi to push for open licences for the Covid-19 vaccines.

"In its spirit, [Covax] is a very admirable idea," MSF senior vaccines policy adviser Kate Elder told the G20 Civil Society Summit this week, "but it seems to be falling prey to some of the global political dynamics that we see in other global health initiatives".

Intellectual property rights were the focus of South Africa and India's letter to the WTO, in which they asked the body to waive some intellectual property protections during the pandemic and

which are set out in its agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (Trips). This would allow nations to manufacture or import a patented product such as a vaccine, the head of South Africa's Health Justice Initiative, Fatima Hassan, explained.

In theory, these kinds of allowances already exist for very poor nations and countries experiencing public health emergencies as under the WTO's 2001 Doha declaration and what's commonly known as Trips flexibilities.

But trying to use these flexibilities, Hassan warns, has not been easy nor without its consequences historically.

The United States, for instance, has threatened to use Trips flexibilities against some pharmaceutical companies domestically but has not supported other

countries' attempts to do the same.

South Africa and India's plea for a waiver is unlikely to be well received by the US or the pharmaceutical industry. Still, if successful, it could allow countries in the Global South to make use of Trips waivers and flexibilities without incurring pressure from the US or pharmaceutical companies.

"If you get the waiver or this kind of concession from the WTO it could make it more difficult for Big Pharma then to challenge governments," Hassan said.

The irony of South Africa's stance is that amendments to its own laws that would make it easier to use Trips flexibilities and prevent frivolous patents at home have stalled for nearly a decade.

"In South Africa, we could just fix our patent laws," Hassan said.

What is Covax and why should I care?

Covax is an initiative led by three international organisations: the vaccines public-private partnership Gavi, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (Cepi) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The trio hopes Covax will ensure that all countries can access a Covid-19 vaccine – when scientists find one.

As of 2 October, 42 Covid-19 vaccines were in human clinical trials, according to the WHO.

How does it work?

Covax is hoping to pool participating countries' purchasing power to secure doses of Covid-19 vaccines and negotiate better rates. Ninety-two low- and middle-income countries will get these jabs for a heavily subsidised price – provided that Gavi and partners can raise at least \$2-billion in funding. So far, the initiative has raised at least \$700-million, according to Gavi's website.

Poor countries will be asked to pay up to \$2 per dose, assuming an eventual vaccine needs two doses to be effective, Gavi's board recently decided. Initially, it had promised poorer nations jabs for free.

Gavi said the aim is to have two billion

doses available by the end of 2021, which should be enough to protect high-risk and vulnerable people, as well as frontline healthcare workers. Covax is striving to make sure that every country can vaccinate 20% of its citizens.

Why do we need Covax?

When a pandemic of the H1N1 influenza virus – commonly known as swine flu – hit in 2009, richer countries hoarded vaccines, explained researcher and Oxfam senior policy adviser Mohga Kamal-Yanni.

The United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and the European Union have already secured more than 4.2-billion doses of potential Covid-19 vaccines, Kamal-Yanni said. She added that this is enough to vaccinate 20% of their populations almost eight times over, assuming one dose of a Covid-19 jab is enough to protect people from infection.

Is it just for emerging countries?

No. Richer countries such as Namibia, Botswana and South Africa can participate in Covax, buying their own vaccines through the initiative to access lower, Covax-negotiated prices. This can happen in one of two ways: countries can commit to purchasing a certain number of doses and pay \$1.50 per dose upfront or 15% of the total cost per dose.

Alternatively, wealthier nations, particularly those who may have already secured some stocks of vaccines, can pass on buying some brands of vaccines in favour of others. Gavi explained that countries like these will pay a higher

upfront price than their peers, but ultimately the cost of jabs will be the same in the end regardless of how much nations pay upfront.

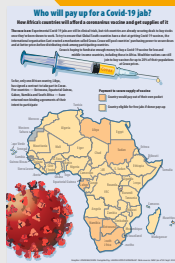
However, the United States and Russia have said they will not participate in Covax. Both countries are home to companies producing Covid-19 vaccines. This week China, also a major vaccine producer, did sign up to the initiative.

During the 2009 outbreak of H1N1 influenza, Cambridge University researchers found that high-income countries producing vaccines refused to export jabs until domestic needs had been met.

However, Gavi told *The Continent* that Cepi has pre-existing agreements with some companies globally and if firms sold stocks to other nations first, it would be a breach of contract. ■

WHO WILL PAY UP FOR A COVID-19 JAB?

Zoom in to find out how Africa will afford the vaccine



We wish you a merry ... October?

Samira Sawlani

This year has felt like time itself is broken - an endless haze of slow days blurring into endless weeks which become months that somehow seem to fly by. We're in October now, by the way, which by 2020's clock means Christmas is basically tomorrow.

We know it's way too soon to be dusting off the old Mariah Carey and Boney M Christmas albums - but the pandemic is playing havoc with our postal services, so it's a good idea to get our heads in the gift-giving game sooner rather than later, especially if we're posting presents off to distant friends, family and of course our dearest leaders on the continent.

Speaking of whom, what do you get for the president who has everything? A world free from term limits, maybe? Unlimited supplies of teargas? Or something personal: new hats for presidents Museveni and Kiir, and a Lacoste scarf for Mnangagwa.

Sanction clauses

The mail in Mali must be pretty good, because its leaders got their present early, courtesy of Ecowas, which has lifted its sanctions against the jolly junta. In return, the generals gifted freedom to 12 people

arrested in the August coup, including former prime minister Boubou Cissé.

Meanwhile President Alpha Condé is no doubt hoping Santa arrives early in Guinea, and brings him an election win. He's not leaving it to chance, though, and has done some campaigning in case Père Noël is stopped at the border due to Covid-19 restrictions. He was even spotted on French TV proclaiming: "I am a democrat, I fought for this country for 45 years, it is extraordinary that I am considered a dictator!"

Who jingled his bell, we wonder? Someone very ungrateful, clearly, considering he brought his country together - very close together! - during the pandemic. Do they even understand how challenging it is to stage a referendum these days? Especially with all those protesters getting in the way all the time.

Bah, humbug

Covid-19 or not, some people hate it when Christmas revs its engines too early. The authorities in Tanzania must fall into this category - they banned opposition candidate Tundu Lissu from campaigning for seven days. Maybe they thought he

Grinch: A protester in a Mugabe mask spreads Christmas cheer torture. (Photo: Nehanda Radio)



was going door to door because he was out carolling? And then his convoy was blocked by police in a stand-off that lasted nine whole hours. We know time is broken, but that does seem like too many hours. Even for a carol service.

Eschewing grinchiness, France's National Assembly has voted to return 26 artefacts — beautiful statues, really — which form the “Trésor de Béhanzin” plundered from Benin during the colonial escapades/atrocities of the 19th century. And they want to give a sabre and scabbard — believed to have belonged to the West African soldier-scholar and emperor Omar Saidou Tall — back to Senegal. Re-gifting or restitution, would you say? Either way, if other colonisers want more than a lump of coal in their stocking, they should pay attention.

The first Nobel the angels did sing

All right, so it's too early for Christmas, but it's never too early for peace on earth and goodwill to all. The Nobel Peace Prize, for example, was awarded just yesterday to the World Food Programme for its efforts

to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war.

And we do mean “efforts”. Peace isn't passive, it requires action, no matter the time of year. Protesters in Namibia demanded action this week - government action, over gender-based violence, sexual assault and femicide. Their demonstrations were sparked by the discovery of the body of Shannon Wasserfall, a young woman who disappeared six months ago. We hope her spirit will find peace, and her family and community justice.

So while our would-be and would-still-be presidents ask Santa for an electoral edge or a get-out-of-the-ICC-free card, or do their best to improve their ranking on the naughty-nice league table, they should think about whether their own actions are in line with the peace and goodwill their citizens deserve.

Wouldn't it be something if, on the first day of Christmas, your president gave to thee: freedom, justice, truth and accountability?

Happy October, everyone. ■

Silicon Valley needs to be more responsible in Africa

Julie Owono

In November 2019, Twitter founder Jack Dorsey announced his intention to spend six months on the continent in 2020. The statement surprised many but was no doubt influenced by the well-known slogan: Africa is the future!

In reality, things are much more complicated. Yes the digital future is Africa...but only provided that the leaders of Silicon Valley take responsibility for the negative impact of their products.

In recent years the tech world has become obsessed with accessing Africa's potential 1.3-billion consumers. For social media, this is a matter of survival as the craze for their product is slowing in Europe and North America. This new scramble for Africa is reminiscent of the not so distant times when Western companies pillaged the continent for raw materials, with no benefit to Africans themselves. Contemporary relationships may be less overtly "colonial", but they remain deeply unbalanced. Private

internet companies invest heavily to curb the impact disinformation and hate speech in European or Northern American democracies – but not when it comes to Africa, Asia, or Latin America.

The big difference today is that multinational companies stand to lose out if they ignore their responsibility to protect human rights. My organisation, Internet Without Borders, has been tracking the link between the rise of hate speech and online disinformation in African countries and the increase in Internet shutdowns.

We find that the less Facebook and Twitter diligently moderate dangerous content, the more states resort to censorship and Internet shutdowns. In turn, shutdowns mean smaller profits. Just as worryingly, they also threaten to draw down an Internet curtain, creating a world in which citizens will be denied access to these platforms because of the role they play in facilitating violence.

If Silicon Valley companies don't do more to reduce the harm done by their products, they will not be the only ones losing out. ■

Julie Owono is the Executive Director of Internet Without Borders and a Member of the Facebook Oversight Board. This piece is part of a series on Decoding #DigitalDemocracy in Africa that you can read now at www.democracyinafrica.org



The Continent is continuing its coverage of the human rights violations committed against activists, organisers and opposition politicians in Zimbabwe. This week, we have translated Kudzai Mashininga's feature on the abduction of Tawanda Muchehiwa into Ndebele. We are publishing this alongside an analysis of the situation by political scientist Chipo Dendere, written in Shona.

Ukuthunjwa lokuhlukunyezwa okubhulungu okuvezwe yi-camera

Kudzai Mashininga

UTawanda Muchehiwa omunye wezizalwane zeZimbabwe ezinengi ezithunjwe zahlukunyezwa ngamadoda angaziwayo njalo ehlo mile

Uthunjiwe, wahlukunyezwa wabuya wangaphathwa njengomuntu.

Nxa sikhangelwa kutshaywa kabhulungu okuke kwenzakala eZimbabwe ensukwini ezedluleyo, uMuchehiwa angazithatha njengomunye wabantu abalenhlanhla.

Akafani lo Itai Dzamara (umeli kumbe umlweli owazinikela kwezombusazwe), owanyamalala ngomnyaka ka2015, olokhu engaziwa ukuthi ungaphi kuze kube lanamuhla.

UMuchehiwa yena singathi ubele nhlanhla ngoba usaphila njalo akafani loHopewell Chin'ono (intathelizindaba) labanye abanengi ababotshwe nguhulumende, yena engelacala okumele athonisiswe.

Indaba yesifundi sokuthapha indaba lomsakazo oleminyaka engamatshumi amabili lambili (22 years) waqalisa mhlaka



Tawanda Muchehiwa

30 Ntulikazi ekuseni ilanga elalilandela ilanga lapho okwakuhlelwe ukuthi abantu batshengisele bephikisana lohulumende okwakuzaqala emadolobheni amakhulu kusiya kwamancane elizweni leZimbabwe.

UMuchehiwa wayephakathi kwemota eyayimi phandle kwesitolo se-hardware koBulawayo, isigodlo sesibili njalo lapho

okugcwele abebandla eliphikisayo.

Kusenzaka kuMuchehiwa, abazawakhe uAdvent lo Amandlenkosi Mathuthu babephakathi esitolo.

Owayesemoteni loMuchehiwa ngomunye webandla le MDC Alliance, okulibandla eliphikisayo elaziwayo ngokusemthethweni. Dukuduku, izimota eziningi zathutsha eceleni kwakhe. Owesilisa omude owayeqoke iyembe eluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka (light blue) wehla kwenye yezimota wavula isivalo sikaMuchehiwa ngolaka, wamemeza ngesiShona esithi “wasungwa” kusitsho ukuthi: “usubotshiwe” Engakaboni ukuthi kwenzakalani, uMuchehiwa wayesefakwe izankosi wadonswa wakhutshwa emoteni ayekuyo.

Wahlohlelwa kwenye, eyasuka ngesiquku, izihlobo zakhe zathwalwa ngenye imota zasiwa enkambeni yamapholisa.

Ngemva kwesikhatshana uMuchehiwa bamsusa bamusa kweyinye imota yohlobo lwe-Ford Ranger emhlope elenombolo ezithi AES 2433 bemusa endaweni engaqaanjwanga.

Ngahlukunyezwa kabuhlungu ngabantu ababethunyiwe (agents) ababebahlanu okwamalanga amathathu alandelayo,” watsho etshela abe *Mail & Guardian*.

“Babengitshaya besebenzisa izigodo lenswazi, bengitshaya ikakhulu ezibunu langaphansi kwenyawo ngaze ngalimala izibunu lezinso.”

Ababemthumbile babecabanga ukuthi uMuchehiwa nguye owayehlela ukutshengisela kokuphikisana lohulumende koBulawayo lase

Matabeleland okwakumele kwenzeke mhlaka 31 Ntulikazi, yena uyalandula lokho.

Bambuza ngomalumake uMduduzi Mathuthu ongumhleli (editor) weZimlive, iphephandaba lebulenjini elake lakhupha izindaba ezazichaya ubugwelegwele (corruption) okuthiwa benziwa nguhulumende.

Ngalesosikhathi uMathuthu wayecatshile ngemva kokuba ababethunywe nguhulumende bamlande endlini yakhe, lakhathesi ucatshile. Izithunywa zikahulumende zamethusela zisithi zizambulala njalo zamkhombela ngovolovo ekhanda, zamtshela ukuba zazizamlengisa besezilahlela umzimba wakhe emfuleni owawuseduzane.

UMuchehiwa wabezwa bekhuluma ecingweni, wacabanga ukuthi babekhuluma lomkhulu wabo bembuza ukuthi benzeni ngaye. Ngemuva kwamalanga amathathu, sekusiyi kuhola letshumi ebusuku (10pm) mhlaka 1 Ncwabakazi, ababemthumbile bamthatha bayamtshiya phambi kwangakibo. Bamtshela ukuthi angene kubandla le Zanu-PF, elubusayo. Bathi kuye engenza njalo asebenzise iplatform yakhe ku-social media ukutshengisa ukusekela kwakwe ibandla elibusayo, bazamlungisela iuniversity scholarship lomsebenzi ngemva kokhetho lomnyaka ka2023.

“Ngiyesaba ukuphila impilo ngendlela efaneleyo eZimbabwe ngoba ngiyazi okungenziwa libandla elibusayo,” watsho uMuchehiwa Imuli yami iyesaba; yethukile kodwa iyathokoza ngoba ngiphenduke ngiphila. Basebelahle ithemba. Ngemva kwamalanga amathathu



basebecabanga ukuthi angisaphenduki.”

Indlela yokuhlukunyezwa

Indlela abantu ababotshwa ngayo kaziphathi kuhle abanengi. eZimbabwe inkokheli ezinengi ezamabandla aphikisayo, labazinikela umsebenzi wokulwela lokumela uzulu labakhuluma besola uhulumende bayathunjwa okungacaciswayo njalo bahlukunyezwe bengakakhululwa.

Kube kuvamile ngesikathi sombuso kamuyi umongameli uRobert Mugabe, kodwa sekubuye kwajula kumbuso kamongameli uEmmerson Mnangagwa.

Ihofisi ye-United Nations ebona ngezamalungelo oluntu iOffice of the High Commissioner for Human Rights ithi kulendaba ezingu 49 ezokuthunjwa lokuhlukunyezwa eZimbabwe ngo2019 kodwa akuzange kuhluzwe lutho ukuze labo abakwenzayo bajeziswe.

“Ukuqopha umhlamuki ovukela umbuso ngokuthula, okuhlanganisela inkokheli yabatsha lokubandezela inkululeko yokuziveza ngokufaneleyo kuyindlela yokwephula umthetho wamalungelo abantu.” watsho ummeli we UN.

Eminyene imizekeliso ihlanganisela

owomdlali ohlekisa uzulu uSamanta Kureya owaziwa ngokuthi nguGonyethi owathunjwa endlini yakhe ngoNcwabakazi ngomnyaka ophelileyo ngamadoda ayehlomile bamtshela ukuthi “usemncane ukwenza uhulumende inhlekisa” bamnathisa amanzi esewage bembamba ngamandla.

UPeter Magombeyi, owayekhokela inhlanganiselo yamadokotela eye-Zimbabwe Hospitals Doctors Association wakhokhela ukutshengisela kwabodokotela abancane ngoMpandula ngomnyaka ophelileyo. Ngemva kwesikhatshana sokutshengisela wathunjwa endlini yakhe eHarare. Kwathi ngemva kwamalanga amahlanu wayalahlelwa kwelinye idolobho elincane elingaba ngamakilomitha angu 18 usuka eHarare, edakisiwe njalo esezinhlungwini.

Abesifazane abathathu abazinkokheli zebandla eliphikisayo

Ummeli wePalamende (MP) uJoana Mamombe, uCecilia Chimbi loNetsai Marowa babotshwa ngamapholisa ngoNkwenkwezi lonyaka bebotshelwa ukutshengisela ngesikhathi lapho ilizwe



With Tawanda now inside the Isuzu, it speeds off with the Ford Ranger following behind.



After driving on the wrong side of the road for 100m, Isuzu holding Tawanda and Ford Ranger turn left. Tawanda is moved from Isuzu into Ford Ranger

livaliwe (lockdown).

Bathathwa enkambeni yamapholisa ngamadoda angaziwayo ehlo mile njalo, batshaywa bahlukunyezwa ngezamacansi amadoda la abalahlela eceleni komgwaqo ngemva kwelanga elilodwa. Bathe sebesiya bikela amapholisa basebesetheswa icala lokuqamba amanga.

Uhulumende walandula waphinda wathi kalalwazi ngokuthunjwa kwabo kodwa ugcona ibandla eliphikisayo esithi yilo eliqamba amanga ngendaba zokuhlukunyezwa kwabantu. “Ibandla elithile alisathembekanga ngenxa yemikhuba yalo yokugcona amanye amabandla,” kwatsho uNick Mangwana, isikhulumeli sikahulumende, wengezelela ngokuthi: “Ukuqamba amanga ngokuthunjwa kutshabalalisa wonke amathuba okuphumelela kwenotho yelizwe”

Ukuthunjwa kukaMuchehiwa kwathathwa ngama-CCTV cameras.

Impikitsha (footage) yakhona ungani iluvilibana kodwa ayiphici.

Njengoba wayechasisile, imota yakhe igombolozwe ngezinye ezinengi.

Uyadonswa esuswa kuyo ngumuntu wesilisa ogqoke iyembe eluhlaza angeniswe ngenkani kweyinye imota.

Enye i-CCTV footage itshengisa

esengeniswa njalo kwenye imota emhlophe eyoloho lwe-Ford Ranger elenombolo ezithi AES 243 ikhanya kuhle.

Onozindaba beZimbabwe benelisa ukuyidinga leyomota. Abanikazi bayo yi Impala Car Rental njalo yabiselwa mhlaka 6 Ncwabakazi isife isuspension. Umnini we Impala Car Rental, uThompson Dondo, wathi yena uzaveza okunengi ngokugcweleyo emapholiseni kuphela.

“Imuli yethu isivezile ukuthi amapholisa aphathisa ekuthunjweni kungela kuthandabuza. Ummeli wami u-advocate Nqobani Mpfu, loMduduzi Mathuthu basebenza gadalala ukuze ngithole ukuqhutshwa komthetho okufaneleyo,” watsho uMuchehiwa.

“Ngithemba umkhulu weImpala kumele azwisise ukuthi njengomuntu owayethunjiwe emoteni yabo, ngilelungelo lokubakwazi labo abangithumbayo. Akumelanga babavikele kumbe bathi bazatshela amapholisa wona aphathisa ekuthunjweni kwami. Kusobala ukuthi labo bafuna ukuthi bazifihle bangaveli kuloludaba,” “Umbiko wami kumhlaba wonke jikelele ngowokuthi umbuso kaMnangangwa usuvuse impi labahlali beZimbabwe. Amafasitela alokho okufunwa ngabantu asevaleka ngokuphangisa.” ■

Mamiriro akaita zvinhu muZimbabwe

Chipo Dendere

Mumwedzi yapfuura hurumende yeZimbabwe yasunga vatapi ve nhau vazhinji vanodarika gumi. Vatapi venhau vanosanganisira vaHopewell Chin'ono varikusungirwa kutaura nezvenyaya dzekubiwa kwemari uye chiokomuhomwe chavanoti chiri kuitwa nevari muhurumende.

Magweta anomirira hurumende vanoti zvinyorwa zvavaChin'ono nevamwe vatapi venhau ndezvekunyomba vakuru venyika uyezve vanyori vanokodzerwa kusungwa. VaChin'ono nemutungamiri weTransform Zimbabwe, vaJacob Ngarivhume, vapihwa mukana wekubhadhara mari yechibatiso nedare repamusoro mushure mekugara mujeri kwenguva inoda kusvika mwedzi miviri.

Mumwe mutapi wenhau, Mduduzi Mathuthu, arikutsvagwa nemapurisa. Vatadza kuvabata vaMathuthu, zvinonzi hurumende yakatumira vanhu kune muzukuru wavo Tawanda Muchejiwa. VaMuchejiwa vakanyora vachirondedzera nyaya yekupambwa kwavo musiwa 30 Chikunguru muguta reBulawayo. Vakakandwa mumotokari yemhando rwe Ford Ranger ndokunorohwa nekushunguridzwa kwemazuva

matatu. VaMuchejiwa vakazosiyiwa vakandwa pakati pehusiku musi wa 1 Nyamavhuvhu panguva iyo mapurisa akanga akomekedzwa nedare redzimhosva kuti auye navaMuchejiwa kudare mukati memaawa makumi manomwe nemaviri. Hurumende yakaramba kuti ndiyo yakabata vaMuchejiwa. Vebepa nhau re ZimLive vanoti vane mafirimu anoratidza kupambwa kwavo zvinodurikidza zvakataurwa na nyakupambwa.

Vamwe vatapi venhau varikurohwa pamwe nekupwanyirwa michina yavo nemapurisa. Nomusi wa 20 Gunyana mutungamiri weZinasu vaTakudzwa Ngadziore nevatapi venhau vakarohwa zvakaipisisa nevanhu vasina kuzikanwa apo vachiratidzira pedyo nemahofisi ekambani yeImpala Car Rental. Kambani iyi ndiyo ine motokari inonzi yakashandiswa pakupambwa, kwava Muchejiwa muna Chikunguru.

Mutapi wenhau Godwin Mangudya, akapwanyirwa muchina wake wekutapa manzwi. Mutori wenhau anoshanda akazvimirira achitora nhau dzemifananidzo, James Jemwa, akatorerwa camera yake. Vamwe vatori venhau vakarohwa ndi Thomas Madhuku wekambani ye263chat, Bernard Mpfu, uyezve Munashe Chokodza.

Hurumende yavaMnangagwa inenge irikutevera mutsoka dzavaMugabe pakudzvanyirira vanoda kubudisa chokwadi muZimbabwe. Kunze kwevanotapa nhau vachishandira bepa nhau rehurumende mamwe mapepanhau mazhinji anoti zvakaoma kushandira muZimbabwe. ■

Chipo Dendere anoita nezvematongerwo enyika



New look:
Mosimane
is the first
South African
to coach in
Egypt's top
flight

Pitso, pride and prestige

South Africa's greatest coach takes the helm of Egypt's Al Ahly, the continent's most successful club – and both have plenty to play for

Luke Feltham

Pitso Mosimane and Al Ahly are a fascinating marriage. One of Africa's finest coaches meets its biggest giant; an ambitious, uncompromising tactician at the helm of a ruthless, unyielding club. One way or another we're going to see an explosion – the Red Devils are banking on being able to steer the blast in the direction of their enemies.

There's some irony in the fact that it was Mosimane who helped expose the true extent of the footballing decline in Cairo so violently a little over a year ago.

His Mamelodi Sundowns' 5-0 win was the biggest loss the eight-time African champions had endured in 77 years and triggered a massive inquisition at the club. In the short time since then, much has changed and Al Ahly stands on the precipice of an historic treble.

Now, Mosimane has been asked to finish the job. He will have no shortage of supporters back home hoping he can do just that, including South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa, who cheered the move as a cause for national pride.

"It is also a recognition of the talent and capability that resides within our

own continent,” he said. “I wish Pitso and his team well as they fly our flag and the flag of continental football with a club in whose success all Africans take pride.”

The presidential words fit into a motif that has continually followed Mosimane in his career: his success is seen as local success. In a domestic scene in which clubs often take the easier route of importing highfalutin European coaches – as opposed to grooming young South Africans – it is he who has reigned supreme and won more league titles than anyone else.

It’s a narrative Mosimane himself has embraced, as evidenced by an enlightening exchange on the sidelines of the Sundowns training ground earlier this year.

Mosimane will have no shortage of supporters back home, including President Cyril Ramaphosa

“I have my legacy that I have to fight for,” he said. “People take it personally but I’m not like that ... I’m highly, highly competitive when it comes to winning a match ... I must write my own history and fight with the two Germans.”

The two Germans he was referring to were the respective managers of South Africa’s two biggest teams, Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates.

The German at the former was later fired after Sundowns pipped them to the league title on the final day. Interestingly,



Game on: Mosimane’s first training session in Cairo

the other German had replaced a Serbian, Milutin Sredojević, who had gone to Al Ahly’s loathed rivals Zamelek – and lasted less than four months.

Having well and truly conquered his turf, Mosimane arrives as the first South African to take charge of Al Ahly and follows in the wake of three non-African full-time coaches.

The club is looking to solidify Egyptian football as the premier brand on the continent once more. In past years they have had to watch as North Africa rivals from Tunisia and Morocco (and Mosimane) have sat upon their Champions League throne; there was also the ignominy of a poor national team performance at the African Cup of Nations (thanks to an early exit courtesy of South Africa).

It would appear that the fates of South African, Egyptian and African pride are about to intersect in a manner never before seen on the football pitch. ■

There is a way to kickstart Africa's economic recovery

By working together, African countries can recover tens of billions of dollars lost through illicit financial flows

Paul Akiwumi

The Covid-19 pandemic has worsened the vulnerabilities caused by the excessive reliance of African economies on world markets.

Africa's main trade partners include the European Union, China, the United States and United Kingdom. Together they represent more than 50% of the continent's trade flows.

African nations' dependence on external markets for medicinal and pharmaceutical products is particularly acute – more than 95% of these products are imported from outside the continent.

As their main trade partners have been severely hit by the pandemic, countries on the continent have suffered significant business disruptions and output contraction, including in export sectors.

The combined GDP of African countries could contract by 1.4% in 2020, while the continent's merchandise exports could decline by 17%. McKinsey estimates that manufacturing sector output will shrink by 10% in 2020 – equivalent to a



Missed opportunities: At an abandoned industrial mine in Mongbwalu, DRC, men sift through buckets of mud looking for gold. Lax controls on illicit financial flows mean that most of the big profits from natural resources like gold are realised outside of the continent.
(Photo: Spencer Platt/Getty)

loss of more than \$50-billion – as a result of Covid-19.

Deeper integration can build resilient economies

Deepening regional integration on the continent through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) could build resilient economies post-Covid-19, however: if quickly and effectively implemented, the AfCFTA could address challenges emanating from Africa's reliance on world markets while creating more value in local economies. This would in turn help reduce vulnerability to future pandemics.

Such a free trade area could by 2035 boost Africa's total exports by 29%, intra-continental trade by more than 81% and African exports to the rest of the world by 19%, with most of the gains accrued to the manufacturing sector. However, AfCFTA implementation requires significant financial resources due to the need to address infrastructure bottlenecks, invest in productive capacities and expand access to operational cash flows by businesses.

The continent's infrastructure financing gap ranges from \$68-billion to \$108-billion while its trade finance gap is estimated at \$91-billion per annum.

Curbing illicit flows is key to better recovery

One way to address the financing gap is by preventing Illicit Financial Flows (IFF), which drain billions of dollars out of Africa every year. Curbing these flows will contribute to increasing some of the much-needed resources required to realise the AfCFTA. In turn, the latter can provide a framework for cooperation and institutional capacity to combat IFFs.

In 2015, IFFs from the continent were estimated at \$50-billion per year. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in a recent report, reckoned that Africa is currently losing about \$88.6-billion a year in illicit capital flight.

IFFs appear most prominent in the extractive sector, estimated at over \$40-billion in 2015 and a cumulative amount of \$278-billion from 2008 to 2018.

Policy collaboration required for success

The AfCFTA process including preparatory interventions and actual implementation (likely to begin in early 2021) coincides with the global spread of Covid-19 and its recovery. Therefore, policy sequencing and synergies should be sought by countries when they are devising and implementing both AfCFTA and Covid-19 recovery strategies.

The AfCFTA could establish the foundations for better integrated actions including: the harmonisation of investment laws and practices; improvement of data collection and information-sharing to better track IFFs; building-up of institutional capacity; and the promotion of transparency and accountability at both the state and private sector levels which is essential to combating many forms of IFFs.

Through greater cooperation, IFFs can be curbed and Africa's economic recovery kickstarted. ■

Paul Akiwumi is director of UNCTAD's division for Africa and least developed countries. This piece was originally published in the Mail & Guardian and has been edited for length.



The Big Picture

Return of the mummies: Archaeologists in Egypt last month discovered 59 sarcophagi – including the one in this photograph – in a tomb that had lain undisturbed for at least 2,500 years. The ancient coffins were discovered inside a new shaft in the Saqqara necropolis, and will soon be moved into a new home, inside the Grand Egyptian Museum on the Giza Plateau.

(Photo: Fadel Dawood/dpa/Picture Alliance via Getty Images)

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