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The Continent

TRUST ME:
VACCINES WOULD
BE WASTED IN
AFRICA

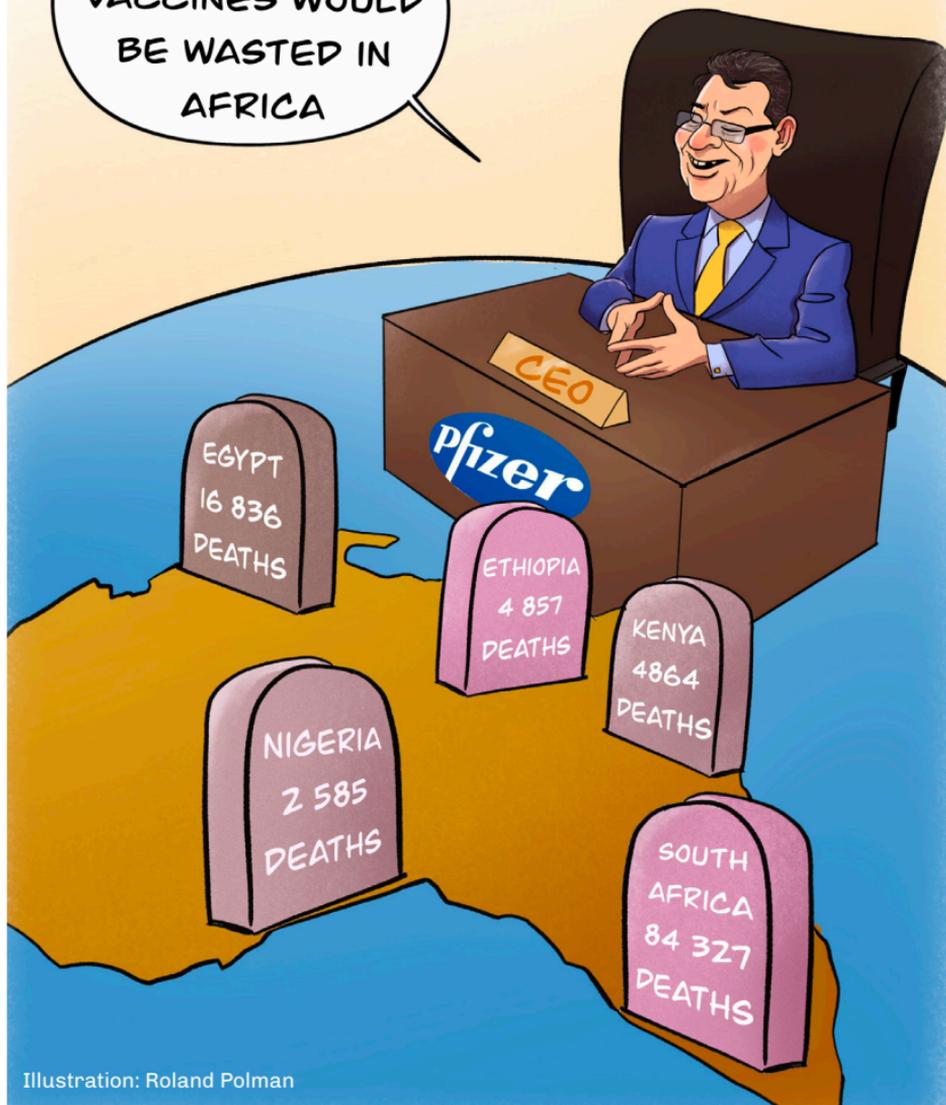


Illustration: Roland Polman

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COVER: A convenient myth

The head of Pfizer this week claimed, without any data to support his view, that vaccine hesitancy in poor to middle income countries would be “way, way higher than the percentage of hesitancy in Europe or in the US or in Japan”. This is a convenient myth with racist undertones, argues Laura López González, one of the most experienced health journalists in South Africa, and is designed to make Big Pharma feel better about selling their jabs almost exclusively to the Global North. Cover cartoon by Ivorian cartoonist and *Le Neuf* editor Roland Polman. (p16)



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Photo: Habimana Thierry/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images

SPORT

Tunisia nets yet another victory

There were no surprises in Kigali last Sunday when Afrobasket defending champions Tunisia beat Côte d'Ivoire in the African basketball championship, retaining the title they won at home four years before. The Tunisian Eagles of Carthage led 47-34 at halftime and survived a second half comeback by the Ivorian Elephants to win 78-75.

CULTURE

Home of tequila spits out a worm

A statue of Christopher Columbus in Mexico City is going to be replaced by one of an Olmec woman. This is the culture that Iberian looters destroyed when they butchered their way through the Americas. That wealth underpinned the growth of now minor European nations, Spain and Portugal. In Mexico, 90% of the population died as a result.

SOUTH AFRICA

JZ plays 'get out of jail sick' card

Former South African president Jacob Zuma has been released from his 15-month prison sentence due to ill health. The 79-year-old had spent less than two months of his jail term for contempt of court when he was freed on Sunday. The nature of his illness is unknown. And the prisons official who released him owes a great deal to Zuma. President Cyril Ramaphosa shuffled him to this position in an attempt to weaken him without firing him. Which is to say that playing the short game always comes at a cost.

HEALTH

DRC hit by deadly meningitis crisis

The World Health Organisation has declared a meningitis epidemic in the northeastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This week it was reported that there were 261 suspected cases and 129 had died. Those numbers constitute a "high case fatality ratio of 50%", the organisation's Africa branch noted. "We are moving fast, delivering medicines and deploying experts to support the government's efforts to bring the outbreak under control in the shortest possible time," regional director Matshidiso Moeti said.

TRANSPORT

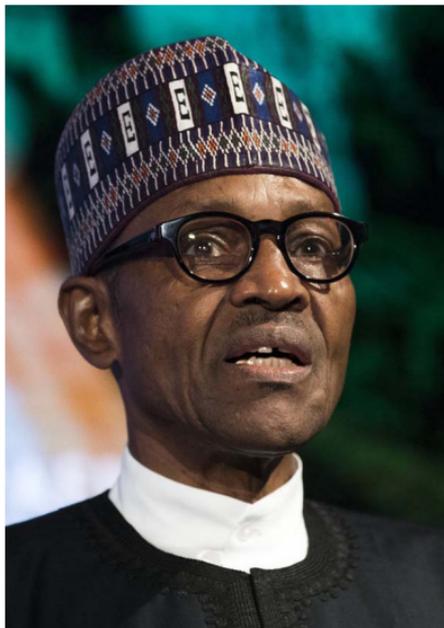
Bolt 'monetising women's fears'

Kenyan commuters who use the taxi-hailing service app Bolt have complained about the inflated prices of rides from women drivers. One Twitter user posted the steep pricing of the women-driven rides, noting that: "Charging more for the same distance because of 'safety' is monetising women's fears because they are unable to vet & guarantee safety with regular male drivers. Flawed strategy." The service responded by saying that "we increase prices when there are more customers than our online drivers can handle".

GUINEA

Military leaders free Condé critics

After the coup and ahead of Wednesday's Economic Community of West African States meeting, military leaders in Guinea released around 80 prisoners. The released were opponents of President Alpha Condé. "I hope that the junta will do something so that Guineans can get along, so that Guineans can move forward, because we are more than 60 years into our independence and it's dragging on," said democratic activist Mamady Onivogui after his release.



Can you not: President Muhammadu Buhari is being sued by his jailed foe Nnamdi Kanu for wrongful detention.

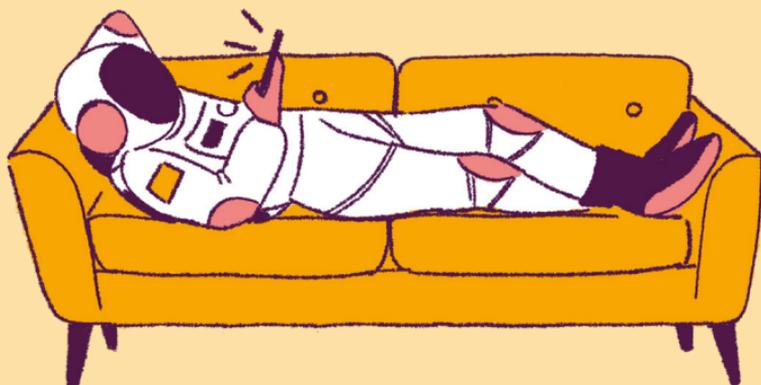
NIGERIA

Kanu sues Buhari for \$12-million

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari is being sued by detained separatist leader Nnamdi Kanu, who claims his human rights have been violated. Kanu faces terrorism and treason charges and is asking the government to apologise to him, free him, stop prosecuting him and to allow him to return to his base in the United Kingdom. Kanu is seeking to be paid damages of five-billion naira (\$12-million). He is expected back in court at the end of October.

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SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

Nova wins over island nation

Opposition candidate Carlos Vila Nova has won São Tomé and Príncipe's presidential election, prevailing over the ruling party's Guilherme Posser da Costa, a former prime minister, in the run-off. The former infrastructure minister took 57% of the vote and will replace Evaristo Carvalho, who declined to seek a second term.

ZIMBABWE

Get a job or lose your job

Zimbabwe's government is giving its employees an ultimatum: Get vaccinated or resign. The minister of justice noted that state employees who thought they had a choice in the matter were mistaken. Churches and restaurants have also been ordered to only allow people who have been vaccinated onto their premises.

INTERNATIONAL

Do all athletes look the same to you?

Britain's education secretary confused Marcus Rashford with Maro Itoje. The former is a football player who forced the UK government to feed hungry children. The other plays rugby for England. Not that we're surprised: the country that would seek to lecture African countries on so much while cutting foreign spending and allowing its companies to evade taxes is currently a statue to the power



Still not Maro: Manchester United and England forward Marcus Rashford.

of mediocre white men. It wasn't long ago that its Africa minister confused Zimbabwe with Zambia. While he was *in* Zambia.

HEALTH

Ethiopia dealt another bad hand

This week Ethiopia became the latest African country to confirm the presence

of the highly transmissible Delta variant of the Covid-19 coronavirus within its borders. The country is trying to meet its target of vaccinating at least 20% of its population and currently has vaccinated more than 2.5-million people out of 114-million.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Jack McBrams's column last week – arguing that Malawian bestsellers should replace Shakespeare on Malawi's school curriculum – stirred up some controversy.

In defence of the bard

Dear Editor,
Is William Shakespeare still relevant to the modern world? My response is a resounding YES. Shakespeare remains relevant. His themes cut across cultures and generations... The books advocated by McBrams are mere life stories with not much emphasis on the literary virtues that are taught in our schools. It would be wise to advocate for more Malawian works into the curriculum *without* forsaking the works of Shakespeare. His plays and sonnets transcend time and have valuable lessons for this generation, and all those to come.
Precious Agondwe
Mzuzu, Malawi

A colonial hangover

Dear Editor,
I thought it was just us Brits that had to endure the 16th century English of William Shakespeare at school. We had no idea what he was talking about, it had little relevance to our lives and it puts lots of British youngsters off literature for life. So I'm shocked to read in *The Continent* that teenagers in Malawi go through the same thing. I'm sure there's African literature which would be more interesting to Malawi's students, and Britain's too for that matter. My apologies for inflicting our poets on Malawi's youth.
Joe Lo
United Kingdom

Our future is not fiction

Dear Editor,
There is something rotten in schools – not only in Malawi, but around the world. Pupils should learn a lot more about science – biology, chemistry and physics. William Kamkwamba tells them why to build a windmill, but not how to build a modern one. There are scientists all over

Africa to teach teachers; at Nigeria's pharmaceutical research institute in Abuja, and at the South African Large Telescope in the Karoo, for instance. Our future is neither fictitious nor is it a matter of philosophy. It is an adventure that affords both knowledge and responsibility.
Reinhold Guetter
Hamburg, Germany



Would you like to respond to a story that appeared in *The Continent*? We welcome all feedback and critique – but please do remember to play nicely. Email us at letters@thecontinent.org. All submissions must be under 100 words and will be moderated by the editorial team.

Guinea

Alpha Condé overthrew Alpha Condé

Since the coup d'état on Sunday, Guinea's head of state has been in the custody of the military officers who raided the presidential palace. But in reality it was the president himself who was the primary architect of his own downfall.

Sidy Yansané in Conakry

At 8am on Sunday, September 5, residents of Kaloum in downtown Conakry were suddenly roused from their sleep by the sound of heavy gunfire around Sékoutouréyah Palace, where the president lives. No one knew what was going on until midday, when Lieutenant-Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, the head of the army's Special Forces Group, appeared in a video alongside two heavily armed soldiers wearing red berets.



Coup casual: Guinea's Alpha Condé after he was taken prisoner by army putschists during the coup d'état on September 5. Photo: AFP

From a desk, his eyes masked by dark sunglasses, Doumbouya announced that a mysterious “national rally and development committee” had detained president Alpha Condé and dissolved the current constitution and government. All land and air borders would be immediately closed, he said.

Another video appeared, serving perhaps as the coup de grâce: the 83-year-old head of state is seen lounging on a sofa, seemingly casually, with his shirt open. But he is visibly strained.



Booyah: Lieutenant-Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, the head of the special forces unit that the president himself created, led the coup in Conakry.



Photo: Cellou Binani / AFP

Silent, he looks away in anger when one of the coup plotters asks him if he has been mistreated. Other images begin to flood social media of the president in a vehicle, surrounded by soldiers, bound for an unknown destination.

There can be no doubt: the first democratically elected president in Guinea's history had just been ousted in a military coup.

Usually suspicious of the army, the people of Conakry celebrated. They took to the streets with cries of "Freedom! Freedom! Doumbouya! Doumbouya!"

Many converged on military camps and bases to show their appreciation.

In the Bambéto district, the epicentre of long-running protests against Condé, men in uniform were suddenly being treated as heroes – much to their surprise. The crossroads of the same name, the starting point for multiple opposition protests, was occupied throughout the day by euphoric crowds of thousands.

An ageing despot

Alpha Condé made his name as a brave and outspoken opponent of the various military regimes and dictatorships that preceded him. When he was elected in 2010, he promised that things would be different.

But the man known as "Le Professeur" failed to meet the aspirations of his people, despite favourable economic conditions for much of his tenure.

Despite some minor improvements, basic services such as access to electricity and running water remain a luxury in Guinea. The country's roads are in terrible shape, perhaps the worst in West Africa. And despite being the world's second-largest producer of Bauxite, this vast mineral wealth has seemed to benefit only a handful of individuals in Condé's orbit.

But it was in seeking to change the constitution, to allow himself to run for a third term in office, that the president's despotic nature became impossible to ignore.

Condé succeeded in making this change, and then won a disputed election last October, but his prolonged stay in the presidential palace came at great cost:

dozens of demonstrators were killed by his security forces, and many more injured; hundreds of political opponents, journalists and activists imprisoned; and increasing isolation from regional and international communities.

His frequent insults against his own people – “Guineans are afraid, they are like a turtle, you have to put a fire in their behinds,” he said at a conference in February – made him even less popular.

“The Guinean political system lives by recycling its authoritarian spirit,” said Amadou Sadjo Barry, a professor of philosophy. “Alpha Condé has helped renew the logic of arbitrariness and establish military legitimacy.”

Ironically, it was the special forces unit created in 2018 by the president himself that brought him down. At the head of this battalion of 500 men is 37-year-old Lieutenant-Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, who is famous as much for his physique as for his military career.

Speaking after the coup, he said he was ridding Guinea of corrupt elites, and promised to install a government of national unity for a transitional period before democracy and the rule of law is restored.

Guinea has heard all this before, of course; the country is now onto its third military coup. This one, however, appears to enjoy the support of most citizens.

“However, we must remain suspicious,” political scientist Kabinet Fofana told *The Continent*. He also warned that further instability could come from Doumbouya’s disagreements with Defence Minister Mohamed Diané,



Same old story: The powerlessness of the Economic Community of West African States is skewered in this cartoon that appeared in the Abidjan-based *Le Neuf* magazine

who is seen as a threat.

For now, the reaction of the international community has been muted, with West African regional body Ecowas restricting itself to suspending the country and demanding Condé’s release.

Even amid the fears and uncertainty around Guinea’s immediate future, no one appears to be especially sorry to see Condé go. ■

Guinea: A hard place, adding a rock

If Guineans feel trapped between unpalatable alternatives, who can blame them? A week ago, they were ruled by a president who pushed his way into an unpopular third term at the head of a government that most citizens see as weak on the economy and corruption.

This week, the military is in charge after arresting President Condé, suspending the constitution and state institutions, and closing land and air borders.

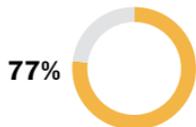
Afrobarometer's survey findings from November-December 2019 summarise

citizens' dilemma: Most Guineans support democracy (77%), reject military rule (77%), want to choose leaders via clean elections (82%), and want to limit presidents to two terms (76%). But only a third (36%) think the country is headed in the right direction; fewer approve of the state's performance on the economy (27%) and corruption (18%) and think their democracy is actually working (29%).

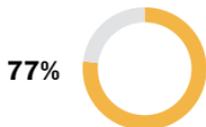
What to do?

Lieutenant-Colonel Mamady Doumbouya has offered his solution.

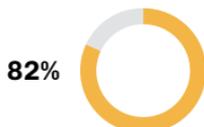
Democratic ideals



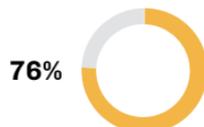
Support
democracy



Reject military
rule



Want to choose
leaders via clean
elections



Want to limit
presidents to two
terms

(Dis)satisfaction with reality



Think the country
is headed in the
right direction



Approve of the
government's
performance on
the economy



Approve of the
government's
performance on
corruption



Think democracy
is actually working

Source: Afrobarometer, a non-partisan African research network that conducts nationally representative surveys on democracy, governance, and quality of life. Face-to-face interviews with 1,200-2,400 people in each country yield results with a margin of error of +/- 2 to 3 percentage points.

Mozambique

Kagame: We are paying for Cabo Delgado intervention

Responding to widespread claims that France is funding Rwandan forces, the president says 'no one is sponsoring' his army

Luís Nhachote
in Northern Mozambique

Two months after Rwanda sent a 1,000-strong military force to Mozambique, that country's president, Paul Kagame, spoke about it publicly for the first time in a lengthy interview last Sunday with state broadcaster RBA.

In an apparent response to a range of articles questioning Rwanda's motivation for intervening in Cabo Delgado – and whether it is being financed by a third party – Kagame said that “no one is sponsoring” the military support Rwanda is providing in northern Mozambique.

The intervention is paid for entirely out of Rwanda's own resources, Kagame said.

This is despite strong rumours

that finance is coming from France or the French oil and gas company TotalEnergies, whose liquefied natural gas project in Cabo Delgado has been on hold since an attack on the town of Palma in March.

“So far, until now, we are using our means,” Kagame said. “We have decent means, which we are also ready to share with friends and brothers and sisters. So there is nobody who sponsored us for this,” he continued.

“I've been reading in the media people questioning, why Rwanda is in Mozambique,” Kagame said. One such article was published by *Zitamar News* in August, which argued that the intervention “is unlikely to come without some quid pro quo for the aspiring African powerhouse”.

An article published by *Zitamar News* argued that the intervention 'is unlikely to come without some quid pro quo for the aspiring African powerhouse'.

The intervention followed a trip to Kigali by France's President Emmanuel Macron, who said Rwanda is “at the heart of [the] capacity that France may have to help bring out regional responses” to crises such as that in Cabo Delgado. On

the same trip, France offered Rwanda a \$71-million soft loan to help deal with the coronavirus pandemic, and a \$1.8-million grant to support sports in Rwandan schools. French public investment bank Bpifrance also signed three agreements to co-operate with Rwanda's sovereign wealth fund.

"Even if Rwanda is nominally funding this operation itself, Western aid, spent in areas such as health and education, effectively frees up the funding needed for this kind of operation," Michela Wrong, author of a recent book about Rwanda (which Kagame also criticised during his September 5 press conference), told *Zitamar*.

And speaking to Voice of America on September 9, Mozambican military analyst Albino Forquilha said that Rwanda's denial that it is being financed from Paris was "simply an exercise in protecting questions of sovereignty".

'...Western aid, spent in areas such as health and education, effectively frees up the funding needed for this kind of operation.'

The speed of Rwanda's response has also raised questions – going into the field ahead of the joint Southern African Development Community (SADC) force, called SAMIM. South Africa's defence minister at the time, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, said it was "regrettable that this deployment takes place before the deployment of SADC troops," saying:

"One would expect Rwanda to go to Mozambique in the context of a mandate given by the heads of state of the SADC region".

But, Kagame said on Sunday, "if somebody has his house on fire and is calling for help, I've never heard of a situation where the one who arrives there first is questioned: 'Why did you arrive so fast, to put out the fire?' I've never heard of this."

Hope for the gas project

Kagame did, however, give a nod to the gas project and the importance of restoring security so that it can continue. "I hope and I'm sure the Mozambicans are hoping that the people will come back to work [on the LNG project] because it means a lot to their economy and to their development," he said – before repeating that "we are there on the request of the Mozambicans".

If security conditions continue to improve in Cabo Delgado, the TotalEnergies project could restart operations in 12-18 months, according to African Development Bank president Akinwumi Adesina, who told Reuters that the temporary suspension of the project should not affect the long-term viability of producing liquefied natural gas.

The armed conflict between military forces and insurgents in the northern province of Cabo Delgado has already caused more than 3,100 deaths, according to the Cabo Ligado conflict observatory, run by ACLED and *Zitamar News*, and more than 817,000 people displaced, according to Mozambican authorities. ■



PHOTO FEATURE

How the mighty have fallen

When your fall from grace is captured on camera

Simon Allison

It is not, by any normal measure, a particularly good photograph. The lighting is all wrong. The resolution is poor. The framing is not balanced. And yet, of the thousands upon thousands of photographs that exist of Alpha Condé, this is the one by which he will be forever defined.

It shows the Guinean president – the *former* president – in the immediate aftermath after the military coup which deposed him on Sunday. Surrounded by heavily armed soldiers, Condé is slouched on a couch. His shirt is buttoned up all wrong and he is clearly seething. The photo is so compelling because it captures the very moment when Condé realises

that everything he has ever worked for has been taken away from him; that the power which he has fought so hard to keep is no longer his.

He has fallen from grace, and this extraordinarily intimate image – stripped of all the pomp and ceremony and grandeur of your typical presidential photograph – is proof of just how far he has fallen.

Condé is not the first president, and he will not be the last, to have his humiliation captured on camera for the world to see. The images are often grainy – mutinous soldiers make for poor photographers, or perhaps they are stills taken from video footage – but what they lack in clarity they make up for in emotional heft.

Other classics in this genre include:



Photo: Jérôme Delay/AP



Photo: AFP

Photo: Still from video/
Nicholas Bauer/ENCA

Robert Mugabe, on the sofa next to his wife Grace, surrounded by the “friends” who have been sent to persuade him to step down. On the coffee table in front of them – alongside the box of tissues provided to mop up their tears – is a folder containing the resignation letter Mugabe will sign just seconds after this picture is taken.

Muammar Gaddafi, face battered and bloodied, in the minutes before his death at the hands of the opposition fighters who found him cowering in a drain pipe.

Yahya Jammeh, clutching on to the last remnants of his status and dignity as he boards the private plane that will ferry him into unhappy exile.

Hosni Mubarak, in a cage in a Cairo courtroom, being made to answer for his

crimes.

Jacob Zuma, shock and fury written all over his face, as Cyril Ramaphosa is announced as the next leader of the ANC

Laurent Gbagbo being arrested, at home in his vest, after failing to convince anyone except his own diehard supporters that he won the 2010 Ivorian election.

There is something utterly fascinating about seeing these once all-powerful presidents in positions of powerlessness; the schadenfreude, yes, but also the reminder that nothing on this earth is permanent or immovable. It is a lesson that other long-term occupants of presidential palaces might be wise to heed, before they get their own entry into this particular hall of shame. ■



No escape: The West's false assumptions are putting African lives at risk.
Photo: Amanuel Sileshi/AFP

The convenient myth of an Africa spared

Many media outlets and pharmaceutical executives claim that Africa has not been badly hit by Covid-19. The evidence shows the opposite is true.

Laura López González

The world has used a lack of data to tell itself that Africa has emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic relatively unscathed. It is a dangerous and deeply rooted fiction – and a tacit justification for one of this century's darkest moments.

This week, analytics company Airfinity revealed that the five regions that had secured the bulk of Covid-19 vaccine

doses by September 2020 – the European Union, United States, United Kingdom, Japan and Canada – will now have more than one-billion spare vaccine doses in the coming year.

Soon though, the supply of vaccines in the Global South will no longer be the problem, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla told journalists this week. Instead, the difficulty will be the willingness of people in poor countries to take them.

“Next year, we should be having enough doses for all that want to receive,” Bourla said. “Then we will reach the same problems [in low and middle-income nations] that we are reaching in the high-income countries, with people that are refusing to get the vaccination.”

He added: “As far as I know, that [vaccine hesitancy] will be even higher. The percentage of hesitancy in those countries [low and middle-income countries] will be way, way higher than the percentage of hesitancy in Europe or in the US or in Japan.”

However, there are few, if any, studies to support Bourla’s assertion that the Global South would be more vaccine-hesitant than the North.

Research on vaccine hesitancy in low-income countries is in its infancy, noted an August study in the journal, *Nature*. In fact, the study found about 80% of people in the 10 largely African low and middle-income countries it reviewed wanted a Covid-19 vaccine – a proportion much higher than that recorded in the United States (65%) or Russia (28%).

There are few, if any, studies to support Bourla’s assertion that the Global South would be more vaccine-hesitant than the North.

Data may not underpin Bourla’s warning to the world but a popular myth might, and some – including prominent journalists such as *The Economist’s* health editor – believe he is right.



Myth take: Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla believes vaccine hesitancy will be more of a problem in Africa than it has been in the West. Photo: Drew Angerer/Getty Images

Africa, they argue, has not been as hard hit by Covid-19 as the North. After all, a recent *Time* magazine headline read, “Why Africa’s Covid-19 outbreak hasn’t been as bad as everyone feared.”

Without having experienced (allegedly) the kind of devastation that the North has, they wonder, will Africans appreciate the urgency to get vaccinated when their turn finally comes?

To be clear, the Brookings Institute noted in May that although developing countries accounted for about half of all official Covid-19 fatalities, nearly nine in 10 Covid-19 deaths could be in the Global South.

In Africa, there’s absolutely no data to say the continent has been spared. In fact, Professor Tom Moultrie, a demographer from the University of Cape Town, thinks the notion should be retired altogether.

“The reason why we think there’s no Covid in much of Africa is simply



Demand: Health workers carry supplies to a vaccination site in Goma in the DRC.

Photo: Guerchom Ndebo/Getty Images

because we don't know where to find those deaths... that doesn't at all mean to say that they are not happening," Moultrie told *The Continent*.

Moultrie tracks uncounted Covid-19 deaths in South Africa. "I buy the argument that we have a younger population, but that is not enough. Without hard evidence built off reliable data from health and vital registration systems and reasonably large sample sizes of testing and mortality tracking, we simply cannot say that Africa has been spared."

We also may never know Covid-19's true body count in Africa for two reasons: A lack of testing and a dearth of records.

Globally, countries use civil registration systems to record births and deaths. But more than half of countries on the continent don't even have enough information on reported deaths to measure how well deaths are being recorded in general, Covid-19 aside.

"Most of the developing world cannot do the accounting for who is dying and to

what extent people are dying at anything approximating a complete way," Moultrie told *The Continent*.

A myth to ease a guilty conscience

Still, the fairytale that the continent's outbreak was "not as bad" risks allowing pharmaceutical companies and heads of state to justify the inequitable Covid-19 vaccine distribution that has seen just 2% of doses globally administered in Africa. It paves the way for a revisionist history – penned by the North – that says vaccines went first to those who needed them most. It makes a mockery of the dead that will never even be counted among the victims of this inequity.

The fiction of an Africa spared also underpins, in Bourla's comments, a historical narrative in which some know better about other people's bodily autonomy – and choices. These "other people" are often at the margins whether by virtue of their race, gender, geography, poverty, incarceration or by the sheer inconvenience their existence poses to power.

We've been here before. In the early 2000s, HIV treatment wasn't available in South Africa but drugs to prevent mother-to-child transmission were – if healthcare workers could diagnose women in time to provide it. Many said Black women would never agree to be tested for a disease that was a death sentence, but more than nine times out of 10, pregnant, HIV-positive women volunteered to be tested.

They understood the science. They understood the stakes, and they made a choice. ■

September 11: The day the world woke up

This was shaping up to be the American century. Then we watched a plane fly into the World Trade Centre.

Patrick Gathara

Twenty years ago, the 9/11 attacks in the United States mainland killed over 3,000 people. Immediately afterwards, America began the Global War on Terror.

Prior to this, the US had seemed invincible, with adversaries restricted to flailing at it in faraway corners of the globe – targeting its embassies in Nairobi and in Dar-es-Salaam, its warships in the Gulf of Aden, or its troops across the Middle East.

In the previous decade, terror groups based in the Middle East had managed few major attacks inside the US, most notably the 1993 bombing at the World Trade Center which killed six and injured 1,500. In fact, the vast majority of terror attacks within the US were carried out by homegrown Christian extremists – like Oklahoma bomber Terry McVeigh, who murdered 168 people in 1995.

The country appeared to be at the peak of its international prestige, having “won” the Cold War, reigning undisputed as the world’s only superpower. “We are the indispensable nation,” secretary of state Madeleine Albright declared in 1998.

This illusion had been dented by the debacle in Somalia and the subsequent

reluctance to intervene in Rwanda in 1994. However, by the end of the decade, following successful interventions in Bosnia and in Kosovo, the US was once again on top of the world.

The reverie was shattered on 11 September 2001. The attack finally brought home to the US the consequences of decades of meddling in other people’s affairs. It also represented a challenge to American global hegemony and introduced a new battleground. As Samuel Huntington postulated in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, in the post-Cold War world: “The most important distinctions among peoples are [no longer] ideological, political, or economic. They are cultural.”

The idea of a clash of civilisations – a war between the Western and the Islamic – was heartily embraced by radical Islamists intent on establishing a global caliphate. Through its words, successive US governments prior to Donald Trump disavowed that framing, with George W Bush declaring “the face of terror is not the true faith of Islam”; and Barack Obama constantly refusing to use the term “radical Islamic terrorism” for fear it would portray the US as being in a war against Islam.



But US actions undermined its rhetoric. It sent armies into Muslim countries and drones rained death on their civilians from the sky. It made it easy for the terrorists to make their argument – and under Trump, even the US seemed to accept it.

Meanwhile on the ideological, economic and political fronts, the US had a new and formidable competitor. As its economy grew, China sought to assert itself on the global stage. Unlike the Americans, China preferred to use more carrot than stick. Within a decade of 9/11, the unipolar, post-Cold War world was becoming increasingly bipolar once again.

The US still possesses the most powerful military on earth. But its post-9/11 adventures have exposed the limits

of that power. It is still the wealthiest country, but is being challenged and even supplanted by China. Even its claim to exceptionalism, to being a paragon of democracy and good governance, has foundered on the rocks of Trumpism.

In truth, the decline was evident before 9/11 and not necessarily caused by it. But that September morning is when those weaknesses were brutally exposed to the world. And, in the decades since – as US troops head home, having meekly surrendered Afghanistan back to the Taliban – it is clear that the superpower's superpowers have only grown weaker. ■

Patrick Gathara is a Nairobi-based cartoonist and commentator.

Nyavuti zinazosaidia serekali kudukiza wananchi wao

***Editor's note:** Pegasus is a spyware program that allows governments to spy on their citizens' mobile phones. It is sold by the NSO Group, an Israeli company, and has been bought by a number of governments around the world – including in Africa. Among the alleged client states are Morocco and Rwanda (although Rwanda's government vigorously denies any wrongdoing – just this week, President Paul Kagame said the whole story was a plot designed to damage Rwanda's relations with other nations). In this op-ed, written in Kiswahili, author **Nanjala Nyabola** argues that the existence of programs like these is a threat to freedom of speech, and inhibits the ability of journalists and activists to hold governments to account.*

Jumatatu 19 julai, wanahabari na wanaharakati kote duniani walistaajabishwa na habari kwamba kampuni ya kiizraeli, NSO Group, iliuzia serekali kadhaa duniani teknolojia inayotumika katika hatua za udukizi, yaani ufuatilaji wa tabia, shughuli au habari za wanahabari hawa kawa kusudi la kukusanya taarifa na kuwashawishi. Programu iliotumika kutekeleza hatua hizi huitwa Pegasus, na upelelezi wa wanahabari hawa uligundua kwamba nchi kadhaa, miongoni mwao nchi za kiafrika kama Rwanda na Moroko, ilikuwa baina ya serekali zilizoinunua. Kulingana na upelelezi wa gazeti hizi, wakiungwa mkono na wanaharakati wa Amnesty International, wanahabari waligundua kwamba serekali hizi zilipatia shirika ya NSO Group nambari elfu hamsini za simu ili shirika hili liivunje usumabji fiche

katika simu zao za mkononi. Kwa hivyo, serekali hizi ziliweza kutekeleza udukizi dhidi ya wanahabari na wanaharakati kwa azma ya kusimamisha kazi zao.

Wanahabari hawa pia waligundua kwamba watu wengi waliolengwa na programu ya Pegasus wamekumbwa na matatizo mengi. Wengi walifungwa jela au walifuatiliwa karibu na polisi nchini mwao, na wengineo hata wakauwawa. Mkewe Jamal Kashoggi, mwanahabari msaudi aliyeuliwa na serekali yake, ni miongoni mwa waliolengwa na programu hii, naye pia Alaa Al Sadiq, mwanaharakati muemirati aliyefariki mjini London katika ajali ya gari isiyoeleweka. Mwanahabari mumeksiko Cecilio Pinedoa Birto pia alilengwa na serekali yake na programu hii naye akauliwa wiki kadhaa baadaye. Tena Carine Kanimba, mwanawe Paul Rusesabagina yumo katika kundi hili,

naye babake alikamatwa alipokuwa ubelgiji na akajipata jelani Rwanda bila uwazi kuhusu jinsi serekali ya Rwanda ilivyomkata. Kwingineko Omar Radi, mwanahabari wa Moroko alifungwa jela siku sambambe na kuchapishwa kwa habari za Pegasus. Hata rais wa Meksiko alipokuwa mwongozi wa upinzani nchini humo yumo kati ya waliolengwa na programu hii.

Kwa kweli utumizi wa programu kama Pegasus ni kikawazo kubwa katika hatua za kulinda haki za binadamu. Wanazojiunda programu hizi hutarajia kuvunja ufichamishaji kamili unaolinda data ya watumizi dhidi ya kusomwa na yeyote ila mtumaji na mpokeaji. Programu hii ni mojawapo ya programu zinazoitwa “spyware” kwenye Kiingereza. Programu hizi huunduwa na nia moja tu – kuwezesha udukizi dhidi ya wananchi, hasa ilipogundulika kwama simu za aina ya iPhone huwa na usalama ya hali ya juu. Ikipaukwa kwenye simu ya mkononi, Pegasus hukusanya ujumbe zote anazozituma au kuzipokea mtumaji, pamoja na picha zake, huweza kuasha kamera yake ya simu au kipaza sauti simuni ili irekodi mazungumzo yake. Programu hii pia inaweza kutambua alipo mtumaji, alikoenda awali na aliyekutana naye.

Ndiposa wataalamu wa kidijitali wanasema kwamba Pegasus ni programu ya udukizi iliyoendelea zaidi duniani, angalau iliyoundwa na kampuni ya kibinafsi. Hapo awali, programu hizi zilihijati mtumuzi afuate kiungo fulani ili programu ipaukwe kwenye simu yake. Lakini Pegasus ni ya haijitaji kubonyezwa

kwa kiungo, na kwa hivyo wanaharakati wanahofishwa sana na kutumika kwake. Programu hii inamaanisha kwamba serekali zinaweza kutekeleza udukizi dhidi ya wapinzani wao bila kupitia hatua za kisheria kama kutafuta hati kortini. Na kufuatia mifano ya hapo awali, matokeo yanaweza kuwa maovu zaidi.

Nia ya serekali zinazotumia programu kama Pegasus ni kutawala uwandaraia na uandishi wa habari kwa kupunguza uhuru wa kunena. Katika enzi hizi za wavuti, wanahabari wamezidisha nguvu zao za kujieleza na huwapa watu maelezo muhimu kuhusu matatizo za kijamii hata katika mitandao ya kijamii. Kwa hivyo, serekali zisizokuwa na nia ya kubadilisha jinsi zinavyotawala huamua kutatiza kazi za wanahabari na wanaharakati, ili wakomeshe kazi zao. Nazo shirika za kibinafsi kama NSO Group zinatafuta faida bila mipaka, na huuzia serekali yoyote iliyo na hela za kulipa programu hizi, bila kuzingatia rekodi zao za kulinda haki za binadamu. Kama tulivyoona hapo awali, sio mara ya kwanza kwa NSO Group kulaumiwa kwa kuza programu hii kwani iliuzia serekali ya Saudia iliyoitumia katika hatua za kuuu mwanahabari Jamal Kashoggi. Ndiposa wanaharakati wanahimiza serekali zote na umoja wa mataifa kutia marufuku kuuzwa kwa programu kama Pegasus. Programu kama hizi hupa serekali uwezo nyingi ya kudhoofisha haki za binadamu bila uangalizi, na yanakera nia ya kutawala na haki na uwazi. ■

Nanjala Nyabola ni mwandishi, mtafiti na mchanganuzi wa siasa.



Welcome to **Benguela**

Benguela exists within Angola's collective psyche in a way no other city does. It's a place that's inspired poets, musicians, writers and artists, a frequent subject of their adoration and longing.

Cláudio Silva

The second-oldest Portuguese-founded city in Angola, Benguela has existed since May 17 1617 and is located in the western part of the country. As a coastal city – a *cidade das acácias rubras* (city of the Royal Poinciana

tree), as Benguela is known – it is spoilt for beaches, fresh seafood, the type of climate that makes you want to constantly be outside, and gorgeous people with open hearts.

It wasn't always like this, of course.

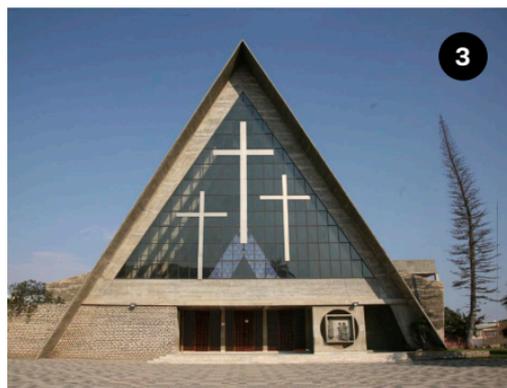
Perhaps the darkest part of this city's history coincides with its colonial past, when Benguela was a major slave port. No other country in Africa exported more slaves to South America, specifically Brazil, than Angola, and a countless number of them left from these very shores.

From Benguela's fabled Praia Morena, where slaves were loaded, it's a straight shot to Salvador da Bahia on the other side of the Atlantic.

Paradoxically, as it constantly is with history, Benguela's colonial past richly contributes to the architecture that gives this city its charm. The wide, tree-lined avenues are dotted with centuries-old churches and palaces,



Photo: Walter Fernandes



gardens and plazas, and on the edges of the city are sprawling shanty towns to remind us of all the refugees that arrived from the interior, driven by Angola's decades-long civil war.

A city of more than 600,000 people, Benguela is surprisingly small, compact and easy to navigate. The best way to get around is by kupapata, the ubiquitous motorcycles that carry everyone around (trips start at 150AKZ – about 25 US cents), but sometimes, especially in the historic centre, it's just better to go on foot. There are actual sidewalks, something those from the capital city Luanda have forgotten exists, and the varied architecture of houses, cinemas (the open-aired Cine Kalunga **(1)**) and the majestic Teatro Monumental are a must) and government offices are visually arresting.

To further delve into Benguela's past, the Archeology Museum, one of the oldest buildings still standing in the city, is a must. The museum no longer houses much, but in centuries past

Benguela is spoilt for beaches, fresh seafood, and the type of climate that makes you want to be outside

slaves were held here before being put on wooden vessels that sailed to Brazil and Cuba.

To clear your head, exit the museum and take a stroll down Praia Morena **(2)**, Benguela's very own urban beach (the water has seen cleaner days, though), and enjoy the *casuarinas* and the people-watching, then down a Cuca beer or two at nearby O Boteco.

A deeply Catholic city, Benguela has several significant churches. Among the more famous ones are the Our Lady



To clear your head, take a stroll down Praia Morena, Benguela's very own urban beach, and enjoy the casuarinas and the people-watching

of Fátima Cathedral **(3)**, an imposing triangular structure that took 40 years to complete, and the unmistakable Our Lady of Pópulo, an architectural treasure built in the 17th century with stones brought over from Brazil to steady the slave ships as they made their journey back. Close by, the Palácio das Bolas **(4)**, a palace built in 1920, is one of Benguela's most recognisable landmarks; today, it serves as the ruling party's provincial headquarters.

Of course, you can't visit Benguela without taking a swim in one of its beautiful beaches. The best one closest to the city is Baía Azul, a short, breezy 25 minute drive along the coast. Baía Azul

is where Benguela goes to unwind, and many locals and out-of-towners built vacation homes on the hills overlooking the serene blue waters. For 5,000AKZ (\$8), have yourself some freshly caught grilled fish or lobster with a side of *feijão de óleo de palma* (beans stewed in palm oil) and a beer on the picnic tables at Restaurante Bodona, with your feet firmly planted on the sand as your eyes scan the Atlantic's horizon.

Bodona is good and the setting is hard to beat, but perhaps the best place to eat in town is at Tudo na Brasa. Their specialty: traditional Portuguese roasted suckling pig, in which the pork meat is juicy and tender while the skin is satisfyingly crisp. It's served alongside a distinctive sauce made of lard, a splash of white wine, garlic and lots of white pepper. (It'll set you back about \$10.) Such is Portuguese influence in coastal Angola and especially Benguela that one of its favourite dishes is a perfected version of this Iberian favourite.

The band África Tentação sang warmly about the city in their iconic 1982 jam *Quando Fui à Benguela* (When I Went to Benguela). Even though the song is in Portuguese, you'll be able to make out some of the landmarks mentioned here.

"When I went to Benguela I didn't want to leave," they sing. *"When I saw Praia Morena I started dreaming."* ■



Do you want to show us around your town or city?

Send an email to thecontinent@mg.co.za and we'll be in touch!

Brazil's moment of truth

It's a bad time for Brazil's president, Jair Bolsonaro. With an election coming up next year, his poll numbers are dropping rapidly, with Brazilians increasingly dissatisfied with rising inflation and his poor handling of the Covid-19 pandemic. He has consistently downplayed the severity of the virus, despite Brazil recording nearly 600,000 deaths. The Supreme Court is investigating his friends and allies for corruption, and there are talks in parliament about whether he should be impeached.

Bolsonaro's supporters took to the streets of major cities this week to protest against his perceived enemies – including the courts, opposition parties and the senate – with some calling for the army to intervene to protect the president, which would amount to a military coup.

Bolsonaro himself has taken to criticising the country's electoral commission, saying that the vote is being rigged against him. It is a variation of the tactic used by former US president Donald Trump – for whom Bolsonaro has repeatedly expressed admiration – and, even more recently, by Zambia's former president Edgar Lungu. It didn't work for either of them.

To understand more about what's going

on in South America's most populous country, and what might happen next, *The Continent* spoke to João Bosco Monte, the head of the Brazil Africa Institute.

***The Continent:* What do the protests this week tell us about Bolsonaro's support?**

João Bosco Monte: Bolsonaro is something different in Brazilian politics. Very extreme right, conservative, looking to the Trump model. He has three or four key policies: he wants people to be able to carry guns, he wants to make abortion illegal, he is anti-LGBTQI, and he has made things harder for minority groups. These policies are popular with some voters, and he had their support from the beginning. But what we are seeing is that he has not been able to grow that support. Fewer people came to support him this week than predicted. They thought they could bring two million people, but they only brought around 125,000. His policies are not resonating with most Brazilians.

Can the political opposition mount a viable challenge in the next election?

The polls say, today, that Bolsonaro is likely to lose. The main opposition candidate is Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, known as Lula, along with a few other candidates. Lula's support is so strong at the moment that he could even win the election on the first round, so it might not go to a run-off election. Usually, leftist parties in Brazil are not organised in a single coalition, and fight among themselves, but these are not



Make Brazil Great Again:
Bolsonaro's right-wing
policies are not the trump
cards he thought they'd be.

normal circumstances. The opposition have a common objective – removing Bolsonaro. But Bolsonaro doesn't need anybody to beat him, because he beat himself. Every time he opens his mouth, every time he appears on camera, he brings an agenda to the public that fails to garner their support.

The president's close allies are being investigated for corruption. What is the likelihood of the president himself being impeached, and would there be support in parliament for this?

There is a coalition of smaller parties called Centrão in Brazil's National Congress. These parties are not particularly ideological but usually vote with the government, in order to grab whatever is possible in terms of government positions and budgets. So they support Bolsonaro for now, but if he starts to bleed they might rethink their position. And he is bleeding now, so the next few days and

weeks are very important to see if they will keep supporting him or if they are out of his club.

What about the military?

Bolsonaro's current minister of defence, Walter Braga Netto, was an army general. Normally it's a civilian. He is very supportive of Bolsonaro. But the other generals – the heads of the army, air force and navy – are not supporting him. But we won't see what happened in Guinea happening in Brazil. The critical players in this situation are not the military but the police. The local police in many places – the low-ranking police officers – many of them support Bolsonaro. This is something very important for us to consider. They have the guns, they can go to the street and do something. They won't be able to keep Bolsonaro in power, but they can certainly do real damage to the democratic environment we have in Brazil. ■

We can't keep forgetting Africa's scientists

When searching for African heroes, the scientific community is too often overlooked

Olusegun Obasanjo

Many a time, when looking for individuals and institutions to celebrate in Africa, we tend to overlook the scientific community. Even when we do applaud scientists, it is not unusual that our attention will be drawn more to those far beyond the continent.

This trend has especially been apparent now, during the Covid-19 pandemic. All notable focus has been directed to research activities in Europe, Asia and the United States. Yet we have thousands, if not millions of scientists doing similarly impactful work in the continent.

Thankfully, this narrative is gradually changing with prestigious awards focused on the African scientific community, such as the Africa Food Prize. Since 2006, the award – for which I chair the prize committee – has been shining a spotlight on heroic African individuals and institutions making a real difference

in the continent's agriculture, food and nutrition security landscape.

In 2020, remote sensing scientist Dr Catherine Nakalembe and soil specialist Dr André Bationo shared the prize.

Exemplifying the importance of scientific work in Africa, the 37-year-old Nakalembe is helping countries build systems to monitor crops using satellite data, thus supporting African farmers to make evidence-based decisions for better agricultural output and resilience. Bationo is contributing to the understanding of soil fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa and has made transformative discoveries in micro-dosing fertiliser technology.

During the five years that I have been involved, we have reviewed thousands of nominations. Others that stand out include Josephine Okot, who was honoured for her efforts in reversing Africa's declining agricultural productivity, managing to penetrate the hitherto male-dominated seed sector with her Victoria Seeds enterprise; and Malian entrepreneur Maimouna Coulibaly, whose company has grown into one of the largest seed producers in West Africa, with a wide distribution network for hybrid maize, sorghum, rice, cowpea, peanut and vegetable seeds.

Seeing many young people brilliantly deliver solutions for Africa's biggest problems gives me hope of a brilliant future for the continent. ■

Olusegun Obasanjo was president of Nigeria from 1976-1979 and 1999-2007.

THE QUIZ

0-3

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

4-7

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

8-10

"I am my own president-for-life."



- 1_ Name the ousted president of Guinea.
- 2_ Bah Ndaw is the ousted president of which country?
- 3_ What is the capital city of the Central African Republic?
- 4_ Which country's team won this year's AfroBasket?
- 5_ In which country is the kwanza currency used?
- 6_ True or false: Gabon is part of Ecowas.
- 7_ The word "junta" means "president". True or false?
- 8_ How many countries in the world have "Guinea" in their name?
- 9_ Which country has an artificial island called Banana Island?
- 10_ The Volta River is the main river system of which country?

HOW DID I DO?

WhatsApp 'ANSWERS' to +27 73 805 6068 and we'll send the answers to you!

Would you like to send us some quiz questions or even curate your own quiz? Let us know at TheContinent@mg.co.za

What do the people of Guinea think about the coup – and the prospect of army rule?

Aliou Barry

Guinea hit the headlines last Sunday, September 5, when long-term president Alpha Condé was overthrown in a coup led by Special Forces Commander Mamady Doumbouya. The new military junta quickly announced the dissolution of the constitution, released political prisoners and promised to form a new government within weeks. But what do the people of Guinea themselves want from their next government?

Ahead of the coup, Condé's popularity had fallen significantly due to his efforts to prolong his stay in office. Having already served the two-term presidential limit, Condé held a constitutional referendum in March last year to give himself a third term. Knowing that poor economic conditions and growing repression meant that his support had fallen dramatically, the president couldn't rely on a fair vote: the referendum was heavily manipulated.

In response, the opposition boycotted and the African Union cancelled its election observation mission. When the Constitutional Court announced that the new constitution had passed with a majority of 90%, it did nothing to boost the president's legitimacy: Afrobarometer's

nationally representative survey of Guinea in 2019 revealed that 76% of Guineans wanted to maintain a two-term limit.

Opposition to Condé continued to grow as a result of the greater economic hardship brought by Covid-19, to the point where some 85% of Guineans disapproved of his performance related to improving poor people's living conditions.

But does this mean Guineans want the army to determine their destiny? There may have been support for the overview of Condé, but there is no public appetite for military rule. In the last Afrobarometer survey, 77% of Guineans disapproved of the idea of the "army coming in to run the government", and the same proportion backed democracy as the best form of government for their country.

It is therefore clear that if Mamady Doumbouya has taken power in the name of the Guinean people, the first thing he must do is to transfer it back to a civilian government. ■



Dr Aliou Barry is the Director General of Stat View International, the national investigator for the Afrobarometer network in Guinea. This analysis was produced in collaboration with Democracy in Africa

Dressed to kill (or lightly maim)



Continental Drift

Samira Sawlani

Put on your best outfit, practice that pout and get ready to strut, fashion lovers, it's the most important time of the year! Fashion weeks will be running back to back this month in New York, London, Paris and Milan; however, those are not the ones we are interested in.

Gucci? Dior? Armani? Louis Vuitton? Who needs them when we have our own fashion-forward leaders constantly demonstrating sartorial excellence (with taxpayers' money but, to quote Carrie Bradshaw, "I like my money where I can see it – in my closet").

This week saw Alpha Condé giving us "coup casual", in jeans and a half unbuttoned blue shirt, while he was entertaining military guests who dropped by for some reason. Naomi Campbell, Iman and Alek Wek had nothing on him – his pout in pictures from the event surely make him the envy of them all.

By contrast, the military chic of Lieutenant-Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, in his army fatigues, red beret and large sunglasses, underscored his gravitas, as he announced the arrest of Mr Condé. Later he shifted to evening

formalwear by draping the Guinean flag around his shoulders, handily reminding us that dictators are temporary, but drip is forever.

We suspect the whole thing caught Condé quite unawares. He is known to have been midway through a spot of reinvention, updating not just his wardrobe but the curtains, carpet and constitution of Guinea too, allowing him not just to stay on for another term, but to do it in style. Everyone's a critic, we suppose. Everyone he'd personally thrown in prison, anyway.

But the criticism was fine. It wasn't like he was going to run out of jail cells, after all. But it hurts when it comes from those closest to you. And he and Lieutenant-Colonel Doumbouya were close enough that in a pre-coup interview Condé felt it was okay to mention that the colonel was popular among the ladies but that "unfortunately for them, he is married".

Revealing his marital status on TV? Possibly forcing him to close his Tinder profile? Ouch. We won't lie, Uncle Alpha, a lot of men would have ousted you after cramping their style like that.

Talk to my agent

Meanwhile serving us up piping hot drama and ice-cold looks are President Farmajo of Somalia and Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble.

The country's National Intelligence

Agency said one of its spies who had gone missing, Ikraan Tahlil Farah, had in fact been killed by Al-Shabaab. Unsatisfied with the way the matter was handled, the prime minister suspended the agency's director, Fahad Yasin.

In a statement the PM appointed Bashir Mohamed Jama as interim head of the agency. And then he only went and announced that the president himself was obstructing effective investigations into Ikraan Tahlil Farah's death.

President Farmajo was *livid*. After he'd stopped smashing the perfectly lovely plates Jama got him for their anniversary (we imagine), he then decided to appoint his own guy to act as interim director.

The tug of war is still going on, and reminds us of every season of *America's Next Top Model*. The question is, who will come out on top? And, more importantly, how many innocent Somalis will be caught up in the crossfire?

Oh no, not corduroy

Back to the catwalk: we are just loving the resurgence of the mom jeans we're seeing, along with the scrunchies, cargo trousers and the very sexy puffy sleeves that are transporting us back to 1990s Nollywood. But some trends should stay buried. Low-waisted jeans? Oof. Corduroy? Please, no. And, oh boy, Yahya Jammeh?

Ahead of December elections, the National People's Party of Gambia has announced it will be forming a coalition with Jammeh's Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction – or APRC, as they're known.

While Jammeh remains in exile in



Catfight: America's Next Top Model could learn from Somalia's drama.

Equatorial Guinea, secretary-general Fabakry Tombong Jatta said APRC wants "President Jammeh to return to the country peacefully".

Exactly what this means is anybody's guess, but human rights activists have joined a growing chorus of Gambian voices expressing dismay at the merger, and concern that this could see Jammeh return without facing consequences for past actions, which allegedly include looting Gambia's coffers to fund a life of luxury, as well as accusations of human rights abuses, corruption and rape.

Those are untested allegations, sure, but if he does come back into fashion we think we'll give that catwalk a miss, thank you.

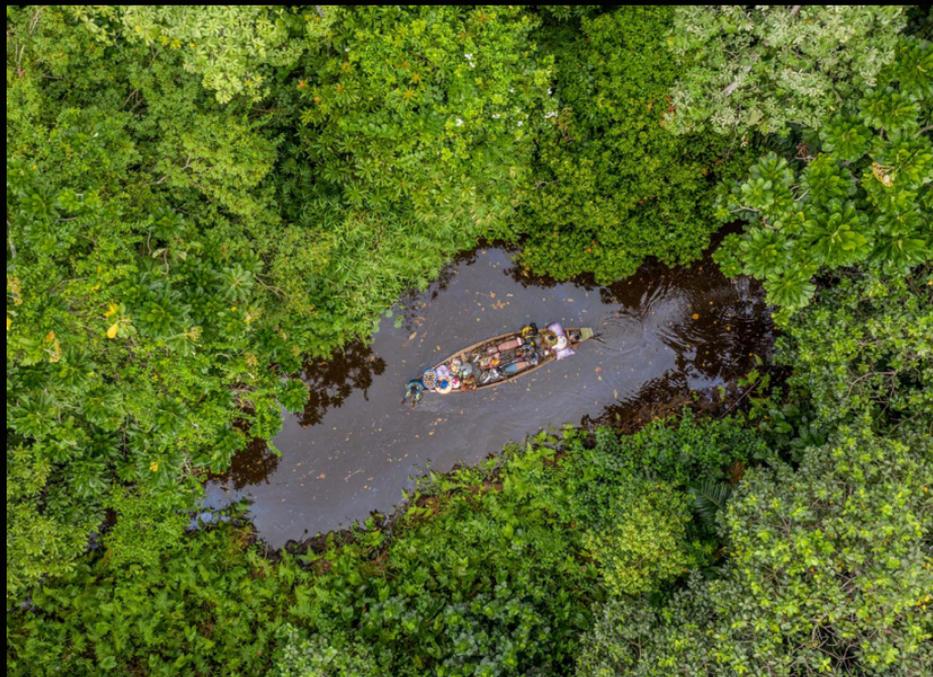
Don't let a fashion faux pas sap your sartorial spirit, though. It's the end of another week on the continent, after all, so whether you're stepping out or staying in, why not do it in style? You could wear a hat in a tribute to Yuweri Museveni, or a beret inspired by Julius Malema, or even a camo-print mask as a shout-out to Doumbouya.

Whatever you wear, wherever you go, please be safe, be happy, and at least *try* not to overthrow the government this weekend, okay? ■

THE BIG PICTURE

Wetland wonder: A canoe makes its way through the Lokoli forest in Benin, named after the Hlan river that crosses it. More than 241 plant and 160 animal species are found in the forest's marshes, including the rare red-bellied monkey, the swamp mongoose and the sitatunga. Travelling through the immense forest, which covers nearly 3,000 hectares, is only possible using small wooden boats to navigate the area's lakes, swamps and marshland.

Photo: Yanick Folly / AFP



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