

African Politics and Policy

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Editorial

In 1994 Giovanni Sartori noted a curious paradox, namely that in some countries government instability, that is the frequency with which governments are voted in and out of office, was coupled with the fact that political leaders in such systems enjoyed remarkably long and stable career in office.

African events in 2015 portray a rather similar paradox because in spite of the fact that many African countries are or perceived to be politically unstable, some African Presidents remain in power with remarkably long periods of time. The President of Cameroon has been in office for 39 years, the presidents of Angola and Equatorial Guinea have been in power for 36 years, Mugabe has been Zimbabwe's president for 33 years, Museveni has been the Ugandan President for 29 years, while Al-Bashir has been Sudan's president for 26 years.

The stability of personal power is remarkable if one considers that regardless of how one measures political stability, these countries are characterized by uncharacteristically high levels of instability. According to the 2014 World Governance Indicators, 96.1 per cent of the countries in the world are more stable than Sudan, 85.9 per cent of them are more stable than Cameroon, 84 per cent of the world is more stable than Uganda, 76.2 per cent of the countries are more stable than Zimbabwe, 69.4 per cent are more stable than Equatorial Guinea and while Angola, which is the most stable country in this sample, is less stable than 55.5 per cent of the countries worldwide.

The African story is interesting not only because it shows that political instability goes hand in hand with long tenure in office, but because it indicates that in some cases leaders' efforts to remain in power are responsible for the political destabilization of their respective countries. The case of Burundi, where the constitution was amended to allow the president to serve for a third term, or the case of DRC, where Kabila announced that elections will be postponed for 2 to 4 years, are emblematic in this regard.

The lesson that African leaders should learn is that what matters is the stability of their countries not the length of their tenure in office and the latter should be sacrificed to secure the former. Learning this simple lesson would be highly beneficial to many countries in the continent and would provide an indication of real leadership.

Riccardo Pelizzo

this issue

Stability and Leadership P.1
SDG for Africa P.2
Elections in Tanzania P.3
Announcement P.4

IN THE NEWS

On October 25, elections were held in both Ivory Coast and Tanzania. In **Ivory Coast** President Ouattara won 84 per cent of the vote, while in **Tanzania** dr Magufuli won 59.4 per cent of the vote. The NEC annulled the results of the elections in Zanzibar and the decision was harshly criticized by the opposition and by the members of the international community.

South Sudan

The investigators of the African Union found evidence of killings, rape, torture and forced cannibalism. Human bodies were mutilated and burned. Blood was drained from dead bodies and people were at times forced to eat the burned human flesh and drink blood. According to the AU report human rights violations were perpetrated both by the government forces and by the rebels.

What do SDGs promise for Africa?

By Omer F. Baris

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in September this year by the UN summit, replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The number of goals, which set a framework for achieving true development worldwide by 2030, is increased to seventeen from eight MDGs.

The results of the MDG's were mixed for the African continent, as outlined by the 2015 Africa MDG report. Explaining the failure of some MDGs, complete or partial, it can always be claimed that there are number of institutional challenges specific to Africa that makes the implementation a major issue. More central issue, however, as outlined by William Easterly, a former World Bank economist and an open critic of large-scale development strategies, MDGs were unfair to Africa even at the setup (1). Take poverty reduction goal for example. It was less likely for Africa to reduce poverty by half compared to other regions, as per capita income is considerably low in Africa. Even for the same rate of growth, the poverty reduction will be lower in Africa, compared to other regions of the world. Similarly, it was less likely for Africa to achieve the goals on education and other development indicators, all of which depend largely on income levels.

With the new SDGs, the problem becomes more severe. In a recent article appeared in Foreign Policy with the title "The SDGs Should

Stand for Senseless, Dreamy, Garbled", Easterly finds SDGs worthless, unattainable, unmeasurable (2). Having "both too many items and too little content for each one", Easterly rightfully questions the relevance of the targets to concrete actions where the "SDGs are so encyclopedic that everything is top priority, which means nothing is a priority".

It is now an open question whether the SDGs will function as a motivating factor for the real development issues in Africa, or they will pave the way for keeping Africa as the scapegoat of large-scale development proposals.

References

- (1) How the Millennium Development Goals are Unfair to Africa, *World Development*, 37, no. 1, (January 2009): 26-35.
- (2) The SDGs Should Stand for Senseless, Dreamy, Garbled, *Foreign Policy*, appeared online: September 28, 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/09/28/the-sdgs-are-utopian-and-worthless-mdgs-development-rise-of-the-rest/>



The dangers of Meat

The results of a study released by the World Health Organization (WHO) showed that the consumption of red meat and the consumption of cured meat such as bacon and sausages may increase the likelihood to get cancer. Specifically, the WHO argued that the consumption of 50 grams of cured meat on a daily basis increases the probability to get colorectal cancer by 18 per cent. Kenyan doctors commented the news by saying that meat consumption has always been known to be carcinogenic and to be related to a wide range of cardio-vascular diseases. Kenyan doctors warned specifically against the dangers of Nyama choma (roasted meat) which is quite popular in the country. According to WHO processed meat is considered as carcinogenic as alcohol, asbestos and tobacco, while red meat is likely to be conducive to cancer.



The 2015 Tanzanian Elections

The Presidential elections recently held in Tanzania were expected to be the most competitive in the country's history. The ruling party had experienced a fair share of factional and personal infighting, had suffered several defections, was challenged by a coalition of opposition parties that were hoping to find strength in unity, and was not terribly popular among younger segments of the electorate.

In spite of the rapid economic growth that Tanzania had experienced for several years, a large percentage of Tanzanian voters believed that the quality of public services was low and rapidly deteriorating.

The fact that the CCM was unable to capitalize on its successes, was criticized for its alleged failures, was internally divided and was challenged by a united front led several observers to suggest that CCM would struggle to win the Presidential elections.

The CCM did indeed struggle to win. The campaign was bitter, it was full of accusations and CCM's electoral returns were the lowest in the last 15 years. CCM, that won nearly 72 per cent of the vote in 2000, 80 per cent in 2005, nearly 63 per cent in 2010, won just 58.4 per cent in 2015—a result which is rather disappointing for a party

that 10 years earlier appealed to four voters out of five.

What will happen next is anybody's guess. Our impression, however, is that CCM will have to work hard to solve its internal issues, to pacify factional tensions, to improve the quality of service delivery and to satisfy the demands of a wider portion of the electorate. This is the recipe to remain electorally competitive. The alternative is defeat. This is the choice that CCM and President Magufuli need to make.

RP

Readings

IN AN INCREASINGLY POPULAR ARTICLE, Leeson argues that Somalia is better off stateless

Leeson's evidence was presented in three parts. One portion of the evidence discussed in his paper presented a comparison between socioeconomic conditions in Somalia under statehood and statelessness. A second portion of empirical evidence provided a comparison of Somalia and other countries in the region, while the third set of data displayed cross-regional variation within Somalia. The evidence sustained three sets of claims: namely that progress along developmental lines was quite uneven within Somalia, that Somalia was better off stateless than it had been under a predatory state and that the developmental progress achieved by a stateless Somalia was in line with, if not better than, what other countries had been able to achieve in the East African region. See Leeson, Peter T. "Better off stateless: Somalia before and after government collapse." *Journal of Comparative Economics* 35.4 (2007): 689-710.

Growth Forecasts for East Africa

Investments in infrastructure boost growth in Eastern Africa

East Africa is expected to experience strong economic growth in 2015. Investments in infrastructures are expected to make the economy grow by 5.3 per cent in **Uganda**. The economic outlook looks even brighter in **Kenya**, where investments in road, rail and power plans are expected to stimulate the economy, economic growth is estimated to be in the 6.9-7.0% range for 2015. In **Tanzania** the government has revised upward its growth estimates. Strong performance in the agricultural, construction and manufacturing sector are expected to lead to a 7.4% economic growth in 2015.



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Job Openings

The GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies / Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien plans to appoint a research fellow to work on “international diffusion and cooperation of authoritarian regimes – IDCAR network”
Job reference: GIGA-15-09

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