

Africa Briefs

Museveni Denounces COP26 Conference in *Wall Street Journal* Op-Ed

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni identified the conflict between the COP26 process and the necessity for development in Africa in an Oct. 24 *Wall Street Journal* [op-ed](#) titled, “Solar and Wind Force Poverty on Africa.” President Museveni bluntly stated: “Africa can’t sacrifice its future prosperity for Western climate goals. The continent should balance its energy mix, not rush straight toward renewables—even though that will likely frustrate some of those gathering at next week’s global climate conference in Glasgow.”

Noting the fact that Africa’s entire output of carbon is a mere fraction of the global total, he makes the valid point that even if Sub-Saharan Africa “were to ... triple its electricity consumption overnight, it would add only 0.6% to global carbon emissions.” He supports a “slow” move to “reliable green energy sources,” adding that “nuclear power is also already being put to good use in South Africa,” and that other nations (including his own) have nuclear ambitions. In closing, Museveni says: “Africans have a right to use reliable, cheap energy, and doing so doesn’t prevent the development of the continent’s renewables. Forcing Africa down one route will hinder our fight against poverty.”

Sudan Coup in Line with Regional Principles

Sudan’s military coup of Oct. 25—ending the civilian-military government under civilian Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok—preserved leading

principles of the regional powers, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and UAE. The three powers are in agreement that democracy is not an option, that influence of the Muslim Brotherhood must be opposed, and that the Abraham accords with Israel are a positive step.

Sudan has been ruled by the military since independence in 1956, apart from brief, failed attempts at parliamentary democracy. The co-leaders of the Oct. 25 coup, Generals Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (aka Hemedti) oppose influence of the Muslim Brotherhood. And Burhan “was a driving force in the normalization with Israel,” according to the *Jerusalem Post*, Oct. 26.

It is also likely that economic policy considerations entered into the calculations of Burhan and Dagalo. Prime Minister Hamdok had instituted IMF shock therapy (or a close likeness) after he was sworn in, in August 2019, and the conditions of life have degenerated markedly since then. Probably the military could see disaster looming. They are solicitous of political stability in general and their own ability to rule in particular. That means people have to eat.

As regards economic development, a military government in Sudan could draw upon the examples of Egypt and UAE. UAE has just completed Al-Barakah nuclear power plant and has a space program. Egypt is building a nuclear power plant at Al-Dabaa and a new capital city, and continues to improve and expand the capacity of the Suez Canal with a further \$10 billion project now underway. Saudi Arabia plans to build 16 nuclear reactors by 2030.

Prime Minister Hamdok represented the Forces for Freedom and Change, a coalition led by Western-ori-

ented academics and activists, formed in the 2019 unrest opposing President Omar al-Bashir. The military saw advantages in removing him. He is currently in prison for corruption, but the military does not wish to send him to the ICC, where he could name others.

According to Reuters Oct. 28, Russia gave assurance in advance that it would protect the coup-makers from hostile UN Security Council resolutions, and is now doing so.

Calls in CAR and Mali for Dialogue with Jihadis Mean Angst for London

A state of emergency instituted in January in the Central African Republic (CAR) was to expire at the end of October. Instead of extending it, President Faustin-Archange Touadéra now says the emergency decree has done little to stop the violence, which caused hundreds of thousands to flee their homes in recent years, and he is reportedly calling for dialogue with rebel forces. The rebellion in CAR has progressed steadily since rebels defeated President François Bozizé in 2013.

Mali has also experienced jihadi terror since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. The failure of its military operations against the jihadis has led to a reevaluation, with muted calls for dialogue in the recent months. Reuters reported Oct. 19 that the Ministry of Religious Affairs had approached the High Islamic Council to open negotiations with jihadi groups.

That announcement—which would be the first official call for dialogue between a West African government and a jihadi opposition, undermining the post-9/11 strategy of the Global War

on Terror—was quickly retracted by the government. Its Oct. 21 statement “[informed] the national and international public that to date, no national or international organization has been officially mandated to carry out such an activity,” as reported by Reuters.

London Sees a Weakened Nigeria as on the Verge of Collapse

In the eyes of the imperial powers, Nigeria’s army and police are so weakened, and public confidence in the state to provide security is so low, that Nigeria is likely soon to just fall apart.

The Economist Oct. 23 features two articles on Nigeria, both focusing on the security and political situation, and both foreseeing the early dissolution of Africa’s most populous country. One of them, “How Kidnappers, Zealots and Rebels Are Making Nigeria Ungovernable,” after describing three destabilization threats—jihadi insurgency, secessionism, and banditry—each predominant in a different region, ends with the following:

“Yet even countries that seem permanent can fall apart, if the bonds between citizen and state disintegrate. It happened to Yugoslavia. It seems to be happening in Ethiopia, which was long seen as a model for development in Africa, and perhaps in Cameroon, which had been peaceful for decades before a separatist war forced more than 1 million people to flee their homes. It would be complacent to assume that Nigeria is uniquely immune to the poison being injected daily into it by jihadism, separatism and warlordism. ‘Violence is a slippery slope,’ warns Bulama Bukarti of the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change.”

The second article, “Insurgency, Secessionism and Banditry Threaten Nigeria,” perhaps more explicit, notes

the weakened state of the police and army—so weak, they say, that the country might have to call in experts from the UK and the U.S. Nigeria was in fact visited by a trio of U.S. diplomats, led by U.S. Principal Deputy National Security Advisor Jonathan Finer, who descended on Nigeria (and Equatorial Guinea and Mauritania), to press for allegiance to imperial dictates: “fighting terror” and other issues, according to the White House statement.

Late last year, *The Financial Times* ran a headline asserting that “Nigeria is at risk of becoming a failed state.” That came in the wake of a month-long “twitter rebellion” targeting the state security apparatus, with the “End-SARS” hashtag, after which the regional crises expanded.

Zimbabwe’s Chivhu Mine and Steel Complex Gets Initial \$1bn from China

In what could be seen as a “pump primer” for the upcoming November conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), China has announced a \$1 billion financing deal to build a massive steel and manufacturing complex in central Zimbabwe. The Chivhu project, when fully built, will feature a hydropower dam; a short rail line; a mining and ore reducing facility; a steel production facility; and ultimately a completely new city of 15,000.

Located in Chivhu, about 100 km south of Harare, the nation’s capital, the project is under the control of Afrochine Smelting, a division of Tsingshan Holding Group (THG) based in China. Quoted in the *Zimbabwe Herald*, Afrochine project manager Benson Xu explained that the company is already Zimbabwe’s biggest chrome smelter, while THG produces 25% of global steel. Benson estimates that the Chivhu complex will create 4,000 permanent jobs, plus potentially 10,000

more in upstream and downstream opportunities.

Xu stated on Oct. 18, “We already have funds enough to see the setting up of the project, and you may have heard the figure of US\$1 billion. That is for the first phase, and we are ready to increase the investment in the following five years,” adding, “We are ready for the groundbreaking ceremony in the next couple of months and weeks, and the commissioning will take place in December 2022.”

The project—originally proposed in 2013—has been twice sidetracked by operations involving the ruling ZANU-PF’s G40 faction under Grace Mugabe, but was revived by President Emmerson Mnangagwa and agreed to at the 2018 FOCAC conference in Beijing. In 2014, the Tsingshan Group had agreed to a \$10 billion financing offer, indicating the extent of its proposed investment in the project.

Africans Pinning Aid and Recovery Hopes on COP26

As the countdown to the COP26 “Hallowe’en” conference proceeds, African nations are stepping up demands for aid that has been promised but never delivered through the COP Climate Agenda. As far back as 2009, African and other developing nations were promised \$100 billion annually for five years, beginning in 2020, through the UN Climate Finance Commitment, a claim that has yet to materialize.

Tanguy Gahouma, chair of the African Group of Negotiators at COP26, has said: “African countries want a new system to track funding from wealthy nations that are failing to meet the \$100 billion annual target.” Current estimates are that the fund had \$79.6 billion in 2019, and that from 2016-19 Africa only got 26% of it.