
**Annual
Report**

**Africa
Programme**
December
2020

The Africa Programme in 2020



**CHATHAM
HOUSE**

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Foreword

2020 will be remembered for the COVID-19 pandemic. The risks of a devastating health crisis triggered an early response and coordination among African leaders, who also called for global cooperation to overcome the pandemic. Some countries, like South Africa and Rwanda, implemented tight lockdowns early on, while others like Tanzania downplayed the health risks and argued the economic impacts would be worse, allowing the virus to spread through the population. The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has confirmed over 2 million COVID-19 cases across the continent. Despite available data showing relatively higher numbers in South Africa, Ethiopia, and Kenya, Africa has so far been impacted less directly by COVID-19 than other regions, but the economic consequences are devastating.

COVID-19 has thrust many African countries into recession. Oil-based economies have been particularly badly hit, such as Nigeria, Angola, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Chad. Mining countries have had mixed fortunes, with gold prices increasing but other commodities such as iron ore seeing significant declines. South Africa, with its mixture of manufacturing, mining and tourism has been badly affected. Tourism-dependent states, like The Gambia and the Seychelles have also seen their economies suffer.

Tied to this has been a growing unsustainable debt burden. This has resulted in countries such as Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Congo Brazzaville and Chad joining IMF programmes; Zambia is finally following. Talk of a Chinese debt-trap strategy is overstated, although Djibouti's debt exposure to Beijing might be partly the result of this. One of the big debates for 2021 will be over international forgiveness versus suspension of African debt.

The pandemic is taking a severe toll on livelihoods, pushing millions more Africans into extreme poverty and erasing years of progress in fighting poverty. Poverty reduction had already been stalling because of uneven economic growth and inadequate governance. Coupled with continued demographic growth, unlocking economies that provide sufficient, equitable and well-managed growth for a youthful continent of 1.2 billion people remains a key challenge for Africa in the coming years. The hope is that the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) that commences in January 2021 (after a six-month COVID-19 induced delay) will create an integrated market and generate jobs. The AfCFTA eliminates tariffs on 90 percent of goods produced on the continent, tackles non-tariff barriers to trade and guarantees the free movement of persons.

Prior to the pandemic Africa featured several of the world's fastest-growing economies and a burgeoning middle class, although some regions remained mired in debt, ravaged by conflict and protest and plagued by elites clinging to power. Such contradictions are to be expected in a diverse geographical area with land mass that would swallow up Europe, US, China and India combined.

Civilian-led reform movements toppled regimes in Algeria and Sudan in 2019, paving the way for ongoing but fragile transitions. Youth-led protests pushing for more accountable government have clashed with state security forces, such as the #EndSARS protests in Lagos or the November 11 (Independence Day) demonstrations in Luanda.

There have been democratic advances. An independent court in Malawi overturned fraudulent presidential elections, resulting in a rerun that brought opposition leader Lazarus Chakwera to power. The Seychelles electorate voted for an opposition presidential candidate for the first time since independence in 1976, resulting in a peaceful and constructive transfer of power. These positive developments and smooth but fiercely contested elections in Ghana offered hope for the health of democracy in Africa.

There were worrying democratic reversals too, including incumbents re-elected as presidents in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire for third terms following controversial redrafting of constitutions, or overtly oppressive and fraudulent elections in Tanzania. Flawed electoral practice in Mali contributed to a military coup in August – which toppled an unpopular government and has introduced an 18-month transitional process. A year ago, Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed was lauded as Nobel Peace Prize winner and a reformer, but his military action against the leaders of the Tigray region in November has led to a regional conflict that also involves Eritrea and will not be resolved militarily.

Resolving persistent conflicts continues to be a top priority for African security, whether in South Sudan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo or elsewhere. COVID-19 may have encouraged exploratory peace talks with Anglophone separatists in Cameroon but divisions within the regime appear to have since undermined progress. But in other contexts, the pandemic further overstretched struggling governments, which insurgents in Burkina Faso and Mozambique used to their advantage.

Over the year countering Islamist-linked terrorism has increasingly dominated Africa's security agenda, from established networks like al-Shabaab in Somalia and Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin, to widening threats in the Sahel and the emboldened Islamic State-affiliated efforts in northern Mozambique, also now spilling over into Tanzania. Meanwhile, long-standing violence between nomadic herders and sedentary farmers in West Africa and the Sahel continues to be largely overlooked.

Africa's international partners remain engaged, although with some distraction. The UK held its first ever UK-Africa Investment Summit in London in January, which 16 African leaders attended. The AU-EU summit in Brussels was postponed to 2021, and China's next FOCAC summit is scheduled for 2021 in Dakar. With the election of Joe Biden in the US, a more active American diplomacy and retained military engagement in Africa can be expected, but with few new resources. It is likely that European nations and the US will seek to shore up bilateral trade across the continent but will also strengthen

collective efforts to counter China's growing presence in Africa. On the back of its Belt and Road Initiative, China has been leveraging infrastructure financing deals for access to resources and increasing influence. Other countries are looking to expand their influence in Africa as well, such as the Gulf states and notably Russia which announced in November that it had reached agreement on a naval facility in Port Sudan.

This year the Africa Programme expanded its projects and activities despite COVID-19. In January we celebrated the centenary of Chatham House by co-hosting an exhibition at Bonhams Art Gallery of Africa at Chatham House over the past century. This illustrated the importance of Africa from the creation of the Institute in 1920 and growing African agency and mainstreaming in international affairs as the decades progressed. In 2020, the Africa Programme held regular virtual meetings from London, reaching new audiences through Zoom and Teams. The Programme produced 42 publications, including four peer reviewed papers, book chapters, and academic journal articles, and Programme staff were cited 1,513 times in the global media including 33 opinion or comment pieces.

Dr Alex Vines OBE

Director, Africa Programme, Chatham House

A century of supporting African engagement in international affairs



To mark the centenary of Chatham House in 2020, the Africa Programme has been examining the Institute's research and engagement with African citizens, institutions and states over the past 100 years, and the facilitating role of the institute as a platform for African leadership in international relations.

History of Africa at Chatham House



The Africa Programme curated an exhibition of archive material that charts how the Institute has been a major forum for discussion on Africa. The exhibition was first displayed at the world-renowned fine art auctioneers and valuers Bonham's in London for a reception in January 2020, marking the centenary of the Institute.

African Liberation: Rediscovered Nationalist Speeches



In July, we published for the first time, speeches delivered at Chatham House by two of the most iconic leaders of southern Africa's national liberation movements: the 1968 speech by Dr Eduardo Mondlane of Mozambique's FRELIMO and the 1985 speech made by Oliver Tambo of South Africa's ANC.



Two articles published in *The World Today* by Alex Vines and Dr Prexy Nesbitt and an event hosted in partnership with UNESCO and the Oliver & Adelaide Tambo Foundation, reflected on these speeches. Situated within the context of the Black Lives Matter movement and in the year of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Eduardo Mondlane, the event symbolised and showcased the longevity of Chatham House convening.

Chatham House Prize

Malawi's constitutional court judges won the 2020 Chatham House Prize in recognition of their courage and independence in the defence of democracy.

There could be no more special way to mark Chatham House's Centenary than by recognizing the commitment of these brave individuals to the cause of accountable governance and the justice that this affords to all.

Dr Robin Niblett, Director of Chatham House



Africa's foreign relations and agency in international affairs

The importance of African agency in international affairs has been the central theme for the Africa Programme's work this year to mark Chatham House's centenary. A series of outputs examined areas where state or non-state actors have acted to exert international influence or have done so indirectly, challenging the conventional wisdom that Africa is at the periphery of international affairs.

African Agency to Shape Post-COVID Multipolar World

Analysis by Elizabeth Donnelly and Elizabeth Sidiropoulos examined the need for African actors to leverage the power of their collective voice to influence systems of global governance and aid post-COVID recovery.



Africa Needs a Strategy for Europe

With negotiations for a new post-Cotonou Partnership Agreement and a renewed Joint Africa-EU Strategy due to be concluded in 2021, there is the potential for a critical reset in the relationship between Africa and the EU. In March, Tighisti Amare participated in an agenda-setting workshop organized by the European



Africa is the world's largest free trade area, the continent is creating an utterly new development path.

HE Professor Victor Harison
Commissioner for
Economic Affairs, African
Union Commission



Think Tank Group and the United Nations Development Programme in Addis Ababa, and argued in an article for ECDDP that a truly beneficial partnership between the AU and EU requires both to take an active role in shaping their strategic priorities.

Africa and the EU: Cooperation for a Sustainable Future

The Africa Programme co-hosted the Republic of Slovenia's 9th Africa Day conference with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia and the European Commission. This virtual conference, organized ahead of Slovenia's Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2021, included high-profile opening keynote addresses by Foreign Ministers of Slovenia and Kenya; the EU Commissioner for International Partnerships; the African Union Commissioner for Economic Affairs; and a South African Deputy Minister of International Cooperation.

Central & Eastern Europe and EU–Africa Relations After 2020

Since 2016, with the support of the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the Africa Programme has been examining the drivers and prospects of further engagement between Central & Eastern Europe (CEE) and sub-Saharan African countries. The latest publication examined how CEE countries influence the structure and institutions of the Africa-EU partnership. The report was launched at a webinar featuring experts from the CEE region, and representatives of the African Union and the European Union External Action Service.



Common Futures Conversations

A series of online dialogues and webinars were convened as part of our Common Futures Conversations (CFC) project, to engage young audiences from Africa and Europe for discussions on climate change; youth unemployment; fake news and disinformation; youth representation in politics; surveillance technologies; the Black Lives Matter movement; police violence; protest movements; and addressing domestic violence.

The CFC Project is a Chatham House centenary initiative supported by the Robert Bosch Stiftung that aims to deliver innovative ways for young people in Africa and Europe to engage in policy and share perspectives on key global challenges.

The Future of UK-Africa Relations

A webinar with the UK Minister for Africa, James Duddridge MP, discussed the trajectory of UK-Africa relations, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the priorities for engagement going forward.

In January, Africa Programme analysts provided a briefing for the House of Lords International Relations and Defence Committee at Chatham House, as part of their inquiry into the UK and its relations with sub-Saharan Africa.

The UK's future relationship with the countries of Africa and their regional institutions needs to be based, as has not always been the case in the past, on a genuine partnership.

UK House of Lords
International
Relations and Defence
Select Committee



The Need for EU-Russia Dialogue on Africa

With the intensification of geopolitical competition in Africa, Alex Vines wrote in an article for the EU-Russia Expert Network on Foreign Policy that in order to avoid further geopolitical tensions, Russia and the EU will need to manage their own rivalries and visions, as well as consulting their African partners on their strategies.



UK Objectives in the Sahel

As the Sahel continues to undergo an escalation in jihadist activity, illegal migration and trafficking, in an article for *The Telegraph* Alex Vines discussed why the UK needs clarity on its objectives, and to sustain its strategic pivot in the region intended to deliver development impact, address long term security threats to UK interests, and support alliances with international partners.



Africa, Japan and the UK

A virtual conference brought together diverse speakers including policymakers, civil society representatives, academics, trade and investment practitioners, and artists to discuss the diversification of partnerships among African countries, Japan and the UK. The event explored the design of summits for African engagement, the centrality of African agency in summitry, the role of creative industries in deepening transregional people-to-people partnerships, and the importance of diversifying frameworks as well as choices of partners in multilateral arrangements.

Understanding US Policy in Somalia



A research paper published in July 2020 summarized the evolution of US strategy, and how potential shifts could influence future scenarios in Somalia, with implications for federalism and resolution of the conflict with al-Shabaab.

Africa-China Relations



Relations between African states and China have become increasingly varied over the years, reflecting the complexity of the countries, their societies and the multiplicity of actors involved in diplomatic, commercial and development engagements. A panel event examined the changing dynamics and configurations of engagements between African countries and China, including a dissection of the scale of debt burdens across Africa, while a series of Africa Programme research outputs assess the dynamics of African infrastructure linked debt to China and multilateral debt initiatives.

Multilateral Efforts in Furthering Sudan's Transition



Ahead of the High-Level Sudan Partnership Conference co-hosted by the Transitional Government of Sudan, the UN, EU and Germany in June, the Africa Programme convened a public webinar to review progress in Sudan's transition and discuss how a more coordinated international response can consolidate and promote further progress.

Africa and the COVID-19 pandemic



As the coronavirus pandemic began to unfold, a range of analytical pieces and virtual events explored the implications of the outbreak for African countries on issues ranging from food security, resilience and economic prospects to governance and democracy.

Africa's Evolving Policy Options in Response to COVID-19



In the early stages of responses to the pandemic, Ben Shepherd and Nina van der Mark discussed the common challenges likely to be faced by African governments despite the continent's diversity, and the need for virus suppression strategies to be implemented sensitively while also empowering communities. As the COVID-19 situation evolved further and with case figures on the continent remaining lower than many early negative projections, the valuable policy lessons from successful interventions were examined in a co-authored piece by Dr Knox Chitiyo, Professor Martin Rupiya and Pamela Wadi.

Food Security and Resilience



Commentary by Associate Fellows Dr Leena Koni Hoffmann and Paul Melly focused on the risks of a worsening food security crisis in the Sahel and West Africa due to the global economic impact of the pandemic and disruptions to supply chains, and highlighted the need to draw on collective experiences of strategic coordination in the regions. A UN World Food Programme (UNWFP) research paper examining COVID-19's impact on those living in poverty and potential interventions to prevent a food security emergency was launched at a webinar.

COVID-19 in Nigeria



Elizabeth Donnelly and Idayat Hassan wrote on the need for Nigeria's political leaders to win trust and to start to bridge the accountability divide between citizens and the state in order to tackle the virus. Beyond the direct health priorities of virus containment, analysis by Matthew Page explored the devastating impact of the pandemic and drop in oil prices for Nigeria's already precarious fiscal outlook, as well as the knock-on effects for the security and governance landscape in Nigeria.

COVID-19 in South Africa



South Africa's domestic COVID-19 policy imposed one of the tightest sets of lockdown restrictions in the world, while as chair of the African Union, its president Cyril Ramaphosa emerged as one of the figureheads of the Africa-wide response. A piece by Christopher Vandome assessed the key features of this leadership at the national and continental level, and examined the need to balance crisis management with the wider challenges facing South Africa's economy and society.



Contrasting Responses in East Africa

Kenya's tradition of community philanthropy played a critical role in helping to partially bridge the country's considerable social welfare gap in the context of increasing COVID-linked income insecurity. An expert comment by Robert Bosch Stiftung Academy Fellow Nkirote Laiboni assessed the significance of local community movements in tackling this challenge. An expert comment by Fergus Kell on Tanzania argued that the government's initial series of virus containment measures gave way to an outright rejection of the epidemic's existence, heralding challenges for governance and freedom of expression ahead of the country's national elections.

Inclusive economic growth, governance and technology

African countries should pursue large investment in centralised and decentralised renewable energy generation.

Damilola Ogunbiyi
Special Representative of
the UN Secretary-General
for Sustainable Energy
for All

2020 deepened existing socio-economic challenges in Africa and added new ones in an already diverging regional context. As African countries grappled with the imperatives of providing services and jobs for rapidly expanding and youthful populations amid existing concerns, the pandemic induced sharp contractions to headline growth rates across the continent. But the pandemic also gave rise to discussions on opportunities for long-term recovery: whether in building genuine partnerships, harnessing digital technologies or embracing green transformation. The Africa Programme's events and outputs offered a forum for dialogue, informed analysis and debate on these challenges and the policy priorities and pathways to resolving them sustainably.

Financing for Sustainable Development in Africa

In February, the Africa Programme hosted President of Ghana, HE Nana Akufo-Addo, who discussed how his government has actively embedded sustainable development into its domestic and foreign policies, and how different stakeholders can be involved in achieving long-term goals in Ghana and beyond.





UK-Africa Investment Summit

As part of the British government’s Africa Investment Summit, Deputy Director Elizabeth Donnelly chaired roundtables on South Africa at the Sustainable Infrastructure Forum. Alex Vines facilitated a discussion with Mozambique’s President, HE Filipe Nyusi, on opportunities in the agriculture sector and value chains arising from new LNG developments.



Collective Action on Corruption in Nigeria

The Africa Programme’s Social Norms and Accountable Governance (SNAG) project, funded by the MacArthur Foundation, uses social norms methodology to diagnose the social drivers of different corrupt practices and propose evidence-based options to address those drivers. As part of this project, in 2020, the research team provided support to individuals and organizations working on behaviour change approaches to tackling corruption.



Meeting the Promise of the 2010 Constitution: Devolution, Gender and Equality in Kenya

A research paper by former Mo Ibrahim Foundation Academy Fellow, Natasha Kimani, examined the importance of devolution in enhancing gender equality in Kenya and identified practical ways to facilitate gender-responsive budgeting and planning.



Angola Forum

The 2020 Angola Forum was hosted in partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. The virtual conference brought together experts and practitioners to discuss policy priorities for promoting sustainable economic recovery and resilience beyond the COVID-19 pandemic and provided an in-depth review of the country's economic outlook; potential sources of growth and diversification; environmental sustainability; and ecosystem protection, emissions reductions and urban planning for climate change adaptation.



Privatization and Economic Reforms in Angola

Hon. Manuel José Nunes Júnior, Minister of State for Economic Coordination of Angola, spoke at Chatham House on economic stabilization, diversification and business reform programmes. Held in the aftermath of the publication of the Luanda Leaks, the event provided a platform to discuss the government's work in curbing corruption and to challenge the Angolan administration on how to ensure the country's privatisation process is free from irregularities.



South Africa's Economic Future

COVID-19 has accelerated economic decline in South Africa, the continent's most economically diversified country. A series of webinars with senior political leaders and policy makers, including Lesetja Kganyago, Governor of the South African Reserve Bank; Paul Mashatile, the Treasurer General of the African National Congress; John Henry Steenhuisen,

Leader of the Democratic Alliance; and Zingiswa Losi, president of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), discussed different options for responding to the crisis, and the social compact between government, business and labour.

Economic Reform in Zimbabwe



A series of webinars on long-term economic reform in Zimbabwe were hosted in partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. The series brought together government representatives, business leaders, and representatives of the informal economy for discussions on the importance of technology for economic resilience and recovery, and to reflect on entry points for regional engagement. Speakers included Justice Loice Matanda-Moyo, the Chairperson of the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission, who outlined the importance of tackling corruption for improving economic governance.

Dialogue with Candidates for Director-General of the World Trade Organization



A series of dialogues were conducted with candidates for the director-general post at the WTO. Speakers included Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala of Nigeria and Ambassador Amina Mohamed of Kenya, who discussed their visions for the future of the WTO, and what will be needed to deliver on this vision and tackle the most pressing issues facing the organization as the world grapples with the COVID-19 crisis and ongoing global trade tensions.



African Agency in Mineral Resource Governance

Analysis by Christopher Vandome and Lawrence Dechambenoit highlighted the importance of building genuine partnerships between international industry and African governments for unlocking the potential of the mining sector on the continent. In an article for *The World Today*, Sheila Khama also explored how extractive companies can include regional diversity and African voices at board level, to go beyond ESG criteria and have true knowledge of regional socio-cultural norms and politics.



Harnessing Technology for Inclusive and Quality Jobs

The factors and social protection mechanisms needed to promote an inclusive future of work in Africa were the subject of a panel discussion that focused on the nature of labour market disruptions from digital technologies, and the intersection of digital technologies and economic informality in future African work landscapes. A webinar on African deep technologies also examined potentially transformative scientific discovery and innovation in engineering, and the support and investment landscape that start-ups require to sustainably grow inclusive economies.

The Role of Non-Violent Protests in Influencing Change and Delivery



A panel event held in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) examined the changing modalities of citizens' resistance and policy influence in Africa, the social compact between state and citizens, and the ways in which protest movements can resist co-optation from military, foreign and elite agendas.

Elections and political systems

The principle of separation of powers is tested in the electoral period, because it is during that time that we see whether the judiciary is able to deal with electoral matters in a way that demonstrates independence.

Dr Christopher Fomunyoh
Senior Associate and
Regional Director for
Central and West Africa,
National Democratic
Institute (NDI)

The year 2020 highlighted the deeply contrasting trends in electoral processes and democratic governance across Africa: reflected as much by the numerous elections that did take place as those which did not, with the postponement of highly anticipated polls in Ethiopia due to COVID-19 a prominent example. Peaceful transfers of power were witnessed in Malawi's re-run election and in the Seychelles, but electoral proceedings elsewhere – including in Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Tanzania – variously raised concerns over constitutional process and respect for political freedoms.

The Africa Programme's commentary and convening provided informed analysis and space for debate on these critical issues in the lead-up to several polls, as well as post-election thinking on the long-term implications.

Côte d'Ivoire's 2020 Elections

The Africa Programme opened its 2020 events calendar on elections and political systems with a public event with HE Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. Convening a diverse audience spanning members of the Ivorian diaspora, diplomatic community, private sector and government, including attendance



by President Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana, the event provided a neutral platform to engage in discussion on Côte d'Ivoire's much anticipated 2020 elections.

Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire: Stumbling Totems of Democracy



Following the sudden death of Côte d'Ivoire's Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly, Paul Melly wrote about the choices facing President Ouattara, and the political, economic and legacy challenges of a third term bid. Follow up analysis after the October elections in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire examined the threat to regional norm of adherence to term limits in West Africa, and how institutional principles underpinning democracy can be manipulated in the interests of those in power.

Police, Protest Power, and Nigeria's Young Democrats



Analysis by Leena Koni Hoffman examined the #ENDSARS protests that were reignited following reports of the shooting of an unarmed young man by Special Anti-Robbery Squad officers, and which has highlighted the bleak outlook young Nigerians face due to governance failures.

A panel of young Nigerian experts discussed at an Africa Programme webinar how young Nigerians can engage in shaping governance, and their ideas for improving governance systems and outcomes in the future.



Ghana Election: Fault Lines in a Resilient Democracy

As Ghana prepared for its 2020 election, when for the first time in the country's electoral history voters were choosing between a sitting and a former president, Gina Honwana Welch discussed the preparedness and challenges faced by the Electoral Commission due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the threat of election-related violence and the integrity of the voter register.

Tanzania's 2020 Elections: Preparations, Participation and Prospects



At a panel event ahead of Tanzania's 2020 elections, speakers assessed the country's electoral context against wider developments, including around economic growth and poverty reduction efforts, and pressures on media outlets and electoral accountability mechanisms such as national commissions and foreign observers.

Malawi's Re-Run Election is Lesson for African Opposition



Following the overturning of the result in the fresh presidential contest in Malawi, the second African country to annul a presidential election, Fergus Kell outlined how African opposition movements can take lessons from Malawi's coalition of nine opposition parties.

Equatorial Guinea: Prospects for Economic and Governance Reforms



Despite boasting among the highest GDP per capita rates in Africa, much of Equatorial Guinea’s population remain in poverty. In January, a roundtable meeting discussed prospects for meaningful reforms in Equatorial Guinea to improve economic governance, human rights and achieve sustainable and inclusive growth.

Burundi After Nkurunziza Has Chance to Take Different Path



The untimely death of former president Pierre Nkurunziza closed a major chapter in Burundi’s history stretching back to the end of the twelve-year civil war in 2005. Ben Shepherd analysed the erosion of Burundi’s once-lauded post-civil war settlement and argued that an opportunity now exists for the country to end the post-war spiral and reset relations with neighbours and partners.

Somalia’s Elections: Progression or Stasis in the Transition



Ahead of Somalia’s 2020–21 elections, a panel event explored Somalia’s electoral context within the broader trends of its political transition. Discussions focused on the challenges and priorities around inclusivity in political participation, mechanisms for dialogue between the Federal Government and the States, as well as security sector reforms.

Elections in the Central African Republic



The Central African Republic's presidential election scheduled for 27 December 2020, and legislative and local elections in early 2021, risk inflaming an already volatile security and humanitarian situation in the country. In January, the United Nations Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in the CAR, Denise Brown, discussed at Chatham House the security, humanitarian and development situations, the role of international actors and prospects for much-needed governance reform and reconciliation.

Peace and security



An evolving security context on the African continent in 2020 continued to be marked by significant complexity. Positive trends were seen in the emergence of new national peace and reconciliation agreements, such as Sudan’s Juba Peace Agreement; alongside ongoing processes to put existing accords into practice, as witnessed in Mozambique and South Sudan.

In contrast, however, the escalation of conflicts in Ethiopia, the Sahel region and Mozambique’s north western coastal province of Cabo Delgado has raised concerns over the possibility of entrenched long-term violence and associated humanitarian emergencies in these areas. Africa Programme research and events sought to generate a deeper understanding of these complex and sensitive situations, as well as exploring options to address insecurity and support peace responses.

Ethiopia’s Transition and Conflict in the Tigray Region

Analysis by Ahmed Soliman following the escalation of a simmering feud between Ethiopia’s government and leaders in the Tigray region into armed confrontation outlined the need for commitment to inclusive dialogue and reconciliation in order to avoid growing instability across the country and the region, and the return to civil war. Previous expert analysis on Ethiopia examined the increase of violence and civil unrest in the country,



including the standoff between the Federal Government and Tigrayan authorities, and the need for political dialogue, compromise and reconciliation.

Nile Basin States Must Persist with Water Diplomacy



Prospects for a diplomatic and peaceful solution to the dispute over the Blue Nile Basin, which intensified following satellite imagery that revealed significant filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), has been a focus of expert analysis that assessed Egypt's, Sudan's and Ethiopia's concerns and ambitions. The comment piece reflected on the progress of negotiations, stressing the need for regional and international partners to support and strengthen the negotiation process, and cautioning against a securitized response to the dispute.

Is the Juba Peace Agreement a Turning Point for Sudan?



Sudan's historic Juba Peace Agreement is an important first step towards bringing peace to Sudan's conflict zones and laying the foundation for democratic transition and economic reform throughout the country. An article by Rosalind Marsden cautioned that the successful implementation of the deal is threatened by the fragility of the civilian-military partnership, widespread insecurity and the lack of resources, while also requiring sustained cooperation and greater inclusivity.

At the first event in a series on international support for Sudan's transition funded by Humanity United, an expert panel discussed Sudan's efforts and prospects, and the role of regional and international partners in supporting the implementation of the agreement.



Realising South Sudan's Peace Deal

Ahead of South Sudan's deadline for the Transitional Government of National Unity in February 2020, a panel event examined the challenges and priorities for the realisation of South Sudan's peace deal. Topics of discussion in the context of the peace deal included territorial disputes and security sector reform processes.

Decentralization and Cross-Border Integration in the Horn of Africa



The Africa Programme is undertaking a five-year project on the local, national and transnational interconnections of cross-border conflict in the Horn of Africa. Earlier in the year, a panel discussion on the dynamics of decentralisation across the Horn of Africa assessed the driving factors and mechanisms of cross-border integration, with discussions centred around inter-state parameters, the role of regional economic blocs in integration processes, and the influence of political cultures, structures, and distribution of economic resources.

Mozambique's Peace and National Reconciliation Agreement: One Year On



On the anniversary of the Maputo Peace and National Reconciliation Agreement that was signed on 6 August 2019, a webinar explored lessons from past mediation efforts and prospects for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of RENAMO combatants. The online event brought together senior leaders from each of the key mediation initiatives involved in the process to reflect on the factors of its success, and next steps in continuing support for the DDR process.



Finding Solutions to Insecurity in Cabo Delgado

Throughout 2020 the security situation has worsened in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique's resource rich north west coastal province. The Africa Programme has been following closely the evolution of the insurgency and state of insecurity in the province and has published expert comments and contributed to media analysis on the topic. A webinar also explored the structural causes, drivers and dynamics of the armed attacks in Cabo Delgado, including the regional and international aspects of the situation, with an emphasis on finding solutions to the problem and making recommendations to all stakeholders.

Risk and Resilience Series: Mozambique and Madagascar



The Africa Programme has worked in partnership with the World Bank's Fragility, Conflict & Violence Group and with the Bank's country offices to conduct consultation processes to develop a baseline understanding of the structural causes of fragility, and factors of risk and resilience in Mozambique and Madagascar. The consultations supported and informed World Bank Risk and Resilience Assessment's (RRA) of those countries.

Why the Mali Coup Should Matter to the UK



Following the coup in Mali and departure of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita in August after months of mass protests against alleged corruption, a worsening economy and disputed elections, in an article for *The Telegraph*, Alex Vines outlined the need for clarity on UK's objectives ahead of the deployment of British troops in the region.

Natural Resources and the Political Economy of Sahelian Jihadism



A workshop jointly hosted with the University of Portsmouth, brought together expert speakers on the key jihadist groups in the wider Sahel to discuss the links between natural resources and armed groups across the region, examine and contrast how natural resources may sustain the activities of these different armed groups, and assess how these insights can inform future policy priorities for addressing conflict.

Cameroon's President Makes a Fresh Overture to Anglophones



As violence in the southwest and northwest regions of Cameroon continue to threaten the country's stability, Paul Melly assessed President Paul Biya's attempts to end the violence, including through the implementation of new decentralization laws, which reinforce bilingual language rights and devolve greater autonomy to provincial level, but cautioned optimism in the context of deep scepticism and resentment in the two regions.

Africa Programme reports 2020



Africa Programme speakers 2020

- **Professor Amr Khairy Abdalla**, Professor Emeritus, University for Peace, Costa Rica
- **Aden Abdi**, Horn of Africa Programme Director, Conciliation Resources
- **Murtala Abdullahi**, Climate & Security Reporter, HumAngle Media; Founder, Goroinitiative.org
- **Rinsola Abiola**, Youth and Gender Advocate, Nigeria
- **Jean-Paul Adam**, Director, Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resource Management Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- **Dr Edward Addai**, UNICEF Representative to the African Union & Economic Commission for Africa
- **Emmanuel Adegboye**, Managing Partner, Utopia Lagos; Mo Ibrahim Foundation Academy Fellow (2021), Chatham House
- **Faten Aggad**, Senior Advisor to the African Union High Representative on AU-EU Negotiations
- **HE Nana Akufo-Addo**, President, Republic of Ghana
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ISBN 978 178413 444 0

This publication is printed on FSC-certified paper.
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