

AFRICA YEARBOOK 2023

Editors

Prof. Dr. Soyalp Tamçelik

Dr. Tunç Demirtaş



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PUBLICATIONS

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Dr. Tunç Demirtaş



REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE MINISTRY
OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
PRESIDENCY FOR TURKS ABROAD
AND RELATED COMMUNITIES



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PRESIDENCY FOR TURKS ABROAD AND RELATED COMMUNITIES

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Foreword

Over the last twenty-five years, Türkiye has strengthened its relations with countries in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America more than ever before and has gained an institutional structure. Keeping its national values and independence at the forefront, Türkiye strives for the establishment and provision of global peace and stability by resolutely pursuing its strong, multi-dimensional and people-oriented foreign policy.

Our close and friendly relations with Africa, which has great strategic potential, are based on the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, equal partnership and a win-win approach. As a result of the close relationship, we have established with the continent, we are developing our cooperation with African countries in the fields of education, culture, tourism, agriculture, transportation, technology, infrastructure, development and defense. At the same time, we continue our work in a much more effective and comprehensive manner, in line with the African Union's "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want" vision document.

Our primary goals are to increase our current trade volume, which exceeds \$40 billion USD with the continent as a whole, to over \$50 billion USD as soon as possible, and to deepen our economic relations. The activities of our 44 embassies and six consulate generals throughout the continent are supported by the work of our various institutions and organizations, whereby our ties and cooperation with the countries of the continent are strengthened in this way. Our institutions such as the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, Yunus Emre Institute, the Turkish Maarif Foundation, the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation, TRT, Anadolu Agency and Turkish Airlines make serious contributions to Türkiye-Africa relations across the continent.

As with the previous year, Africa Yearbook 2023 sheds light on the developments in Africa in 2023 by addressing the economic, political, military, cultural and academic developments in Africa and Türkiye-Africa relations in a detailed and holistic manner. I hereby congratulate and thank everyone who contributed to this valuable work. I hope this work, which we believe will make significant contributions to Türkiye-Africa relations, will be beneficial for our academicians, researchers, institutions and organizations, as well as everyone interested in this geography.

We hope that this work finds its intended readers...

Mehmet Nuri ERSOY
Minister of Culture and Tourism
of the Republic of Türkiye

Preface



In today's world, global threats and challenges impact everyone, while power struggles in various regions endanger peace and stability. As dialogue and compromise become increasingly unfeasible, humanity faces numerous challenges, including strategic conflicts, armed conflicts, mass migrations, wars, and crises in food, energy, and climate, as well as extremism and terrorism. Eliminating the challenges threatening the international system requires the joint efforts of all members of the international community as well as the adoption of solution-oriented policies and approaches based on cooperation and dialogue.

Conducted with the aim of establishing sustainable peace, prosperity and security not only in the neighboring geography where it has deep-rooted historical and cultural ties but also on a much broader scale, the foreign policy approach conveys Türkiye's position in the international system to a valuable and credible level. Focusing on human values and standing out with its deep structure, Turkish foreign policy enables our country to stand on the side of peace, justice and stability all around the world with an understanding that is highly mobile and maneuverable, drawing strength from its rich civilizational heritage.

In the Century of Türkiye, this policy, implemented under the slogan "A Fairer World is Possible!", as emphasized by our President, and extends to different continents, regions and countries without compromising its national identity and independent character, also includes Africa, whose role and weight in the international system is increasing day by day. By prioritizing mutual benefit and equal partnership in its policies and activities targeting Africa, Türkiye continues to strengthen its friendship and brotherhood relations with the countries of the continent, adopting the principle of "African Solutions to Africa's Problems" at bilateral, regional, continental, and global levels. African countries are bolstering their influence on international platforms day by day, taking a firm and courageous stance against human rights violations, crimes, and the perpetrators of injustice. As demonstrated

by the genocide case filed by South Africa against Israel at the International Court of Justice, they have become a loud voice for the global conscience.

Being aware of the continent's importance and potential in the new era from the very beginning, our country has quickly reaped the benefits of the "African Initiative Policy" launched in 1998. Türkiye was elected as an "observer member" of the African Union (AU) in 2005, was declared a "strategic partner" of the AU in 2008 and has implemented the "Africa Partnership Policy" since 2013. Consequently, economic, social, commercial and cultural relations between the countries in Africa and Türkiye have intensified as the basis for cooperation has expanded to include areas such as the private sector, investments, development, civil society and security.

In line with our country's Africa policy, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) continues its work for the whole of the continent in many different areas, especially education and culture.

On 25 May 2023, which is celebrated as "Africa Day", a panel discussion entitled "Türkiye-Africa Relations in the Centenary of the Republic" was organized under the auspices of the YTB, where Türkiye-Africa relations were discussed in all their dimensions in the presence of experts, academics, civil society representatives and African Ambassadors in Türkiye.

During the visit of President H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, to Algeria on 21 November 2023, a Cooperation Protocol Regarding Higher Education Scholarships was signed between YTB and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, making an important contribution to bilateral relations in the field of international education.

Furthermore, Türkiye Alumni Meetings were organized in Tanzania, Kenya, and Zanzibar from December 4-9, 2023. Field visits were conducted, and important consultations were held with stakeholders and interlocutors in the region within the scope of education, diaspora and alumni policies.

Within the scope of the Turkish Language Program for Public Officials and Academicians (KATİP), conducted by YTB, four diplomats and two public officials from Gambia, Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia and Lesotho took part in the program during the 2023-2024 period.

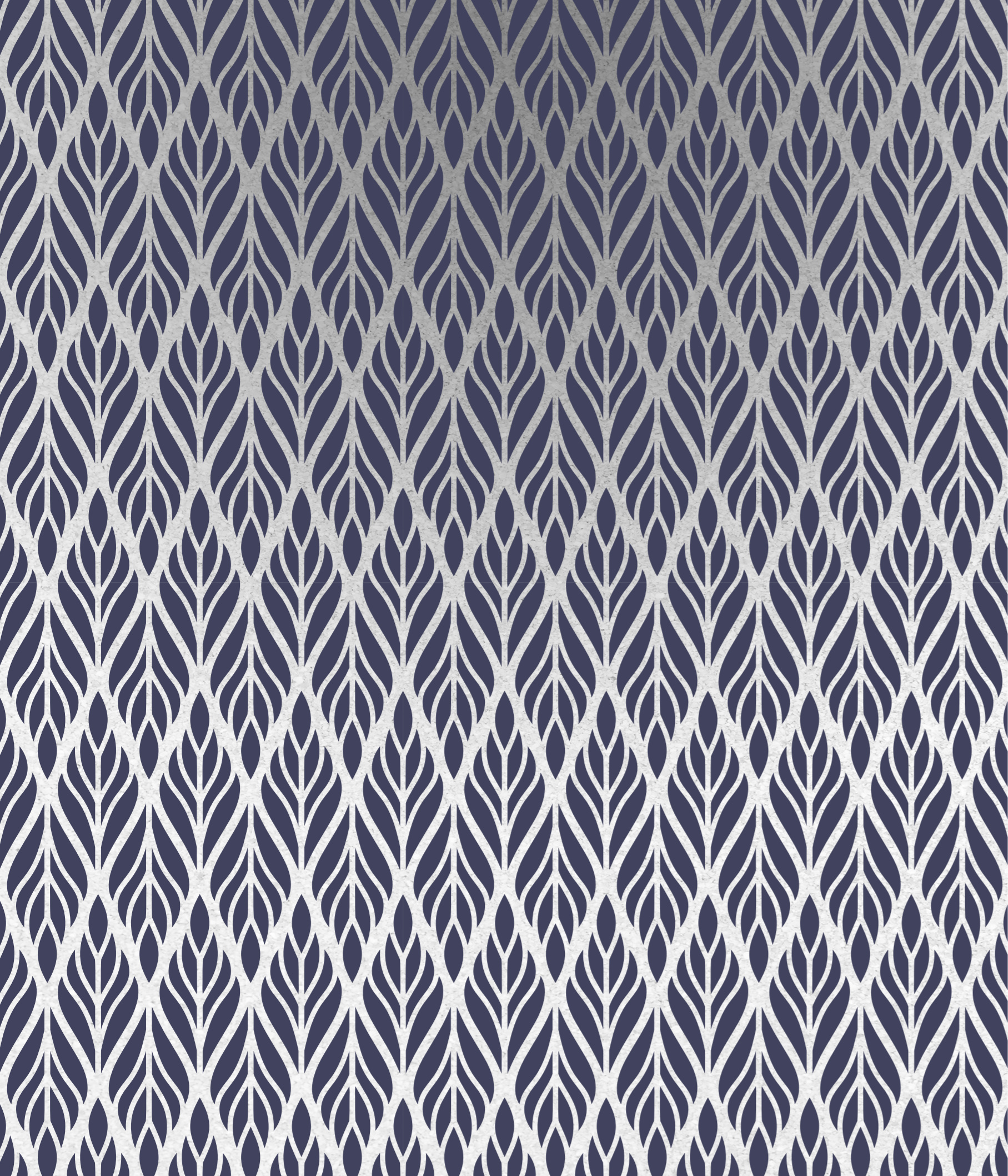
Carried out under the auspices of YTB and are Türkiye's educational gateway to the world, Türkiye Scholarships continue to foster human bridges between Türkiye and Africa through African international students studying in Türkiye. African students successfully completing their education process in Türkiye constitute the qualified human resources needed by the continent

after their graduation, going on to assume leading roles in relations between Africa and Türkiye as "Türkiye Alumni." 16 Türkiye Alumni Associations in 14 African countries continue their activities successfully, constituting a driving force in relations between Türkiye and Africa. In continuing to gain momentum in the upcoming period, YTB and its relevant institutions are committed to supporting their African brothers in the Century of Türkiye under the leadership of our President.

The third of the Africa Yearbooks we have published under the auspices of YTB Publications since 2021, "Africa Yearbook 2023" is comprised of five main sections: "Politics, Economy, Society and Environment," "Türkiye-Africa Relations," "Global and Regional Actors' Relations with Africa," "Culture, Arts, Education and Sports" and "Publications on Africa." I want to take this moment to wholeheartedly congratulate those who contributed to the compilation of this work. This work covers the last year of the continent from a comprehensive perspective and adds a powerful contribution to the literature. I hope that the 'Africa Yearbook 2023' will be insightful and beneficial for the academic community, decision-makers, practitioners, researchers, and our NGOs.

Wishing you an inspiring read...

Abdullah EREN
The President of Turks Abroad
and Related Communities



Editors' Foreword

Africa plays an influential role on the world stage, characterized by its rich cultural heritage, dynamic young population, active political structures, economic potential, and significant importance in global geopolitics. In recent years, there has been a notable increase in interest from global and regional actors in Africa, leading the continent to attain a central position in international relations. In this context, Türkiye has also demonstrated a strong commitment to Africa, viewing the countries on the continent as key partners.

Taking this into consideration, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) also attaches importance to Africa in terms of aspects such as humanitarian, cultural, educational and social issues. While YTB shares its activities with the public in reference to the value it attaches to Africa, YTB has also published the Africa Yearbook for 2023, which it has been publishing continuously since 2021 to introduce the activities conducted by Türkiye towards the continent together with all state-run and NGOs.

In light of this, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of Africa's role and significance in the international system by thoroughly addressing the political, economic, military, cultural, social and educational developments in Africa throughout 2023. The Yearbook, prepared with contributions from 49 authors as well as institutions and organizations integral to Türkiye's Africa policy, aims to appeal to a broad audience interested in Türkiye's Africa policy. It aspires to serve as an essential reference source in this field.

The YTB Africa Yearbook 2023 is comprised of five chapters in total, the first of which includes 19 articles covering the topics of "Politics, Economy, Society and Environment." The second chapter, featuring 11 articles, encompasses "Türkiye-Africa Relations" and includes firsthand accounts from institutions influential in Türkiye's Africa policy, providing a holistic view of the policy. The third chapter, consisting of 12 articles, evaluates "Global and Regional Actors' Relations with Africa," while the fourth chapter, also comprising 12 articles, covers "Culture, Arts, Education, and Sports" in Africa. Finally, the Yearbook concludes with a fifth chapter, that features six studies in the section "Publications Regarding Africa 2023."

The first section of the study, titled "Politics, Economy, Society and the Environment," discusses the various events that occurred in Africa throughout 2023 and their consequences. This chapter begins with the article entitled "Elections in Africa in 2023," penned by Soyalp Tamçelik, which addresses the elections held in eight countries: Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Gabon, Liberia, Egypt, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, providing a comprehensive analysis of their outcomes.

Entitled "Security and Geopolitics in the Sahel Region in 2023," Ibrahim Bachir Abdoulaye's study examines military mobility on the continent and its effects on regional security.

Entitled "Ongoing Conflicts in Africa," Enver Arpa's article evaluates the subject from a comprehensive perspective by addressing the Central Sahel conflicts, Sudanese Civil War, Somali Civil War, the Boko Haram Attacks, the Ethiopian civil conflicts, the Nigerian social conflicts, the Kivu conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the rebellion of the allied democratic forces as well as the ethnic conflicts in South Sudan.

The articles entitled "Natural Disasters and Their Consequences in Africa" by Esin Güzel and "The Impact of the Global Climate Crisis in Africa" by Isidore Agha discuss the impact of environmental problems and the climate crisis on Africa.

Hande Sapmaz's "Internal Migration Mobility in Africa in 2023" and Luis Eric Davila Vega's "External Migration in Africa: Climate Change in 2023" analyze the migration movements on the continent and their social consequences.

Zainul Abidin Jibril's article entitled "African Countries' Political Stances in the Israel-Palestine Conflict" and Semra Aksu's article entitled "South Africa's Genocide Case against Israel in the International Court of Justice and Its Legal Basis" reveal Africa's position in international relations and its active role in the face of critical problems in the global system.

Africa's energy resources and economic growth targets are discussed in articles entitled "Global Energy and Africa" by İhsan Ömer Atagenç and "Growing Economies and Targets of sub-Saharan Africa" by Didem Özdemir.

Entitled "Africa's Summit Diplomacy in 2023," Mürsel Bayram's article analyzes summits concerning the continent, such as the Russia-Africa and Africa-Saudi Arabia Summits, as well as BRICS enlargement and climate change.

Entitled "The 60th Anniversary of the African Union," Gözde Söğütlü's study evaluates the gains of G-20 Membership for the African Union, the 36th African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government, and the role of the African Union in maintaining peace and security, while Muhammed Soliman

Al-Zawawy's study entitled "The Role of Private Military Security Companies in Stability in Africa: Terrorist Acts in West Africa" examines the role of private military security companies on the continent.

Entitled "Defense Industry from African Perspective - New Trends," Abdullah Uçak's study examines the defense industry export items in Africa in 2023 and examines how these sales affect international relations.

Tunç Demirtaş's study entitled "Türkiye's Defense Industry and Security Cooperation with Africa in 2023" examines the developments and cooperation between Türkiye and Africa in 2023 and then evaluates the defense needs of African countries and the Defense Industry partnership with Türkiye and its potential impacts on regional security dynamics.

In the article titled "Africa's Representation and Participation in the United Nations: A Critical Analysis," Abdallah Imam Haruna evaluates Africa's role and effectiveness in the United Nations.

Entitled "Health in Africa and the Doctors Worldwide Association in 2023," the study of the Doctors Worldwide Association comprehensively addresses the issue of public healthcare in Africa.

Erman Akılı's study entitled "Artificial Intelligence and Africa: 2023" discusses the use and potential of artificial intelligence in Africa.

Türkiye's relations with African countries are discussed in depth by institutions, organizations and relevant institution officials in the second chapter of the study entitled "Türkiye-Africa Relations." Türkiye's ties with the African continent are not solely politically and economically motivated; they also encompass cultural and human dimensions. In fact, this chapter aims to examine Türkiye's various contacts and joint activities with Africa from an institutional perspective.

Entitled "Türkiye-Africa Relations in the Centennial of Our Republic: A Success Story of Türkiye" written by the Deputy Director General for North and East Africa of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Elif Çomoğlu Ülgen, and the Director General for West and Central Africa, Ambassador Şebnem Cenk, the first study in this chapter comprehensively analyzes relations with Africa.

The study of the Presidency's Directorate of Communications entitled "A Significant Contribution to the Power of Media and Communication with Developing Africa: Türkiye Partnership" evaluates the development of communication in relations between Türkiye and Africa on the Centenary of the Republic and the activities in 2023.

Entitled “2023 African Activities of the Ministry of National Defense,” the study prepared by the Ministry of National Defense examines Türkiye’s contribution to peace and stability on the African continent.

TİKA’s study entitled “Türkiye’s Hand of Friendship in Africa: TİKA” examines TİKA’s activities in Africa throughout 2023, as well as the Türkiye in Africa Model and Türkiye’s comradery with African countries. Entitled “Yunus Emre Foundation’s Activities in the African Continent in 2023,” the article by the Yunus Emre Institute expresses various activities of Yunus Emre Institute in Africa.

While the study of the Turkish Maarif Foundation entitled “Activities of the Turkish Maarif Foundation in Africa” deals with the educational activities of the Foundation in Africa, the study of the Turkish Religious Foundation entitled “The Role of the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation in Reviving Today and Building the Future in Africa” deals with the activities and programs of the TDV in Africa.

Despite experiencing the “Disaster of the Century” in February 2023, Türkiye has healed its wounds with support from African countries. Within this scope, an article entitled “Support from African Countries to Türkiye after the 6 February Earthquakes,” penned by the Turkish Ambassador to Dar es Salaam, Mehmet Güllüoğlu, describes the support efforts of African countries to Türkiye.

Turkish Airlines’ study entitled “Türkiye’s Heart Line: Turkish Airlines” examines Turkish Airlines’ flight network with Africa and the role this network plays in the relations between Türkiye and the continent.

TRT Afrika’s study entitled “Telling Africa as It Is: TRT Africa” evaluates the practices, languages and content of TRT Afrika, which broadcasts in four different languages. Entitled “Anadolu Agency’s 2023 Activities in Africa,” Anadolu Agency’s article covers the Agency’s bilateral agreements in Africa, educational activities and content production.

Entitled “Global and Regional Actors’ Relations with Africa” the third chapter examines the importance of the continent in international relations and its interactions with global actors. This chapter examines Africa’s relations with various global and regional powers, revealing the strategic and economic importance of the continent. The study analyzes the policies and cooperation activities of each actor in Africa within the context of 2023.

Accordingly, the first article of the chapter, “BRICS-Africa Relations in 2023” penned by Betül Özyılmaz Kiraz, evaluates the relations of BRICS countries with Africa. Entitled “US-Africa Relations in 2023,” Buğra Sarı’s study examines the relations of the US with Africa, taking into account the basic pillars of the US presence in Africa.

Mücahid Gürbüz’s study entitled “Continuity Efforts in France-Africa Relations: The “New” Africa Strategy” examines France’s Africa policy through Macron’s Central Africa tour and the impact of recent military developments on the continent on that country’s “new” discourse and strategy. Salih Şahin’s study entitled “UK-Africa Relations in 2023” analyzes Britain’s Africa policy through the immigration agreement signed with Rwanda, King Charles’ visit to Kenya and Cleverly’s Africa tour, agreements and announced projects in the fields of climate, environment and energy, as well as developments in Niger and Sudan.

Entitled “The Rising Role of Russia: New Dynamics of Relations with Africa,” Çağrı Adil’s study evaluates Russia’s strategic and economic interests in Africa and the policies it pursues in this regard. Entitled “China-Africa Relations in 2023,” Hasan Aydın’s study examines China’s political and economic relations with Africa and comprehensively addresses the initiatives taken.

Entitled “India-Africa Relations,” Hilal Karakoyunlu’s article examines India’s diplomatic, economic, commercial, educational, military and security relations with Africa. Gökhan Albayrak’s article entitled “Brazil-Africa Relations in 2023: From Stagnation to Strengthening Ties” examines Brazil’s relations with Africa.

Entitled “Israel-Africa Relations in 2023,” Muhammed Yasir Okumuş’ study analyzes Israel’s relations with African countries in 2023 and the important diplomatic and political developments in this process. Entitled “Relations of Nordic Countries with Africa in 2023” Burak Şakir Şeker’s study examines how the relations of the five Nordic countries with Africa evolved in 2023.

Entitled “Germany’s New Africa Strategy,” İsmail Akpınar’s study addresses the main reasons for Germany’s need to create a new common strategy for Africa and discusses the applicability of this strategy in its final form in 2023.

Finally, Mustafa Caner’s study entitled “Iran’s Africa Policy 2023” is evaluated in the context of Reisi’s African tour, mutual visits and cooperation agreements.

Entitled “Culture, Art, Education and Sports,” the fourth chapter of the study comprehensively examines the cultural and artistic riches, developments in education and sports events of the African continent. Throughout history, Africa has gained an important place on the world stage with its cultural heritage, artistic expressions and successes in sports. Notable cultural, artistic, educational and sports events that occurred in Africa throughout 2023 are examined in depth in this section.

This chapter starts off with a study entitled “Contributions of Türkiye Alumni to State-Building Processes in Somalia” written by Abdulkadir Mohamed Nur, a

Turkish graduate and current Minister of Defense of Somalia. The study examines the role played by Somali graduates educated in Türkiye in the relations between the two countries.

Entitled “Türkiye’s Education Diplomacy: Review of Educational Supports for Africa” Selim Mürsel Yavuz’s study examines the general situation of Türkiye’s education support provided to Africa in 2023 and evaluates the opportunities for cooperation in this direction.

Entitled “Dakar Fashion Week and Diplomacy,” the study penned by the Turkish Ambassador to Dakar, Nur Sağman examines the effects of the fashion week held in Dakar on African fashion, events organized by the Dakar Embassy on the occasion of the Fashion Week, and the unifying power of diplomacy.

Entitled “Türkiye’s Colorful Gateway to Africa: The Africa Culture House”, Zeliha Sağlam’s article examines the activities conducted by the African Culture House throughout 2023 and how these activities increased cultural interactions. Entitled “The African Film Industry Experienced Its Golden Year in 2023,” Mehmet Baydemir’s study analyzes the developments and important works of African cinema in 2023.

Entitled “2023 African Para Games,” Burcu Saygun’s study covers the process of organizing the 2023 Paralympic Games held in the Ghana capital of Accra and mentions the countries that participated in the organization, which is Africa’s first Paralympic Games, and the results obtained.

Entitled “The Importance of the Ancient City of Timbuktu in Terms of African Cultural Heritage and Developments in 2023,” the developments in 2023 on the subject are evaluated after mentioning the place and importance of the ancient city of Timbuktu in terms of cultural heritage in Africa in Tuğrul Oğuzhan Yılmaz’s article.

Entitled “Africa Entertainment Awards 2023 as an Alternative to Western-Centric Award Ceremonies,” Nursema Özcoşar’s study touches upon the work of the African Entertainment Awards and includes its activities in 2023.

Handegül Terken Kabakcıoğlu’s work entitled “2023 African Fabric Art: Rebirth and Dialogues on Cultural Heritage” points out the importance of African fabric art by addressing its promotion, rebirth and dialogue pertaining to cultural heritage.

Entitled “Africa’s Looted Treasures: 2023 Lyon Confluences Museum and Turin Egyptian Museum,” Duygu İlkhan Yılmaz’s study examines the return processes of Africa’s looted treasures and the steps taken for the return of its cultural heritage. Deniz Ekşi’s study entitled “2023 Rugby World Cup: Champion South Africa” examines South Africa’s success in rugby and its World Cup victory.

Bilge Tüzel’s study entitled “Intangible Cultural Heritage of Africa” examines how African countries handle, promote and protect their intangible cultural heritage at the global level, focusing on the place of this heritage in the implementation of UNESCO’s goals and principles.

The fifth and final chapter of the study includes works published on Africa in 2023. In this regard, Anıl Dereli evaluates the book entitled “Geopolitics of Africa,” edited by Hasret Çomak, Burak Şakir Şeker and Mehmet Şahin and published by Nobel Publishing. Emre Garip’s study examines the book entitled “Premesh Lalu, Undoing Apartheid” published by Afrika Vakfı Yayınları.

Hasan Alptekin Toprak examines the work entitled “Islam and Blackness” written by Jonathan A.C. Brown, published by Afrika Vakfı Yayınları, whereby Joana Ruçi examines the work entitled “Colonialism in Africa” written by Ali Maskan, published by Kadim Yayınları.

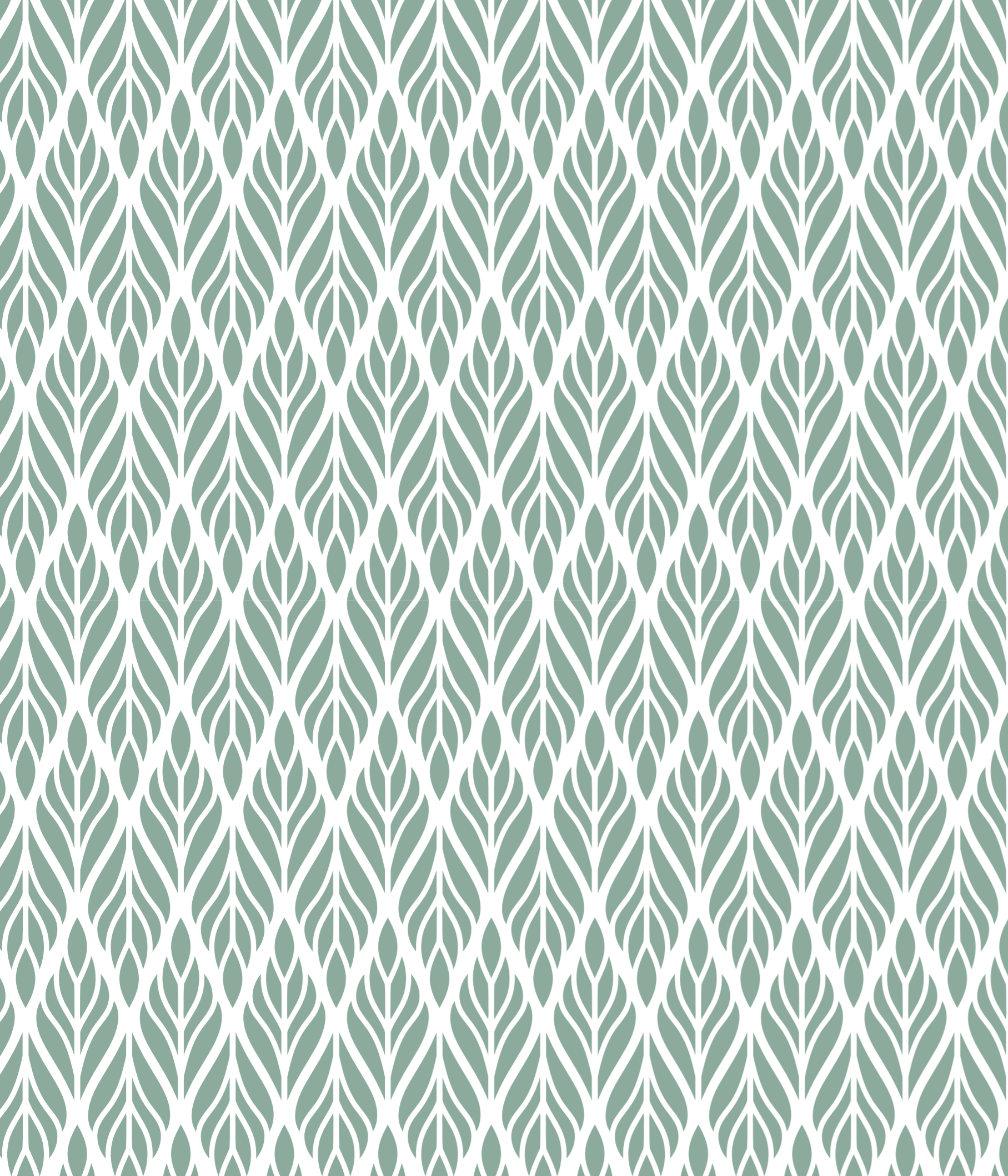
The work entitled “China’s Soft Power in East Africa: Examples from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda” written by Ensar Küçükaltan and published by Nobel Academic Publishing is reviewed by Meryem Temiz. Finally, the work entitled “Politics and International Relations in Africa” edited by Bilge Şahin, Valerio Colosio and Mürsel Bayram and published by Nika Publishing is evaluated by Muhammet Arif Seyran.

The third book in the series, published by the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities and titled “Africa Yearbook 2023,” comprises 54 original studies and six book summaries. Following two years of regular publication, the Yearbook will also be made available in English, thereby contributing not only to Turkish literature but also to international literature. This initiative is designed to appeal to researchers, academics, thinkers, policy makers and practitioners interested in Türkiye’s Africa policy, as well as students and people from all walks of life who are devoted to Africa. We would like to express our gratitude to all our authors, institutions, and organisations, as well as everyone who contributed to this study. We believe this work will significantly contribute to the deepening and dissemination of studies on Africa, and we hope it will be beneficial to all our readers.

Prof. Dr. Soyalp TAMÇELİK
Dr. Tunç DEMİRTAŞ
Editors

Politics, Economy, Society and Environment

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Elections in Africa Held in 2023

Soyalp Tamçelik*

1

1. Introduction

With the conclusion of the 2023 presidential elections, many questions and debates remain across the African continent, which gained independence after a long colonial past and paid a heavy price on the road to democracy. According to the election calendar, elections were scheduled to be held in nine different countries during the year. While the populations of eight of these countries, namely Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Gabon, Liberia, Egypt and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), went to the polls for the presidential elections, polls could not be established in Libya due to the conflicting parties not coming together.

Although the presidential elections on the continent planned for 2023 were conducted with a rate of 88.8%, practices observed in many of the election processes have once again revealed that democracy not only pertains to the ballot box. Matters such as putting pressure on opposition candidates in the elections, blocking their campaigns by yielding state power, controlling the media, violating ballot box security, irregular voting procedures, and not taking into account the objections of opposition candidates after the elections have brought criticism that elections were not managed fairly and transparently.

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Liberia is one of the countries where hopes for democracy rose in the 2023 elections, which were controversial in the African continent. Following a successfully managed election process in Liberia, the government changed hands peacefully.

This study will discuss the process of the presidential elections held in Africa in 2023 and the outcomes of this process. On the other hand, while the study will not address other elections held in the same year, it will cover the dynamics of the 2023 elections in Africa, including the manner in which they were held, the suitability of democratic procedures as well as the results obtained.

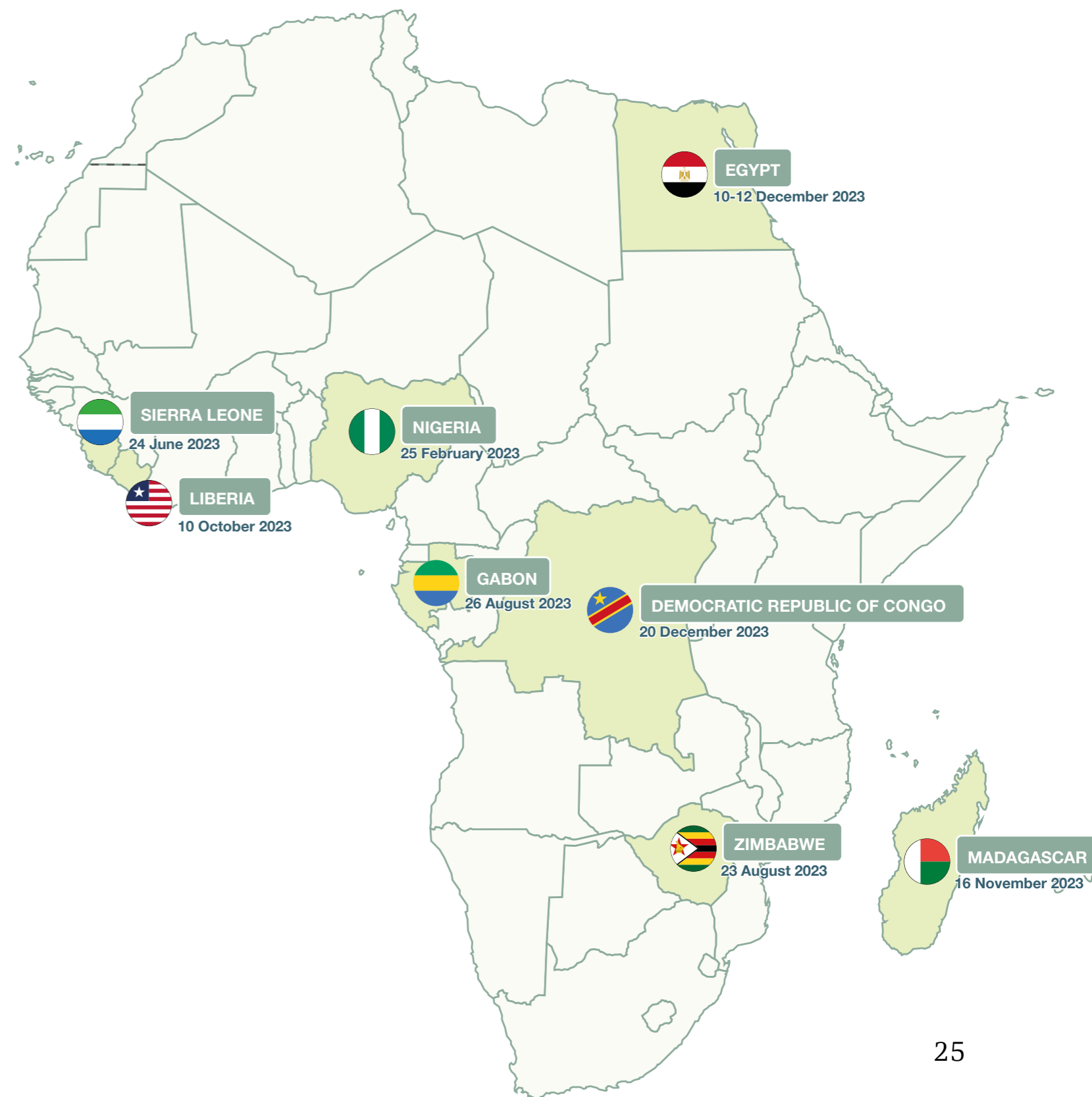
2. Low Public Participation in Elections in Nigeria

The 2023 election marathon in Africa started on February 25, 2023 in Nigeria, the most populous country on the continent. In the country governed by a federal system, the head of state is directly elected by the people for a period of four years. The elected person can constitutionally serve a maximum of two terms (eight years). To win the presidential election in Nigeria, candidates must receive at least 25% of the vote in 24 of 36 states. Otherwise, the top two candidates with the most votes advance to a second round.¹

Hosting a population of approximately 206 million with 93.4 million registered voters, the people of Nigeria went to the presidential polls for the 7th time since the transition to civilian rule in 1999 on February 25, 2023. In the election, 18 candidates competed for the presidential seat vacated by Muhammad Buhari, who served for two terms and completed his term.² Amongst the prominent candidates, former Lagos Governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu, a member of the ruling party, the All Progressives Congress (APC), received 8,794,726 votes. The candidate of the main opposition party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Atiku Abubakar was elected as the new president, with approximately 6,100,000, whereas the candidate of the Labor Party (LP), Peter Obi received approximately 6,985,000 votes.³

It was observed that while the presidential elections held in Nigeria were conducted in accordance with the election calendar and there were no security problems that could affect the elections throughout the country, that they did not attract enough public attention. In Nigeria, where the average age is 18, 40% of the registered voters are under the age of 35, and the youth unemployment rate is over 50%,⁴ it was determined that 27% of the registered voters participated in the elections.⁵

Elections in Africa in 2023



¹ Adam Abu-basal, "Nijerya, genel seçimlerle yeni bir sınava hazırlanıyor", Anadolu Agency, 22.02.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/nijerya-genel-secimlerle-yeni-bir-sinava-hazirlaniyor/2827840>, Date of Access: 15.04.2024.

² Elmurod Usubaliev, "Nijerya halkı yeni devlet başkanını seçmek için sandık başına gidiyor", Anadolu Agency, 24.02.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/info/infografik/32553#>, Date of Access: 15.04.2024.

³ Independent National Electoral Report, "Report of the 2023 General Election", p. 418. <https://inecnigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2023-GENERAL-ELECTION-REPORT-1.pdf>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

⁴ Joseph Siegle and Candace Cook, "Africa's 2023 Elections: Democratic Resiliency in the Face of Trials", Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 31 Jan 2023 (Updated: 09.11.2023). <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/elections-2023-nigeria-sierra-leone-zimbabwe-gabon-liberia-madagascar-drc/>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

⁵ Independent National Electoral Report. "Report of the 2023 General Election", p. 418. <https://inecnigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2023-GENERAL-ELECTION-REPORT-1.pdf>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

The 2023 presidential election was notable for its low level of participation, which was the lowest since the transition to civilian rule. However, operating problems experienced in the electronic system, which was used for the first time and aimed to increase the transparency of the election results, also raised questions about the reliability of the election. Objections raised by PDP candidate Atiku Abubakar and LP candidate Peter Obi, who took the election results to the court, were rejected by the court in the capital Abuja on the grounds that the allegations were “unfounded.” Thus, Tinubu’s presidency became official.⁶

3. Discussions on Transparency in Elections in Sierra Leone

Just like Nigeria, the West African country of Sierra Leone also underwent a controversial election process. If any one candidate is unable to attain the required 55% of the votes in order to win the presidential election in the first round, the top two candidates with the most votes advance to a runoff election.⁷

Hosting a population of approximately 8,400,000 with 3,300,000 registered voters, the people of Sierra Leone went to the polls on June 24, 2023 to elect the president for the 5th time since the country’s civil war ended in 2002.⁸ The prominent names amongst a total of 13 presidential candidates were Julius Maada Bio, president of the Sierra Leone People’s Party, who was elected in 2018, and Samura Kamara, the candidate of the All People’s Congress, who lost the 2018 elections by a narrow margin. According to the results announced by the Election Commission, Julius Maada Bio was elected president for the second time with 56.17% of the votes, while his closest rival Samura Kamara’s vote rate remained at 41.16%.⁹

In Sierra Leone, where political and economic tensions prevail, where the national income per capita is \$500 US, approximately 60% of the population lives below the poverty line, and three out of every four citizens experience difficulty accessing food¹⁰ the elections had a high participation rate of 83%.¹¹ However, despite the heavy public interest, discussions regarding transparency and inclusiveness left their mark on the elections.

In a statement released on June 28, 2023, the EU Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) stated that there were unacceptable statistical errors in the vote rates announced by the Sierra Leone Election Commission and that data sharing was not conducted properly¹² In stating that the final result was based on Parallel Voter Tables compiled by domestic and international

6 TRT Haber, “Nijerya’da ana muhalefet partisi, devlet başkanı seçim sonuçlarına itiraz etti”, 22.03.2023.

<https://www.trthaber.com/haber/dunya/nijeryada-ana-muhalefet-partisi-devlet-baskani-secim-sonuclarina-iraz-etti-755051.html>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

7 Adam Abu-basal, “Sierra Leone halkı sandık başında”, Anadolu Agency, 23.06.2023,

<https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/sierra-leone-halki-sandik-basinda/2929314>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

8 TRT Afrika, “Sierra Leone elections: What you need to know”, 16.06.2023,

<https://www.trtafrika.com/africa/sierra-leone-elections-what-you-need-to-know-13642353>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

9 Freetown, “Sierra Leone president wins re-election, says electoral commission”, Reuters, 28.06.2023,

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/sierra-leone-president-wins-re-election-says-electoral-commission-2023-06-27/>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

10 Joseph Siegle-Candace Cook, “Africa’s 2023 Elections: Democratic Resiliency in the Face of Trials”, Africa Center For Strategic Studies, 09.11.2023,

<https://africacenter.org/spotlight/elections-2023-nigeria-sierra-leone-zimbabwe-gabon-liberia-madagascar-drc/>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

11 Elections in Africa throughout 2023, p.11.

12 European Union Election Observation Mission Sierra Leone 2023, “The EU EOM calls on Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone to promptly publish disaggregated results data at polling station level, to ensure transparency and public scrutiny”, 28.06.2023,

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eom-sierra-leone-2023/eu-eom-calls-electoral-commission-sierra-leone-promptly-publish-disaggregated-results-data-polling_en?s=410315, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

observers. The USA expressed concerns about the reliability of the election results for not overlapping the election results.¹³

4. Controversial Elections in Zimbabwe

Democracy on the African continent was also put to the test in the presidential elections held in Zimbabwe. According to the Zimbabwean constitution, the president is directly elected by the people for a term of five years. In Zimbabwe, where a two-round election system is in place, candidates must receive more than half of the votes in the first round to be elected president. If no candidate reaches this percentage, the top two candidates with the most votes compete in a runoff election.¹⁴

Zimbabwe was ruled by Robert Mugabe for 37 years since it gained independence in 1980. After Mugabe was overthrown by a military coup in 2017, Emmerson Mnangagwa became the head of the country and controversially won the elections held in 2018. As leader of the “African National Union-Patriotic Front” (ZANU-PF) 80-year-old Emmerson Mnangagwa has the constitutional right to be elected for a second time, and ran as a candidate again for the 2023 elections. In the elections where 11 candidates competed, 45-year-old Nelson Chamisa, President of the “Citizens Coalition for Change” (CCC), came to the forefront as Mnangagwa’s biggest rival.

Home to a population of approximately 16.3 million, 6.6 million of which are registered voters, the people of Zimbabwe voted to elect the president on August 23, 2023. According to the official results announced in the elections, in which the participation rate was recorded as 68.86%, Mnangagwa, who received 52.6% of the votes, was re-elected as president in the first round of voting. The candidate with the second-highest number of votes was Chamisa, with 44% of the total.¹⁵

Zimbabwe’s elections have been criticized for not being conducted independently and fairly. The most controversial issue before the elections is the exorbitant increases in candidacy fees. Case in point, a 2000% increase (i.e., 1,000 USD to 20,000 USD) in presidential candidacy fees for the 2023 general elections was published in the official gazette.¹⁶ The government then enacted the ‘Patriotism Bill,’ which prohibited journalists and suspected opposition members from covering the president’s campaigns legal experts. While this move was described as an attack on freedom of expression, the opposition was not allowed to conduct its campaign independently and equally. During this process, more than 100 events of the opposition were banned, and those criticizing the government were harassed or intimidat-

13 Matthew Miller, “On Sierra Leone’s Election”, U.S. Department of State, 14.07.2023, <https://www.state.gov/on-sierra-leones-election/#:~:text=We%20call%20on%20all%20actors,are%20essential%20for%20any%20democracy>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

14 TRT Afrika, “Zimbabwe elections 2023: Why the polls matter”, 23.08.2023, <https://www.trtafrika.com/africa/zimbabwe-elections-2023-why-the-polls-matter-14596544>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

15 Farai Mutsaka & Gerald Imray, “Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa wins re-election after troubled vote, officials say”, AP News, 03.08.2023, <https://apnews.com/article/zimbabwe-election-emmerson-mnangagwa-4aeb10b7bf49f54fd10af141d18ced2>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

16 Murat Özgür Güvendik, “Zimbabwe’de 2023 genel seçimleri için adaylık ücretleri 20 katına çıkarıldı”, Anadolu Agency, 24.08.2022, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/zimbabvede-2023-genel-secimleri-icin-adaylik-ucretleri-20-katina-cikarildi/2668466>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

ed. While voters living abroad were not allowed to vote, more than 41 election observers were arrested on election day for trying to interfere with the results.¹⁷ Having started on August 23, 2023, the voting process was supposed to be concluded on the same day, but was terminated by the declaration issued by President Mnangagwa due to the non-delivery of ballot papers. It has been reported that the process was extended until Thursday, August 24, 2023. Surprisingly, the election results were announced two days after the polls closed.¹⁸

While foreign poll observers stated that the elections did not comply with international standards and raised doubts about the reliability of the voting and its results, which took place in a tense environment, regional and international observers cited issues such as cancellation of rallies, the denial of accreditation of some media organizations, biased state media and voter intimidation as issues that tainted the election.¹⁹

5. Elections Ended in a Military Coup in Gabon

The Central African country of Gabon left behind an election process that resulted in a military coup in 2023. While Gabon is the fourth largest oil producer in Africa and its per capita income is 8,635 USD, one third of its population of 2.5 million lives in poverty.²⁰ Following the declaration of independence in 1960, the people of Gabon have been under the governance of the Bongo family since 1967. This period commenced with the presidential elections held on 26 August 1967. Ali Bongo Ondimba, who governed the country for two terms (14 years), controversially won the 2016 elections by a difference of a mere 5,500 votes, bloodily suppressed the post-election protests. He became a candidate for the presidency for the third time. However, Ali Bongo was elected president after his father, Omar Bongo, who passed away in 2009 after ruling the country for 42 years.²¹

Gabon entered the 2023 presidential elections in a tense environment. Prior to the election, the government used the High Authority for Communications (HAC) to suspend the publications of independent media organizations and excluded journalists from HAC membership. On election day, while internet access was severed, a curfew was imposed during the final hours of the voting process to prevent citizens from voicing their complaints.²²

While the elections were held under bans and pressure, 14 candidates still ran for the presidency. In the presidential race, where there were 850,000 registered voters and the participation rate was 56.65%, the official results, announced on 30 August 2023, indicated that Ali Bongo was elected to a sec-

17 Nkasi Wodu, "Africa in 2023: The year in elections", *Democracy in Africa*, 10.12.2023, <https://democracyinafrica.org/africa-in-2023-the-year-in-elections/>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

18 Farai Mutsaka and Gerald Imray, "Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa wins re-election after troubled vote, officials say", *Apnews*, 03.08.2023, <https://apnews.com/article/zimbabwe-election-emmerson-mnangagwa-4aaeb10b7bf49f54fd10af141d18ced2>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

19 TRT World, "Vote observers cast doubt over Zimbabwe election credibility", *Ağustos 2023*, <https://www.trtworld.com/africa/vote-observers-cast-doubt-over-zimbabwe-election-credibility-14685348>, Date of Access: 21 Nisan 2024.

20 Joseph Siegle and Candace Cook, "Africa's 2023 Elections: Democratic Resiliency in the Face of Trials", *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 31 Jan 2023 (Updated: 09.11.2023), <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/elections-2023-nigeria-sierra-leone-zimbabwe-gabon-liberia-madagascar-drc/>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

21 Euronews, "Gabon'da Bongo bir kere daha seçilerek ailesinin 55 yıllık iktidarını sürdürmek istiyor", 24.08.2023, <https://tr.euronews.com/2023/08/24/gabonda-bongo-bir-kere-daha-secilerek-ailesinin-55-yillik-iktidarini-surdurmek-istiyor>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

22 Nkasi Wodu, "Africa in 2023: The year in elections", *Democracy in Africa*, 10.12.2023, <https://democracyinafrica.org/africa-in-2023-the-year-in-elections/>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

23 Barron's, "Ali Bongo re-elected as president of Gabon: Official Results", 29.08.2023, <https://www.barrons.com/news/ali-bongo-re-elected-as-president-of-gabon-official-results-9cddf976>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

24 Kaan Devocioğlu, "Gabon'da Neden Darbe Girişimi Oldu?", *Ortadoğu Araştırmaları Merkezi*, 02.09.2023, <https://www.orsam.org.tr/tr/gabonda-neden-darbe-girisimi-oldu/>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

25 Adam Abu-bashal, "Liberya halkı yarın sandık başına gidecek", *Anadolu Agency*, 09.10.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/liberya-halki-yarin-sandik-basina-gidecek/3012382>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

26 Al Jazeera, "What to know about Liberia's presidential election", 10.10.2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/10/what-to-know-about-liberias-upcoming-elections>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

27 National Elections Commission - Results Portal, "2023 Presidential First Round Elections", 29.02.2024, <https://results.necliberia.org/>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

ond term with 64.27% of the votes, while his closest rival, Albert Ondo Ossa, received 30.77%.²³ Nevertheless, a few minutes after the election results were announced at 03.30 AM, a group of high-ranking military officials announced that the elections were fraudulent and effectively took control of the country's administration.²⁴

6. Growing Hopes for Democracy in Liberia

Differing positively from other elections held on the African continent in 2023, the Liberian elections symbolized calm and peaceful management of the election process as well as a peaceful transfer of power. Both presidential and parliamentary elections were held on October 10, 2023 in Liberia, one of the two countries and the oldest republic of the continent that has never experienced colonial rule. According to the Liberian constitution, the president is directly elected by the people for a six-year term and can serve a maximum of two terms (12 years). In order to be elected, candidates must secure a minimum of 50% of the votes cast. In the case of no candidate being elected in the initial round, a runoff vote is held between the two candidates who have received the highest number of votes.²⁵

In the 2017 elections, held after two consecutive civil wars from 1983 to 2003 that claimed approximately 250,000 lives, as well as the Ebola epidemic from 2014 to 2016, the people elected George Manneh Weah, the Chairman of the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) and former football legend, as president. While the 2017 election went down in history as the first since 1944 in which power changed hands through democratic means, Weah became a candidate for the second and last time in the 2023 presidential elections.²⁶ Featured a total of 20 candidates, including Weah, another name that stood out in this election was former Vice-President Joseph from the 'Unity Party' (UP) Nyumah Boakai.

Home to a population of approximately 5.2 million with 2.4 million registered voters, no candidate in Liberia was able to achieve the necessary constitutional majority to be elected during the first round of the presidential elections held on October 10, 2023. Weah, who received 43.83% of the valid votes, and Boakai, who received 43.44% of the valid votes, faced each other again in a runoff election held on November 14, 2023.

In the second-round elections, in which 66.12% of registered voters in Liberia participated, Boakai was elected as the new president of Liberia, receiving 50.64% of the votes.²⁷ After the official results were announced, Weah, who was only 1.34 points behind his opponent, having received

49.30% of the votes, accepted Boakai's victory saying, "CDC lost the election, but Liberia won. Now is the time to show kindness in the face of defeat and put national interests above personal interests."²⁸

While there were no noteworthy hitches during the election process, election observation missions assigned by international organizations such as the EU and ECOWAS confirmed that the elections were held in a free, fair, calm and peaceful environment.²⁹ After long years of war, the government was installed peacefully as a result of the successfully managed election process. The transfer went down in history as a promising development for Liberian democracy.

7. Elections Boycotted by the Opposition in Madagascar

Madagascar is another country in Africa that underwent a rather controversial election process. According to Madagascar's constitution, a two-round election system is implemented, where the president is determined directly by popular vote for a five-year term. More than half of the votes must be received in the first round in order for any candidate to be elected president.

11 million registered voters out of a population of approximately 30 million in Madagascar, went to the polls on November 16, 2023 to decide who would govern the country during the next five years.³⁰ According to the official results announced by the Supreme Constitutional Court, former President Andry Rajoelina was reelected as president after receiving 58.96% of the votes in the first round. One of his rivals, Siteny Randrianasoloniaiko, received 14.39% of the votes, while Marc Ravalomanana received 12.09% of the votes. It was stated that the participation rate in the elections was 46.35%.³¹

Although no major incident occurred in Madagascar on election day, it did not pass the litmus test of democracy in the period leading up to the elections. With a decision taken in April, President Rajoelina banned political rallies in open areas before the election. On the other hand, after it was revealed in June 2023 that Rajoelina had acquired French citizenship with her husband and three children in 2014, the opposition claimed that Rajoelina had lost her Madagascar citizenship and could not run as a candidate.

Before the election, in which a total of 13 candidates were to compete for the presidency, the opposition group, which called itself "Collectif des 10" and was comprised of 10 candidates, organized protests to boycott the elections. It was observed that the police intervened harshly against the partic-

Madagascar Andry Rajoelina at the swearing-in ceremony for his second term as president of Madagascar. Antananarivo, Madagascar (Source: Anadolu Agency)

²⁸ TRT World, "Liberia's George Weah concedes defeat to rival Joseph Boakai", Kasım 2023, <https://www.trtworld.com/africa/liberias-george-weah-concedes-defeat-to-rival-joseph-boakai-15874638>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

²⁹ Africanews, "Liberia: election observers applaud peaceful conduct", 17.11.2023; European Union Foreign Affairs Service, "Remarkably close and well administered run-off election", 16.11.2023, <https://www.africanews.com/amp/2023/11/17/liberia-election-observers-applaud-peaceful-conduct/> ve https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eom-liberia-2023/remarkably-close-and-well-administered-run-election-0_en?s=410332, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

³⁰ Lovasoa Rabary, "Madagascar president takes huge lead in early results of low turnout vote", Reuters, 17.11.2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/madagascar-president-takes-huge-lead-early-results-low-turnout-vote-2023-11-17/>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

³¹ Ministry of Trade, Republic of Türkiye, "Madagaskar Cumhurbaşkanlığı Kesin Seçim Sonuçları Açıklandı", 29.12.2023, <https://dtybs.ticaret.gov.tr/blog/post/22617/>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.





Egypt Cairo, 12 December 2023
(Source: Anadolu Agency)

ipants during the protests, and even injured two of the presidential candidates. This intervention of the police was described in the statement made by the UN Human Rights Office as “unnecessary and disproportionate use of force”³² against peaceful demonstrations. Although the 10 candidates belonging to the opposition group “Collectif des 10” stated they withdrew their candidacy before the election and invited the public to boycott the elections, it was observed that the names of these candidates were not deleted from the ballot papers.

8. A Third Term for Sisi in Egypt

While Egypt is struggling in the midst of the worst economic crisis in its history, her citizens went to the 2023 presidential polls in the shadow of Israel’s operation against the Gaza Strip. After leading the military coup that overthrew Mohammed Morsi, Egypt’s first democratically elected president, in 2013, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi became president by obtaining 97% of the votes in both the 2014 and 2018 elections. He became a candidate for president for a third time in the 2023 elections. According to the Egyptian constitution, the head of state can be directly elected by the people for a maximum two four-year terms in office, but with the constitutional amendment made in 2019, the term of office was increased to 12 years in total, with 6 years for each election. Thus, the path was cleared for Sisi’s candidacy again in the 2023 elections.³³

Struggling with a deep economic crisis, the Egyptian people voted to elect the president on 10 - 12 December 2023. In addition to the independent candidate Sisi, Hazem Ömer (Republican People’s Party), Farid Zahran (Egyptian Social Democratic Party) and Abdel-Sanad Yamama (Wafd Party) were also candidates in the elections.

In the elections, Sisi received 89.6% of the votes cast, with approximately 67.3 million voters registered and a participation rate of 66.8%. This resulted in his election as president for a third term, while his other rivals collectively received less than 4.5% of the votes.³⁴ Thus, upon winning his third election, Sisi gained the right to become the head of state until 2030.

The fact that low-profile candidates appeared against Sisi in the election led to criticism that Sisi chose his own opponents.³⁵ Shown as an alternative to Sisi and announced his intention to run for the presidential elections in May, Ahmet Tantawi had to withdraw from candidacy in October because he could not meet conditions needed to become a candidate. While Tantawi needed to collect the signatures of a total 25,000 voters from 15 governo-

³² Lorraine Mallinder, “What’s at stake in Madagascar’s upcoming presidential election?”, Al Jazeera, 15.11.2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/15/whats-at-stake-in-madagascars-upcoming-presidential-electioni>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

³³ Farah Saafan and Aidan Lewis, “Egypt’s Sisi sweeps to third term as president with 89.6% of vote”, Reuters, 19.12.2023; “Egypt’s Sisi sweeps to third term as president with 89.6% of vote”, Reuters, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

³⁴ Gobran Mohamed, “Egypt’s President El-Sisi secures 3rd term in landslide victory”, Arabnews, 18.12.2023; “Egypt’s President El-Sisi secures 3rd term in landslide victory (arabnews.com)”, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

³⁵ Euronews, “Mısır’da seçim sonuçları: Oyların yüzde 89,6’sını alan Sisi 2030’a kadar cumhurbaşkanı”, 18.12.2023, <https://tr.euronews.com/2023/12/18/misirda-secim-sonuclari-oylar-in-yuzde-896sini-alan-sisi-2030a-kadar-cumhurbaskani>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

rates in order to become a candidate, it is claimed that Tantawi was prevented from reaching the required vote threshold for candidacy because the security institutions threatened and pressured his staff and supporters in the election campaign.³⁶

9. An Election in the Shadow of Conflict: Democratic Republic of the Congo

Home to the largest surface area in sub-Saharan Africa and a population of approximately 100 million people, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), is another African country where presidential elections were held in 2023. According to the DRC Constitution, the president is directly elected by the people to a five-year term. In a country where elections are held in a single stage, whereby the candidate with the majority of the votes is elected president.³⁷

Presidential elections were conducted in an environment of conflicts, economic crisis and lack of trust between the government and opposition. Despite the martial law imposed for almost a year prior to the election, the conflicts in North Kivu and Ituri provinces could not be resolved. Rebel groups such as “M23”, “Allied Democratic Forces” and “Codeco” continued to launch attacks against civilian and military targets. For this reason, according to UN estimates, 28% of the population of North Kivu province and 39% of the population of Ituri province has been displaced. Even polling stations could not be set up due to ongoing conflicts in the Kwamouth, Maisi and Rutshuru regions.

Struggling to deal with economic difficulties as well as security problems, as 2/3 of the population lives below the poverty line and daily earnings are below 2.15 USD, the Congolese people went to the polls to vote on December 20, 2023.³⁸ Approximately 44 million registered voters. 43.23% of the registered voters voted in an election which saw 20 candidates vying to become president. Felix Tshisekedi was re-elected as President with 73.34% of the votes cast in his favour, thus serving a second term in office. Former Katanga Province Governor and businessman Katumbi, a prominent contender, garnered 18.08% of the votes, while Martin Fayulu secured 5.33% of the votes.³⁹

The presidential elections, which resulted in the victory of Felix Tshisekedi, added a new chapter to the controversial election history of the DRC. The EU cancelled the activities of the election observation mission in the DRC in late-November, citing security problems.⁴⁰ Incidents of violence between supporters of rival candidates and security forces occurred during the elec-

tion campaign, whereas the President of the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI), Denis Kadima, who was affiliated with the government was accused. Logistical problems experienced on election day resulted in many centers either not being able to vote on time or not being able to open at all. For this reason, voting was delayed to the second day in some parts of the country, voting was observed even five days after the official election day. Local observers and NGOs described this situation as illegal. Before the election results were announced, the opposition front, including Katumbi, stated they rejected these results and called on the public to take action.⁴¹

10. Conclusion

While the 2023 presidential elections in Africa were shaped within the framework of the relevant country's own political, social, economic and internal dynamics on one hand, they also had their share of the democratic climate that prevails across the continent on the other hand.

The transparency and reliability of the elections held in countries such as Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe were subject to criticism from international observers. In Madagascar, the opposition boycotted the elections. While voting was not possible in some parts of the country in the DRC due to security problems, a group of soldiers staged a coup and seized power in Gabon after the election results were announced.

While it is observed that in terms of elections, the African continent generally did not pass the exam very successfully, it is clear that Liberia was the only exception in the 2023 presidential elections. The peaceful change of hands of the government in Liberia at the end of the successfully managed election process is recorded as a promising development in the continent's democracy.

In making a general assessment, while the 2023 presidential elections did not bode well for the continent's democracy, it is evident that the lessons learned from this process will provide valuable insights that can help shape and guide the development of African democracy along this challenging path.

³⁶ Euronews, “Egypt’s president Abdel Fattah El-Sissi wins third term in office”, 18.12.2023;

³⁷ “Egypt’s president Abdel Fattah El-Sissi wins third term in office”, Euronews, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

³⁸ Ousmane Badiane, “DR Congo election 2023: What you need to know”, BBC, 16.12.2023,

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67587434>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

³⁹ Ousmane Badiane, “DR Congo election 2023: What you need to know”, BBC, 16.12.2023,

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67587434>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

⁴⁰ TRT Haber, “Kongo Demokratik Cumhuriyeti’nde cumhurbaşkanı seçiminin galibi Tshisekedi oldu”, 31.12.2023,

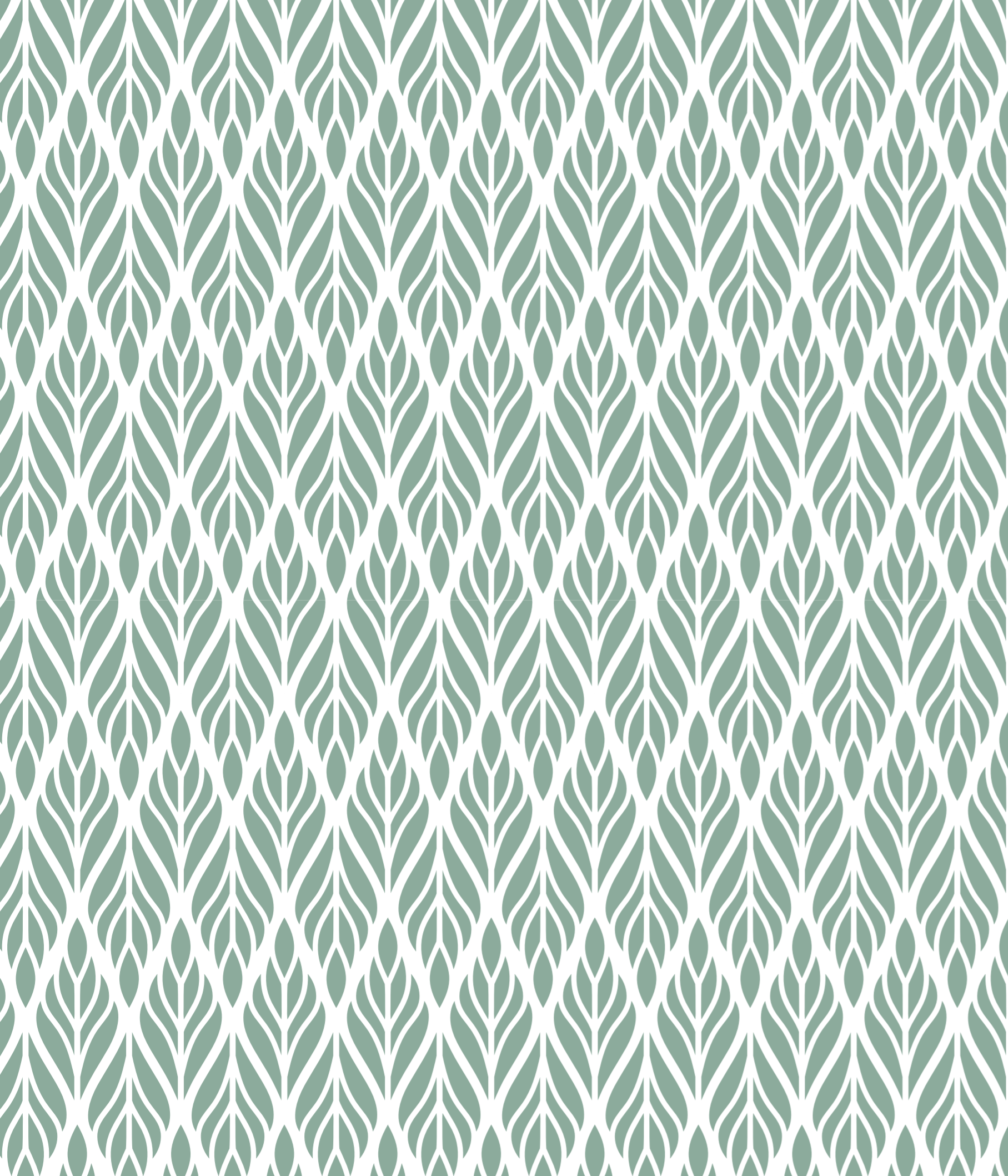
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⁴¹ Reuters, “EU cancels Congo election observation mission”, 30.11.2023,

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eu-cancels-congo-election-observation-mission-2023-11-29/>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

⁴¹ Africanews, “President Felix Tshisekedi declared winner of DRC election”, 31.12.2023,

<https://www.africanews.com/2023/12/31/president-felix-tshisekedi-declared-winner-of-drc-election/>, Date of Access: 21 April 2024.



Security and Geopolitics in the Sahel Region in 2023

2

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1. Introduction

The Sahel region witnessed a series of significant political and military developments throughout 2023, including a number of military coups, terrorist attacks, political crises, and geopolitical shifts. In this context, 2023 has proven to be a year of notable political developments within the Sahel region, both in terms of internal affairs and in the context of international relations. The Sahel region is one of the most conflict-affected areas globally, with the crises that began in Mali in 2012 having subsequently spread to Burkina Faso and Niger in 2015, with ramifications for other neighbouring countries in the past two years. The Sahel region is currently one of the most closely monitored crisis areas by international media and global public opinion, following the crises in Ukraine and Palestine.

The military coup in Niger in 2023, the withdrawal of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger from ECOWAS to establish a new regional alliance, the withdrawal of the UN peacekeeping forces from Mali, the forced withdrawal of French troops from the region, the deployment of Russian mercenaries in Burkina Faso and Niger following Mali, the severing of diplomatic relations with France, and ongoing terrorist incidents have collectively left significant marks on the region. These developments are profoundly affecting both

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the internal and external politics of the region, transforming it into a playground for international powers and playing a role in shaping global geopolitics.

Accordingly, this study will evaluate the developments in Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali within the Sahel region in 2023, and assess their importance from the perspective of regional and global security.

2. The Developments in Niger

On July 26, 2023, Niger entered a new era with the military coup led by General Abdourahmane Tiani, Commander of the Presidential Guard. Tiani cited the deteriorating security situation and poor governance as justification for his actions against the elected President, Mouhamed Bazoum. In the wake of the coup, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) imposed sanctions on Niger and declared its intention to intervene militarily with the objective of reinstating Bazoum to power. In response to the severe economic embargoes and the threat of war facing Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso formed a new defence alliance with Niger. In the event of external intervention against Niger, the other two countries would participate actively in the conflict alongside Niger. Furthermore, any declaration of war against any of the three nations would be regarded as a declaration of war against all three. As a result, ECOWAS has been forced to concede defeat in the face of this military alliance formed by the three countries. The new military government in Niger is attempting to challenge the authority of the Economic Community of West African

States (ECOWAS) while simultaneously seeking to terminate strategic alliances with France and the European Union (EU).

In the aftermath of the coup, Niger sought to reduce its reliance on Western allies and instead foster closer ties with Russia. In this context, one of the initial measures taken by the military administration under the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland (CNSP) was to demand the withdrawal of French troops from the country. Following weeks of blockades by the Nigerien public against the French military base and the determination shown by the military regime, France initially stated that it would not leave, but ultimately had to accept the withdrawal. Subsequently, France announced its complete withdrawal from the country on 24 December.¹

Despite months of resistance from the French government, Sylvain Itté, the French ambassador in Niamey, who had been designated as *persona non grata* by the military administration, was compelled to leave the country on 27 September.² On December 4, 2023, Niger announced its withdrawal from the EUCAP Sahel Niger civilian mission, which had been active since 2012, and declared the termination of the agreement. Subsequently, the military administration in Niger revoked the authorisation for the deployment of the EU Military Partnership Mission in Niger (EUMPM) within the country's borders and informed the mission that the troops should return to their respective countries of origin.³ On the same day, Russian Deputy Defence Minister Lounus-Bek Levkourov undertook an official visit to Niger with a substantial delegation in attendance.⁴ Subsequently, on 16 January, Niger's Prime Minister Ali Mahaman Lamine Zeine undertook an official visit to Russia with a substantial delegation.⁵

While the military regime is attempting to engage more effectively in the fight against terrorist organisations within the country, it is concurrently seeking to establish new alliances at the regional and international levels. Despite a reduction in the frequency of terrorist attacks compared to previous years, incidents continue to occur. For example, a terrorist attack occurred on 3 October in the vicinity of the Niger-Mali border, resulting in the deaths of 29 Nigerien soldiers.⁶ Since the military coup on 26 July, it has been reported that over 200 individuals have lost their lives as a result of terrorist attacks in the country.⁷

3. The Developments in Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso, which is currently under the governance of a military regime, has been one of the most severely affected by terrorism in the Sahel re-



Nigeria Leaders of the member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) met in Nigeria's capital Abuja to discuss coup events and security challenges in the Sahel region. (Source: Anadolu Agency)

1 *Le Monde*, "Paris a achevé son retrait militaire du Niger et a fermé son ambassade à Niamey", 22.12.2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2023/12/22/au-niger-les-derniers-soldats-francais-sur-le-depart_6207219_3212.html, Date of Access: 03.05.2024.

2 *Le Point*, "Niger: l'ambassadeur de France est rentré à Paris", 27.09.2023, https://www.lepoint.fr/monde/niger-l-ambassadeur-de-france-a-quitte-le-pays-27-09-2023-2537157_24.php, Date of Access: 03.05.2024.

3 *Africa News*, "Le Niger met fin à 2 missions de sécurité de l'UE", 05.12.2023, <https://fr.africanews.com/2023/12/05/le-niger-met-fin-a-2-missions-de-securite-de-lue/>, Date of Access: 03.05.2024

4 *Actu Niger*, "Coopération : une délégation ministérielle russe à Niamey pour échanger avec les autorités de transition", 04.12.2023, <https://www.actuniger.com/politique/19725-cooperation-une-delegation-ministerielle-russe-a-niamey-pour-echanger-avec-les-autorites-de-transition.html>, Date of Access: 03.05.2024.

5 *RFI*, "Niger: le Premier ministre Lamine Zeine en visite à Moscou", 16.01.2024, <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20240116-niger-le-premier-ministre-lamine-zeine-en-visite-%C3%A0-moscou>, Date of Access: 03.05.2024.

6 *AA*, "Une attaque terroriste au Niger fait 29 morts parmi les soldats", 03.10.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/fr/monde/une-attaque-terroriste-au-niger-fait-29-morts-parmi-les-soldats/3006691>, Date of Access: 03.05.2024.

7 Morgane Le Cam, "Au Sahel, la multiplication des attaques djihadistes met à mal la propagande des régimes putschistes", *Le Monde*, 10.10.2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2023/10/10/au-sahel-la-multiplication-des-attaques-djihadistes-met-a-mal-la-propagande-des-regimes-putschistes_6193600_3212.html, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

8 *Institute for Economics & Peace*, "Global Terrorism Index 2023: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism", Sydney, Mart 2023, <http://visionofhumanity.org/resources>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

9 *Burkina24*, "Attaque entre Deou et Oursi : 51 militaires tombés et plus de 160 terroristes neutralisés (Mise à jour de l'armée)", 20.02.2023, <https://burkina24.com/2023/02/20/attaque-entre-deou-et-oursi-51-militaires-tombes-et-plus-de-160-terroristes-neutralises-mise-a-jour-de-larmee/>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

10 *RFI*, "Le Burkina endeuillé par une nouvelle attaque, 40 soldats et supplétifs tués", 16.04.2023, <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20230416-le-burkina-endeuille-c3%A9-par-une-nouvelle-attaque-40-soldats-et-suppl%C3%A9tifs-tu%C3%A9s>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024; *AA*, "Burkina Faso : 44 civils tués dans une double attaque terroriste dans le Sahel", 08.04.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/fr/afrique/burkina-faso-44-civils-tu%C3%A9s-dans-une-double-attaque-terroriste-dans-le-sahel/2867370>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

11 *Reuters*, "At least 70 killed in attack on northern Burkina Faso village on Nov. 5 - prosecutor", 13.11.2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/least-70-killed-attack-northern-burkina-faso-village-nov-5-prosecutor-2023-11-13/>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

12 *France24*, "Dozens killed in attack by armed groups in Burkina Faso, UN says", 28.11.2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20231128-armed-groups-carry-out-major-attack-in-northern-burkina-faso-say-security-sources>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

13 *Amnesty International*, "Burkina-Faso: La responsabilité de l'armée pointée dans le massacre de Karma", 02.05.2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/fr/latest/news/2023/05/burkina-faso-la-responsabilite-des-forces-speciales-de-larmee-pointee-dans-le-massacre-de-karma/>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

14 *AA*, "Burkina Faso: Au moins 400 «terroristes» neutralisés dans le Sahe", 28.11.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/fr/afrique/burkina-faso-au-moins-400-terroristes-neutralises-c3%A9s-dans-le-sahel/3066243>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

15 *CNN*, "Four officers arrested in Burkina Faso after thwarted coup attempt, prosecutor says", 28.09.2023, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/09/28/africa/burkina-faso-foiled-coup-attempt-intl/index.html>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

gion over the past three years. As indicated by the Global Terrorism Index, Burkina Faso was the country most severely affected by terrorism in 2023, with Afghanistan ranking as the second most impacted nation.⁸ The most lethal terrorist attacks in the country during 2023 can be summarised as follows: in February, a terrorist attack near Oursi and Déou in the northern part of the country resulted in the deaths of 51 security personnel.⁹ In April, terrorist attacks in the villages of Aoréma, Kourakou, and Tondobi resulted in the deaths of 40 security personnel and 43 civilians.¹⁰ In September, fatal clashes with terrorist groups resulted in the deaths of 50 security personnel.¹¹ Moreover, in November, a terrorist attack in the village of Zaongo resulted in the deaths of 70 civilians. Additionally, in the same month, a substantial terrorist attack in the city of Djibo resulted in the deaths of approximately 40 civilians.¹²

A number of international human rights organisations have documented instances of violence perpetrated by security forces, which have resulted in a considerable number of civilian casualties. For example, a statement from Amnesty International indicated that 147 civilians were killed by Burkinabé security forces in the village of Karma.¹³ It has been reported that a significant proportion of the terrorist attacks in the country are claimed by the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (EIGS) and Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), both of which are active in the northern region.

Despite the significant prevalence of terrorist activities within the country, security forces are engaged in active counterterrorism operations with the support of the Voluntary Defense Patriots (VDP). In the aftermath of an attempted terrorist attack on the Djibo military installation in November, security forces revealed that they had neutralised over 400 terrorists in a military operation.¹⁴

The military regime has been confronted with the prospect of internal coup attempts in response to its policy of distancing itself from the West and the concomitant increase in terrorist attacks. In this context, the government announced in September that a coup attempt had been successfully thwarted and that four senior officers had been arrested.¹⁵

Captain Ibrahim Traore, the 36-year-old President, who has initiated a notable shift in foreign policy, participated in the second Russia-Africa summit held in St. Petersburg on 27-28 July. Traore has declared his intention to reinforce ties with Russia while simultaneously distancing himself from Western powers.¹⁶ He has denounced the defence agreement concluded with France in January 2023 and has called for the withdrawal of French troops

from his country.¹⁷ In December 2022, French radio RFI and in March 2023, French television France24 were banned from broadcasting in the country, and journalists from Le Monde Afrique and Libération were expelled.¹⁸

4. The Developments in Mali

Since 2020, the government of Mali has been under the control of the army-led “National Committee for the Salvation of the People” (CNSP). The country is also home to a number of terrorist organisations and separatist groups, which are active in the central and northern regions. As indicated in the 2023 Global Terrorism Index report, Mali represents one of the primary conflict zones in the Sahel region and globally. Notwithstanding the persistence of terrorist attacks in 2023, Mali has achieved notable historical successes in its operations against Tuareg-dominated separatist armed groups unified under the Permanent Strategic Framework (CSP), with the support of Russian mercenaries. The Malian army has successfully reclaimed control of the city of Kidal, which has historically served as a symbolic stronghold for armed groups and was previously under the control of separatist factions since 2012. Subsequent to the seizure of Kidal in November, the Malian government has initiated the re-establishment of state authority over pivotal locations in the northern region.¹⁹ In June, Mali requested that the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) conclude its decade-long tenure in the country. By December, MINUSMA was obliged to withdraw entirely from Mali.²⁰

In June, a referendum was held, resulting in the approval of the country’s new constitution. In accordance with the recently adopted constitution, the transitional military government is anticipated to reach its conclusion with the scheduled presidential elections, which are set to take place in February 2024.²¹ However, the postponement of the elections to an indefinite date, as announced in September, has resulted in an increase in tension within the country’s domestic politics. Furthermore, in January 2024, Mali declared its withdrawal from the Algiers Agreement, which was signed in 2015 with separatist groups, thereby altering the country’s political balance. This decision has resulted in a diplomatic crisis with Algeria. Mali has accused Algeria, which has been attempting to preserve the Algiers Agreement, of interfering in its internal affairs and has stated that it will monitor the trajectory of their relations from a completely neutral position.²²

16 Burkina24, “2e Sommet ‘Russie-Afrique’: Le Capitaine Ibrahim Traoré en route pour Saint Pétersbourg, ”, 25.07.2023, <https://burkina24.com/2023/07/25/2e-sommet-russie-afrique-le-capitaine-ibrahim-traore-en-route-pour-saint-petersbourg/>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

17 Reuters, “La France va retirer ses soldats du Burkina Faso”, 25.01.2023, <https://www.reuters.com/article/burkina-france-idFRKBN2U419E/>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

18 Anna Sylvestre-Treiner, “Les correspondantes du ‘Monde Afrique’ et de ‘Libération’ expulsées du Burkina Faso”, *Le Monde* 02.04.2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2023/04/02/les-correspondantes-du-monde-afrique-et-de-liberation-expulsees-du-burkina-faso_6167943_3212.html, Date of Access: 05.05.2024 ; Le Figaro, “Burkina Faso : la chaîne France 24 suspendue après l'interview d'un chef d'al-Qaida”, 27.03.2023, <https://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/burkina-les-autorites-ordonnent-la-suspension-de-la-diffusion-de-france-24-20230327>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

19 France24, “Mali junta seizes strategic northern stronghold of Kidal”, 14.11.2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20231114-mali-junta-seizes-strategic-northern-stronghold-of-kidal>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

20 Aljazeera, “UN peacekeeping mission in Mali officially ends after 10 years”, 11.12.2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/12/11/un-peacekeeping-mission-in-mali-officially-ends-after-10-years>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

21 Aljazeera, “Mali votes in constitutional referendum to pave way for elections”, 18.06.2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/18/mali-military-rulers-hold-constitutional-referendum-vote>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

22 AP News, “Mali recalls its envoy in Algeria after alleging interference, deepening tensions over peace efforts”, 23.12.2023, <https://apnews.com/article/mali-algeria-ambassador-recall-tuareg-c5a3c71db2d3f1df9dd94b094fb20494>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024; TRT Afrika, “Algerian ambassador returns to Mali after recall”, 07.01.2024, <https://www.trtafrika.com/africa/algerian-ambassador-returns-to-mali-after-recall-16564758>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

5. Establishment of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES)

Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali, which are governed by military regimes, represent the primary hub for terrorism and various armed groups in the Sahel region. In September, the three countries signed the Liptako-Gourma Pact with the objective of conducting a joint effort to address internal and external threats, with a particular focus on combating terrorism.²³ By declaring their withdrawal from both the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the G5 Sahel, these countries have paved the way for the creation of a new regional entity with the establishment of the Sahel States Alliance (AES).

The AES countries have indicated a preference for Russia as a strategic partner, particularly in opposition to the West. They have emphasised independence and sovereignty in their internal and external policies, and have pledged to ensure regional security and enhance prosperity. It has been observed that the necessity for the West to withdraw from the region, pressured by military regimes and local populations, has enabled Russia to gain influence. However, given that Russia is unlikely to allow unrestricted actions in the region, the risk of the Sahel becoming a battleground for global power contests is assessed to be high.

6. Conclusion

The year 2023 has been characterised by substantial shifts in both domestic and external politics within the Sahel region. The formation of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES) by Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali has the potential to influence not only regional politics but also the international order.

With a combined population of over 70 million and rich natural resources such as oil, uranium, and gold, these countries have become attractive arenas for global powers as they turn their backs on the West and forge strategic partnerships with Russia, China, and Iran. Furthermore, the mounting economic and security crises indicate that regional stabilisation is unlikely to occur in the near future. While the new efforts of these countries to eradicate terrorism may yield short-term results, it is anticipated that terrorist incidents will persist into 2024, accompanied by an intensification of competition among global Powers.

23 Reuters, “Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso sign Sahel security pact”, 16.09.2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/mali-niger-burkina-faso-sign-sahel-security-pact-2023-09-16/>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

Ongoing Conflicts in Africa

Enver Arpa*

1. Introduction

Defined in various ways by disciplines, the concept of “conflict” is generally understood as a state of opposition that leads to the development of mutually negative relationships. Social scientists define conflict as “the destruction of rivals or groups – tribal, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, socio-economic, political, etc. – in the pursuit of power, status, and resources.” It is characterized as “the struggle of groups with differing objectives against each other over incompatible goals.”¹ Although conflicts have individual, group or interstate levels,² this review will provide information about internal social conflicts between social identity groups, which are considered macro conflicts, civil wars, or wars that turn into interstates with the influence of social identity groups.

In 2023, numerous conflicts of varying intensities occurred across many African countries. Some of these conflicts were rooted in ethnic tensions, while others arose from competing interests or struggles for power. Since addressing all of these would exceed the determined volume of this review, only conflicts which resulted in more than 1,000 deaths in 2023 will be examined.

The primary causes of these conflicts, which align with this definition, along with their effects on the countries or regions where they occur, will be evaluated in **Table 1**.

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¹ Kemal İnat vd. (ed.), *Dünya Çatışma Bölgeleri*, Nobel Distribution, Ankara, 2007, p. x-xi.

² Yakup Şahin, “Çatışma Kuramları ve Kimlik Temelli Çatışmalar; Teorik Bir Giriş”, *Barış Araştırmaları ve Çatışma Çözümleri Dergisi*, 1(1) 2013, p. 34.

Table 1: Ongoing Conflicts in Africa Leading to More than 1000 Deaths³

No	Start of Conflict	Conflict	Number of Deaths in 2023
1	2012	Central Sahel (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger) Conflicts	10,000 +
2	2023	Sudanese Civil War	12,785
3	1991	Somali Civil War	9,192
4	2009	Boko Haram Attacks (Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, Chad)	4,967
5	2018	Ethiopian Civil War	3,578
6	1998	Nigerian Social Conflicts	3,050
7	2004	Democratic Republic of the Congo Kivu Conflicts	2,438
8	1996	Democratic Republic of the Congo Allied Democratic Powers Rebellion	1,378
9	2008	South Sudan Ethnic Conflicts	1,240

2. Central Sahel (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger Border Region) Conflicts

Over the last decade, the border region where central Mali, northern Burkina Faso and western Niger converge has become the epicenter of violent attacks by al-Qaeda and ISIS-affiliated armed groups in the Sahel.⁴

Most affected by these attacks, Mali has been in the grip of a deep security crisis that began with a religious rebellion in the north since 2012 and spread to the center of the country as well as neighboring Burkina Faso and Niger.⁵ More than 10,000 people lost their lives and approximately 2 million people have died in the conflicts. They were also displaced from their homes.⁶

According to the UNICEF report; In the Sahel region, where armed militants blockaded towns and villages, millions of children were affected by the conflicts in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, water resources have been destroyed, more than 10 million children have need of humanitarian aid, children have been forcibly recruited by militants and dragged into war, whereas it is stated that there is a water shortage.⁷

While it is the education sector that has suffered the most from the region conflicts in question, more than 8,300 schools in these three countries have been closed due to violence.

More than 20,000 people are faced with “catastrophic” hunger in the border region between Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali. Conflicts have already spread from the center of the Sahel to neighboring countries such as Benin, Cote D’Ivoire, Ghana and Togo.⁸

³ The table is based on the chart titled “List of Ongoing Armed Conflicts” available at https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Devam_eden_silahli_çatışmalar_list#cite_note-41 and obtained from various sources.

⁴ Aljazeera, “More than a dozen Niger soldiers killed in attack near Mali border”, 16.08.2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/8/16/more-than-a-dozen-niger-troops-killed-in-attack-near-mali-border> Date of Access: 19.04.2024; VOA, Africa,

“Six Malian soldiers killed in attack, says army”, 13.08.2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/six-malian-soldiers-killed-in-attack-says-army/7223274.html>, Date of Access: 13.04.2024.

⁵ VOA, Africa, “Six Malian soldiers killed in attack, says army”.

⁶ Aljazeera, “Dozens killed in Burkina Faso attack near Mali border”, 24.04.2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/24/dozens-killed-in-burkina-faso-attack-near-mali-border>, Date of Access: 13.04.2024.

⁷ Garowe Online, “Central Sahel: Lives of 10 million children on the line as conflict rages”, 19.03.2023, <https://www.garoweonline.com/en/world/africa/central-sahel-lives-of-10-million-children-on-the-line-as-conflict-rages>, Date of Access: 13.04.2024.

⁸ Garowe Online, “Central Sahel: Lives of 10 million children on the line as conflict rages”.

3. The Sudanese Civil War

Disagreements arose during the transition period between Army Commander Abdul Fattah al-Burhan, who assumed the chairmanship of the Sovereign Council established to govern the country after the fall of the Omar al-Bashir administration in 2019, and his deputy, Rapid Support Forces Commander Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, whereupon the two heavily armed forces began fighting on April 15, 2023 when they were unable to reach an accord.

More than 10,000 people lost their lives in the conflicts between the two military forces in 2023.⁹ The Sudanese Civil War became one of the world’s worst humanitarian tragedies and one of the largest internal displacement crises in the world in 2023. A famine problem arose in the country due to the conflicts.¹⁰

It is stated that since the start of the conflict, an estimated 6,657,550 people have been displaced within the country and 2,044,248 people have migrated to neighboring countries. An estimated 13% of the population in Sudan was displaced during the conflict. More than half of the displaced people (about 53%) were children under the age of 18, and approximately 22% were children under the age of 5.¹¹

Neither the army units nor the Rapid Support Forces were able to maintain control over the entire Sudan. Conflicts have spread from Khartoum to Darfur and Kordofan, and other local powers are trying to take advantage of this rivalry to establish themselves as local security providers.¹²

4. Somali Civil Conflicts

With the defeat of Siad Barre, who took over the government in 1969, in the Ogaden War, which he started against Ethiopia with the dream of a “Greater Somalia,” Somalia was dragged into a conflict that continues to the present. A coup attempt launched against Barre, who lost prestige after the defeat, was prevented and many trained bureaucrats and soldiers were arrested or killed. Those who managed to escape turned into rebels who would cause trouble in Somalia for many years. After the war, there was an economic collapse in the country and a famine occurred. This collapse led to various wars between tribes struggling for national power. The chaotic environment that commenced after Barre left power and the failure to establish a new state authority rendered a devastating conflict environment in the country where thousands of people lost their lives.¹³

⁹ CNN, “10.000 reported killed in one West Darfur city, as ethnic violence ravages Sudanese region”, 27.07.2023, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/07/26/africa/sudan-west-darfur-thousands-killed-intl/index.html>, Date of Access: 18.03.2024.

¹⁰ Reliefweb, “Sudan situation: UNHCR external update #57”, 17.04.2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-situation-unhcr-external-update-57-17-april-2024>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

¹¹ IOM UN Migration, The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), “One year of conflict in Sudan: Visualizing the world’s largest displacement crisis”, 15.04.2023, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/one-year-conflict-sudan-visualizing-worlds-largest-displacement-crisis?close=true>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

¹² ACLED, “One year of war in Sudan”, 14.04.2024, <https://acleddata.com/2024/04/14/sudan-situation-update-april-2024-one-year-of-war-in-sudan/>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

¹³ Belma Engin Güder, “Doğu Afrika’daki iç çatışmalarda komşu ülke faktörü: Somali iç savaşı örneği”, *Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 22(51), 2024, p. 205.



The Transitional Federal Government, which was established in 2004 with the support of international organizations such as the UN, the African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), has not been successful in maintaining order and establishing peace amongst tribes in Somalia. The emergence of the terrorist organisation al-Shabaab in 2006 gave rise to a conflict with a religious dimension. Aiming to govern the country in accordance with Sharia law, Al-Shabaab has seized control of significant part of Somali territory by taking advantage of the authority gap. The events between the central government, which has wanted to take back the regions controlled by Al-Shabaab, and al-Shabaab have cost the lives of thousands of people, as this struggle continued unabated during 2023.

Al-Shabaab is estimated to have between 6,000 and 12,000 members and primarily maintains its presence in the southern region of Somalia, where it controls approximately 20% of the country's territory. While continuing to attack and assassinate politicians, public officials, AMISOM troops and civilians of the Federal Government of Somalia and in the border regions of Kenya close to Somalia, this organization has used bomb-laden vehicles, suicide bombers and mortars in attacks targeting restaurants, hotels and roads. The use of handmade explosives, land mines and weapons have caused the deaths of thousands of people. Kenya, the USA, AFRICOM, AMISOM and Ethiopian forces are also involved in the Somali government's fight against al-Shabaab from time to time.¹⁴

5. Boko Haram Attacks (Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, Chad)

Founded as a tabligh movement in 1995, Boko Haram, which was later affiliated with al-Qaeda, and cooperated with the DAESH terrorist organization in 2015, is considered one of the bloodiest terrorist organizations in Africa. Having conducted its first armed action in 2003, this organization gained worldwide notoriety and went down in history as the bloodiest terrorist organization by causing the deaths of 6,644 people and kidnapping more than 250 girls in 2014.¹⁵ The organization has been active in the country's border neighbors Cameroon and Chad since 2015 and carried out attacks in Niger.¹⁶

According to a statement released by the UN Development Program (UNDP), approximately 350,000 people were killed directly by late-2020 in the conflicts with radical groups in Northeastern Nigeria. It has been stated that many more casualties have occurred due to the indirect impact of the conflict, i.e., the damage to agriculture, water, trade, food and health services.¹⁷



Egypt At the Sudan's Neighboring Countries Summit held in the Egyptian capital of Cairo, a call was made to the Sudanese parties to end the conflict and start negotiations to come up a peaceful solution to the crisis. In attendance at the summit were; Egyptian President AbdelFattah al-Sisi (5th from left), South Sudanese President attended the meeting. Salva Kiir Mayardit (4 right), Libyan Presidential Council Chairman Mohammed al-Menfi (3rd from right), Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (2nd from right), Arab League Secretary General Ahmed Abu Gheit (right), Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki (4th from left), Central African Republic President Faustin-Archange Touadera (3rd from left), Chad Transitional President Mahamat Deby (2nd from left), as well as the Chairman of the African Union Commission Musa Faki Muhammed (left) (Source: Anadolu Agency)

14 Güder, *ibid.*

15 *Independent Türkçe*, "Katliam ve işkencelerle dolu 10 yıl: Afrika'nın IŞİD'i Boko Haram", 01.08.2019, <https://www.indyturk.com/node/57471/dunya/katliam-ve-iskencelerle-dolu-10-yil-afrikanin-isi-di-boko-haram>, Date of Access: 28.04.2024.

16 *Habertürk*, "Nijerya'da Boko Haram ve DEAS'ın Batı Afrika kolu arasında çatışma çıktı: En az 100 terörist öldü", 24.04.2024, <https://www.haberturk.com/nijerya-da-boko-haram-ve-deas-in-bati-afrika-kolu-arasinda-catisma-cikti-en-az-100-terorist-oldu-3680410>, Date of Access: 28.04.2024.

17 *Reuters*, "Northeast Nigeria insurgency has killed almost 350,000", 24.06.2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/northeast-nigeria-insurgency-has-killed-almost-350000-un-2021-06-24/>, Date of Access: 28.04.2024.

18 *TRT Haber*, "Nijerya'da iki haftada 151 terörist öldürüldü", 15.09.2023, <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/dunya/nijeryada-iki-haftada-151-terorist-olduruldu-795664.html>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

19 Tufan Aktaş, "Etiyopya'da kanlı iç savaşı bitiren anlaşmada son aşamaya geçildi", *Anadolu Agency*, 24.01.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/etiopyada-kanli-ic-savasi-bitiren-anlasmada-son-asamaya-gecildi/2795694>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

20 Mahmut Ebu Bekir, "Tigray'daki savaş 28,8 milyar dolarlık hasara yol açtı", *Independent Türkçe*, 17.06.2023, <https://www.indyturk.com/node/640566/dunya/tigraydaki-savas-288-milyar-dolarlik-hasara-yol-aciti>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

21 *UCDP*, "Ethiopia", Summary 2023, <https://ucdp.uu.se/country/530>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

22 *UCDP*, Ethiopia.

Conflicts between the organization and security forces continued to increase in 2023. In the clashes that in early-September, 151 members of the organization were neutralized and dozens of them managed to escape with injuries. During the operations, 456 terrorists were captured, and their weapons confiscated.¹⁸

6. Ethiopian Civil Conflicts

A party of the alliance that overthrew the government in 1991, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) was the most effective element of the government until 2019. However, it began to lose influence after Abiy Ahmed became prime minister. In September 2020, the TPLF held elections in Tigray State, not recognizing Abiy Ahmed's decision to postpone the elections due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Regarded as a rebellious act against the federal government, this stance led to conflicts between the TPLF and the central government. Conflicts between the two powers reached their peak in 2022. It is estimated that approximately 600,000 people were killed and hundreds of thousands of people were displaced in the conflicts that lasted for two years.¹⁹ The military conflict ended with an agreement between the two sides in November, 2022. However, while the conflicts in Tigray have ended, it is stated that the Oromia regional conflicts continue to spread into Gambella, Benishangul and the Somali region.²⁰

Considering the agreement with Tigray as a betrayal, the government's former ally, the Amhara Militia Group, also took action, with tensions escalating in early-2023, turning into violent clashes encompassing a large swathe of the Amhara region.²¹ While the conflict between the government and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) has diminished, about 500 people have lost their lives in the ongoing conflicts in most of Oromia. As in previous years, most of the deaths in 2023 occurred in state-based violence. Deaths in one-sided violent incidents have decreased from around 1,800 in 2022 to below 500 in 2023. It has been observed that non-state conflicts in 2023 did not exceed the 25-death threshold required to be included in UCDP data.²²

7. Nigerian Social Conflicts

While the Nigerian state is trying to cope with problems caused by the Boko Haram organization, it is also dealing with various social events that pose significant threats to internal peace. Thousands of people have lost their lives in conflicts that occasionally break out between shepherds and farmers in the country due to proper access to land and water.²³ The Fulani,

who are engaged in animal husbandry, and Hausa farmers come face to face in such conflicts, which mostly occur in the northwest of Nigeria. These conflicts, which extend to the central regions and are generally based on ethnic and religious causes, pose a serious threat to the security of Nigeria.

Moreover, many people have lost their lives in attacks conducted by various gangs throughout the country. The northwest of Nigeria has turned into a hotbed of violence with the increase in kidnappings, extortions, etc. by these groups called 'Bandits'. According to ACLED data, 662 kidnappings occurred in the northwest of the country between 2019 - 2023.²⁴

In Nigeria, where there are suitable areas for terrorist organizations due to incidents caused by villagers engaged in animal husbandry and shepherding as well as attacks carried out by bandits, many people have lost their lives in conflicts between Christians and Muslims. Mosques and churches have been set ablaze in clashes between Muslim and Christian youth in the northwest of the country, especially in Kaduna State.²⁵ There are many organizations established by Christians and Muslims in the country.

8. Democratic Republic of the Congo Kivu Conflict

Thousands of people have lost their lives so far in the attacks conducted by the Rwanda-backed rebel military group called the March 23 Movement (M23), which operates in the eastern regions of the Democratic Republic of Congo, mainly in the North Kivu province. Founded in 2012 and engaged in armed conflict with DRC forces, M23 is mainly comprised of Congolese Tutsis. After remaining inactive for many years, the organization rearmed itself in November 2021 to capture the town of Bunagana on the Ugandan border in June, 2022. After a short period of calm, it attacked again in October, 2022.²⁶

The North Kivu Rutshuru region has been the scene of clashes between the DRC army and M23 rebels during which hundreds of people have died in the conflicts and approximately 20,000 people had to abandon their homes and lands since November 2021.²⁷

9. Democratic Republic of the Congo Allied Democratic Powers Rebellion

While Democratic Republic of Congo Government forces were fighting against M23 on the one hand, they were also forced to fight against the 'Allied Democratic Forces' an armed group with ties to DAESH operating in Uganda. Allied Democratic Forces have become the most significant threat for the DRC,

²³ Chinedu Asadu, "Nigeria says 36 soldiers killed in an ambush by an armed group and a related helicopter crash", AP, 17.08.2023, <https://apnews.com/article/niger-soldiers-attack-bandits-0ee7c3891f737afc51762a7989ab2909>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

²⁴ ACLED, "Nijerya'da son dönemde artan kitlesel kaçırma olayları bize ne anlatıyor?", 15.03.2024, <https://acleddata.com/2024/03/15/joint-brief-what-does-the-recent-escalation-of-mass-abductions-in-nigeria-tell-us/>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

²⁵ Yeni Şafak, "Nijerya'da Müslüman-Hristiyan çatışması", 12.05.2014.

²⁶ The Guardian, "DRC estimates 300 villagers killed in massacre by rebels", 12.5.2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/dec/05/m23-rebels-in-drc-democratic-republic-of-congo-massacred-300-villagers#>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

²⁷ The Guardian, "I prayed to God to find him: the families scattered by violence in DRC", 25.10.2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/oct/25/families-scattered-by-violence-in-drc-congo-m23-rebels>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

whereas an excess of 1,000 deaths in the country in 2023 are attributed to this organization²⁸

Due to its support to the Allied Democratic Forces, the DRC boosted its cross-border attacks against Uganda compared to previous years, during which many people lost their lives in these conflicts.²⁹

10. South Sudan Ethnic Conflicts

After Africa's longest civil war, South Sudan gained independence from Sudan in 2011. However, it was subsequently dragged into deep instability that continues until today with tribal warfare that began within the country. After President Kiir, who belongs to the Dinka tribe, dismissed his deputy Riek Macher, who belongs to the Nuer tribe, in July 2013, Macher and his forces attempted a coup. With this action of Macher's forces, an ethnic-based civil war began between the Dinka tribe, to which Kiir belongs, and the Nuer tribe, to which Macher belongs.³⁰ In pitting the country's two largest tribes against each other, this civil war is responsible for the deaths of around 400,000 people between 2013-2018. It was determined that approximately half of them died through violence. Intermittent internal conflicts that continued in 2023 displaced more than one third of the total population from their homes. It has been observed that two-thirds of the population suffers from serious malnutrition.³¹

11. Conclusion

The African continent has witnessed many conflicts that have resulted in the deaths of thousands of people in 2023. Political religious movements, which have started to increase in recent years, are responsible for a significant portion of these conflicts. Another issue that significantly affects continental security and leads to bloody conflicts is conflicts caused by ethnic division. Tribal warfare still remains the most important problem in Africa.

Conflicts lead to many social problems, especially the exodus of hundreds of thousands of people. Problems caused by migration caused by conflicts, financial resources spent to prevent conflicts, and financial and military efforts spent to strengthen security systems all lead to a significant waste of resources. Achieving the desired level of development for the continent and ensuring social peace and welfare will only be possible by preventing these conflicts, many of which can be considered within the scope of terrorism. It is considered that this will be possible by increasing national security measures and obtaining the required support from the international community.

²⁸ ACLED, "Democratic Republic of Congo: Re-elected president Tshisekedi faces regional crisis in the east", 17.01.2024, <https://acleddata.com/conflict-watchlist-2024/drc/>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

²⁹ ACLED, "Democratic Republic of Congo.

³⁰ Tuğrul Oğuzhan Yılmaz, "Güney Sudan'da iç savaş ve barış süreci", AA, 13.11.2018, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz-haber/guney-sudan-da-ic-savas-ve-baris-sureci/1310111>, Date of Access: 30.04.2024.

³¹ N World, "South Sudan's civil war has caused 400,000 deaths", 26.09.2018, <https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/africa/south-sudan-s-civil-war-has-caused-400-000-deaths-1.774286>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

Impacts of the Global Climate Crisis in Africa

Isidore Agha*

1. Introduction

Climate change is a phenomenon that poses a significant threat to environmental sustainability and human development. Climate change essentially refers to prolonged variations in temperature and weather outcomes. The development of industry has been dependent on the utilisation of fossil fuels, including coal, gas and oil, over time. However, the constant burning of these fuels led to the emission of greenhouse gases that raised the earth's temperature and eventually altered its weather patterns.

It is worth noting that Africa emits less than 4% of the global greenhouse gases responsible for the climate crisis.¹ However, the effects of climate change are more pronounced in Africa than in any other region of the globe. Floods, heat waves, droughts, heavy rains, and tropical cyclones continue to negatively impact communities while destabilizing national economies and increasing the number of people at risk. According to the World Meteorological Organization, 2023 was the warmest ever witnessed on record. The global average temperature for 2023 stood at 1.45°C.² On the other hand, the changes to the 2023 annual temperature of Africa stood at 1.49°C, indicating the warmest year the continent has witnessed.³ Climate change impacts on the continent include floods, extreme weather events, food in-

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¹ Alfred Kwadzo and Matthias Krönke, "With Climate Change Making Life Worse, Africans Expect Governments and Other Stakeholders to Step Up", *Afrobarometer Dispatch* 717 (2023).

² Yeşil Gazete, "2023 açık ara en sıcak yıl, iklim eylemsizliğinin maliyeti artıyor", 2024, <https://yesilgazete.org/2023-acik-ara-en-sicak-yil-iklim-eylemsizliginin-maliyeti-artiyor/>, Date of Access: 01.05. 2024.

³ National Center for Environmental Information, "Annual 2023 Global Climate Report", 2023, <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/monitoring/monthly-report/global/202313#:~:text=Africa had an annual temperature,years have occurred since 2005,> Date of Access: 01.05. 2024.



Italy Africa In Lampedusa, Italy's closest landmass to North Africa, which is located on the irregular migration route in the Central Mediterranean on the irregular migration route from Africa to Europe, the intensity and repercussions of the approximately 7 thousand irregular migrants who have reached the island since the beginning of the week continue to be felt (Source: Anadolu Agency).

security, health risks and diseases, economic implications, and social and political instability. It can be reasonably concluded that Africa's capacity to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C in accordance with the Paris Agreement and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals will be significantly constrained. In light of these circumstances, 2023 can be considered a year of significant occurrences, as numerous countries across the continent experienced the effects of climate change to varying extents.

2. Extreme Weather Events

One of the most glaring impacts of climate change in Africa has been extreme weather events. Climatic changes in temperature and precipitation most often trigger these extreme weather conditions. In 2023, many extreme weather events swept across the African continent. Some extreme events that affected the continent included heavy rainfall, floods, waves, wildfires, droughts and tropical cyclones.⁴ Libya experienced unprecedented levels of torrential rains on September 2023. This was followed by a deadly storm known as Storm Daniel that caused floods in major cities of the country. The flooding caused an estimated 11,000 to die.⁵ The flood equally damaged infrastructure and properties. Several floods in the Democratic Republic of Congo led to the death of about 3000 people in April and May. Flooding equally contributed to the death of 131 people in Rwanda. As part of the impact of global warming, record-breaking heat waves were witnessed in Malawi, Nigeria, Algeria and Morocco. It is noteworthy that Nigeria experienced heat intensities with temperatures of 47°C, while Algeria recorded an all-time high temperature of 48°C.⁶ The Washington Post reported in August that South Africa, Botswana and Namibia were all hit by significant heatwaves with temperatures close to 40°C.⁷

Heat waves have been known to drastically affect humans and livestock as they all thrive to survive the scorching heat caused by extreme weather conditions. In order to mitigate the effects of heat waves, individuals have turned to the use of air conditioning units and fans as a means of providing cooling. It is, however, important to acknowledge that the majority of Africans who are unable to afford this cooling equipment are forced to rely on natural processes to determine their fate. Amazingly, many Africans have been injured or died because of heat waves. However, the lack of facilities and systems to track such deaths means that they end up unreported, thus blurring the full impact of the climate crisis on the continent.

⁴ Afşin Ahmet Kaya, ed., *Climate Crisis Research within the Framework of Disaster Preparedness* (Lyon: Livre de Lyon, 2023), 186.

⁵ Zayed Hediyye, "Libya'daki Danyal Fırtınasından Sağ Kurtulanlar, Dehşet Verici Anları Anlattı", 2023, <https://www.indyturk.com/node/660801/dunya/libyadaki-danyal-firtinasindan-sag-kurtulanlar-dehset-verici-anlari-anlattı>, Date of Access: 02.05.2024.

⁶ Ténéré Majhoul, "Algeria Heat wave takes toll, forces climate change reckoning", *Le Monde*, 2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/algeria/article/2023/07/25/algeria-heat-wave-takes-toll-forces-climate-change-reckoning_6066267_221.html, Date of Access: 02.05.2024.

⁷ Ian Livingston, "Heat records are being smashed in multiple parts of the globe", *The Washington Post*, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2023/08/24/global-heat-records-europe-asia-south-america/>, Date of Access: 03.05.2024.

⁸ Ketu Isaac, "Achieving the 'zero hunger' goal in Africa: Beyond the direct effects of infrastructure development," *World Food Policy*, 2 (9AD): 204–227.

⁹ Daisy Dunne, "Analysis: Africa's extreme weather has killed at least 15,000 people in 2023", *Carbon Brief*, 2023, <https://www.preventionweb.net/news/analysis-africas-extreme-weather-has-killed-least-15000-people-2023>, Date of Access: 01.05.2024.

¹⁰ Alessandro Abbonizio and Annabel Symington, "Horn of Africa hunger crisis pushes millions to the brink", *World Food Programme*, 2024, <https://www.wfp.org/stories/horn-africa-hunger-crisis-pushes-millions-brink>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

¹¹ Peter Dawuni, "Achieving food security through agricultural water security of smallholder farmers in Ghana", *International Journal of Food and Agricultural Economics*, 12, no. 1 (2024): 27–46.

3. Agriculture and Food Security

The discussion on Africa's development can only be complete concerning the state of the continent's agricultural sector. Sustainable Development Goal number two is a fine blueprint that provides African governments with road maps to end hunger, improve food security and promote sustainable development.⁸ Food security is inherently tied to well-functioning agricultural systems. Unfortunately, the reverse is true for Africa as climate change continues to impact the continent's agricultural sector in complex and contradictory ways. More than 29 million people were affected by drought and famine in Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Niger and Mauritania in 2023.⁹ The World Food Programme noted that droughts significantly exacerbate food insecurity in the Horn of Africa, leaving millions of people hungry. The difficulty in securing sufficient and nutritious food causes acute malnutrition for more than five million children.¹⁰

Furthermore, irregular weather patterns, rising temperatures and climate variability have served to exacerbate food insecurity in Ghana and numerous other regions of West Africa. Last year, the increased frequency of rainfall and floods negatively affected Ghana's agricultural value chain.¹¹ More than half of Africa's population depends on agriculture for their livelihood. They rely on regular rainfall patterns to make the soil conducive for cultivation. However, the occurrence of droughts, desertification, flooding, soil erosion and wildfires has resulted in crop failures, a reduction in agricultural yields and the loss of livestock in numerous regions of the African continent throughout 2023. Climate change threatens Africa's sustainable agricultural productivity and endangers vast portions of the continent's population.

4. Health Risks and Diseases

The effects of climate change have been observed to have severe consequences for populations and health systems within the African continent. Climate change has caused an increase in the outbreak and spread of diseases like malaria, cholera and dengue fever in Africa. Heat waves and sweltering weather conditions provide a conducive atmosphere for malaria-transmitting mosquitoes to thrive. This does not only stifle efforts aimed at eradicating malaria but also exposes a considerable portion of the continent's population to premature death. In 2023, 19 African countries recorded climate-related cholera outbreaks. The cholera outbreak cumulatively report-

ed 252,934 cases, with 4,187 deaths.¹² Some countries that experienced these acute cholera outbreaks include South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Last year, Cyclone Freddy affected some Southern African countries with severe floods, which destroyed 233 health facilities and displaced thousands of people.¹³

Moreover, the climate crisis has equally contributed to the spread of infectious diseases like dengue fever. In 2023, dengue fever outbreaks were recorded in several African countries like Mali, Togo, Benin, Chad, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Senegal, Ethiopia, Mauritius and Guinea. WHO report indicated that the rate of dengue fever infection in 2023 was ninefold compared with that of 2019.¹⁴ It is, however, paradoxical that Western countries that are the most significant emitters of greenhouse gases have robust health systems that are resilient enough to address the challenges of climate change. On the other hand, Africa, which contributes less to the climate crisis, continues to bear the brunt of global warming with fragile health systems that are not resilient enough to address outbreaks and health emergencies.

5. Social and Political Instability

The relationship between climate and conflict in Africa is not a direct one. However, the impacts of climate change have exacerbated instability and violence in conflict-affected countries in Africa. The occurrence of floods, droughts, desertification and environmental degradation has a considerable impact on the availability of community resources, such as water and arable land. Conflicts thus intensify as various groups contest for these resources to sustain their livelihoods. In 2023, severe flooding in Adamawa State in Nigeria between May and October resulted in the forced displacement of approximately 8,504 households, the majority of whom were engaged in agricultural and pastoral activities. In December 2023, a farmer-herder conflict in Nigeria's Plateau State resulted in the deaths of 200 individuals.¹⁵ While farmers struggle for control over arable land, pastoralists, on the other hand, seek access to such land for livestock grazing.

In addition to the above, floods triggered forced migration in many parts of the continent as affected populations were forced to flee for safety. The cyclone that hit Zimbabwe and Malawi led to the deaths of hundreds of people and displaced thousands. Climate-induced migration thus disrupts socialisation and social cohesion patterns, which are critical for holistic development.

¹² Fallah MP Kaseya J., Dereje N., Tajudeen R., Ngongo A.N., Ndembi N., "Climate change and malaria, dengue and cholera outbreaks in Africa: A call for concerted actions", *BMJ Glob Health*, 9, no. 3 (2024).

¹³ Focus Adriano, Abubakar Nazir, and Olivier Uwishema, "The devastating effect of cyclone freddy amidst the deadliest cholera outbreak in Malawi: A double burden for an already weak healthcare system", *Ann Med Surg*, 85, no. 7 (2023): 3761–3763.

¹⁴ Kaseya, Dereje, Tajudeen, Ngongo ve Ndembi, *ibid*.

¹⁵ NTV, "Nijerya'da çoban-çiftçi çatışmaları can almaya devam ediyor", 2024. <https://www.ntv.com.tr/dunya/nijeryada-coban-ciftci-catismalari-can-almaya-devam-ediyor,a-MfGJ7JakiMLs4LUEdGAg>, Date of Access: 01.05.2024.

6. Conclusion

The phenomenon of climate change presents a significant array of challenges to numerous countries in Africa. As previously outlined, the ramifications of climate change have significant implications for the continent's developmental trajectory. The year 2023 was notable for its developments in the context of climate change in Africa. One noteworthy event was the inaugural African Climate Summit, which was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from September 4-6, 2023. During the summit, African governments and other stakeholders in the climate change arena collectively mobilised and made commitments aimed at addressing the climate crisis on the continent.

In order to protect the continent from the adverse effects of global warming, it is necessary to adopt a multilateral approach that relies on climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. These include, the conservation of ecosystems for sustainable agriculture, support for developing countries, refugee support, vaccine and medicine stockpiling, technological solutions and the construction of flood defences against weather and rising sea levels. The implementation of these strategies would have a significant impact on reducing the burden of climate change in Africa.

Natural Disasters and Their Aftermath in Africa

Esin Güzel*

1. Introduction

The natural disasters that occurred in Africa in 2023 caused significant damage and loss of life. The earthquake that struck Morocco resulted in the deaths of over 3,000 individuals and injuries to approximately 6,000 others. The effects of flooding resulted in the deaths of over 1,000 individuals in Mozambique and Malawi, over 6,000 in Libya, and over 150 in Tanzania. A total of 438 individuals perished as a result of the flooding in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). A flood disaster in Somalia had an impact on 460,000 individuals. The drought in Ethiopia's Tigray and Amhara states resulted in the deaths of over 50 individuals due to starvation, with 45 fatalities and the displacement of 35,000 people due to flooding that occurred in May. The floods and forest fires in Algeria resulted in the deaths of nearly 50 individuals.¹ These disasters once again demonstrated the necessity for emergency aid and strategies to combat climate change in Africa. Furthermore, the prevalence of political instability and the activities of separatist groups, gangs, terrorist organizations and paramilitary structures in various parts of the continent have contributed to the already challenging living conditions of the region's inhabitants, both before and after the occurrence of disasters.²

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¹ Saliha Metin, "Afrika'da iklim değişikliğinin etkileri: İklim adaleti ve göç", *Akdeniz Havzası ve Afrika Medeniyetleri Dergisi*, Volume 5, No. (2), 2023, p.107-108.

² Ceren Gürseler, "Çeşitli Afrika Ülkelerinde Doğal ve "Yapay" Felaketler: Kuraklık ve Kıtık", *Ankasam*, 04.04.2017,
<https://www.ankasam.org/cesitli-afrika-ulkelerinde-dogal-ve-yapay-felaketler-kuraklik-ve-kitlik/>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

2. Analysis of Disasters Experienced in Different Regions of Africa in 2023

a. Drought, Storms and Flood Disaster

The drought that occurred in the Horn of Africa in 2023 resulted in a significant humanitarian crisis, with 22 million people facing starvation. A multitude of countries and international organizations endeavored to provide assistance to the region by supplying food, water and other essential resources. Nevertheless, the situation was worsened by the Russia-Ukrainian War, which greatly reduced humanitarian aid funds. The frail regional economy has shrunk further due to losses in the agriculture and livestock sectors, unemployment has increased and living conditions have become increasingly tenuous. While this situation increased internal migration and immigrant influxes in the region, it also had a detrimental impact upon social and political stability.³

In East Africa, heavy precipitation above seasonal norms caused rivers to overflow and puddles to form. The frequency and severity of extraordinary weather events triggered by global warming and climate change have increased, displacing people and causing hundreds of casualties through disasters that occur at certain times of the year. Resulting in more than 400,000 people abandoning their homes, the flood disaster affected 37 regions in Kenya, causing flood waters to rise in major cities such as the capital Nairobi and Mombasa, damaging houses and infrastructure, and causing many casualties. In Somalia, which was similarly affected, Somali President Hasan Sheikh Mahmud announced that hundreds of people lost their lives due to heavy rain and floods in the country.

The United Nations has emphasized that the countries most affected by climate change are Somalia and Kenya and that the consequences of disasters must be prevented. Considering that the Al-Shabaab organization has prevented agriculture for years, there is no doubt this loss is quite great for the Somali people.⁴

The proliferation of epidemic diseases in other countries in the East African region, such as Tanzania and Ethiopia, has created a dangerous situation. While people living in Tigray and Amhara states in Ethiopia are struggling with drought, the government and international aid organizations have taken action in regards to the floods that struck the eastern and southern regions of the country. Cyclone Freddy, which formed in April and impacted the southeastern coast of Africa, displaced half a million people in

³ IOM, "East and Horn of Africa Regional Drought Response 2023", 2023, https://crisisresponse.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1481/files/appeal/pdf/2023_East_and_Horn_of_Africa_Regional_Drought_Response_2023.pdf, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), "Eastern Africa: El Niño Impact Snapshot (December 2023)", 14.12.2023, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/somalia/eastern-africa-el-nino-impact-snapshot-december-2023>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

⁵ Robert Mackay, Astghik Mavisakalyan, Yashar Tarverdi, "Trust a few: natural disasters and the formation of trust in Africa", 21 Aralık 2023, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4672385, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

⁶ Africanews, "Ghana: dam flooding displaces hundreds", 27.11.2023, <https://www.africanews.com/2023/11/29/ghana-dam-flooding-displaces-hundreds/>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

⁷ John P. Rafferty, "Libya flooding of 2023". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 27.09.2023, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Libya-flooding-of-2023>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

⁸ Independent Türkçe, "Fas'ta hükümet yetersiz kaldı, binlerce yurttaş depremzedelere yardım için yola düştü", 13.09.2023, <https://www.indyturk.com/node/660656/d%C3%BCnyaya/fasta-h%C3%BCKk%C3%BCmet-yetersiz-kald%C4%B1-binlerce-yurtta%C5%9F-depremzedelere-yard%C4%B1m-i%C3%A7in-yola>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

Malawi and caused more than 1,000 deaths. The fact that the people of the region were already forced to relocate before the disaster due to the presence of terrorist organizations here further increased the chaos in the disaster zones.⁵

It is possible to say that deluges and storms that struck South, Central and West Africa also gave rise to similar epidemics. In Ghana, malaria and typhoid epidemics occurred in the region following a flood caused when the Akosombo Dam was breached. Major flooding and landslides occurred in the DRC. Authorities made efforts for search and rescue efforts, but were faced with militia groups in the country fighting each other, aggravating the process. Political instability and inadequacy in disaster response capacities in these countries also increased the impact of the disaster.⁶

In the North African region, Algeria and Libya witnessed devastating floods with long-lasting effects. Having impacted the Central Mediterranean, Storm Daniel reached the east of Libya in a short time, causing floods in the Libyan cities of Derne, Benghazi, Beyda, Merc and Suse on 10 September 2023. Approximately 25% of the port city of Derne was destroyed due to intense water and mud floods, whereas the United Nations announced that at least 11,300 people died in this city and thousands went missing. The Algerian Government was criticized for its lack of preparation and coordination.⁷

b. Earthquakes and Forest Fires

Situated in northwestern Africa, Morocco faces regular earthquakes due to its location between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean. Despite this, the administration has not taken sufficient steps to be prepared for an earthquake disaster. Consequently, the 6.8-6.9 magnitude earthquake that struck the Marrakesh-Safi region on September 8, 2023 resulted in more than 2,000 deaths and thousands injured. Those affected by the earthquake stated that the central government was unable to properly manage this crisis. However, it is also a fact that the lack of infrastructure in the region does not allow the central government to intervene adequately. However, Morocco did not appeal for international aid and chose to accept some of the aid offers. This attitude of the government stems from its desire to show it is a regional power in Africa and that it can manage aid. However, many Moroccan citizens characterized this behavior of the administration as "uncoordinated and slow."⁸

No sooner were the people in Algeria shaken by severe flooding, when they had to fight a series of forest fires. Approximately 35 conflagrations,



Morocco Ongoing search and rescue efforts for those trapped beneath the rubble after a magnitude 7 tremor that struck Marrakech, Morocco on 13 September 2023 (Source: Anadolu Agency).

which occurred on 24 July 2023 and were recorded in more than 11 regions of the country, spread rapidly and caused great destruction.

A significant portion of the population had to relocate because they were engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry, leaving them vulnerable to disaster.⁹

In Tunisia, forest fires spread quickly over a wide area, and when combined with temperatures exceeding 45° C. and wind speeds exceeding 50 km/h, the conditions became uncontrollable, leaving permanent effects on natural life and biodiversity. A crisis desk was established under the chairmanship of the country's Prime Minister, Necla Budin in order to coordinate the national and international response. This situation has once again demonstrated the need for Tunisia to implement more effective policies in combating fires.¹⁰

3. The Impact of Political Instability and Armed Groups on Disasters

Omnipresent in East Africa, al-Shabaab disrupts security and stability, carrying out attacks that target civilians to spread its radical ideology. Apart from this, other armed groups based on various tribes and ethnicities in the region and conflicts occur. These conflicts often arise from disputes over land and water resources. Constituting a serious threat to the security of the people, this situation also disrupts the stability of the region.

Similarly, the Tigray People's Liberation Front, which causes chaos and violence in Ethiopia, causes social unrest by fueling ethnic conflicts. This organization weakens the country's economy and has a detrimental impact upon the living conditions of the people by providing financing through illegal means. Transportation problems to the region due to armed groups blocking road routes and threatening security force disaster victims to be isolated. This situation negatively affected disaster victims' access to assistance, resulting in increased casualties and victimization of those in need of urgent assistance.¹¹

As for Libya, one of the most important armed organizations is the Libyan National Army, led by Khalifa Haftar. This organization runs rampant in the eastern and southern regions of the country. Due to the lack of political authority, people in other regions controlled by militias present in the country complain about not being able to ensure their life safety and not being able to access the aid they receive.

⁹ BBC, "Cezayir'deki orman yangınlarında en az 34 kişi hayatını kaybetti, binlerce kişi tahliye edildi", 25.07.2023, <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/articles/c1e0l0vpzv0o>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

¹⁰ Erick Burgueño Salas, "Area burned by wildfires in Tunisia from 2009 to 2023", Statista, 04.12.2023, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1322257/area-burned-by-wildfire-in-tunisia/#:~:text=As%20of%20December%202023%2C%20nearly,in%20about%2028%2C500%20hectares%20burned>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

¹¹ Felix Shihundu, "Doğu Afrika'da Radikalleşme ve Terörizm", Kritik Dergi, 01.09.2023, <https://kritikdergi.com/dosya-afrika/dogu-afrikada-radikallesme-ve-terorizm>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.



Libya Leaving a lasting impact on the Central Mediterranean region, a storm called 'Daniel' struck the east of Libya on 10 September caused catastrophic floods in the cities of Benghazi, Beyda, Merc, Suse and Derna (Source: Anadolu Agency).

In the natural disaster aftermath, local people experience chaos because they lack official institutions and administrators and are controlled by the armed forces of the region. The fact that there are two authorities in the country, lack of communication and lack of experience working on common ground renders the situation even more dire. It is clear the great pain and loss experienced by the people in Libya cannot be attributed to natural disasters. Political division increases the security risk in Libya day by day, and the right to speak for isolated regions is left to armed groups or administrators with different goals.¹²

4. Conclusion

In 2023, the African continent suffered natural disasters such as drought, floods, earthquakes and forest fires, negatively affecting the lives of millions of people. Disasters have seriously complicated the living conditions of the people of the continent and detrimentally affected the social and economic structure. Moreover, political instability and the presence of armed groups have increased the devastating effects of disasters and prevented access to emergency aid.

While the main reasons for the mass destruction rendered by natural disasters are factors such as climate change, weak economy, a lack of infrastructure and political instability, a coordinated effort at national and international levels is needed to deal with these problems. Effective decisions need to be implemented in order to provide emergency aid to disaster victims.

It is considered that the African continent needs to be better prepared for natural disaster risks, increase its capacity to cope with such crises, and put an end to political instability. Accordingly, the effects of future disasters will be minimized.

¹² Hakan Karaaslan, "Uluslararası Bir Sorun Olarak Libya Krizi: Libya'daki Kırılgan Güvenlik Ortamı Üzerine İç ve Dış Etkenler Bağlamında Bir Değerlendirme", *Akademik İzdüşüm Dergisi*, Volume 8, No. 1, 2023, p. 242-244.

Internal Migration Mobility in Africa During 2023

Hande Sapmaz*

6

1. Introduction

Migration in Africa has been continuing with increasing momentum, particularly over the past two decades. Reasons for migration on the continent can be explained theoretically with a kind of “push-pull” approach, considered to be closely affiliated with limited economic opportunities, political conflicts, oppressive government policies, increasing young population and climate change. Nonetheless, it is also possible to evaluate migration as a function of people’s desires and needs to migrate.¹

Migration movements in Africa occur mostly within the continent. 44% increase in intra-African migration since 2010 supports this situation. In total, only 6.6% of the approximately 43 million African immigrants migrate to the Middle East, and 8.2% migrate to Europe to achieve a better life.²

According to data found in the 2024 “World Migration Report” of the United Nations International Organization for Migration, approximately 21 million Africans live in another African country within the continent.³ Considering this number was approximately 18 million in 2015, it becomes clear that internal migration in Africa needs to be examined in more detail.

Accordingly, this study will delve in the situation of African internal migration in 2023, without ignoring the sociological and economic consequences, and regional migration data and trends, along with relevant thematic issues by dividing Africa on a regional basis.

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1 Marie-Laurence Flahaux ve Hein De Haas, “African migration: Trends, patterns, drivers”, *Comparative Migration Studies*, 2016, p. 4.
<https://comparativemigrationstudies.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40878-015-0015-6#citeas>, Date of Access: 19.05.2024.

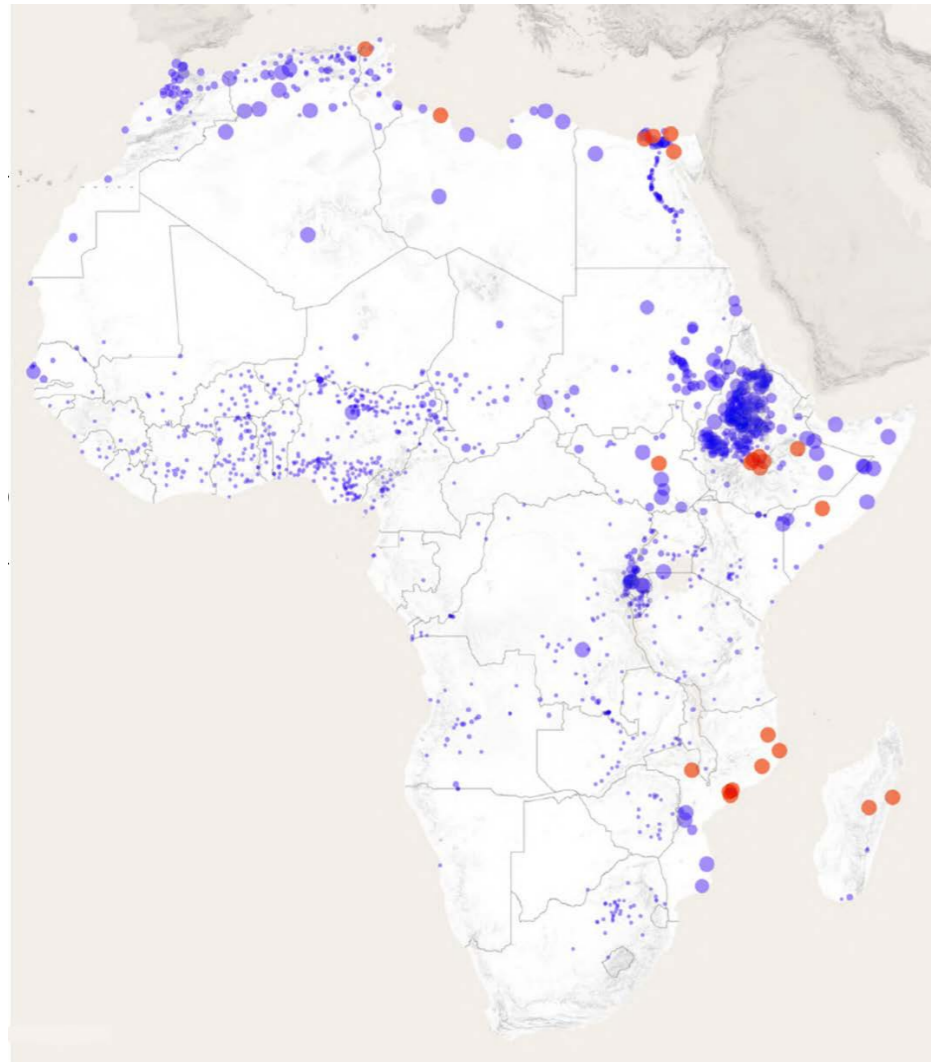
2 Wendy Williams, “African migration trends to watch in 2024”, *Africa Center*, 09.01.2024,
<https://africacenter.org/spotlight/african-migration-trends-to-watch-in-2024/#:~:text=African%20migration%20continues%20to%20experience,migrants%20over%20the%20past%20year,> Date of Access: 19.05.2024.

3 The United Nations International Organization for Migration, *World Migration Report 2024*,
<https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/what-we-do/world-migration-report-2024-chapter-3/africa>, Date of Access: 17.05.2024.

2. East and South Africa

There is a significant increase has occurred in internal migration in East Africa due to the effect of free movement regulations, an indication that states can facilitate migration through direct and indirect means. Some free movement regulations are as follows: East Africa Common Market Protocol, Protocols of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).⁴

Another variable that affected internal migration in Eastern and Southern Africa in 2023 was disasters caused by climate change. Climate change has been observed on the continent in the form of extreme temperatures, droughts, floods and coastal erosion, leading to results such as loss of biodiversity, water scarcity, leading to decreased food production and economic growth. It is believed that people prefer internal migration instead of inter-



Map 1. The Impact of Climate Mobility on Urban Population Change in Africa in 2050 According to the Rocky Road Scenario (Source: The Global Center for Climate Mobility, "African Shifts: the Africa climate mobility report: Addressing Climate-forced migration and displacement," <https://cdn.sanity.io/files/pd7x71de/production/2a4ad38091846247068faf2d2493413f88b607d8.pdf>, Last Access Date: 19.05.2024.)

⁴ The United Nations International Organization for Migration, World Migration Report for 2024....

Map 2: Drought Responses of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia (Source: UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Drought Situation 2023, https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99156#_ga%3D2.126880653.1468019465.1679659259-290143048.1660236972 Last Access Date: 17.05.2024).

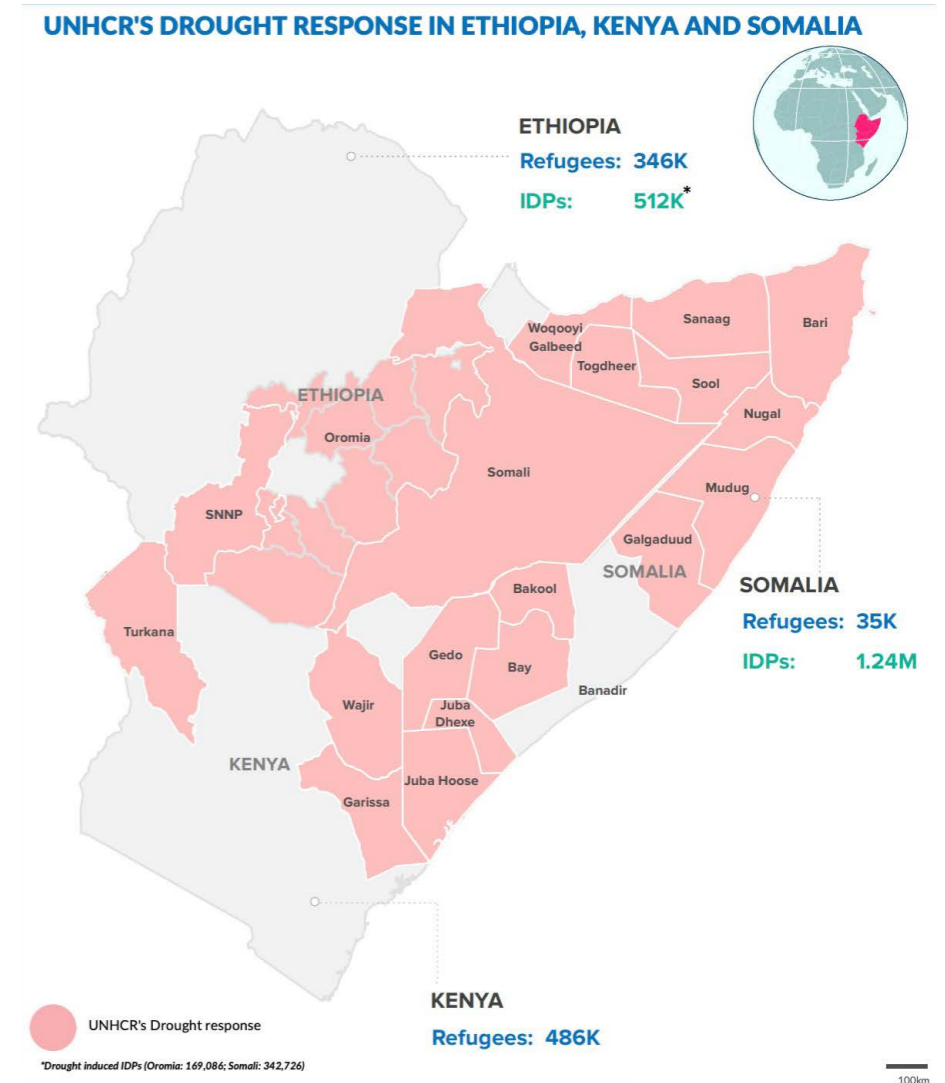
⁵ Kanta Kumari Rigaud, Alex de Sherbinin, Bryan Jones vd., "Groundswell: Preparing for internal climate migration", World Bank Group, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/2be91c76-d023-5809-9c94-d41b71c25635>, Date of Access: 20.05.2024.

⁶ The Global Centre for Climate Mobility, African Shifts...

national migration when they cannot overcome the effects of the climate crisis.⁵

Map 1 shows how climate change will impact urban population change until 2050; Cities with increasing populations (change between 5-75%) are shown with purple dots, whereas cities with decreasing populations (change between 5-75%) are shown with orange dots. It is estimated that by 2050, intra-country climate mobility may reach 88 million people on the continent, whereby this number may rise to 113 million people.⁶

Climate change in East Africa has led to a decrease in agricultural productivity caused by the sixth drought in the Horn of Africa in the period since March 2023. This situation has aggravated food insecurity in the region. Increasing food insecurity increases the number of displaced people in East



Africa by having a multiplier effect on the ongoing political conflict and economic crises in Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan.⁷

According to the data released by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, it has been determined that approximately 2 million people were displaced due to drought in Ethiopia and Somalia in the first months of 2023. In the same period, more than 867,000 refugees and asylum seekers lived in drought-affected areas in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia.⁸

Consisting of destructive winds and excessive precipitation, one of the longest-lived tropical cyclones on record, Cyclone Freddy started in South Africa in February 2023 and lasted 34 days, affecting large areas such as Northeast Zimbabwe, Southeastern Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. It is estimated that 1.75 million people were affected and more than 8,000 people were displaced due to the hurricane.⁹

Another variable affecting internal migration in East Africa is armed conflicts. Particularly, the fundamentalist terrorist organization Al-Shabaab, which has been operating in Somalia for nearly two decades, triggered mass displacement in the country by targeting civilians in Banadir, Lower Shabelle and Hiraa regions, with an increase of 17%, 95% and 366% respectively in 2022 compared to 2021. Furthermore, DAESH's increasing competition with Al-Shabaab in terms of power and tax collection in order to expand its area of influence in Somalia may initiate a new wave of internal migration, which will cause a security crisis in the region.¹⁰

More than 6,050 violent incidents and more than 16,650 deaths have been recorded in Sudan, since April 15, 2023, when the first conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) commenced.¹¹ Intensive attacks against civilians by the RSF have been concentrated in the states of Al Jazeera and North Darfur. 800,000 people have been displaced as of April 2023 due to the conflicts in Darfur alone. The conflict between the RSF and its allied militias and SAF allies, which began in El Fasher in April 2024, the capital of the North Darfur state, which hosts displaced people, has caused the food and security crisis in the region to deepen, causing to new wave of internal migration to East African countries, especially South Sudan and Ethiopia.¹²

Map 3 shows the regions where internally displaced people in Sudan are concentrated as of April 2024, as a result of the conflicts that started in April 2023, according to data released by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. The number of internally displaced people in Sudan is approximately 7 million. The total number of forcibly displaced people is 8,853,025.¹³

⁷ Kyilah Terry ve Aishwarya Rai, "Amid record drought and food insecurity, East Africa's protracted humanitarian crisis worsens", Migration Policy, 18.01.2023, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/east-africa-drought-food-insecurity-refugees>, Date of Access: 18.05.2024.

⁸ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Drought Situation...

⁹ The World Meteorological Organization, "Tropical cyclone freddy may set new record", 10.03.2023, <https://wmo.int/media/news/tropical-cyclone-freddy-may-set-new-record>, Date of Access: 17.05.2023.

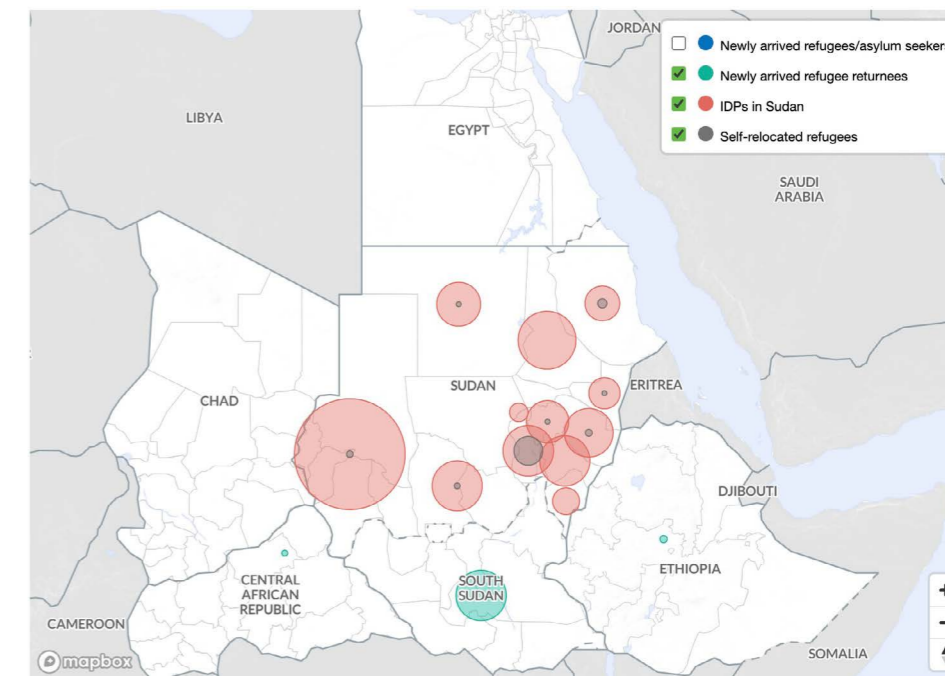
¹⁰ The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), "Heightened political violence in Somalia", 03.03.2023, <https://acleddata.com/2023/03/03/context-assessment-heightened-political-violence-in-somalia/>, Date of Access: 17.05.2023.

¹¹ The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), "Sudan: The RSF sets its eyes on North Darfur", 17.05.2024, <https://acleddata.com/2024/05/17/sudan-situation-update-may-2024-the-rsf-sets-its-eyes-on-north-darfur/>, Date of Access: 17.05.2023.

¹² United Nations News, "Sudan: Under siege, El Fasher teeters on the brink of famine", 02.05.2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/05/1149281>, Date of Access: 17.05.2023.

¹³ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Operational Data...

Map 3. Map Showing the Regions Where Displaced People and Refugees Concentrate in Sudan After April 2023 (Source: UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Operational Data Portal: Sudan situation, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/sudansituation>, Last Access Date: 17.05.2023).



3. West and Central Africa: The Sahel Region

The Sahel Region of Africa refers to the strip located between the Sahara in the north and the African tropics in the south, extending from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Red Sea in the east, in other words, from Senegal to Eritrea. The Sahel Region remains a major transit route for migrants traveling from sub-Saharan Africa to the coastal states and onwards to Europe.¹⁴

Home to climate crises such as desertification, political and institutional instability, the failure of states to provide basic services, conflicts between nomadic herders and farmers, and Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen (JNIM), Islamic State of the Greater Sahara (ISGS), Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP). The Sahel Region is facing deep crises that may increase both internal and external migration, as organizations such as these tighten up their effectiveness in the region.¹⁵

The epicenters of the security crisis in the region are Liptako-Gourma and the Lake Chad Basin, whereas the main actors of the security crisis in these two regions are comprised of a number of armed groups that may or may not be affiliated with Al Qaeda. Moreover, it is evident that both the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) established in Burkina Faso and the Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen Jamaat (JNIM) affiliated with Al Qaeda, established

¹⁴ Center for Preventive Action, "Violent extremism in the Sahel", 14.02.2024, <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violent-extremism-sahel>, Date of Access: 17.05.2023.

¹⁵ The United Nations International Organization for Migration, World Migration Report for 2024...



Source: Anadolu Agency

in 2017, represent a risk of the security crisis spreading from Liptako-Gourma to the relatively stable coastal states of West Africa.

The deepening humanitarian crisis in the region due to armed conflicts and the failure to achieve regional stability has displaced 2.6 million people in Liptako-Gourma and 2.8 million people in the Lake Chad Basin during the last decade. There has been a significant increase in deaths resulting from extremist violence in the Sahel Region in 2023 compared to 2022. While this situation has brought about a mass displacement of people in the region, the relationship between violence resulting from extremism has turned into a vicious circle.¹⁶

4. Conclusion

According to the taxonomy conducted by the UN International Organization for Migration in its 2024 World Migration Report, internal migration mobility in Africa is an issue worth examining. However, while underscoring the acceptance that the main reason for migration in Africa is poverty and underdevelopment, it is evident other determinants of internal migration at the regional level should need to be given importance as well. As a result, free movement policies idealized with the search for unity and integrity in Africa, security crises arising from violent conflicts and problems caused by climate change indicate that internal migration on the continent is an important process that must be managed in the future.¹⁷

Despite regional differences, internal migration caused by the security crisis resulting from climate change and armed conflicts has been observed in many parts of the continent. Natural disasters such as drought, flood or hurricane caused by climate change are not the sole cause of displacement or internal migration. When combined with political conflicts, listed disasters such as food insecurity, limited state capacity and lack of coordination all have a multiplier effect.

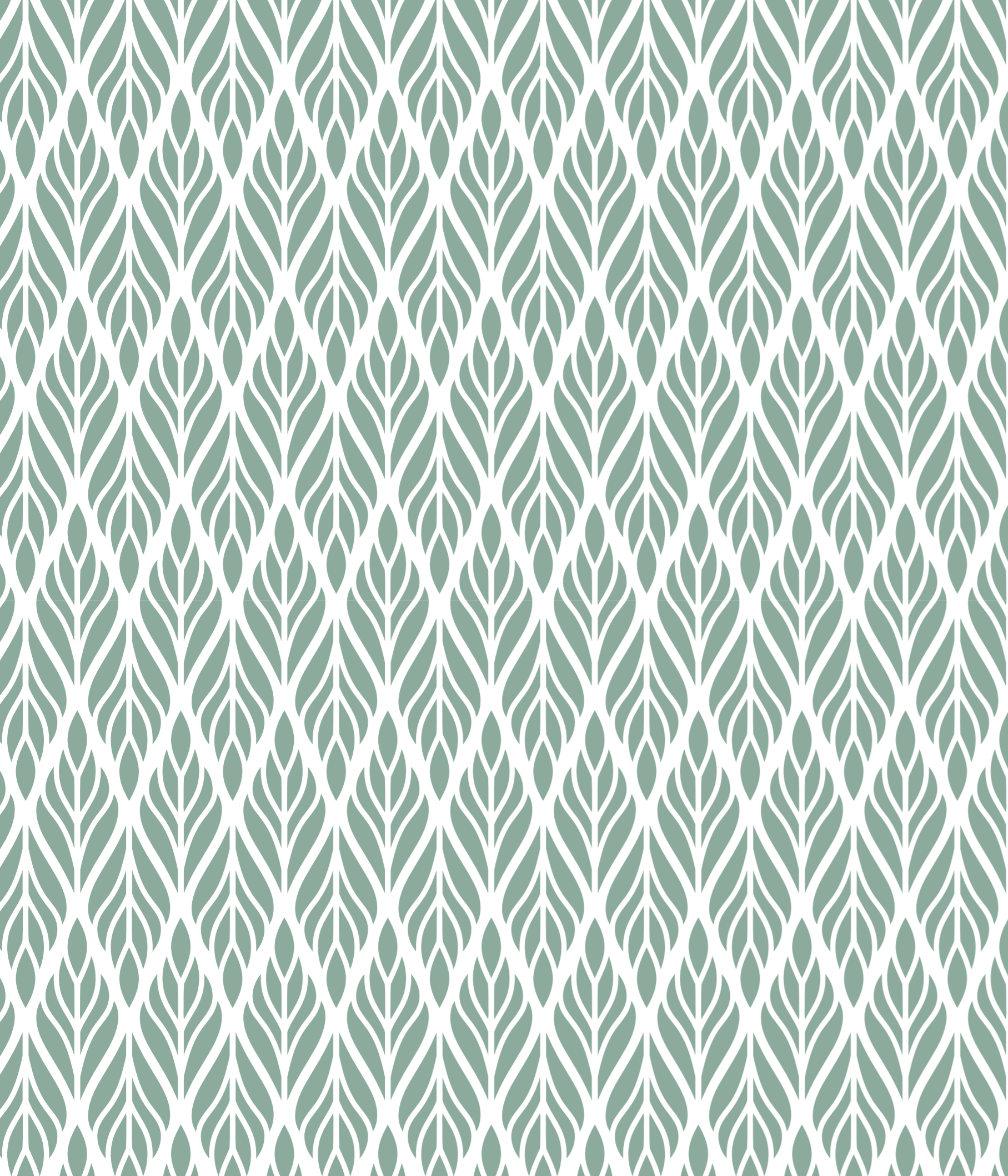
The conflicts intensifying in East Africa and the Sahel Region can be explained by weak state structures characterized by corruption, democratic regression, lack of service and legitimacy, and human rights violations. In rural areas where state power is weakened, fundamentalist organizations aggravate internal migration by carrying out actions against civilians.

Accordingly, without ignoring the role of African states in directing and managing internal migration, it has been seen that internal migration caused by climate change and security crisis can be considered as the result of crises that African states are unable to control effectively.

¹⁶ Méryl Demuyneck, "Mass displacement and violent extremism in the Sahel: A vicious circle?", *International Center for Counter-Terrorism*,

<https://www.icct.nl/sites/default/files/2022-12/meryl-policy-brief-final-version.pdf>, Date of Access: 17.05.2024.

¹⁷ There are studies in the field showing that intra-African migration intensity has decreased. This can be attributed to the development of policies against the freedom of movement and the rise of nationalism and xenophobia. Flahaux and De Haas, H, "African migration....", p. 22.



External Migration in Africa: Climate Change in 2023

Luis Eric Davila Vega*

7

1. Introduction

The continent of Africa has a lengthy historical record of human migration. The migration of people in Africa is considered by historians to have commenced between two and two and a half million years ago, and is regarded as a significant aspect of human history. As reported by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, over the last years, it has been estimated that over 43 million of people have migrate from their homes in Africa, this mobility has been inside and outside Africa. The factors that drive migration in Africa include a lack of economic opportunities, political and demographic issues, climate change, and other related factors. The phenomenon of migration continues to be a significant aspect of the African demographic landscape, both within the continent and beyond its borders. However, migration originating from Africa is perceived as a challenge within the international system.

This study will focus on the documentation of the climate change-induced external migration in Africa in 2023, as well as to address the challenges posed by this migration for both the African continent and the international community. The study seeks to answer questions regarding the current state of climate change-induced external migration in Africa and the key issues faced by the continent and the international community in response to such migration.

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2. Climate Change in Africa

According to Carbon Brief, in 2023, at least 15,700 people lost their lives due to natural disasters in Africa, while 34 million others were affected by climate change.¹ This indicates that the global system recognizes climate changes as a cause of natural disasters in Africa. The natural disasters occurring in Africa commonly include droughts, wildfires, storms, landslides, and floods. It is also clear that the high temperatures frequently observed across the continent contribute to these disasters. According to Africanews, temperatures in Africa exceeded 40°C in 2023, and it is predicted that this figure will rise in subsequent years. The countries experiencing high temperatures in 2023, as reported by the WiseVoter Institute, include Mali, Senegal, Mauritania, Djibouti, Gambia, Niger, Benin, and South Sudan.²

3. Climate Migration

In general, climate migration occurs when people leave their homes due to extreme weather events, such as floods, heatwaves, droughts and uncontrolled wildfires. It may also occur as a result of slow-onset climate issues, including rising sea levels and increasing water stress.³ Some scientists posit that changes in climate are among the factors that alter the environment of communities, thereby precipitating migration.⁴

The phenomenon of climate-induced migration is influenced by a multitude of factors, including environmental and economic considerations. The impact of climate change on agricultural production and access to water resources has a significant effect on the economy of affected societies.⁵ The impact of climate change on individuals, societies and the global scale is contingent upon the state of economic resources.⁶ The Africa Climate Mobility Initiative estimates that since 1991, the per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of African countries would have decreased by 13.3% even in the absence of climate change.⁷ Moreover, the Africa Center for Strategies Studies indicates that when climate change is taken into account, the decline in agricultural productivity in Sub-Saharan Africa from 1961 to 2023 amounts to 34%.⁸ It is notable that income losses in climate-sensitive sectors such as fishing have contributed to an increase in food insecurity over time. A similar situation has also emerged in agriculture, resulting in losses in income and production reflected in Gross Domestic Product (GDP).⁹

¹ Daisy Dunne, "Analysis: Africa's extreme weather has killed at least 15,000 people in 2023", *Carbon Brief*, 25.10.2023, <https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-africas-extreme-weather-have-killed-at-least-15000-people-in-2023/>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

² Africanews, "Top 10 African countries facing record-breaking heat waves in 2023", <https://www.africanews.com/2023/07/20/top-10-african-countries-facing-record-breaking-heat-waves-in-2023/>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

³ Mia Prange, "Climate change is fuelling migration. Do climate migrations have legal protections?", Council on Foreign Relations, 19.12.2022, <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/climate-change-fueling-migration-do-climate-migrants-have-legal-protections>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

⁴ Quentin Wodon, Nicholas Burger, Audra Grant and Andrea Liverani, "Climate Change, Migration, and Adaptation in the MENA Region", *Climate Change and Migration Evidence from the Middle East and North Africa*, Eds. Quentin Wodon, Andrea Liverani, George Joseph and Nathalie Bougnoux, World Bank Publications, 2014, p. 32.

⁵ Ibid., p. 32.

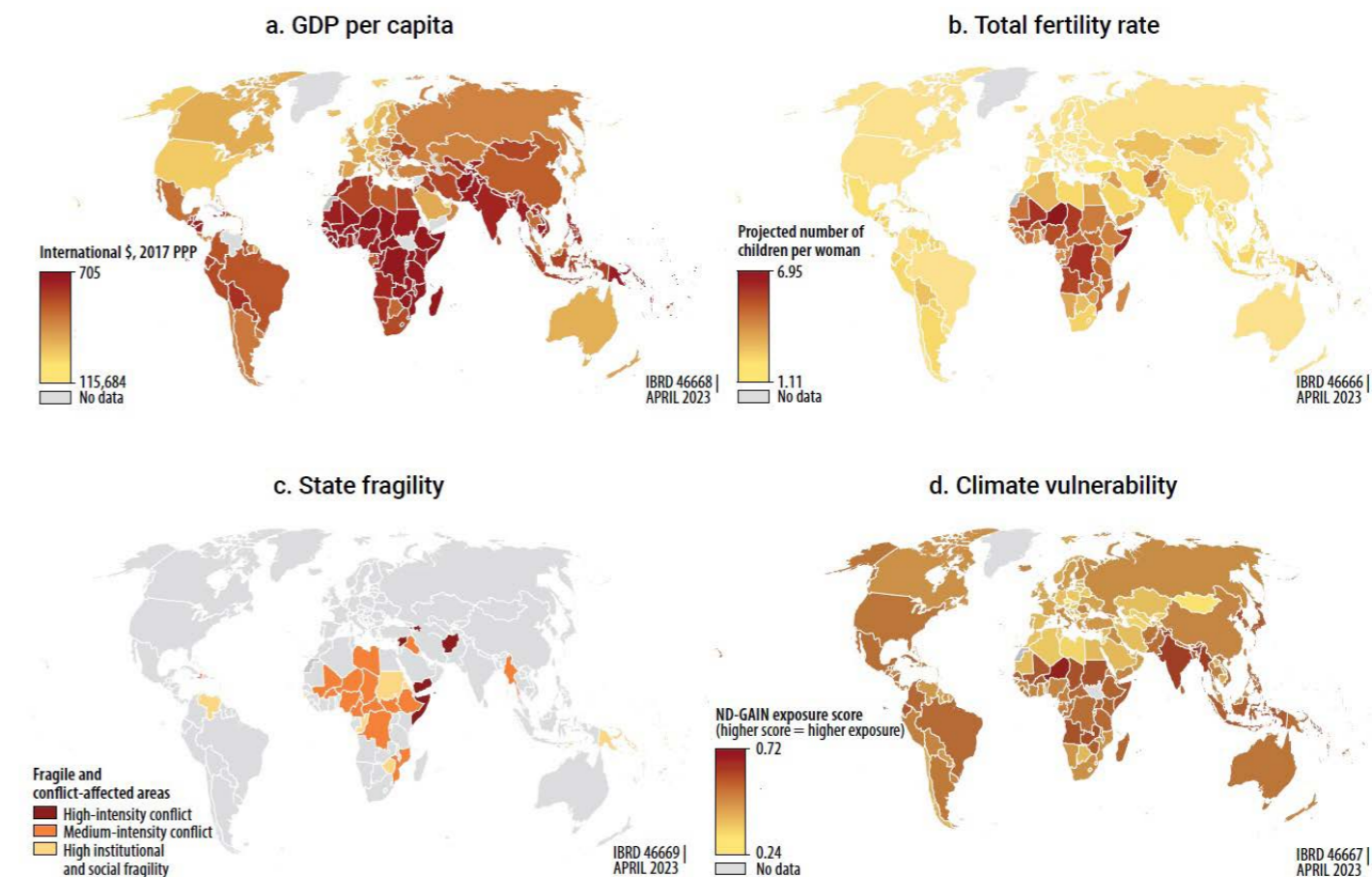
⁶ The Expert Council on Integration and Migration, "SVR annual report summary 2023 climate change and migration: What we know about the connection and what options there are for action", 02.2023, https://www.svr-migration.de/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/SVR_Annual_Report_Summary_2023.pdf, Date of Access: 22.04.2023.

⁷ Africa Climate Mobility Initiative, "African shift report the African climate mobility report: Addressing climate-forced migration and displacement", <https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1411/files/documents/2023-03/African%20Shifts%20Report.pdf>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

⁸ Wendy Williams, "Africa migration trends to watch in 2024", *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 01.09.2024, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/african-migration-trends-to-watch-in-2024/>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

⁹ African Development Bank Group, "Climate change in Africa", <https://www.afdb.org/en/cop25/climate-change-africa>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

¹⁰ Wendy Williams, "Africa migration trends to watch in 2024", *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 01.09.2024, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/african-migration-trends-to-watch-in-2024/>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.



Source: Africa Center for Strategic Studies¹⁰

¹¹ Wendy Williams, "Africa migration trends to watch in 2024", *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 01.09.2024, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/african-migration-trends-to-watch-in-2024/>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

¹² Frédéric Bobin, "En 2023, l'Europe a fait face à un rebond migratoire venu du Sud", *Le Monde*, 09.02.2024, https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2024/01/09/en-2023-l-europe-a-fait-face-a-un-rebond-migratoire-venu-du-sud_6209816_3212.html, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

¹³ International Organization for the Migrations, *Irregular Migration Routes to Europe. Western Africa – Atlantic Route*, 02.2024, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

4. External Migration Mobility and Statistics from Africa

The movement of people from Africa to Europe has historically been a significant phenomenon. However, in recent years, there has also been a notable shift in migration patterns towards the United States (US). According to The New York Times, the number of African migrants entering the US increased from 13,406 in 2022 to 58,462 in 2023.¹¹

As reported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in 2023, 97% of refugees originating from African countries who made their way to Europe were documented, with Spain, Italy, Greece, Malta, and Cyprus identified as the primary destinations.¹² Conversely, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has indicated that the number of migrants arriving in the Canary Islands in 2022 was 39,910. Furthermore, there was a notable surge of 155% in this figure in comparison to previous years. This suggests that the external migration rate in Africa in 2022 was considerably higher than that observed in 2023.¹³



As illustrated by the map, migration mobility in Africa represent a highly sensitive issue. In light of the aforementioned evidence, it can be posited that while climate change is a significant trigger for external migration, a number of additional factors also play a role. These include the fragility of democratic institutions, economic difficulties within countries, the increase of the youth population, and the inability to industrialise. However, in recent years, the climate change experienced in Africa has not only activated internal migration movements within the continent but has also stimulated external migration flows.

5. Current and Further Actions

According to the 2030 Agenda and international responsibility, African states and the international community must guarantee the protection of the rights of the African people and ensure sustainable development. These two elements, which need to be promoted and protected in Africa, are of great importance. To this end, the African Union (AU) has been conducting assessments related to intra-continental and international migration movements since 2018. Among its priority policies, the AU aims to establish “Sustainable Development Goals” and set international migration stand-

Spain The largest migrant point in Spain's Canary Islands is the 'Las Raices' Camp (Source: Anadolu Agency).

14 *Migration for Development in Africa*, “Executive summary. Migration policy framework for Africa and plan of action (2018-2030)”,

<https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/35956-doc-au-mpfa-executive-summary-eng.pdf>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

15 *Migration for Development in Africa*, “Executive summary. Migration policy framework for Africa and plan of action (2018-2030)”,

<https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/35956-doc-au-mpfa-executive-summary-eng.pdf>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

16 *Migration for Development in Africa*, “Executive summary. Migration policy framework for Africa and plan of action (2018-2030)”,

<https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/35956-doc-au-mpfa-executive-summary-eng.pdf>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

17 Luisa Feline Freier, Leon Lucar Oba, María Angélica Fernández Bautista, “Inter-regional migration in the global south: African migration to Latin America”, *The Palgrave Handbook of South-South Migration and Inequality*, Eds. Heaven Crawley and Joseph Kofi Teye, Palgrave Macmillan, 2023, p. 352.

ards and policies. Accordingly, the AU has implemented the “Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action (2018-2030).”¹⁴ The European Union (EU), on the other hand, has sought to establish partnerships with African countries to prevent mass migration movements towards Europe.¹⁵

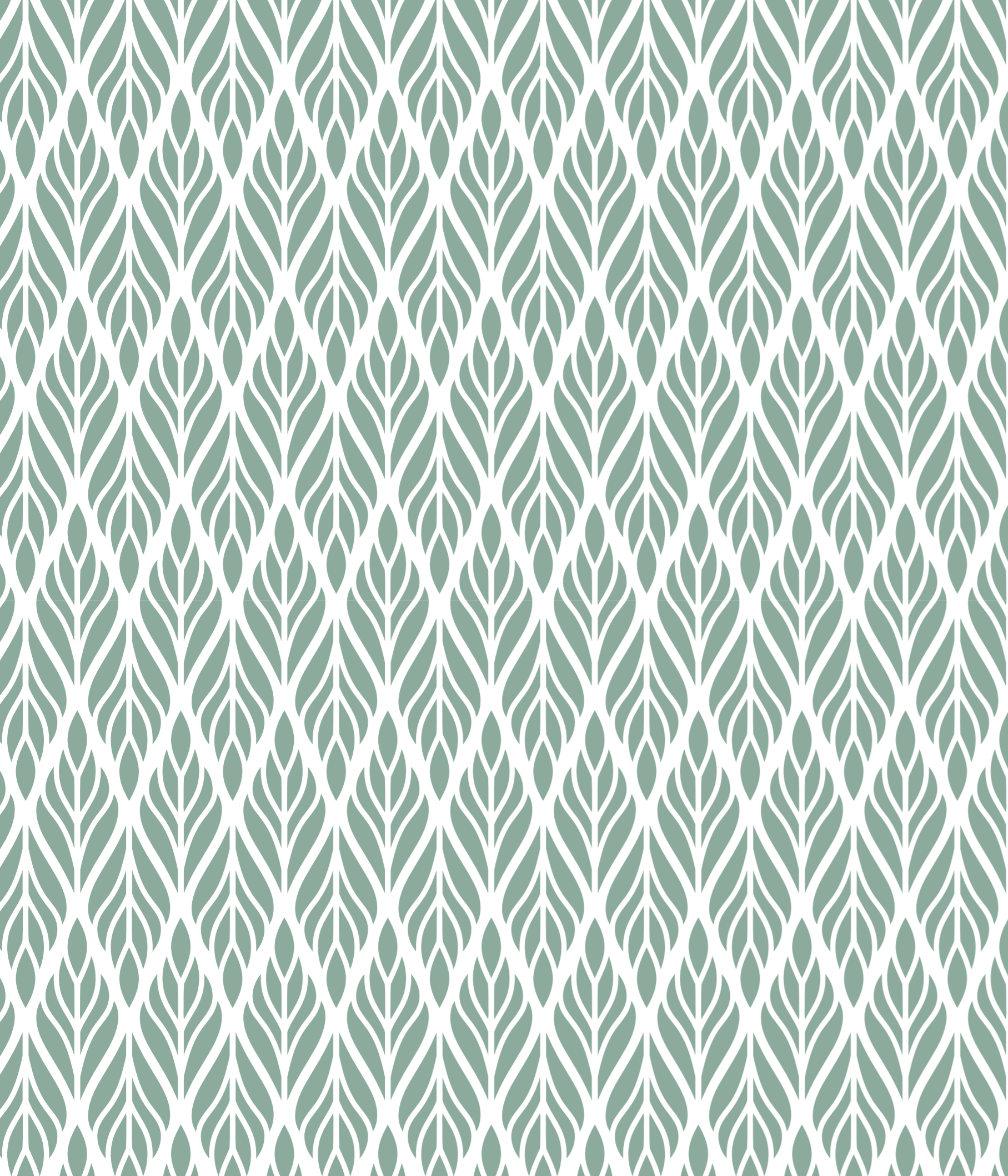
The EU has collaborated with Africa on migration, social mobility, and employment, and through this partnership, they have begun to take joint action on issues such as human trafficking, irregular migration, remittances, diaspora, labor migration, and international migration. Accordingly, African and European nations are striving to develop a common strategy.¹⁶

In response to migration movements from Africa, the United States and Latin American countries have not developed specific policies. However, it has been observed that in recent years, African migrants have initiated migration flows towards Mexico and Brazil, choosing Latin America as a new destination, resulting in a significant increase in the number of African-origin migrants, especially in the aforementioned countries.¹⁷ Therefore, the African Union has launched efforts to protect the mass population in cooperation with the international community, emphasizing the need to examine the effects of this migration movement on the economies, political structures, social lives, and environmental impacts of the countries that serve as destinations.

6. Conclusion

As the concept of climate migration is still in its infancy, specific data regarding this phenomenon is not yet available. It is evident that the international community must intensify its efforts in this domain. The considerable rise in the number of people of Africa living outside the continent serves to reinforce this necessity. The data from previous years indicate that the increase in external migration from Africa has continued, with the figures for 2023 surpassing those for 2022 by over 50%. This increase in migration from Africa is ongoing, with a notable concentration in the United States and Latin American countries. These countries are perceived as the preferred destinations for migrants. It is therefore imperative that the US and Latin American countries implement a comprehensive reorganization of their public, national, and migration policies, and develop innovative strategies to facilitate the assistance of migrating individuals.

As the external migration movements from Africa continue to grow exponentially, it is evident that the international community must pay greater attention to the migration flows caused by climate change and focus on proposing solutions to this issue.



Global Energy and Africa

8

İhsan Ömer Atagenç*

1. Introduction

As of 2023, African countries are still at the bottom rung in terms of access to energy resources. The African continent is one of the fastest growing energy markets in the world. This is due to the increasing economic and demographic potential of African countries, as well as the fact that many of them are intensely struggling with climate change. Although it has transited a long post-colonial period, the energy cooperation that African countries are attempting to achieve with global powers is a difficult process. To date, more than half of the continent's estimated 1.4 billion people still remain without to electrical energy for domestic use, while industries continue to suffer from frequent power outages. This situation negatively affects the level of industrial production throughout Africa. In recent years, it has been observed that African leaders have started to turn to nuclear energy in order to close the region's energy deficit. Especially these countries, which still have a large deficit in access to electrical energy, want to close this need in a short time through nuclear energy. The nuclear energy issue has recently led to Russia playing a more active role in the region.

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Nigeria Nigeria and Germany sign a \$500,000,000 USD cooperation agreement in the field of renewable energy and natural gas. (Source: Anadolu Agency).

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2. Nuclear Energy Diplomacy in Africa

The military-run administration in Burkina Faso has reached an agreement with Russia on the construction of a nuclear power plant. Meeting with Russian President Putin in July, Ibrahim Traore plans to meet Burkina Faso's electrical energy needs through nuclear energy with this agreement. Accordingly, it is estimated that the nuclear power plant in question will meet 95% of the electricity needs in cities and 50% of the electricity needs in rural areas. In Burkina Faso, only 21% of the total population currently benefits from electrical energy.¹

In September, the Rwandan Government reached an agreement with the Canadian-German joint company, Dual Fluid Energy to establish a nuclear power plant. Rwanda sees this reactor as an important option to meet its country's energy demand. It is also stated that the reactor will make the country more resilient to energy crises against the negative effects of climate change.²

Russian President Vladimir Putin attended the general assembly of the Russian Energy Week International Forum on October 11, 2023 and gave a long speech. Addressing Africa in this speech, Putin stated that he was ready to support Africa to ensure energy security on the continent. This speech also refers to the fourth power unit being built ahead of schedule at the El-Dabaa Nuclear Power Plant in Egypt.³

3. Nigeria-Germany Energy Agreement

Nigeria has decided to develop its relations with Germany in the field of energy. In a statement made by Presidential spokesperson Ajuri Ngelale in November, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Union Bank of Nigeria and German DWS Group. With this agreement, Ngelale announced that a renewable energy investment of 500 million USD will be made, covering mostly rural areas. A second agreement was signed between Nigeria's Riverside LNG and Germany's Johannes Schuetze Energy Import AG regarding a gas export partnership. According to the agreement, Nigeria is expected to supply 850,000 tons of natural gas to Germany annually. Ngelale stated that the first shipment is slated to take place in 2026.⁴

4. EU-Algeria Energy Dialogue

Co-chaired by the The European Commissioner for Energy and Minister of Energy Kadri Simson and the Minister of Energy and Mines Mohamed

¹ Gloria Aradi, "Russia to build nuclear plant to meet Burkina Faso's energy needs", BBC, 13.10.2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67098444>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

² Gloria Aradi, "Russia to build nuclear plant to meet Burkina Faso's energy needs", BBC, 13.10.2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67098444>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

³ Kester Kenn Klomegah, "Russia's Dynamic Energy Cooperation with Africa", Modern Diplomacy, 08.11.2023, <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2023/11/08/russias-dynamic-energy-cooperation-with-africa/>, Date of Access: 14.04.2024.

⁴ Felix Onuah, "Nigeria and Germany sign \$500 mln renewable energy and gas deal", Reuters, 21.11.2023, <https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/climate-energy/nigeria-germany-sign-500-mln-renewable-energy-gas-deal-2023-11-21/>, Date of Access: 15.04.2024.

⁵ AB, "Joint press statement: EU – Algeria high-level energy dialogue", 05.10.2023, https://energy.ec.europa.eu/news/joint-press-statement-eu-algeria-high-level-energy-dialogue-2023-10-05_en, Date of Access: 15.04.2024.

⁶ "COP28'de Kenya Devlet Başkanı, BAE'nin Afrika'daki temiz enerji boru hattından yararlanarak Yeşil Sanayileşme Girişimi'ni başlatmak için Afrikalı liderleri bir araya getirdi", 03.12.2023, <https://www.wam.ae/tr/article/apycck6-cop28de-kenya-devlet-ba%C5%9Fkan%C4%B1-baenin-afrikadaki>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

⁷ "Afrika Birliği, AB ile aynı statüde G20 daimi üyeliğine kabul edildi", 09.09.2023, <https://tr.euronews.com/2023/09/09/afrika-birligi-ab-ile-ayni-statude-g20-daimi-uyeligine-kabul-edildi>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

Arkab, the fifth annual meeting of the high-level political dialogue on energy between the EU and Algeria was held in Brussels on October 5, 2023. Both ministers held a meeting on ways and means to strengthen cooperation in the field of energy. This meeting is part of the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Algeria and the EU regarding the strategic partnership in the field of energy, signed in Algeria in 2013, aiming to develop and strengthen energy relations with balance in mind.⁵

5. Africa Green Investment Event at COP28

A special event on the African continent was held at the COP28 energy summit, which was held between November 30-December 12, 2023 in Dubai, the capital of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). This event was led by the President of Kenya William Ruto and UAE and attended by the presidents of Angola, Burundi, Djibouti, Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal and Zambia, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and COP28 President Dr. Sultan bin Ahmed Al Cebir, UN Climate Change Egypt High Level Champion Dr. Mahmud Mohieldin, executives from leading green developers, multilateral development banks and prominent institutions from across the UAE and Africa. Kenya's African Green Industrialization Initiative aims to reduce the problems caused by the climate crisis and achieve green development-based growth by accelerating green industrialization throughout the African continent. Approximately 1.8 GW of clean energy will be supplied to Africa under the leadership of UAE-owned Masdar, AMEA Power, Abu Dhabi Fund for Development and Etihad Credit Insurance. In addition, approximately 2.6 billion USD has been allocated to promote green energy-based production in various African countries (Zambia, Ethiopia, Togo, Mauritania, Mozambique, Angola).⁶

6. "G20 Africa Agreement" Summit Led by Germany

It was acknowledged that the African Union (AU) would become a permanent member of the G20 at the G20 Summit held in New Delhi on September 8, 2023. Thus, the union, which has 55 members, has the same status as the EU within the G20. Represented by the current President, Azali Assoumani, the AU left its 'invited international organization' status for the first time and sat at the table with G20 leaders on an equal footing.⁷ Shortly after the AU joined the G20, an important meeting was held on the future of Africa's energy policies. The 'G20 African Agreement' Summit was held on Novem-



ber 20, 2023 in Berlin, the capital of Germany, under the auspices of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. The G20 African Agreement Summit is the fifth of such summits, the first of which was held in 2017 and was also held under the leadership of Germany. This summit was held with the participation of G20 member states Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Senegal, Guinea, Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia. In his statement, German Chancellor Scholz stated that

Karpowership energy ship (Source: Anadolu Agency).

an investment of €4 billion will be made in line with energy needs. The €4 billion to be transferred to the EU-Africa Initiative will be used for the green energy-based transformation of Africa. Germany's trade volume with Africa has reached €60 billion (\$65.4 billion USD), whereas Germany's investment in Africa has increased by 21.7% compared to the previous year.⁸

7. The Importance of Karpowership as a Turkish Company in African Energy Policies

In recent years, the Turkish company, Karpowership has come to the fore in meeting the energy needs of the African continent. The company produces electricity at 14 locations on four continents. Operating worldwide with 36 floating power plants, the company provides between 10% and 100% of the electricity needs of African countries such as Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Mozambique, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Senegal.⁹ According to a company press release, apart from the existing countries, it has been reported that negotiations are ongoing with Tanzania, Gabon, Kenya, Liberia and Cameroon. On the other hand, it has won a tender to produce 1200 megawatts of electricity, constituting 2% of South Africa's energy supply, which would go online during the second half of 2024.¹⁰ Currently operating 36 floating power plants, the company plans to increase this figure to 46, boosting its energy volume from 6,000 megawatts to 10,000 megawatts in 2024. The company also continues to operate floating storage and LNG carriers.¹¹

8. Conclusion

The African continent's need for energy resources continues to rise. It is seen that this geography, which is still well below the world average in terms of access to energy resources, is searching for alternatives to meet its current needs. While, on the one hand, the EU is searching for fossil fuels and renewable energy sources in Africa, it is observed that Russia is trying to make investments in the region, mostly through nuclear energy. On the other hand, it is seen that the UAE wants to be an important player in Africa's energy diplomacy at the COP28 summit held in 2023. It can be stated that the UAE, which produces projects to promote the use of green energy in Africa, is trying to become a remarkable partner in Africa's global energy equation.

⁸ Andreas Rinke ve Sarah Marsh, "Scholz pledges greater investment in Africa green energy", Reuters, 20.11.2023, <https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/climate-energy/scholz-pledges-greater-investment-africas-green-energy-sector-2023-11-20/>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

⁹ "Türk enerji şirketi Karpowership, 4 kıtada elektrik üretimi gerçekleştiriyor", AA, 28.02.2024, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/sirkethaberleri/enerji/turk-enerji-sirketi-karpowership-4-kitada-elektrik-uretimi-gerceklestiriyor/685945>, Date of Access: 08.05.2024.

¹⁰ Alexis Akwagyiram, "Power ship company that cut electricity in African cities eyes expansion", Semafor, 07.11.2023, <https://www.semafor.com/article/11/07/2023/karpowership-eyes-african-electricity-expansion>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.

¹¹ Elena Kachkova, "Turkish power generator Karpowership to start supplying South Africa electricity in 2024", Intellinews, 14.11.2023, <https://www.intellinews.com/turkish-power-generator-karpowership-to-start-supplying-south-africa-electricity-in-2024-301140/>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.

Africa's Summit Diplomacy in 2023

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1. Introduction

Summit diplomacy is a method of international interaction that has become widespread in parallel with the advances in transportation and communication. In line with the concept of 'new diplomacy,' which implies that governments responsible to their people carry out diplomacy openly, the frequency of summits has increased, their geographical scope has expanded and their agenda has diversified, particularly during the post-Cold War era.¹

In aiming to position African states as equal partners in world politics since the early 2000s, the African Union has also engaged in summit diplomacy to develop strategic partnerships with other regional organizations and states.² High-level meetings held by a non-African state with African states are called 'continental-country summits.' or 'One-Plus-Africa' (Africa+1). France has been holding regular summits with African states since 1972, Japan since 1993, and China since 2000. The USA, Russia, Türkiye, England, South Korea, India, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Italy has since joined this trend.

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¹ Samet Yılmaz, "Asya-Avrupa Diyalogu: Zirve Diplomasisi Bağlamında Bir Değerlendirme", *Optimum Ekonomi ve Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 2022, p. 189-205.

² Neba Ridley Ngwa (ed.), *Zirve Diplomasisi: Afrika'nın Stratejik Ortaklığında Yeni Bir Yaklaşım*, Afrika Vakfı Yayınları, Ankara, 2021.

In addition to two summits that can be considered within the scope of 'One-Plus-Africa' (Africa-Russia and Africa-Saudi Arabia), summits concerning the continent, such as BRICS expansion and climate change have also been held during 2023. In July, the 2nd Russia-Africa Summit held in St. Petersburg, the 15th BRICS Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Johannesburg in August, the First Africa Climate Summit held in Nairobi in early-September, the UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) held in Dubai in late-November and the First Saudi Arabia-Africa Summit held in Riyadh in November were registered as important summits concerning the African continent in 2023.

2. Russia-Africa Summit

Moscow, which had an intense presence in Africa in the context of competition with the USA during the Cold War, limited its activities in the continent after the Cold War. Having become interested in Africa again during Vladimir Putin's presidency, Russia, organized the first Russia-Africa Summit in Sochi in 2019 as an indicator of this interest. The second of the summit in question was held in St. Petersburg on July 27-28, 2023. While 43 heads of state from Africa attended the first summit, 17 heads of state from Africa attended the second summit, which took place in the shadow of the Russia-Ukraine War. According to the Kremlin, the US and French governments put pressure on African states not to attend the summit.³

It is very significant that the African delegation led by South Africa met with Vladimir Putin and Volodymyr Zelensky before the summit and proposed a peace plan to the two countries. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa noted that this is the first time African leaders have undertaken a peace mission outside the continent. The peace plan presented by the African delegation called for the preservation of the territorial integrity of Russia and Ukraine, the reduction of violence, the urgent start of negotiations between the two countries, the release of war criminals and the continuation of grain imports. While Ukraine stated that the Russian army must first withdraw from the occupied territories in order for any meeting or plan to be accepted, Russia found the peace plan of the African delegation reasonable in general and claimed the party that did not want to negotiate was Ukraine.⁴

Russia's withdrawal from the Black Sea grain agreement was one of the most crucial agenda items at the summit of African leaders. It has been stated that the decision in question has disproportionately affected the Horn of Africa countries, which are struggling with drought.⁵ When African leaders

³ Andrew Roth ve Pjotr Sauer, "Kremlin blames west for small number of leaders due at Russia-Africa summit", *The Guardian*, 26.07.2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jul/26/kremlin-blames-west-for-small-number-of-leaders-russia-africa-summit-ukraine-war-grain-deal-vladimir-putin>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

⁴ Ceren Gürseler, "Rusya-Ukrayna savaşında Afrika'nın arabuluculuk diplomasisi", *ANKASAM*, 15.07.2023, <https://www.ankasam.org/rusya-ukrayna-savasinda-afrikanin-arabuluculuk-diplomasisi/>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

⁵ Korir Sing'Oei, "The decision by Russia to exit the Black Sea grain initiative is a stab on the back at global food security prices and disproportionately impacts countries in the Horn of Africa already impacted by drought", X (Twitter), 17.07.2023, <https://twitter.com/SingoeiAKorir/status/1680995973311393792?s=20>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

called for the resumption of the grain agreement, Putin stated that grain supply to Africa would continue, and accordingly, within a few months, committed to send 50,000 tons of free grain to Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Mali, Central African Republic, Somalia and Zimbabwe.⁶

3. The BRICS Summit

While the BRICS bloc, formed by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, does not have the status of an official international organization, it meets annually and has developed a system based on consensus. BRICS, which aims to establish an alternative international cooperation mechanism to the current world order led by the USA, has managed to attract attention with its decisions towards this objective at almost every summit. Nonetheless, it was the 15th BRICS Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Johannesburg on August 22-24, 2023, which was the summit that attracted the most attention from world public opinion thus far.

Amongst the main reasons for the interest in the summit were that Russian President Vladimir Putin attended the summit via video conference due to the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court, that 22 states officially requested to become a BRICS member before the summit, and that a new reference currency to end the dominance of the USD would be discussed.

One of the main agenda items of the BRICS Summit was the expansion of the group with new members. In this context, it has been decided that Argentina, United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Iran, Egypt and Saudi Arabia will be accepted as full members of BRICS as of January 1, 2024. The inclusion of three African countries (South Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt) in the expanding BRICS gave the continent the opportunity to gain a more effective position in world politics and economy.⁷

At the summit, the feature of the Shanghai-based New Development Bank (NDB) as an alternative capital center was emphasized. The most important aspect of the NDB is that it allows developing countries to reduce their dependence on the Bretton Woods institutions. It is noteworthy that, as seen in the recent example of Uganda, the World Bank decided not to provide new financing to this country, citing its criminal law regarding homosexuality. BRICS, which has a traditionalist profile, is large enough to save African countries in need of capital from the conditional loans of Western-based financial institutions.

⁶ Bloomberg HT, "Putin: Afrika ülkelerine ücretsiz tahıl sevkiyatı yapacağız", 27.07.2023, <https://www.bloomberght.com/putin-afrika-ulkelerine-uccretsiz-tahil-sevkiyat-yapacagiz-2335532>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

⁷ Gözde Söğütü, "BRICS genişlemesinin Afrika kıtasına etkisi ne olur?", *Anadolu Agency*, 30.08.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz/3-soruda-brics-genislemesinin-afrika-kitasina-etkisi-ne-olur/2979011>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

Although the expectation of the announcement of a new currency that would weaken the global dominance of the USD at the summit was not met, some steps were taken in this direction. It was recorded that a working group pertaining to the development of a reference currency was to be established, that BRICS members would make agreements in their local currencies until the process is completed, that the necessary payment systems would be developed to ensure the flow of money between members cheaply and safely, and that there would be cooperation of NDB and especially the African Development Bank in this regard.⁸

4. Africa Climate Summit and COP28

The First Africa Climate Summit was held in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, under the leadership of the African Union between September 4-6, 2023. The Nairobi Declaration touched upon fulfilling the 100 billion USD climate finance commitment, implementing the 'loss and damage' mechanism, and supporting a new carbon taxation regime. Reforming the global financial system, alleviating the debts of African countries and removing investment barriers to renewable energy were also underscored at the summit. It has been stated that Africa's renewable energy capacity, which currently stands at 56 gigawatts (gW), may increase to 300 gigawatts in 2030. Kenyan President William Ruto announced that the government, private sector, banks and NGOs have pledged 23 billion USD in financial support for green growth.⁹

The Nairobi Summit was qualified as a run up to the Conference of the Parties, also known as the UN Climate Change Conference. Speaking at the Nairobi Summit, Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, announced that Europe would support Africa's priorities at the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28).¹⁰ While it was controversial that Sultan Ahmed Al-Jabir, the CEO of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, would preside over COP28, which was held in Dubai between 30 November - 12 December 2023, African countries had the opportunity to convey their priorities. In this regard, the demand that large companies which pollute the environment and global financial institutions to allocate more resources to poor countries gained weight at the conference. Uganda's Minister of Energy and Mining Development, Ruth Nankabirwa, stated that African countries began to be proactive in combating the climate crisis by acting jointly at COP28.¹¹

South Africa 15th BRICS Leaders Summit
(Source Anadolu Agency).

⁸ Mürsel Bayram, "15. BRICS Zirvesi: Alternatif blok güçleniyor", Anadolu Agency, 25.08.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz/3-soruda-15-brics-zirvesi-alternatif-blok-gucleniyor/2975951>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

⁹ Didem Taşbaşı, "Afrika İklim Zirvesi'nde gelişmiş ülkelere karbon vergisi çağrısı yapıldı", Temiz Enerji, 07.09.2023, <https://temizenerji.org/2023/09/07/afrika-iklim-zirvesinde-gelistmis-ukelere-karbon-vergisi-cagrisi-yapildi/>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

¹⁰ Politik Yol, "Afrika'nın iklim krizindeki en son çağrısı", 17.09.2023, <https://www.politikyol.com/afrikanin-iklim-krizindeki-en-son-cagrisi/>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

¹¹ Emirates News Agency, "Ugandalı Enerji Bakanı: COP28 Afrika ülkelerinin seslerini birleştirmeyi başardı", 13.12.2023, <https://wam.ae/article/aq7a2bz-ugandal%C4%B1-enerji-bakan%C4%B1-cop28-afrika-%C3%BCikelerinin>, Date of Access: 18.04.2024.





Kenya The 'Africa Climate Summit' was held at the International Kenyatta Congress Center in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi (Source: Anadolu Agency).

5. Saudi Arabia-Africa Summit

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which became interested in Africa during the reign of Faisal bin Abdulaziz (1964-1975), institutionalized its African policy by establishing the Ministry of State for African Affairs in 2018. Held in Riyadh under the chairmanship of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on November 11, 2023, the 1st Saudi Arabia-Africa Summit demonstrated the importance this country attaches to Africa. The summit was attended by almost all African countries, 14 of whom were at the level of heads of state and government. Since Israel's attacks on Gaza occupied the world agenda at the time, this issue was included in the summit as a priority.

As evidenced by the Riyadh Declaration, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has expressed a desire to accelerate its relations with the African continent, with which it shares a number of significant geographical, cultural and historical ties. It was reported that more than 50 agreements were signed with African states within the scope of the summit. It was announced that Riyadh had provided 45 billion USD in financing and 450 million USD in aid to African countries within the scope of development projects since the 1970s. In addition, 25 billion USD of investment will be made in Africa by 2030, 5 billion USD of development finance will be provided, trade with African states will be increased from 20 billion USD to 30 billion USD, with priority given to non-oil products, and the number of embassies in Africa will be increased from 29 to 40. Finally, it was announced that Saudi Arabia has tacitly requested support from African states for its candidacies for Expo 2030 and FIFA 2034.¹²

6. Conclusion

Four important summits concerning the African continent were organized in 2023. At the summit in Russia, which took place in the shadow of the battles in Ukraine, African states conducted active diplomacy aimed at ending the war and continuing grain shipments. The 15th BRICS Summit held in South Africa following the Russia-Africa Summit resulted in two more African states (Ethiopia and Egypt) joining the bloc. As seen in the storm disaster that devastated the Libyan city of Derne, African states, which are amongst the regions most affected by climate change, tried to act with a common agenda at the climate summits in Nairobi and Dubai. The continental states recently attended the Africa Plus One Summit held in Saudi Arabia, where they signed a declaration condemning Israel's attacks on Palestine and discussed how they could benefit from Riyadh's development financing.

¹² İnönü Üniversitesi Afrika Araştırmaları Merkezi, "Suudi Arabistan-Afrika Zirvesi", 13.11.2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=za1PaeIFrUK>, Date of Access: 30.04.2024.

The Growing Economies and Goals of Sub-Saharan Africa

Didem Özdemir*

1. Introduction

Having once predicted not being able to realize its economic potential in the 1990s, sub-Saharan Africa has since become the second fastest growing region in the world, and, despite all the difficulties it faces, is home to many rapidly growing economies. Especially in the international political economic system, the potential of African countries and the policies they pursue are gaining importance day by day regarding the increasing competition between China and the USA. This study aims to make a general analysis of the developing economies and goals of sub-Saharan Africa between January - December 2023.

Upon evaluation of the pertinent economic data presented in the literature, it becomes evident that despite the observed improvement in the region following the advent of the pandemic, the region's developing economies continue to experience adverse effects, particularly due to external dynamics, crises, and instability within the international political and economic system. However, these economies demonstrate resilience in the face of crises. When regional conflicts, political instability and economic structural problems are added to these external factors, the situation becomes even more fragile. For this reason, it becomes necessary for states to follow long-term policies aimed at solving structural problems in order to solve their relevant problems.

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2. General Evaluation of the Sub-Saharan African Economy as of 2023

Although the sub-Saharan African economy achieved growth above the world average after 2014, economic growth in the region followed a fluctuating course on 2021 - 2024.¹ As of January 2024, the effect of economic fluctuation began to be more evident, with the real increase in GNP pegged at 4.1% in 2022 and 3.2% in 2023.²

It is certain that the inflationary pressure faced by Africa's leading economies had a significant impact on this decline. Inflation in 2023, which almost doubled the pre-pandemic values and increased by 3.2% compared to 2022, reaching 17.8%, caused the gains in real income before the pandemic to melt away.³ However, in addition to the inevitable rise in inflation, there are many factors affecting the economic performance of the region since the pandemic. The economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the resulting increasing energy and food prices, the decrease in exports due to fluctuations in large economies such as China, the depreciation of national currencies against the dollar, the supply-demand shocks in agriculture due to the Russia-Ukraine War and climate change. Global or macroeconomic factors, such as the conflict in the Middle East, are seen as conjectural factors that strain the regional economy.

In addition to all these problems, the supply-demand imbalance in the region, the lack of variety in agricultural and industrial products, the concentration of income from trade on agricultural products, natural resources and tourism, conflicts in security-fragile areas in the region, lack of social mobility, and corruption are structural reasons that negatively affect the stability of economic growth.⁴ Debt constitutes one of the most important structural problems of African states. After the pandemic, OPEC's decision to limit production, the global crisis and inflation led to a serious depreciation of national currencies against the dollar, and economies that increased public expenditures instead of following tight financial monetary policies during the pandemic period faced a serious debt problem. However, the tightening of monetary policies, especially by the world's major economies, has increased the borrowing cost of African states. Although there were improvements in the balance of payments in 2023, the ratio of government debt to GNP continues to remain at an average level of 60%.⁵

Despite the negativities listed above and the fluctuations in growth, sub-Saharan Africa remains the second fastest growing region after South East Asia, recording a growth of 3.2% in 2023.⁶ However, it should be noted

1 IMF, "World Economic Outlook 2024", 04.2024, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2024/04/16/world-economic-outlook-april-2024>, Date of Access: 30.04.2024, p. 13.

2 African Development Bank Group, "Africa's Macroeconomic Performance and Outlook", 01.2024, <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/africas-macroeconomic-performance-and-outlook-january-2024>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024, p. 1.

3 African Development Bank Group, "Africa's Macroeconomic Performance...", p. 3.

4 Victor Oluwole, "GDP growth: Top ten fast growing economies in Africa in 2023", Business Insider Africa, 09.11.2023, <https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/markets/gdp-growth-top-10-fastest-growing-economies-in-africa-in-2023/j6dgkr8>, Date of Access: 28.04.2024.

5 World Bank, "Africa Pulse", 04.2024, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/africa-pulse>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

6 IMF, "World Economic Outlook", p. 8.

Table 1: Sub-Saharan African Countries that Recorded Growth Over 5% in 2023
Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook, April 2024, p. 144.

3. Growing Economies and Goals of Sub-Saharan Africa

According to IMF's 2023 data, the economies of 14 countries in the region have grown above 5%, exceeding the world average of developing economies.⁷ The prominent features of these states seen in Table 1 are the diversification of the regional economy and integration, which increased infrastructure investments in 2023. And they are countries that benefit from increased tourism after the pandemic. It is estimated that in 2024, in addition to the following countries, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Niger, Uganda, Djibouti and Burundi will be included in the list of the World's 20 Fastest Growing Economies.⁸

Countries	Growth Rates (%)
Togo	5.4
Guinea	5.7
Gambia	5.6
Benin	5.8
Democratic Republic of Congo	6.1
Côte d'Ivoire	6.2
Eswatini	5.1
Kenya	5.5
Republic of Mauritius	6.9
Mozambique	6.0
Zimbabwe	5.3
Tanzania	5.0
Ethiopia	7.2
Rwanda	6.9
Developing Economies- World	4.2

These states are expected to develop at the same pace in 2024 and 2025, especially thanks to the diversification of hydrocarbon production and export products. The factors that contribute to the growth of these economies

7 IMF, "World Economic Outlook", p. 34.

8 United Nations Economic Commission on Africa, "Investing in a just and sustainable transition in Africa", 24.04.2024, <https://repository.uneca.org/bitstream/handle/10855/50162/b12042717.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>, Date of Access: 28.04.2024, p. 2.



REFORM PRIORITIES FOR TACKLING DEBT



ANNUAL MEETINGS
2023 | **مراكش Marrakech**
WORLD BANK GROUP
INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

IMF

- FINANCIAL TIMES
- Al Jazeera
- The Banker
- Al Arabiya
- devel
- BRICS NEWS
- L'ECONOMISTE
- FDI
- FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Panel discussion stage with six participants seated in white armchairs. Each chair has a small white podium with the IMF logo and '2023 Marrakech' text. A large screen on the right shows a close-up of a panelist. The stage is lit with blue and white lights.

are actually policies that solve structural problems. Niger (despite military intervention), Senegal, Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda have increased agriculture, mining and oil production and diversified their export products, thanks to their infrastructure investments.

Although sub-Saharan African countries have recorded serious growth figures in certain periods, the main problem is that this growth cannot be sustained consistently. The reasons for this are, in addition to the global and external factors mentioned above, Africa's political instability, corruption, infrastructure problems, the need for macroeconomic reform, the fact that economies are mainly based on income from a single product or service and the failure to solve structural problems such as debt, and global economic crises, all renders Africa's structural problems worse. In this sense, the economic performance of 2023 is no exception. This situation manifests itself in the fact that large economies of sub-Saharan Africa such as South Africa, Ghana and Nigeria are not included in the list of fast-growing countries. Especially between 2014 - 2050, the growth rate of the African economy is expected to be above the world average, whereas the share of the region's major economies such as Nigeria, South Africa and Egypt is expected to be high.⁹ However, it is evaluated that the global crisis that started with the pandemic, combined with the internal dynamics and structural problems of these states, will prevent the major economies of sub-Saharan Africa from producing the expected results.

Only regional and international economic organizations are not aware of what needs to be done to sustain stable and inclusive growth. In this sense, many countries in the region are taking important steps to solve structural problems and vulnerabilities due to external factors. For instance, Nigerian President Bola Tinubu, whose country recorded a growth of 2.9% in 2023, said Renewed Hope for the country, which has had difficult times since the pandemic due to attacks by terrorism and armed gangs and wrong economic policies, and is struggling with the global economic crisis, falling oil prices and inflation, has put forward a government program called the Renewed Hope Agenda. Comprised of eight priority areas, the relevant program aims to solve Nigeria's economic structural problems and includes targets such as diversifying the economy through industrialization, digitalization, creative arts and innovation, improving transportation and transport infrastructure, efficient and effective distribution of social services, fighting poverty, employment, using energy and natural resources for sustainable development and investing in agriculture to ensure food security.¹⁰

⁹ World Economic Forum, "Six of the world's fastest growing economies are in Africa", 06.08.2019, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/08/afcta-proof-that-africa-heading-for-substantial-growth/>, Date of Access: 23.04.2024.

¹⁰ Adekunle Dada, "Tinubu redefines 8 priority areas of his administration", Legit, 04.11.2023, <https://www.legit.ng/nigeria/1561932-tinubu-redefines-8-priority-areas-administration/>, Date of Access: 01.05.2024.

¹¹ World Bank, "The World Bank in South Africa: Overview", 05.04.2024, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southafrica/overview>, Date of Access: 30.03.2024.

¹² South African Government, "National development plan 2030", 08.2017, <https://www.gov.za/issues/national-development-plan-2030>, Date of Access: 30.04.2024.

¹³ World Bank, "The World Bank in South Africa", 05.04.2024, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southafrica/overview>, Date of Access: 30.04.2024.

¹⁴ IMF, "World Economic Outlook", p. 144.

¹⁵ World Bank, "The World Bank in Ghana: Overview", 27.03.2024, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ghana/overview>, Date of Access: 30.03.2024.

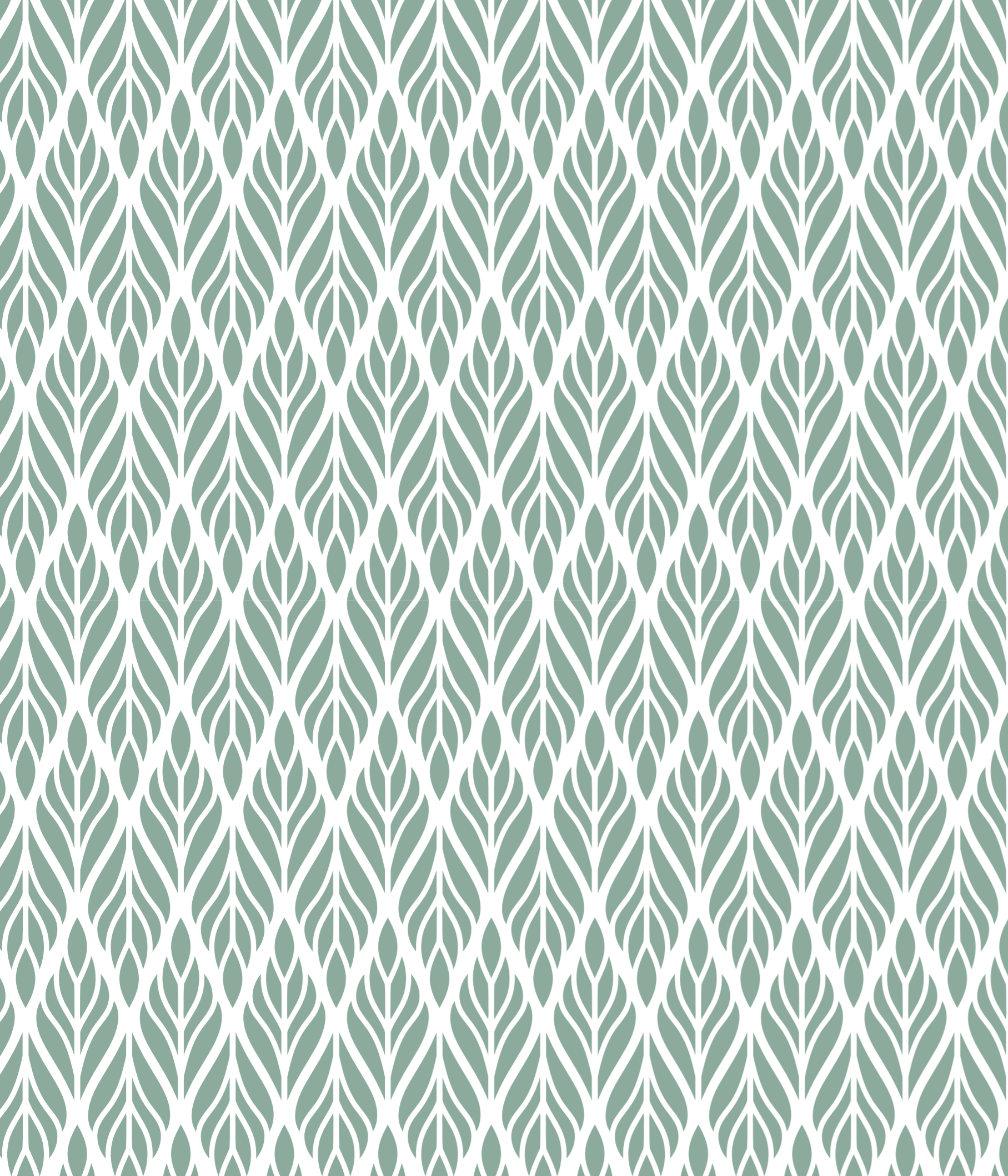
On the other hand, South Africa, which is struggling with high inflation, power outages, serious logistics and transportation problems, corruption and political instability, with 62.7% of its population living in poverty and unemployment rising to 32.4% by 2023 due to the effects of the pandemic¹¹ is trying to return to the 2030 Development Program¹² which it originally planned to solve its structural problems and end poverty back in 2017. South Africa, which needs the determined implementation of social and political reforms as well as economic reforms, aimed to improve the economic growth rate of 0.6% in 2023 through economic restructuring, the fight against corruption, infrastructure projects and economic diversification.¹³

Similarly, one of the rising economies of the region before the pandemic, Ghana plans to solve its worsening state debt and poverty problem due to macroeconomic balances in 2022 and to boost the growth rate, which was 2.9% in 2023.¹⁴ For this purpose, Ghana has restructured its debts with the IMF and has implemented financial and economic measures. Initiated a reform program to ensure stability. Although the pressure on consumers increases due to inflation and tight financial policies, Ghana aims to attract direct foreign investments to the country in the long term, with reforms in the private sector, especially in the field of energy.¹⁵

4. Conclusion

With their natural resources, dynamic and growing young populations and markets, sub-Saharan African countries have serious economic growth potential. However, dependence on macroeconomic balances and therefore increasing economic fragility, combined with the structural problems of the relevant countries, prevents the creation of stable and sustainable growth. At this point, achieving the true potential of the countries in the region and creating inclusive and sustainable economies depends on solving their structural problems and improving macroeconomic balances. Nevertheless, solving the structural problems aforementioned depends upon the determined implementation of long-term programs, as well as the availability of advantageous resources, especially to finance infrastructure and restructuring projects and the state debt.

In this regard, within the scope of changing international conjuncture, it has been evaluated that while the economic potential of sub-Saharan African countries is high, it also has the potential to produce added value.



The 60th Anniversary of the African Union

11

Gözde Söğütü*

1. Introduction

The African Union (AU) was established in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002, after its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), decided in September 1999 to create a new continental organization to expand its work. The vision of the AU, of which all 55 African countries are members, is to create an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa that is guided by its citizens and represents a dynamic force in the global arena.¹ Ranking second after the European Union (EU) in Africa's institutional development, the AU has significantly strengthened Africa's position in international organizations. In this context, the most important achievement of the AU, which is a promoter of political dialogue between African countries and strategic international partners, in 2023 was G-20 membership. On the other hand, the AU Summit of Heads of State and Government, which convenes periodically, pioneered the expressing with one voice the needs of the continent in priority areas such as peace and security, infrastructure and energy, climate change, innovative development financing and education.

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¹ Africa Union Commission, Africa Union Handbook 2023, p. 12.



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2. Gains of G-20 Membership for the AU

Global goals are the main elements that bring the efforts of individuals, nations and multilateral institutions closer. Therefore, the AU garners attention as an international institution with the participation of 55 countries in Africa and approximately 18% of the world's population. Representing African countries in international organizations, the AU is an important organization that takes its place as an organization that defends the right of Africans to speak.

Although historically marginalized on the international stage, the African continent has been playing important roles in international relations as an actor in recent years. Africa has strengthened its increasing influence and weight at the national and international level and its place in the G-20 by accepting the membership invitation of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who hosted the G-20 Summit held in the Indian capital, New Delhi, in 2023.

In becoming a part of the G-20, the AU is a global platform where the world's largest economies, comprised of 19 countries and the EU, participate and where global economic and financial policies are discussed and coordinated. Accordingly, the AU has attained an important achievement, such as being able to support the interests of Africa as a continent and actively shape the global agenda. Defined as an observer international organization in previous periods, the AU has the same status as the EU, which was previously the only regional bloc with full membership in the G-20.

The AU's G-20 membership has been welcomed by many countries, as it will increase the continent's visibility and influence to actively participate in shaping global governance. President of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, stated that the advocacy of G-20 membership in favor of the continent should be bolstered and that it was essential to contribute effectively to overcoming global challenges.²

African countries that have the opportunity to develop economic cooperation within the scope of the AU's G-20 membership shall be able to accelerate their economic development by attracting direct foreign investment in vital sectors such as infrastructure, technology and renewable energy. By actively participating in discussions on international trade agreements within the G-20, the AU will be able to shape trade policies that will benefit the continent and reduce trade barriers by promoting fair trade practices.³

The AU's G-20 membership reflects changing global power structures and greater recognition of the geopolitical importance of emerging markets.

² The Guardian, "African Union Made Permanent Member of G20 at Delhi Summit", 9 September 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/sep/09/african-union-made-permanent-member-of-g20-at-delhi-summit>, Date of Access: 03.04.2024.

³ Oswald T. Brown, "10 Benefits for African Union as a Member of the G20", *The Washington Informer*, 13 September 2023, <https://www.washingtoninformer.com/african-union-g20-membership/>, Date of Access: 03.04.2024.

⁴ Mziwandile Ndlovu ve Alex Jjiya, "The African Union in the G20: Pragmatic US-Africa Collaboration in a World Evolving Towards Multipolarity", *Africa Year in Review 2023*, p. 47-48.

⁵ "Assessing the 36th African Union Summit", *Observer Research Foundation*, 7 March 2023, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/assessing-the-36th-african-union-summit>, Date of Access: 07.04.2024.

It is expected that the AU will benefit from its influence and have the opportunity to voice its problems in the G-20, where many global problems are discussed beyond economic issues such as climate change and sustainable development. Furthermore, it may be possible for the AU to participate in geopolitical changes in the Global South, such as G-20 membership and the expanded BRICS bloc, in which Egypt and Ethiopia have joined South Africa as representatives of Africa. Major geopolitical changes occurring in the Global South appear to be deepening as Western powers increasingly accuse many African governments of supporting Russia in the Russia-Ukraine War. Therefore, the presence of the AU in the G-20 is such that it can give Western powers the opportunity to resolve their tensions with Africa through long-term engagements based on mutual respect.⁴

3. The 36th African Union Heads of State and Government Summit

Following the establishment of the (Organization of African Unity (OAU) at the leaders' summit level, sessions were held between various sub-working groups that ensured the gradual development of the AU. One of the sub-working groups that are of vital importance for the development of the AU has been the periodic meetings of heads of state and government.

The 36th Ordinary Session of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union was held in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, which hosts the union headquarters, on February 18-19, 2023. The global and continental implications of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which occurred at a time when African countries were trying to recover from the destabilizing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and had a direct impact on the continent, such as disruption of trade, the rise in food and fuel prices, macroeconomic instability and security problems. Multilateralism came to the fore at the 36th AU Summit, where they tried to achieve unity.⁵

The main theme of the summit for 2023, which provided African leaders the opportunity to address all the political and socio-economic problems of the continent and propose appropriate solutions for a more developed, resilient and peaceful Africa, is; *The Year of AfCFTA; The Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area has been Accelerated*. Aiming to build political resolve on trade as a development agenda in Africa, the summit focused on Covid-19, which highlighted the depth of unpreparedness of African healthcare systems and Africa's exclusive dependence or unreliability.

ty on global supply chains, as well as the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with the resulting food and energy price crisis highlighting the necessity of intra-African trade and the urgency of fully operationalizing the AfCFTA.⁶ Therefore, after stating that if the policies recommended by the World Bank are implemented, poverty will decrease, prosperity will increase and sustainable development will be promoted, AfCFTA's choice of these as the main theme of the summit is remarkable as it shows the importance the AU attaches to the economic integration of the continent.

The summit, where various issues were discussed, including integration, cooperation, continental solidarity, pan-Africanism, difficulties in the implementation of AfCFTA and Agenda 2063, peace and security challenges and institutional reforms of the AU, was chaired by Macky Sall, whereas the Presidency was transferred to the President of the Comoros, Azali Assoumani.⁷

4. The Role of the AU in Maintaining Peace and Security

Increasing geopolitical competition causes intensification of conflicts, especially in strategically important regions, in an increasingly multipolar world. According to 2023 data, 40 million people have been displaced due to various problems, such as conflicts in this geography, which extends from the Western Sahel to the Horn of Africa and is home to 16 countries in conflict in adjacent regions including the Lake Chad Basin and the Great Lakes.⁸

While civil conflicts continue in Ethiopia, the DRC and Sudan, causing thousands of deaths, a series of threats such as the increase in violent extremism and deepening democracy and governance deficits converged to pose challenges to peace, security, stability and socioeconomic development in Africa. In this context, the African Union Peace and Security Council, the body within the AU tasked with addressing threats to international peace and security in Africa, has focused on solving the continent's most pressing peace, security and governance problems throughout 2023. In doing so, the Council has held at least 96 meetings, 15 of which were held through the Committee of Experts. Although the Council has made some progress in key areas, the decrease in the number of crises addressed in 2023 compared to 2022, when 32 crisis-centered meetings were held, has led to discussions that regional and continental policy actors are indifferent to Africa's peace and security environment.⁹ It has been observed that there is inconsistency in the AU's approach to crises in 2023, that it continues to discuss thematic

⁶ Solomon Ayele Dersso, "The 36th AU Summit Beyond Peace and Security: Reform of the Multilateral System and the AfCFTA", *Amani Africa*, 3 March 2023, <https://amaniafrica-et.org/the-36th-au-summit-beyond-peace-and-security-reform-of-the-multilateral-system-and-the-afcfta/>, Date of Access: 07.04.2023.

⁷ Vanessa Aboudi, "What Should We Retain from the 36th Summit of the African Union?", *NKAFU Policy Institute*, <https://nkafu.org/what-should-we-retain-from-the-36th-summit-of-the-african-union/>, Date of Access: 08.04.2024.

⁸ Dersso, "The 36th AU Summit Beyond Peace and Security: Reform of the Multilateral System".

⁹ ISS Africa, "2023 A Tough Year for the PSC", 30 January 2024, <https://issafrica.org/pscreport/psc-insights/2023-a-tough-year-for-the-psc>, Date of Access: 08.04.2024.

conflict issues instead of foreseeing and preventing conflicts, and that it cannot generate any solutions.

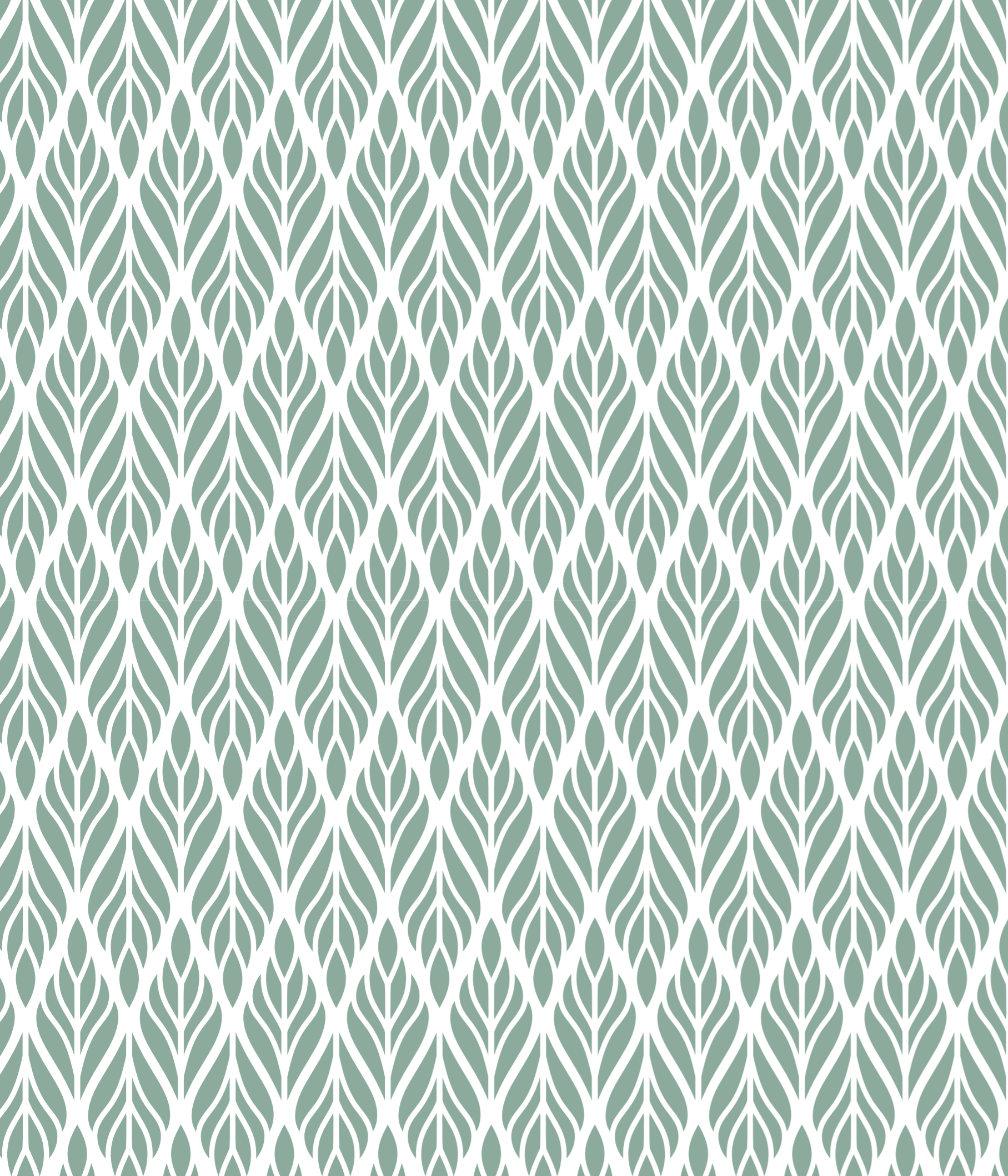
The Council requested the AU Commission to review the African Peace and Security Architecture to adapt it to today's security challenges and to use preventive diplomacy to its full potential.¹⁰ In this context, the 7th African Annual Conference on Peace and Security was held on 10-12 July 2023 under the theme of "Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Africa". Providing a platform for the analysis of Africa's peace and security structures and institutions, focusing on the continent's ability to overcome emerging challenges and gain global competitive advantage, the conference will focus on collective security in Africa, preventive measures to maintain peace, peace through perspectives of African solidarity in times of financial crisis and aimed to address challenges in implementing security architecture.¹¹

5. Conclusion

Comprised of 55 member states, the AU has made significant progress in the integration of the continent's countries and their influence in global politics. Over the past 60 years, it has developed meaningful policies on issues such as the African Continental Free Trade Area and peace and security. With the G-20 membership obtained in 2023, it has achieved important gains such as setting the agenda and representing Africa's interests in global forums. However, for the AU to achieve the set political, economic and cultural goals, there are a number of obstacles that need to be resolved, such as the adoption of common policies on collective decision-making, independent financing, the division of labor and strategic partnerships. From this perspective, apart from the gains that will come from being a part of a global platform such as the G-20 in 2023, the African Heads of State and Government Session is important from the standpoint of implementing and internalizing the union's decisions, dividing up of labor between the AU and regional economic communities, and using the organization in the best way to shape Africa's place in the world.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ Rachid El Houdaigui, "African Peace & Security Annual Conference (APSACO) - 7th Edition", *Policy Center for the New South*, <https://www.policycenter.ma/publications/african-peace-security-annual-conference-apsaco-7th-edition-summary-report>, Date of Access: 08.04.2024.



Impact of Private Military Companies on Security in Africa: Terrorist Activities in West Africa

Muhammad Soliman Al-Zawawy*

1. Introduction

West Africa is viewed as an advanced region in terms of economic cooperation and financial integration compared to other regions in the African continent, with relatively higher ranks on various indexes. However, the security challenge is still widely viewed as a threat to stability and integration. The region has witnessed vibrant foreign interventions on various levels in the decades that followed the independence of these states. In the last few years, we witnessed a rebellion against the French military existence, after military coups took place in this region, which brought a changing nature of security structure in West Africa.

In this context, this study will examine the role of military and security companies in the stability of Africa, with a particular focus on the issue of terrorist activities in West Africa.

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Africa Prigozhin, in the video shared on the Telegram channel called "Evacuation of Wagner", stated that they made Russia "even bigger" on all continents, including Africa. (Source: Anadolu Agency).

⁴ See: Marc, Alexandre, et al. *Challenge of Stability and Security in West Africa*, World Bank Publications, 2015. ProQuest eBook.

⁵ "Nijer cuntası, askeri müdahale tehdidiyle karşı karşıya olan Rus grup Wagner'den yardım istiyor", *Associated Press*, <http://bit.ly/4ahlH4P>, Date of Access: 06.08.2023.

⁶ "2023'te Batı Afrika'da 1.800'den fazla terör saldırısında 4.600 kişi öldürüldü", *Anadolu Agency*, <https://shorturl.at/vHIR9>, Date of Access: 27.07.2023.

⁷ "Wagner grubu Afrika'da nerede ve nasıl faaliyette bulundu", *Statista*, <https://shorturl.at/amzCQ>, Date of Access: 24.08.2023.

⁸ *SIPRI Yearbook 2023*, Ibid.

Main security threats in the region vary from drug trafficking, maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, supporting dictators and coup leaders, manipulating mineral resources revenues, and the rise of religious feuds.⁴ After the July 26th coup in Niger last year, for example, observers anticipated the spread of the PMSC in the region, to help the coup leaders to counter an anticipated attack back then from Western militaries or the armed forces of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Niger's military junta immediately asked for help from the Russian mercenary group Wagner, as the request came during a visit by the coup leader, General Salifou Mody, to neighboring Mali, as Wagner operates in several African countries, including Mali, where human rights groups have accused its forces of deadly abuses.⁵

Recently, China and Russia's PMSCs expanded their presence in Africa in various regions, as in addition to their activities, they export tactical and light weapons that affect the outcomes of battles to ensure their countries' interests. In the absence of accountability, these companies took advantage of the weak state capacity in different African countries to gain military, financial, and political influence.

3. Proliferation of PMSCs in West Africa

The proliferation of security incidents across West Africa results in around 4,600 deaths in terrorist attacks between January and June 30, 2023, including 2,725 in Burkina Faso, 844 in Mali, 77 in Niger, and 70 in Nigeria.⁶ In Mali, the Wagner group was accused of killing 500 civilians, claiming that some of them were al-Qaeda militants in the town of Moura. There were reports of contacts between the Wagner group and the military junta of Niger before committing the coup in 2023.⁷ The Wagner Group has been investigated in numerous UN reports for alleged human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law in sub-Saharan Africa.⁸

On the other hand, China is also intervening in the region with its PMSCs, as they were linked to its investment, infrastructure development, and trade expansion. With the fragile security infrastructure in the region, China used its PMSCs to ensure its long-term existence in West Africa, and access to strategic locations and natural resources, and have a say in the political decision-making in the region. Other Russian PMSCs, such as RSB Group, Moran Security Group, and Patriot, also operate across Africa stretching from the Sahel region to the Gulf of Guinea. That presence allows Moscow to wield substantial influence without deploying conventional military forces.

France is also investing in the PMSCs to preserve its interests in Africa, as its Secopex is helping train the Cote d'Ivoire's military. France also has its security company Agemira, which is active in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The UK's Aegis Defence Services is believed to have worked in 18 African countries, while G4S, Erinys, and Olive Group are also active in Africa.

While the U.S. military companies are more active within the scope of its army operations, it also has companies that have been active in Africa since the 2000s, like MPRI, CACI International, Academy (Previously Blackwater), and DynCorp. In Niger, the AdvanFort American company was offering anti-piracy maritime protection in East and West Africa. Germany's Xeless and Asgaard are also active in Africa.⁹

4. Challenges Ahead

There are several factors that may lead to an increase in external interference in the West African region. The failure to establish a security structure for a regional system in West Africa after the military coups threaten the cohesion of the ECOWAS organization. The rise of private security companies will strengthen the trends of military coups and then the influence of those private companies, which strengthened the coup leaders' boldness in the face of threats from the international community and ECOWAS to intervene to end the coups.

Indeed, the solidarity of the leaders of the military coups in West African countries may lead to more coups and other military leaders daring to overthrow their regimes, as long as they are safe from punishment by entering into the protection of those private security and military companies. The nature of these mercenary companies also makes them more inclined to commit massacres and shed blood, given that they work for money and they are foreigners to the region, and do not follow the same pattern of value and moral system of the population.

5. Conclusion

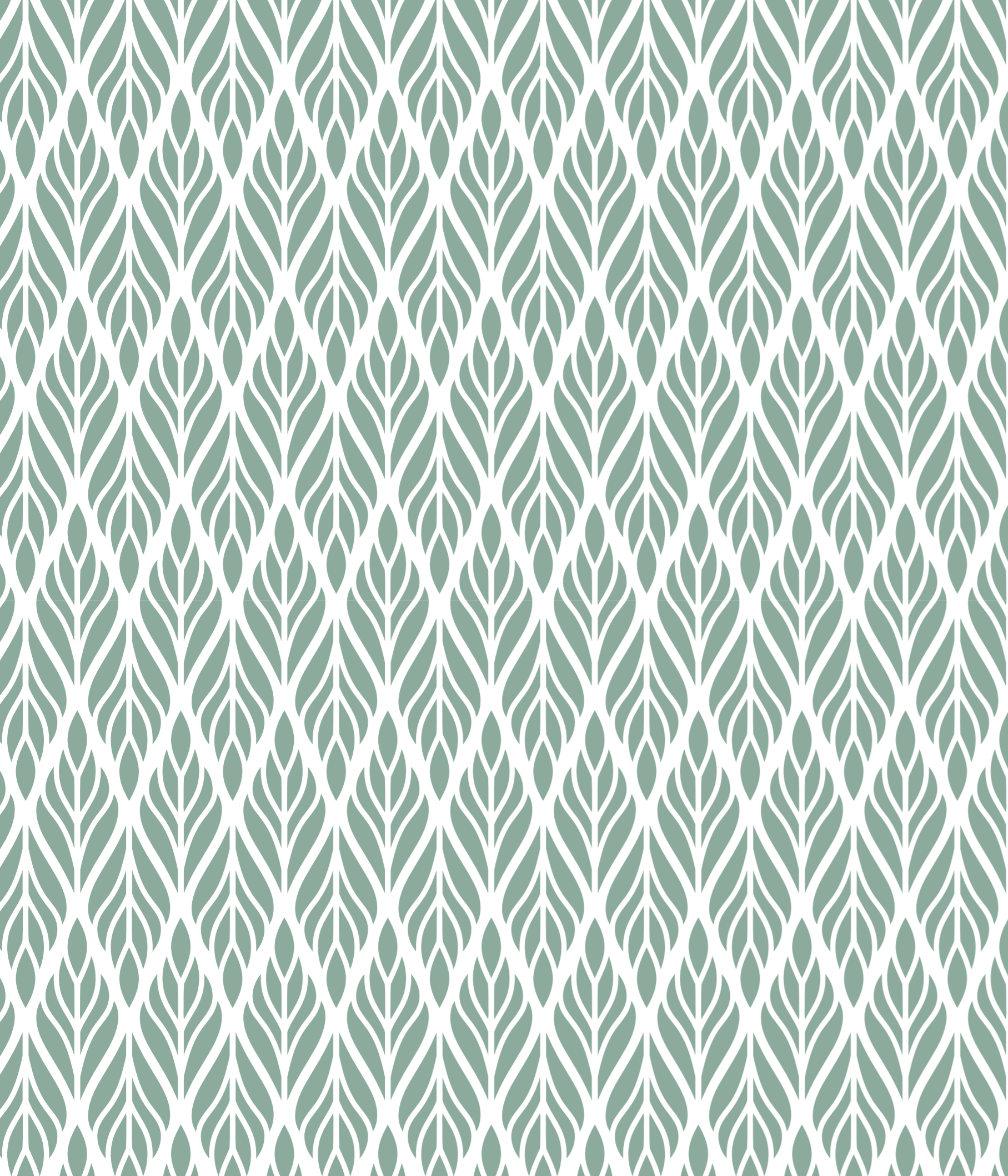
The growing demand for the safeguarding of individuals and institutions in Africa is intensifying the necessity for the involvement of private military companies. Consequently, the conditions are becoming optimal for the operation of these companies. The formation of this environment serves to reinforce the processes by which private security firms are able to evade corruption, tyranny, and the necessary penalties that would otherwise be

imposed upon them. In contexts where the provision of security is lacking and instances of unrest and conflict are commonplace, private military companies establish their own ecosystems. Furthermore, the alignment of these companies with the interests of global powers contributes to increased regional instability. Furthermore, this situation gives rise to an increase in proxy wars among countries engaged in global competition.

It is evident that the most affected parties in this situation are the individuals and populations residing in West African countries. In such an environment, local and regional powers are intensifying their involvement in terrorist activities. Local populations affected by the aforementioned circumstances are attracted to the lucrative remuneration packages offered by private military companies, resulting in an increase in individuals enlisting in security firms. It is therefore evident that the presence of private security companies in Africa is becoming an alternative to regular armies, which is expected to have a detrimental impact on regional security and peace in the long term.

In essence, the role of security companies in Africa is contingent upon the interests of the countries that provide them with support. This situation renders local populations dependent on the interests of external powers, thereby creating a reliance on their exchanges and agreements. The absence of a supreme authority in the region and the declining influence of international organisations impede the process of institutional and structural reform in West African countries, thereby undermining their capacity to govern effectively. In Africa, this process may ultimately result in disintegration and collapse, potentially leading to social unrest and armed conflicts.

⁹ "Özel askeri şirketler Afrika'da genişlemeye devam ediyor". NE Global, <https://shorturl.at/GIY46>, Date of Access: 31.08.2023.



The Defense Industry from the African Perspective: New Trends

13

Abdullah Uçak*

1. Introduction

On the centenary of establishment of the Turkish Republic, it is seen that important work and revolutionary projects has been carried out in the field defense industry. With a jet engine developed by Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI), the unmanned aerial vehicle, ANKA-3, which has low visibility and is designed for air-land and air-air operations as well as reconnaissance, surveillance and intelligence missions, conducted its maiden flight on December 28, 2023. In addition, HÜRJET, which is Türkiye's first jet training and light attack aircraft, successfully completed its maiden flight on April 25, 2023. In addition to the ANKA-3 and HÜRJET platforms providing superiority in military operations, defense industry diplomacy also has a special place in the development of international relations by transferring these and other developed technologies to other countries.

Based on data obtained from the Türkiye Exporters Assembly, defense and aerospace exports increased by approximately 27% compared to the previous year, reaching 5.5 billion USD. More than 230 defense industry platforms, including equipment such as unmanned aerial vehicles, armored vehicles, naval platforms, ammunition and weapon systems were exported to 170 countries.

Especially in 2023, the Turkish defense industry played an active role in meeting the defense and security needs of African countries. Providing

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IDEF IDEF'23 Closing Ceremony (Source: Anadolu Agency).

¹ Ahmet Alemdar, "Afrika'nın savunma ve güvenlik anlayışında Türk savunma sanayii etkisi", *Kriter Dergi*, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

² Savunma Sanayist, "Küllüye'deki toplantıdan yerli uçak gemisi kararı çıktı", 03.01.2024, Date of Access: 16.04.2024.

maintenance training on exported platforms, providing pilot and operator training, providing engineering training for the development of the defense industry in African countries, or organizing informative meetings such as internships and conferences show that Türkiye is actively using defense industry diplomacy in Africa.

Defense industry items that were exported to Africa during 2023 will be examined and how these sales affect international relations will be evaluated in this study.

2. Defense Industry Exports for Africa According to 2023 Data

There are armed conflicts of different intensities in many regions of Africa, with armed conflicts currently ongoing in 44 different countries of the continent.¹ African countries need defense industry equipment to gain superiority in these conflicts. Türkiye is a country that can take expedient action to meet these needs. The most important reason for this is Türkiye's presence on the continent, especially after 2010. They opened embassies, TİKA offices, Yunus Emre Institute's cultural centers, Maarif Schools and defense industry companies' offices in Africa have enabled Türkiye to conduct effective diplomacy on the continent. Additionally, defense industry fairs held in Africa and Türkiye are of great importance. Within the scope of these fairs, Türkiye offers its experience in the defense industry to the participating African militaries. However, these expositions are a good starting point for cooperation. As a result of the work carried out, 2023 has been a year in which export records were broken for the defense industry.

Making a presentation at the "Global Strategies Conference in the Defense and Aviation Industry" held on February 16-18, 2024, President of Defense Industry Prof. Dr. Haluk Görgün stated that Baykar's exports amounted to 1.7 billion USD, Turkish Aerospace Industry's exports to 864 million USD, Machinery and Chemical Industry's exports to 439 million USD, TEI's exports to \$337,000,000 USD, BMC's exports to 255 million USD, Roketsan's exports to 161 million USD, RAM Dış Ticaret exports to 160 million USD, Pratt & Whitney THY Tecnic exports to 111 million USD, ASELSAN exports to 108 million USD and SYS company exports to 104 million USD, with an overall 27% increase across the board since 2018.²

3. Collaborations with Exports

In addition to exporting to African countries in 2023, Turkish defense industry companies visited African countries throughout the year and carried out studies to meet the defense industry needs of these countries. In this context, Turkish Aerospace Industry participated in the Nigeria Security Fair (NISEC EXPO) held in Nigeria in August 2023 and presented the defense industry equipment it produced to African officials.³ In addition, companies such as ASELSAN, HAVELSAN and TUSAŞ, which are amongst Türkiye's largest defense industry companies, participated in the African Air Force Forum held in the Senegalese capital of Dakar, establishing close contact with African officials.

In addition to the fairs and events held in Africa in 2023, it was observed that there was intense participation from Africa in the defense industry fairs held in Türkiye. Türkiye's International Defense Industry Fair IDEF'23 (International Defense Industry Fair), which was held in Istanbul under the auspices of the Presidency between July 25-28, 2023, attracted high-level participation from military institutions such as the Air, Land and Naval Forces of many African countries. They had the opportunity to closely observe the defense industry know-how.⁴

In addition to Türkiye's exports to Africa in 2023, its participation in defense industry events held on the continent throughout the year has enabled it to expand its relations with the countries of the continent. In previous years, Türkiye's engagement in Africa was largely focused on the provision of defence equipment of Russian origin and the expansion of its diplomatic presence. However, in recent times, there has been a notable shift in Türkiye's approach to Africa. This is evidenced by the establishment of new embassies, the inauguration of the activities of the Turkish Maarif Foundation, and the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency Presidency. The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities has facilitated the opportunity for students from the African continent to pursue scholarship education in Türkiye. Additionally, it has enabled the advancement of humanitarian aid initiatives conducted by Turkish non-governmental organisations in Africa throughout the year. Furthermore, it has fostered a constructive and favourable perception of Türkiye in various countries across the continent, thereby contributing to the growth of new perspectives.

³ Nisec Expo, "Nigeria Security Exhibition and Conference", Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

⁴ IDEF'23, "16'nci Uluslararası Savunma Sanayii Fuarı", Katılımcı Listesi, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

4. Conclusion

With Türkiye's exports in the defense industry field to the African continent as of 2023, it has been seen that these exports have reorganized Türkiye's relations with the continent.

Since the 2000s, Türkiye has taken many steps to develop bilateral relations specifically on the African continent. This development has contributed greatly to the selection of Turkish origin products in the defense industry equipment supply of African countries. As a result, many African countries supplied the equipment produced by Türkiye in 2023. Many products such as unmanned aerial vehicles and equipment, land vehicles and defense equipment have been preferred by countries in Africa.

It is clear that Türkiye's sharing its experiences in the field of defense industry with African countries within the scope of various projects contributes positively to the development of relations with the countries of the continent. It is envisaged that new studies will be conducted within the scope of defense industry diplomacy to further develop these relations.

It is considered that opening local offices of Turkish defense industry companies in countries where the development of relations is aimed will be an important tool in the development of relations. It is clear that the opening of the offices will enable the development of the local defense industries of the countries in question. Moreover, it is expected that the local procurement of various engineering works in the countries where exports transpire and the sharing of knowledge and experience will also contribute to the development of bilateral relations.

It is considered that engineering students studying at African technical universities, receiving training in internships, on-the-job training and engineering development studies in Türkiye within the scope of certain projects and using these experiences in their own countries will also support the development of cooperation and relations between Türkiye and African countries.

Finally, opening Defense Industry Attaché positions within Turkish embassies in African countries and employing experienced people in the defense industry as Attachés/Consultants in strategically crucial countries is seen as a strategic step for the development of international relations.

Accordingly, the fact that Türkiye's defense industry equipment exports to Africa in 2023 has improved its relations with African countries, thus making a positive contribution.

Türkiye's Defense Industry and Security Cooperation with Africa in 2023

Tunç Demirtaş*

1. Introduction

Although Africa is a continent of high geopolitical and strategic importance, it is gradually increasing its place and importance in the global system. Furthermore, reasons such as military interventions on the continent, activities of terrorist organizations, ethnic-based conflicts, struggles against neo-colonialism and protecting resources increase the challenges and security challenges on the continent. On the other hand, the inadequacy of African countries in meeting the needs of the “essential” security partnerships with Western countries from the past forces the continental countries to search for alternatives and new partnerships.

In this context, especially in dealing with the fight against terrorism, reconnaissance, surveillance and intelligence sharing, military training, boosting capacity, transfers of land, air and sea platforms and defense industry products are receiving attention between Africa and Türkiye in 2023, as it has in recent years.

In this study, the contributions of Türkiye's defense industry products to the defense and security needs of African countries will be assessed by discussing the potential impact of Türkiye-African relations in the defense industry field in 2023, the defense needs of African countries and the defense industry partnership with Türkiye within the scope of security dynamics.

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2. Developments and Collaboration in 2023

The African continent is home to a complex and ever-changing security environment. Due to conflicts, terrorist threats and piracy activities on the continent, African countries are searching for more reliable and cost-effective military solutions to ensure stability. Therefore, this quest has created a fertile ground for a defense sector that Africa needs. Türkiye, which is on its way to becoming an important defense partner of Africa's security architecture in 2023 and has made great progress in defense industry solutions.

Unlike traditional arms suppliers, Türkiye did not impose political or economic obligations on defense exports and continued to establish its relations in this field in 2023. This encourages a more flexible relationship with African countries, allowing the interlocutor states to meet their security needs while supporting their sovereignty. In this context, unlike countries such as the United States (USA), France, UK, Russia and China, Türkiye stands out as a more compatible partner in terms of defense industry cooperation.

Türkiye's interest in Africa and the response it has received from the continent's countries allow it to expand in various areas, including defense and security, as well as its diplomatic presence. As a matter of fact, the number of Turkish Embassies in Africa is remarkable as 44 in 2023.¹ This shows that there is a strategic focus on strengthening bilateral relations in Africa. Therefore, the increased presence of Turkish Embassies in Africa also opens the door to direct interaction with countries in need of potential defense industry, allowing for a more in-depth understanding of regional security concerns.

Trade between Türkiye and Africa increased from 5.4 billion USD to over 40 billion USD in 2022. Moreover, in parallel with commercial gains, the Turkish defense industry has grown significantly in recent years. Defense and aerospace exports broke a record, increasing by 27% in 2023, with exports in this sector reaching 5.5 billion USD.² This rise is partly due to international recognition of the technology of Turkish defense products, which have been successfully tested in crises such as Syria, Libya, Nagorno-Karabakh and Ukraine. This experience has demonstrated the value, reliability and effectiveness of Turkish military equipment and made this equipment especially attractive for African countries with more limited defense resources.

¹ Teresa Pinto, "Turkey's push for influence in Africa is working", GIS Reports, 09.04.2024, <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/turkey-influence-africa/>, Date of Access: 24.05.2024.

² Ibid.

3. The Defense Needs of African Countries and the Defense Industry Partnership with Türkiye

Due to its geographical proximity and deep-rooted historical ties, Türkiye has always had a strong presence in the Horn of Africa and North Africa, which are located in the sub-regional system of East Africa. In addition to these regions, interest in Turkish defense industry products has expanded in East Africa, the Sahel and West Africa in 2023. Defense relations are developing between Türkiye and countries such as Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Ghana and Kenya, whereas broader continental access moves for Turkish defense exports with Nigeria and Rwanda also received much attention. As a matter of fact, the diversification of relations allows Türkiye to meet a wide range of security demands across Africa.

Table 1: Turkish Defense Industry Products Delivered to African Countries (2023)3 Source: Created by the author.³

Featured Countries / Solutions in Exports to African Countries			
Country	Land Forces	Naval Forces	Air Forces
Uganda			TOGAN Gözcü UAV - STM
Niger			HÜRKUŞ Aircraft
Somalia			Bayraktar TB2 UAV
Chad	Nurol Yörük TWCV		ANKA UAV AKSUNGUR UAV HÜRKUŞ-C Attack Aircraft (MAM-L with Cirit missile)
Senegal	Hızır II TWCV Katmerciler		
Tunisia	Katmerciler tank carrier lowbed trailer		Anka-S UAV
Côte d'Ivoire	Otokar Cobra II TWCV Nurol Ilgaz TWCV		
Burkina Faso	Nurol Ejder Yalçın TWCV Nurol Ejder 6x6 APC		Bayraktar TB2 UCAV Bayraktar AKINCI UCAV
Mali			Bayraktar TB2 UCAV
Nigeria	Yörük 4x4 Light Tactical Armored Vehicle	Dearsan / Tuzla Class Assault boat	T129 Atak Helicopter (Cirit missile) Bayraktar TB2 UAV (MAM-L/C) TOGAN Gözcü UAV - STM BAHHA Sub-Cloud UAV- Havelsan
Ethiopia			Dearsan / NNS ARADU frigate modernization
Djibouti			Bayraktar TB2
Undisclosed African Countries			Sub-Cloud UAV

³ "Nurol makina to export 13 armoured vehicles to Nigeria for border security project", 2024, Military Africa, 29.01.2024, <https://www.military.africa/2024/01/nurol-makina-to-export-13-armoured-vehicles-to-nigeria-for-border-security-project/>, Date of Access: 24.05.2024;

"Turkey strengthens TAIs with African military | times aerospace", 15.11.2023, <https://www.timesaerospace.aero/features/defence/turkey-strengthens-tais-with-african-military>, Date of Access: 24.05.2024.

As seen in **Table 1**, Chad has emerged as a significant purchaser of Turkish defense products, having acquired three Hürkuş light attack aircraft, two ANKA unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and one Aksungur UAV in 2023. Similarly, it is seen that Niger purchased two Hürkuş aircraft. These purchases strengthen both countries' air surveillance and combat capabilities, which are critical to combating regional security challenges. Furthermore, Tunisia's purchase of five ANKA-UCAVs in 2023 boosts its capacity to collect intelligence and ensure border security. These medium-altitude and long-lasting UAVs offer cost-effective alternatives for monitoring large land and sea borders and have made Türkiye an important defense partner.⁴

On the other hand, Nigeria became Türkiye's largest defense partner in 2023. The major agreement to purchase six TAI T-129 ATAK helicopters greatly increases Nigeria's air strike capability. Additionally, the purchase of 13 Yörük 4x4 light tactical armored vehicles reinforces Nigeria's land capability. If the rumors about the purchase of Akıncı UAVs and TOGAN UAVs are confirmed, Nigeria's air power and intelligence gathering capabilities will be modernized. Additionally, the development of the Nigerian Navy's OPV 76 offshore patrol ship demonstrates Türkiye's ability to provide comprehensive solutions in various defense areas.⁵

Türkiye aims to develop technological cooperation through joint ventures and knowledge transfer, as well as direct defense industry transfers. The agreement signed between Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) and Egypt's Arab Organization for Industrialization (AOI) in December 2023 demonstrates this. This collaboration aims to explore joint projects and technology transfer opportunities that could lead to combined manufacturing facilities and know-how sharing in the aerospace and military industries.

4. Potential Implications for Regional Security Dynamics

Türkiye's increasing role in Africa's defense and security sector has important consequences for regional security dynamics. First of all, the entry of Turkish defense industry products into the field has the potential to trigger a wave of military modernization across Africa. Therefore, African countries that acquire Turkish defense industry products also acquire access to tools that can improve their capabilities against security threats. Türkiye's developing defense partnerships also have the potential to affect the current geopolitics of Africa.

Traditional defense suppliers in Africa such as the United States, France and Russia face more competition in 2023. This situation enables the crea-

⁴ ibid.

⁵ ibid.

(Source: Anadolu Agency)



tion of a more diverse security environment across the Continent. Additionally, defense and security agreements between Türkiye and African governments have the potential to make an immense contribution to the security environment in Africa.

5. Conclusion

Türkiye's defense and security sector has become an important participant in the security environment aimed to be created in Africa in 2023. The combination of strategic positioning, competitive advantage in cost-effectiveness and technology, and developing collaborations have accelerated this expansion. While this trend allows African countries to modernize their armies and diversify their defense suppliers, it also bolsters capacity against security threats, especially the fight against terrorism.

As a matter of fact, Türkiye's defense industry initiatives in Africa in 2023 enable that nation to play a more active role on a global scale beyond just being a regional power. Furthermore, the main reason for Türkiye's presence in Africa in 2023 is a spirit of partnership and cooperation with the principle of "people and security first" rather than a military presence or direct economic gain. With this spirit, Türkiye will become closer to the countries of the continent. The potential for creating collaborations emerges, allowing Türkiye's Africa policy to further diversify in different areas in 2023.

Africa's Representation and Engagement at the United Nations: A Critical Analysis

Abdallah Imam Haruna*

1. Introduction

The complex and multifaceted trajectory of African historical engagement with the United Nations is a reflection of the diverse political, economic, and social environment in Africa. The continent has been deeply involved in the UN, leveraging its platform to address various challenges and advance its interests on the global stage. Several key factors, including diplomatic efforts, regional cooperation, and the continent's priorities within the UN framework, have to be taken into account in order to analyze Africa's representation and engagement at the UN in 2023. Following the demise of colonialism in Africa in the 1960s, a large number of newly independent nations not only actively engaged with the UN but also made and continue to make substantial contributions to the world body, particularly for peacekeeping operations across the globe.¹ The first UN peacekeeping mission was launched in 1948 after the UN Security Council approved the deployment of UN military observers to the Middle East to oversee the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbours.² Since then, the UN has carried out more than 70 peacekeeping missions with the participation of numerous African nations. As pointed out by some security experts on the continent, more than 50,000 troops have been deployed in Africa for UN peacekeeping missions globally, with several thousand more deployed for operations led by African countries.³ A case in point is the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), which was authorized and funded by the United Nations.⁴ It is clear that Africa needs to be fully represented as a permanent member of

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¹ "The Relationship between Africa and the UN: From Disenchantment to a more Effective Cooperation" *Conference Report*, Tarrytown, New York, June 20 – 21, 2008.

² "UN PEACEKEEPING: 70 YEARS OF SERVICE & SACRIFICE", <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/un-peacekeeping-70-years-of-service-sacrifice#:~:text=The%20first%20UN%20peacekeeping%20mission,Israel%20and%20its%20Arab%20neighbours>, Date of Access: 14.04.2024.

³ Claire Klobucista and Mariel Ferragamo (December 12, 2023), "The Role of Peacekeeping in Africa." Council on Foreign Relations.

⁴ AMISOM: "African Union Mission to Somalia", <https://amisom-au.org/>, Date of Access: 14.04.2024.



UN Security Council approves draft resolution on Ramadan ceasefire in Sudan (Source: Anadolu Agency)

the United Nations Security Council, given its important contribution to UN peacekeeping operations and its status as the largest regional group within the UN. The aim of this chapter is to provide a critical analysis of Africa's involvement in the UN system, with an emphasis on the continent's evolving role, challenges, and opportunities. The discussion begins with a critical examination of Africa's historical engagement with the United Nations, highlighting key milestones such as the establishment of the African Group within the UN operational framework and the decolonization process prior.

2. The Africa Group in the United Nations

With 54 members, or 28% of all UN members, the African Group is the largest regional group in terms of membership. The group is one of the five regional groups within the United Nations.⁵ Its territory aligns with the traditional continent from which its name originates, making it the only regional group of its kind. All of the land on which it sits is in Africa. Three seats on the Security Council are reserved for members of the African Group, all of which are non-permanent. In addition, the group has 14 seats on the Economic and Social Council as well as 13 seats on the Human Rights Board. The group shall be responsible for the election of nationals from its member states in years ending in 4 and 9 of the rotation for the election of the President of the United Nations General Assembly; most recently, Tijjani Muhammad Bande of Nigeria was elected to this post in 2019.⁶ The Africa Group and the Western European and Others Group (WEOG) rejected South Africa in 1964.⁷ However, after the collapse of the apartheid regime, South Africa became a member of the Africa Group.

As is the case with other regional groups in the UN, the Africa Group is a nonbinding dialogue group that deals with matters related to regional and international issues. Aside from this, by nominating candidates from the African continent, the group assists in the allocation of seats within the various bodies in the United Nations. The group plays a crucial role in advancing the interests of member states in the region. It provides a forum for members to express and exchange their views on issues affecting Africa in particular and the world as a whole. It carries out follow-ups on issues of regional and global significance that are being discussed in international fora, develops consensus positions on major challenges, and produces statements that reflect the continent's shared position. It is also worth noting that, through the efforts of the Africa Group, the UN had two of its most prolific past secretary generals: Boutros Boutros-Ghali of Egypt and Kofi Annan of Ghana.

⁵ "The African Group." *Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations*.

<https://www.africanunion-un.org/africangroup>, Date of Access: 04.12.2023.

⁶ "Tijjani Muhammad-Bande of Nigeria President of Seventy-Fourth General Assembly," September 17, 2019. Available at:

<https://press.un.org/en/2019/ga12177.doc.htm>, Date of Access: 17.09.2019.

⁷ For more on this, see Ramesh, Takur (1999). *What is Equitable Geographic Representation in the Twenty-First Century? Report of a seminar held by the International Peace Academy and the United Nations University*, 26 March 1999, New York, USA. Available at:

<https://archive.unu.edu/unupress/equitable.pdf>, Date of Access: 26.03.1999.

⁸ See Volger, Helmut, ed. (2010). "Archived copy". *A Concise Encyclopedia of the United Nations (2nd ed.)*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers. ISBN 978-90-04-18004-8. Archived from the original on February 25, 2020. Retrieved April 14, 2024.

⁹ "UN elects five new members to serve on the Security Council". *UN News*. 2021-06-11. Retrieved 2024-04-10. Available at <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/06/1093882>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

¹⁰ James Tasamba, "African leaders give renewed push for permanent seats on the UN Security Council." *Anadolu Agency*, 25 November 2023. Available at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/african-leaders-give-renewed-push-for-permanent-seats-on-un-security-council/3064285>, Date of Access: 25.11.2023.

Currently, the Africa Group has three non-permanent seats on the Security Council.⁸ Gabon, Ghana, and Mozambique were the African members of the Security Council the first two expiring on 31 December 2023 and the third on 31 December 2024, respectively.⁹

Africa's current relationship with the United Nations (UN) appears contradictory in terms: although there is a lot of conversation about Africa, far less is spoken about the continent itself and its place within the global body. Admittedly, this relationship has changed over time in a number of ways. There were hardly any independent African states at the time the UN Charter was written. But when African nations gained independence throughout the 1960s, Africa's standing in the UN began to shift. As soon as Africa gained its independence, it joined the UN and discovered how to utilize it as a platform to further regional interests like total self-determination and economic independence. As already indicated above, Africa currently comprises about 28% of all UN members, making it the biggest regional grouping within the organization. However, a larger representation does not always translate into or equate to more proactive and cohesive decision-making. Conversely, for African Member States at the UN, speaking with a single voice and coordinating their positions has been a constant and recurring challenge.

3. Africa's Engagement with the UN in 2023

In analysing Africa's engagement and representation at the UN in 2023, a number of important variables, such as diplomatic initiatives, regional collaboration, and the continent's priorities within the framework of the United Nations, need to be taken into account. Accordingly, Africa's relations with the UN in the year of the evaluation are as follows.

a. Diplomatic Influence and Representation

A significant proportion of the membership of the UN General Assembly is composed of African countries. In 2023, African countries continued to exert influence on a range of issues, ranging from peacekeeping to development priorities. However, the capacity of African governments to adopt cohesive viewpoints on international matters and maintain internal cohesion is often critical to the success of this representation. Africa persisted in its pursuit of more influence and representation within the UN framework. In 2023, discussions on UN Security Council reform, including the possibility of adding African countries to the permanent membership, took the stage once more.¹⁰ In view of the increasing geopolitical significance of Africa, Af-

rican countries have called for a more equal distribution of power and decision-making in the United Nations. African nations have long demanded reforms in the UN system in order to enhance their influence and representation.

In an effort to further Africa's engagement with the UN, the African Union has also worked together with key members of the UN on matters of shared interest. For instance, on September 19, 2023, in Turkish House, New York, during the 78th UN General Assembly, the African Union and the African Handicrafts and Culture House Association signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). In the presence of H.E. Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador Ahmet Yildiz, the MoU was signed by H.E. Ambassador Albert M. Muchanga, AU Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry, and Minerals, and Ms. Zeliha Saglam, Director of the African Culture House.¹¹ The goal of the MoU, which was facilitated by the African Union Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations in New York, was to strengthen the bonds of friendship between Türkiye and Africa, which have grown stronger over the past 20 years through mutual partnership and respect.

b. Security Council Dynamics

To be able to address the security concerns facing the continent, African representation in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is vital. A number of African countries occupied non-permanent seats on the UNSC in 2023, giving them a forum to promote African agendas.¹² The constraints of these non-permanent seats, however, highlight the continuous discussion over fair representation on the UNSC, especially with regard to permanent membership for African nations. As I have previously indicated, Africa's contribution to UN peacekeeping missions remains high, with a number of states on the continent deploying troops in conflict areas. Several African countries have hosted United Nations peacekeeping missions, and Africa's soldiers continue to be active in a wide range of peacekeeping efforts throughout the continent. Conflicts and security challenges in Africa, including those affecting the Sahel region, the Horn of Africa, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have been regularly addressed by the United Nations Security Council in collaboration with African states. Efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of peacekeeping operations in Africa continued through 2023, with a focus on addressing the root causes of conflicts and strengthening regional peace-making capabilities.

¹¹ "African Union Signs Memorandum of Understanding with the African Culture House." September 19, 2023. Available at: <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20230919/african-union-signs-memorandum-understanding-african-culture-house>, Date of Access: 19.09.2023.

¹² "Highlights Of Security Council Practice 2023", United Nations. Available at: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/highlights-2023>, Date of Access: 04.12.2023.

¹³ See the "2023 Africa Sustainable Development Report: Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and African Union Agenda 2063 at all levels." Available at: https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-10/undp_africa_2023_africa_sustainable_development_report.pdf, Date of Access: 04.12.2023.

c. Development Agenda

Africa's development plan revolves around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the UN. African representatives engaged in talks and actions in 2023 with the goal of moving closer to the SDGs, especially in sectors such as infrastructure development, healthcare, education, and poverty alleviation.¹³ However, there were major barriers in the way of accomplishing these objectives, including problems with administration, a lack of resources, and external shocks like the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁴ The United Nations also played a crucial role in providing humanitarian assistance and supporting development initiatives on the African continent. Again, because of its increased susceptibility to the effects of climate change, Africa has made environmental sustainability a top priority within the UN system. African countries participated in international climate negotiations and initiatives in 2023 with the aim of mitigating the adverse effects of climate change, preparing for them, and advancing sustainable development methods.¹⁵ However, putting comprehensive climate change plans into effect was difficult due to limited resources and conflicting development objectives.

4. Conclusion

Africa's engagement and representation at the UN in 2023 reflected a mix of challenges and opportunities. Although African countries have been active in UN initiatives and fora, there are still major gaps in resources, power, and influence that need to be overcome through continued efforts aimed at strengthening Africa's voice and bargaining power within the global community. Africa's interests and aspirations must be advanced on the international scene by bolstering regional cooperation, resolving domestic disputes and governance challenges, and pushing for institutional reforms within the UN system. Within the framework of the United Nations, African countries actively promoted social justice and human rights. Efforts to resolve violations of human rights, advance gender parity, and fight prejudice and injustice throughout the continent persisted in 2023. Nonetheless, issues including authoritarian governments, socioeconomic inequalities, and conflict-related abuses continued to exist, necessitating the need for sustained attention and advocacy.

¹⁴ UN News: "African leaders take bold stand for sustainable development at UN Assembly," September 20, 2023. Available at: <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/september-2023/african-leaders-take-bold-stand-sustainable-development-un-assembly>, Date of Access: 20.09.2023.

¹⁵ Kwame Ababio: "Africa: Making the most out of the climate negotiations." Africa Renewal: December 4, 2023. Available at: <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/december-2023/africa-making-most-out-climate-negotiations>, Date of Access: 04.12.2023.

African Countries' Political Stances in the Israel-Palestine Conflict

Zainul Abideen Jibril*

1. Introduction

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been a longstanding and highly complex issue at the heart of Middle Eastern politics since the establishment of Israel in 1948. Its roots can be traced back to the significant 1947 UN Partition Plan, which facilitated Israel's creation amidst strong resistance from Palestinian Arabs and neighboring Arab states. The roots of this intractable conflict date back to the landmark partition plan adopted by the United Nations in 1947, which paved the way for the creation of the state of Israel. The ensuing decades have been marred by territorial wars, mass displacement of Palestinians, and an inability to resolve core issues around sovereignty, borders, and the rights of the Palestinian people.¹

A long-term solution has been hard despite international attention and intervention efforts, as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to have far-reaching destabilizing effects that extend beyond the region. Even as the world looked on with hopes raised by efforts like the Oslo Accords of the 1990s and the Camp David Summit of 2000, those dreams crumbled. Ultimately, no agreement could bridge the cavernous divides over the profound human questions at stake: the status of Jerusalem, the right of return for displaced Palestinian families, and the formation of a viable Palestinian homeland.²

African countries have taken different stances on the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict; some have supported Israel, some have supported Palestine, while others have taken a neutral position. The positions adopted by

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¹ A. Ahmed, (2021). Israel-Palestine conflict: The world's most intractable conflict", *SSRN Electronic Journal*, <https://doi.org/10.2139/SSRN.3965270>, Date of Access: 12.04.2024.

² Ahmed, *ibid*, 2021.



UN The UN General Assembly approved the draft resolution calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza with 153 votes (Source: Anadolu Agency).

3 T. Demirtaş, "Africa's perspective on Palestine", *Politics Today*, <https://politicstoday.org/africa-palestine-gaza-israel-icj/>, Date of Access: 09.01.2024;

O. Mulima, Through African eyes: Navigating the Israel-Palestine quandary, 2023 ve H. A. Najimdeen, "What does Hamas's attack on Israel reveal about Sub-Saharan Africa's positions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?", *Aljazeera*, <https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/what-does-hamass-attack-israel-reveal-about-sub-saharan-africa-s-positions-israeli>, Date of Access: 2023;

A. Oded, "Africa in Israeli foreign policy – Expectations and disenchantment: Historical and diplomatic aspects", *Israel Studies*, 15(3), p. 121.

4 M. Dogrul ve H. Unlu, TUBA report on the Palestinian-Israeli war, Ankara, 2023; S. Lawal, "Israel-Gaza war: Why is Africa divided on supporting Palestine?", *Al Jazeera*,

<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2023/10/14/israel-hamas-war-why-is-africa-divided-on-supporting-palestine>, Date of Access: 14.10.2023..

5 R. Kasasira, "African leaders criticize Israel's military campaign in Gaza and call for an immediate cease-fire", *PBS*,

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/african-leaders-criticize-israels-military-campaign-in-gaza-and-call-for-an-immediate-cess-fire#:~:text=Gaza's,Date of Access: 11.04.2024>.

6 Amnesty International, Crisis in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, in Amnesty International briefing; A. Gouda, "Hamas hails Russian position on Israel's Gaza offensive", *Anadolu Agency*, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/hamas-hails-russian-position-on-israel-s-gaza-offensive/3019367>, Date of Access: 14.10.2023.

7 Kasasira, *Ibid.*, 2024.

8 OCHA, "About 4,000 Palestinians displaced in the West Bank in 2023" <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/over-4000-palestinians-displaced-west-bank-2023>, Date of Access: 14.10.2023;

The Times of Israel, "2023 most violent" year for West Bank settler attacks, watchdog says", <https://www.timesofisrael.com/2023-most-violent-year-for-west-bank-settler-attacks-watchdog-says/>, Date of Access: 14.10.2023.

9 "Israeli settlers storm Al-Qsa Mosque complex on fifth day of Sukkot", *Al Jazeera*, Date of Access: 03.10.2023.

African countries are shaped by numerous factors arising from historical connections, ideological tendencies, and practical geopolitical concerns. However, economic partnerships, security cooperation and alliances with the West have also motivated some African countries to establish a closer alliance with Israel.³ In this study, the political stances of African countries in the face of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the reasons for this will be discussed.

2. Recent Developments in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

In late 2023, tensions escalated in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with reports of clashes between Palestinian armed groups and Israeli security forces. In early October, Hamas allegedly carried out attacks inside Israel during an important Jewish holiday, leading to an escalation of tensions in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in late 2023, with reports of clashes between Palestinian armed groups and Israeli security forces. In early October, Hamas allegedly carried out attacks in Israeli territory during an important Jewish holiday, prompting a strong response from the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)⁴ The attack also resulted in the capture of approximately 250 Israeli hostages by the militants.⁵

The IDF launched air strikes on Gaza, killing most civilians and children.⁶ According to the Gaza Health Ministry, over twenty thousand Palestinian fatalities were reported. The humanitarian situation in Gaza has deteriorated due to violence. According to the United Nations, approximately a quarter of Gaza's population faces severe food shortages.⁷ In the West Bank, Israel has increased pressure on Palestinian communities. Settler violence increased in 2023, resulting in Palestinian deaths, arson, and mass displacement, as documented by the United Nations and other monitoring organizations.⁸ In addition, the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex became a source of conflict, where clashes between Israeli police and Palestinian worshipers in April led to many arrests and injuries. The situation worsened when Israeli settlers entered the mosque grounds during the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, leading to further clashes.⁹

3. Africa's Divided Response

African countries have taken different stances on the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict; some have supported Israel, some have supported Palestine, while others have taken a neutral position. This division reflects the

complex interplay of historical connections, political principles and pragmatic concerns that shape African responses to this long-standing and multifaceted conflict.

On one side of the divide are countries such as Kenya, Zambia, Ghana and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which have aligned themselves with Israel, emphasizing the importance of bilateral relations and economic cooperation.¹⁰ Kenyan President William Ruto, for example, publicly supported Israel's position on social media in 2023, saying that Kenya values its relationship with Israel and supports its right to self-defense.¹¹

On the other hand, South Africa, Algeria, Sudan and the African Union Commission have favored Palestine, advocating for a two-state solution and criticizing Israel's actions.¹² South Africa has been a vocal critic of Israel's occupation and desecration of sacred sites, with President Cyril Ramaphosa condemning Israel's actions and calling for a peaceful resolution to the conflict.¹³ Algeria, a staunch supporter of the Palestinian cause, declared full solidarity with Palestine in 2023, reflecting Africa's historical ties to the Palestinian.¹⁴ The African Union Commission has consistently called for a peaceful and negotiated settlement, emphasizing the need for a two-state solution.¹⁵

Other countries such as Tanzania, Senegal, Tunisia and Egypt have adopted a neutral stance, asserting the necessity of a just and lasting peace in the region.¹⁶ Meanwhile, Nigeria and Uganda have taken similar stances on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Nigeria condemned the violence and stressed the need to ensure civilian security; Uganda, on the other hand, supported a peaceful solution and called for a two-state solution.¹⁷

4. Factors Shaping African Countries Divide

The recent escalation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has triggered a series of reactions from African countries. Several factors contribute to the diversity of positions among African nations regarding the conflict.

First, some African countries have historical loyalties to Israel or Palestine, which affects their current diplomatic stance. Countries such as South Africa and Algeria have consistently supported Palestine, drawing parallels between the Palestinian struggle and the country's historical struggles against colonialism and apartheid. This empathic consistency is embedded in their national narratives and continues to influence their foreign policy decisions.

10 I. Mugabi, "Israel-Hamas conflict divides opinion in Africa" *DW*, Date of Access: 10.12.2003; Najimdeen, *ibid*, 2023.

11 V. Audu ve W. Lawal, "How African states have responded to the Israel-Hamas war", *The Republic*, <https://republic.com.ng/africa-2/africa-israel-palestine-conflict/>, Date of Access: 03.10.2023;

W. Ruto, "Ruto on X", <https://twitter.com/WilliamsRuto/status/1710724946719080837?lang=en>, Date of Access: 2023.

12 Audu ve Lawal, *Ibid*, 2023; Demirtaş, *ibid.*, 2024; H. Isilow ve J. Tasamba, "Israel-Palestine conflict leaves Africa divided", *Anadolu Agency*, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/israel-palestine-conflict-leaves-africa-divided/3027545>, Date of Access: 11.10.2023;

A. Toumi, "Algeria and South Africa's dynamic diplomacy on Palestinian cause", *Daily Sabah*, <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/algeria-and-south-africas-dynamic-diplomacy-on-palestinian-cause>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

13 Kasasira, *Ibid*, 2024; "South Africa president: 'Israel's crimes are clear, we will not back down from truth'", *Middle East Monitor*, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20240127-south-africa-president-israels-crimes-are-clear-we-will-not-back-down-from-truth/>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024 ve "South Africa calls for the immediate cessation of violence, restraint, and peace between Israel and Palestine", South African Government, <https://www.gov.za/news/media-statements/south-africa-calls-immediate-cessation-violence-restraint-and-peace-between>, Date of Access: 11.10.2023.

14 G. Cafiero, "Algeria is unapologetically pro-Palestinian, and it won't change", *TRT World*, <https://www.trtworld.com/opinion/algeria-is-unapologetically-pro-palestinian-and-it-won-t-change-43634>, Date of Access: 2021; Toumi, *Ibid*, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

15 Demirtaş, *ibid.*, 2024; F. M. Moussa, "Communiqué of the Chairperson of the AUC regarding the Israeli-Palestinian war", <https://au.int/ar/node/43206>, Date of Access: 2023; Najimdeen, *ibid*, 2023.

16 N. ElSheikh, "North African Countries and the Palestinian Crisis: A New Circle of Escalation", *Modern Diplomacy*, <https://valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/north-african-countries-and-the-palestinian-crisis/>, Date of Access: 03.11.2023.

17 Audu ve Lawal, *ibid*, 2023; Najimdeen, *ibid*, 2023.

18 A. B. Nouhou, "Israel's diplomatic offensive in Africa", *Foundation for Strategic Research*, <https://www.frstrategie.org/en/programs/observatoire-du-monde-arabo-musulman-et-du-sahel/israels-diplomatic-offensive-africa-2018>, Date of Access: 2018.

19 M. Maganjo, "Kenya, Israel, and the Gaza genocide", <https://africasacountry.com/2024/02/kenya-israel-and-the-gaza-genocide>, Date of Access: 27.02.2024.

20 L. Ndebele, "Israel-Hamas war: Why Africa is so deeply divided over Israel and Palestine", *News24*, Date of Access: 11.10.2023; D. J. Trump, Proclamation on recognizing the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Morocco over the Western Sahara, 2020.

21 Demirtaş, *ibid*, 2024; Kasasira, *ibid.*, 2024; Toumi, *ibid*, 2024.

In addition, African countries' strategic interests such as security cooperation, trade and investment opportunities play an important role in determining their support.¹⁸ Kenya's support for Israel reflects the influence of strategic interests. Security cooperation and economic partnerships highlight practical considerations that can replace alliances based on ideology.¹⁹

Furthermore, geopolitical considerations have an impact on a country's position on the conflict. For example, Morocco's recognition of Israel is the result of the United States' recognition of Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara.²⁰ This illustrates the complex geopolitical considerations that can determine any country's position.

Lastly, the African Union's commitment to the principles of self-determination and the right to national liberation has guided many countries' positions on the conflict, leading them to support the Palestinian cause. This principle, deeply rooted in Africa's own struggles for independence, has resonated with nations like South Africa and Algeria, which have been vocal advocates for Palestinian statehood and self-determination.²¹

5. Conclusion

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most complex and enduring disputes of our time, with significant implications for regional stability and global geopolitics. As this conflict persists, African countries are prepared to define their positions using a nuanced approach, taking into account historical alliances, strategic interests and commitment to international norms of conflict resolution and human rights.

Across Africa, perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict vary, but there is a common thread: a collective desire for a peaceful and just resolution that meets the legitimate aspirations and concerns of both sides. The diversity of views among African countries reflects the multifaceted nature of this conflict, in which historical ties, political principles and pragmatic considerations intersect and sometimes collide.

South Africa's Genocide Case Filed Against Israel at the International Court of Justice and Its Legal Foundations

17

Semra Aksu*

1. Introduction

Following October 7, 2023, Israel launched a large-scale military operation against Gaza by land, air and sea, causing massive civilian casualties, extensive destruction of infrastructure and displacement of approximately 85% of the civilian population in Gaza.¹ The Republic of South Africa (South Africa), which could not stand by and watch as a shockingly severe and serious humanitarian crisis occurred and Gazans were deprived of their right to life, appealed to the international courts for a legal solution to the issue.

On December 29, 2023, South Africa submitted an application to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), asserting that Israel had breached its obligations under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention) against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The application requests that the Court take provisional measures to prevent further, serious, and irreparable harm to the rights of the Palestinian people under the Genocide Convention and to ensure that Israel fulfils its treaty obligations not to commit genocide, to prevent genocide, and to punish those who commit it. Although South Africa's application was advanced on the grounds that Israel's post-October 7th actions constituted genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza and that Israel failed to prevent genocide and prosecute those who directly and openly encouraged

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¹ The South African application included some data pertaining to losses experienced in Gaza during the 11-week period (until late- December 2023) during which military operations continued. Israel killed more than 21,110 Palestinians, including more than 7,729 children, injured and maimed more than 55,243, destroyed large areas of Gaza, including entire neighborhoods, damaging or destroying more than 355,000 Palestinian homes, as well as civilian infrastructure, including agricultural lands, schools, hospitals, water and sanitation facilities and electricity networks. See... "Application instituting proceedings and request for the indication of provisional measures", 29.12.2023, 4, p. 3. <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20231228-app-01-00-en.pdf>, Date of Access: 23.05.2024.



(Sources: Anadolu Agency)

genocide, it was based on the Apartheid regime in the background. It is also based on years of forced displacement, ethnic cleansing, annexation, occupation, discrimination and the denial of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.²

Accordingly, this study will discuss the genocide case filed by the Republic of South Africa against Israel at the International Court of Justice and its legal basis.

2. South Africa's Claims

In its application, South Africa stated that the attacks carried out by Hamas against Israel on 7 October "no armed attack, no matter how serious, against the territory of a State - even an attack involving atrocity crimes - is legally or morally liable to constitute a violation of the Genocide Convention," thus not constituting a justification or defense" and claims that Israel's actions and omissions are "genocidal" because they aim to destroy a significant part of the Palestinian national, racial and ethnic group.³ Stating that Israel's actions in question include "killing Palestinians in Gaza, inflicting serious bodily and mental harm on them, and subjecting them to living conditions calculated to lead to their physical destruction," South Africa cited

² Application instituting, 4, p. 3. It is possible to find traces of apartheid practices in South Africa in the historical background of South Africa's solidarity with Palestine. South Africa's consistent foreign policy supporting the Palestinians' right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State is also an indication of this solidarity. South Africa's first post-Apartheid President, Nelson Mandela, stated on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People in 1994 that they were always on the side of the Palestinians, saying, "We know very well our freedom would be incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians. "See.. "Address by President Nelson Mandela at international day of solidarity with Palestinian people", Pretoria, 04.12.1997, http://www.mandela.gov.za/mandela_speeches/1997/971204_palestinian.htm, Date of Access: 24.05.2024.

The bond of solidarity between these two communities, who shared the same struggle, can be seen today in the genocide trial.

³ Application instituting, 1, p. 1.152.

⁴ Application instituting, 101-107, p. 59-67. In the application, statements containing genocidal intent against the Palestinian people by Israeli state officials were extensively included, and it was stated that these statements, when combined with acts of killing in the field, inflicting bodily harm and forced displacement, thus proving that the crime of genocide had been committed. § 101, p. 59.

⁵ Oral proceedings, South Africa, Verbatim Record 24/1, 11.01.2024, p. 32. <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240111-ora-01-00-bi.pdf>, Date of Access: 24.05.2024.

⁶ Oral proceedings, Israel, Verbatim Record 24/2, 12.01.2024, p. 75. <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240112-ora-01-00-bi.pdf>, Date of Access: 24.05.2024.

⁷ Oral proceedings, Israel, p. 13.

⁸ Oral proceedings, Israel, parag.48, p. 21.

⁹ Application of the convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide in the Gaza strip (South Africa v. Israel), Order, 26.01.2024. parag.21, p. 9.

the Israeli State, including the Prime Minister and the President, as evidence of genocidal intent, repeating statements made by its representatives and the way Israel's military operation in Gaza is being conducted point to the behavior clearly demonstrated by Israel.⁴

In the oral hearing held on January 11, 2024, it was pointed out that the attacks were systematic in terms of their nature and form, and the genocidal intent was clearly understood, and Israel's failure to provide basic food, water, medicine, fuel, shelter and other humanitarian aid to the occupied Palestinian people and brought them to the brink of famine, emphasizing that "conditions that lead to a slow death" were deliberately created.⁵ In this regard, in its application to find that Israel has violated and continues to violate its obligations under the Genocide Convention and, as a matter of extreme urgency, South Africa requested the Court to comply with the provisions of the Genocide Convention, requesting interim measures on some issues regarding the Palestinian people as a protected group.

3. Statement of Israel

Attending the oral hearing on January 12, 2024, Israel rejected South Africa's claims and asked the Court to reject the request for interim measures, stating that the case misrepresented what was happening on the ground.⁶ Emphasizing that Israel's military operations in Gaza were "distorted and taken out of context",⁷ Israel claimed that the Gaza operations were not conducted with the aim of destroying a people, but that they acted to defend themselves, to end the threats against them and to save the hostages. In this case, it stated there was no "intent to destroy a people in whole or in part," which is the basic element of the crime of genocide, and that this aspect was legally missing.⁸

For these reasons, Israel argued that the appropriate legal framework for the conflict in Gaza is international humanitarian law, not the Genocide Convention. In a document entitled, "Hamas-Israel Conflict 2023" published by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on December 6, 2023, Israel considered the genocide accusations to be "not only wholly unfounded as a matter of fact and law, it is morally repugnant."⁹ Acting with the responsibility to protect its citizens, the Israeli military is trying to prove that the right to self-defense is the legal basis of its operations.

4. The Court's Interim Measure Decision

In order to ground the Court's *ratione personae* jurisdiction, South Africa referenced, in its application, Article 36, paragraph 1,¹⁰ of the Statute of the Court and Article 9 of the Genocide Convention,¹¹ to which Israel and South Africa are parties. It also based the Court's *ratione materiae* jurisdiction on the *prima facie* existence of a dispute between the parties regarding the interpretation, implementation or fulfillment of the Genocide Convention.¹² The Court stated that at this stage, it would determine whether the acts and omissions complained of fell within the scope of the provisions of the Genocide Convention rather than determining whether they occurred or not, stating that at least some of the alleged acts and omissions were of a nature that could fall within the scope of the provisions of the Convention.¹³

The Court also evaluated whether South Africa was a party to the dispute in question¹⁴ and stated that the condition that South Africa's rights had been violated in order to make an application would not be required in disputes arising from the Genocide Convention.¹⁵ Thus, every state party to the Convention can resort to the liability of the violating state in case of violation of *erga omnes* obligations arising from the Convention. On the other hand, the legal basis of South Africa's status as a party is that the dispute is an issue related to the implementation of the Genocide Convention, whereby all states that are parties to the Convention are committed to prevent genocide and punish its perpetrators whenever it occurs. As a matter of fact, as a state party, South Africa has become a party to the obligation to take action to prevent the genocide caused by Israel's actions and omissions.¹⁶

In its application, South Africa requested provisional measures to be taken based on Article 41 of the Court Statute¹⁷ and Articles 73, 74 and 75 of the Rules of Procedure of the Court. In case of a possible risk of irreparable damage occurring, the Court may take interim measures depending on the facts and circumstances. An interim injunction order aims to protect the rights claimed by the parties in a case until a decision on the merits is made. Thereby, the Court will be able to exercise this power only if it is satisfied the rights asserted by the party requesting such measures are at least acceptable. In its interim measures decision, the Court must determine whether the current conditions are such that it requires the use of its authority to apply for interim measures in the light of the information and legal evidence presented by the parties, without going into the merits of the dispute at issue, in other words, without determining whether the Genocide Convention has been violated in the tangible case.

¹⁰ The Court's jurisdiction covers all matters submitted to it by the parties and all situations specifically provided for in the UN Charter or in the treaties and conventions in force. See... Charter of the United Nations, United Nations Information Centre, Ankara, 2012.

¹¹ Disputes arising between the Contracting Parties regarding the interpretation, application or enforcement of this Convention and the liability of a State for acts of genocide or for any of the acts listed in Article 3 shall, at the request of one of the parties concerned, be submitted to the International Court of Justice. See... RG. 29.03.1950, p. 7469.

¹² <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/7469.pdf>, Date of Access: 23.04.2024.

¹³ Order, 26.01.2024, parag. 28, p. 11. The existence of a dispute under the Convention, Oral proceedings, Israel, p. 24-28. Israel claimed that there was no dispute between the parties and stated that the *prima facie* jurisdiction of the Court could not be determined. For claims regarding the absence of conflict, see. The existence of a dispute under the Convention, Oral proceedings, Israel, p. 24-28. The Court considers it a *prima facie* dispute that the parties have clearly opposing views on whether certain acts or omissions allegedly carried out by Israel in Gaza constitute a violation of Israel's obligations under the Genocide Convention.

¹⁴ Order, 26.01.2024, parag.30, p. 12.

¹⁵ In response to the concept of 'standing,' which means 'being a party to the dispute,' the concepts of "subjective capacity, party adjective or bond of interest" are used in Turkish.

¹⁶ Order, 26.01.2024, para.33, p. 12. The fact that the rights and obligations contained in the Convention are *jus cogens* (governing rules of international law) and *erga omnes* (claimable against everyone) allows the party states to act with the aim of protecting a common interest beyond their mutual rights and interests.

¹⁷ Application instituting, § 16, p. 9.

¹⁸ The Court has the power to specify what provisional measures should be taken to protect the rights of each party if it deems the situation necessary.

Stating that Gaza has become uninhabitable and the extent of the tragedy in Gaza, the Court stated that, in taking into consideration the situation will worsen,¹⁸ the conditions are sufficient to conclude that at least some of the rights that South Africa claims and seeks protection for are acceptable.¹⁹

In consideration of the information and legal arguments presented by the parties, the Court determined that the circumstances were such as to justify the exercise of its jurisdiction to apply provisional measures. Consequently, it adopted six measures, which were not limited to the requests made by the applicant.²⁰ With these measures, the Court requires Israel to take all measures within its authority to prevent the commission of the acts specified in Article 2 of the Genocide Convention and to ensure that Israeli military forces do not commit the acts in question (measures I and II); take all measures within its authority to prevent and punish direct and overt incitement to genocide against the Palestinian people (measure number III); Israel to take urgent and effective measures that will enable the provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian aid to eliminate the adverse living conditions suffered by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip (measure number IV); Israel is required to take effective measures to prevent the destruction and ensure the preservation of evidence regarding allegations of acts under Articles 2 and 3 of the Genocide Convention against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip (measure number V) and, finally, a period of time from the entry into force of the Resolution. He asked him to submit a report to the court on the measures taken for its implementation within the month (measure number VI).

5. Conclusion

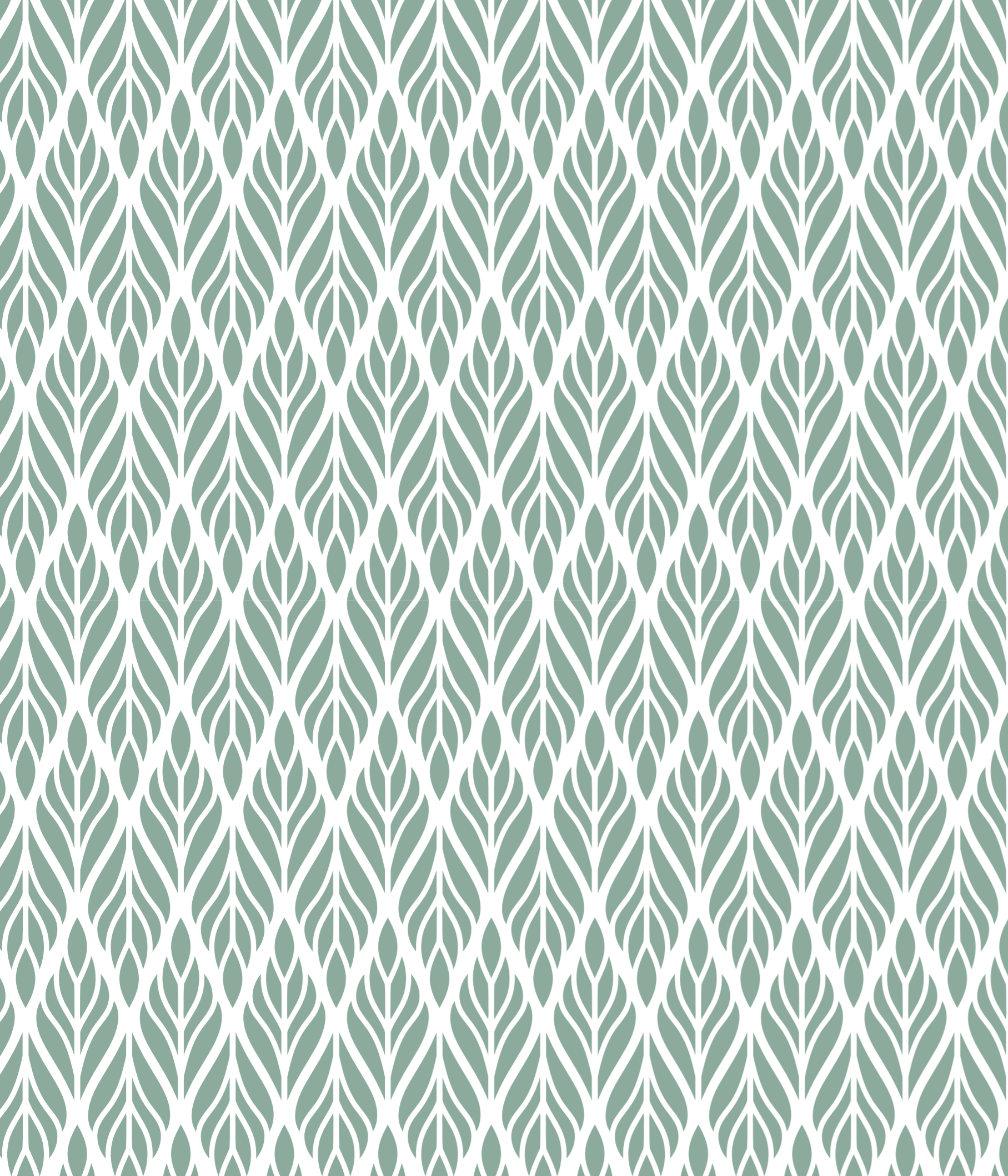
In the dispute in question, the Court found the Palestinians' right to protection from genocide acceptable and implemented the aforementioned measures, taking into account the risk of irreparable damage to these rights and the urgency of the situation.

In taking these measures, the Court accepted that at least some of the acts and omissions committed by Israel in Gaza were of a nature that could fall within the scope of the provisions of the Convention. At this stage, the Court made the determination that Israel violated its obligations under the Genocide Convention and applied the *prima facie* principle with the decision. At this stage, it can be evaluated that the Court concluded Israel violated the rules of the Convention.

¹⁸ The Court stated there was a serious risk that the humanitarian crisis in Gaza would worsen before making its final decision (para. 72), and concluded there was urgency in the sense that there was a real and imminent risk of irreparable harm to the rights it found acceptable. Order, 26.01.2024, para. 74, p. 22. With these statements, the Court confirmed that the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is very dire.

¹⁹ Order, 26.01.2024, parag.54, p. 18.

²⁰ In paragraph 54 of the decision, it found that the facts and circumstances were sufficient to conclude that at least some of the rights claimed by South Africa and for which it sought protection were admissible, and that Palestinians in Gaza had the right to be protected from acts of genocide and the acts enshrined in Article 3 of the Genocide Convention, as well as South Africa's right to require Israel to comply with its obligations under the Convention.



Health in Africa and Yeryüzü Doktorları

18

Yeryüzü Doktorları Association (Doctors Worldwide Türkiye)

1. Introduction

The African continent remains below the world average not only in basic health indicators, but also in all important indicators such as education, housing and environment, especially economic indicators.¹ However, there have been serious developments in African countries in the last 30 years. For instance, data such as a decrease in the number of impoverished individuals, an increase in average life expectancy, production of added value in the field of education and economic growth are the first examples that can be given. On the other hand, the failure to ensure long-term political and economic stability on the continent negatively affects the continuity of these gains. Furthermore, global warming and climate crisis put many African countries in a difficult situation. This fragile makeup of African countries further is exacerbated in the event of a possible disaster. Infrastructure and human capital deficiencies further increase the impact of the humanitarian crisis.²

The consequence of every conflict, disaster and humanitarian crisis on earth is a healthcare crisis. Thus, regardless of the reason, humanitarian aid activities in the field of healthcare have become a necessity in all crisis regions. Doctors Worldwide Türkiye was founded in 2000 by a group of

¹ World Health Organization, "Atlas of African Health Statistics 2022: Health Situation Analysis of the WHO African Region - Country Profiles", 2022.

² Financial Tracking Service, "Humanitarian aid contributions", <https://fts.unocha.org/home/2024/donors/view>, Date of Access: 08.04.2024.

healthcare professionals who responded to this need, especially during the Bosnia-Kosovo wars and the earthquake of August 17, 1999. Doctors Worldwide initially organized short-term healthcare camps. While it aimed to provide examination, surgery and medicine-equipment support, it was eventually transformed into a structure that provided long-term and permanent changes with humanitarian aid programs. The association conducts projects in countries in need in different areas such as therapeutic and preventive health services, psychosocial support, physical capacity development and healthcare education.

Doctors Worldwide currently has permanent healthcare centers in eight different countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Chad, Palestine, Somalia, Syria, Yemen and Türkiye. Doctors Worldwide works not only in regions where access to health services is limited. It also aims to instantly reach countries where crises such as natural disasters and wars are experienced.

Accordingly, the activities of the “Doctors Worldwide Türkiye” in Africa as of 2023 will be discussed in this study.

2. Health Care in Africa

African countries have improved almost all healthcare indicators across all age groups since 2000. Moreover, there has been a serious decline in children mortality under five years of age.³

The annual population growth rate of the region is currently close to 2.5%, while the world average is below 1%. Although Africa is the continent with the youngest population structure in the world, it is estimated that its population will age rapidly due to the population growth rate expected to decrease in the 2030s. Life expectancy has increased continuously from the 2000s to the present, except for the Covid-19 pandemic. However, it is still far behind the world average.⁴ As a result of this process, more people reaching working age and more women joining the workforce since 2000 have positively affected economic growth.

Despite all these positive developments, Africa is the continent with the highest preventable newborn and maternal mortality rates in the world. In addition, the Continent ranks above the world median in mortality rates from infectious diseases, antimicrobial resistant infections and malnutrition.⁵

Recent relatively rapid economic growth has brought about consequences such as rapid unplanned urbanization, inadequate infrastructure and non-contagious epidemic diseases. This condition has brought about at

³ United Nations, “World Population Prospects 2022”, Population Division, <https://population.un.org/wpp/>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

⁴ World Health Organization, “World Health Statistics 2023 - Monitoring Health for the SDGs: Monitoring Health for the SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals”, 2023.

⁵ Nat Commun, “Health in Africa”, 2024, 15(1): 967, 41467-024-45268-1, doi:10.1038/s41467-024-45268-1.

⁶ WHO, “Medical doctors (per 10,000 population)”, [https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/medical-doctors-\(per-10-000-population\)](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/medical-doctors-(per-10-000-population)), Date of Access: 09.05.2024.

⁷ World Population Review, “Human Development Index (HDI) by Country 2024”, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/hdi-by-country>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.

⁸ United Nations, “Nations U. Data Center”, <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.

⁹ United Nations, “Human Development Index”, <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.

¹⁰ Mehmet Akif Turan, “Fas’ taki depremde arama kurtarma ve enkaz kaldırma çalışmaları sürüyor”, AA, 11.09.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/fas-taki-depremde-arama-kurtarma-ve-enkaz-kaldirma-calismalari-suruyor/2988507>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.

least 33% of deaths on the continent. As life expectancy increases among the African population, the number of individuals living with multiple chronic health problems is increasing. This phenomenon is only beginning to be understood, but recent research shows that multiple diseases in Africa are significantly associated with urbanization, female gender, being over 50 years of age, and inadequate education levels.

The impact of increasing multiple chronic diseases on Africa’s healthcare systems are not yet known. However, public healthcare programs that have traditionally focused on a single disease are expected to rapidly gain the ability to diagnose and manage patients with intersecting conditions.

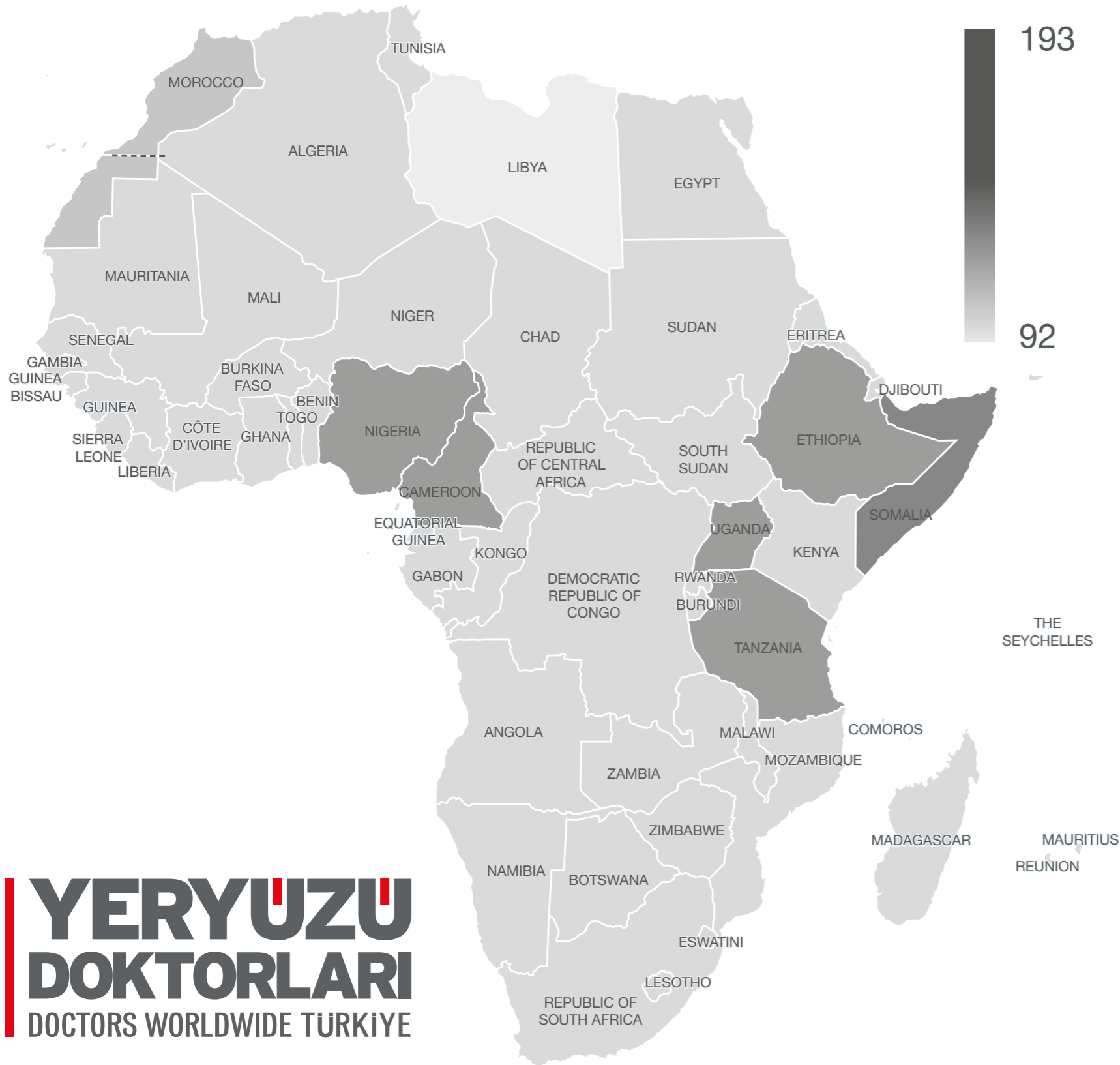
In addition to all this, the number of physicians in African countries is well below the world average. The lack of qualified healthcare workers in many African countries makes it very difficult to run an independent healthcare system.⁶

3. Core Indices

Various indicators and indices are used to measure and rank the development of countries. The most well-known of these is the Human Development Index (HDI), which has been used by the UN since the early 1990s.⁷ The index is a relatively simple index calculated from data on life expectancy, education and GNP (Gross National Product) components. However, data was not always available from all countries. The UN has updated its index methodology over the years and has derived different indices based on this index. HDI divides countries into four groups according to their development levels in order to make the data easier to understand. Accordingly, they are categorized into low, medium, high and very high levels.⁸

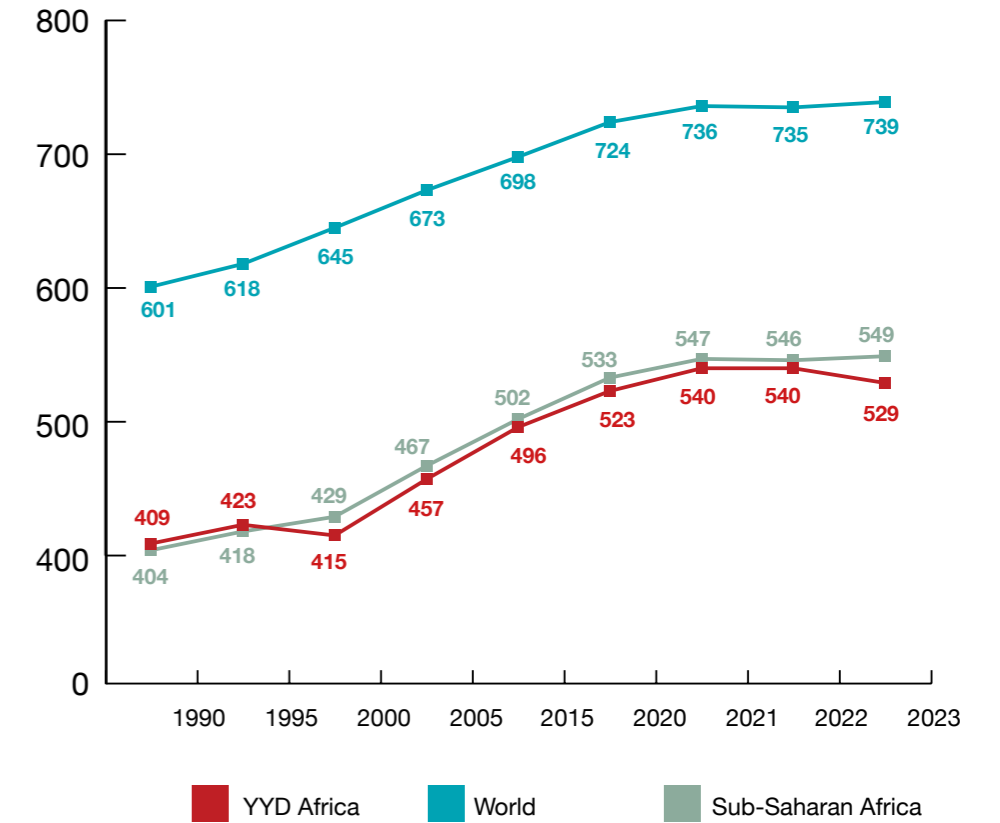
Nine of the countries where Doctors Worldwide serve in Africa (Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda) are sub-Saharan African countries, while two are located above the Sahara (Libya and Morocco). Figure 1 shows the countries where Doctors Worldwide operates in Africa and the 2022 Human Development Country rankings. While Somalia ranked 193rd in the study, which included 193 countries, not all sub-Saharan African countries were ranked above the top 150. Among the countries above the Sahara Desert with better rankings, Libya, which is recovering from the civil war, ranked 92nd and Morocco ranked 120th.⁹ The devastating magnitude 7 earthquake that occurred in Morocco in the autumn of 2023 is one of the factors that caused this.¹⁰

HDI RANKING



← **Figure 1.** Countries where YYD operates in Africa and their HDI Scores¹¹

Figure 2. HDI World Average, Sub-Saharan African Countries Average and Average of African Countries Where YYD Operates¹²



When we look at the average HDI score of the African countries where Doctors Worldwide has been operating since 2000, it is seen that the score is lower than both the world and sub-Saharan African countries.

Another indicator, the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), consists of three basic indicators such as the HDI. While both indices include health and education, MPI, unlike the HDI, includes living standards rather than economy. According to the UN's MPI report, 2023 data, the total population of the 110 developing countries included in the report is 6.1 billion, while 1.1 billion of them, that is, 18%, are determined to be poor. For sub-Saharan African countries, while the total population is 1.1 billion, the number of poor people is 534,000,000 people, that is, approximately 48%. In summary, sub-Saharan Africa is clearly poorer than other regions.¹³

4. Health Studies of Doctors Worldwide in Africa

Considering the activities of Doctors Worldwide in Africa in 2023, 41,070 people benefited from 89 water wells opened in Cameroon. Within the framework of emergency operations in Libya and Morocco, 123,543 people

¹¹ World Health Organization, "World Health Statistics 2023 - Monitoring Health for the SDGs: Monitoring Health for the SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals", 2023.

¹² World Population Review, "Human Development Index (HDI) by Country 2024", <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/hdi-by-country>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.

¹³ Human Development Reports, "2023 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)", 2023, <https://hdr.undp.org/content/2023-global-multidimensional-poverty-index-mpi>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.



Somalia Health services were provided in Somalia within the scope of the 'Health from Heart to Heart' campaign of the Doctors Worldwide Association (Source: Anadolu Agency).

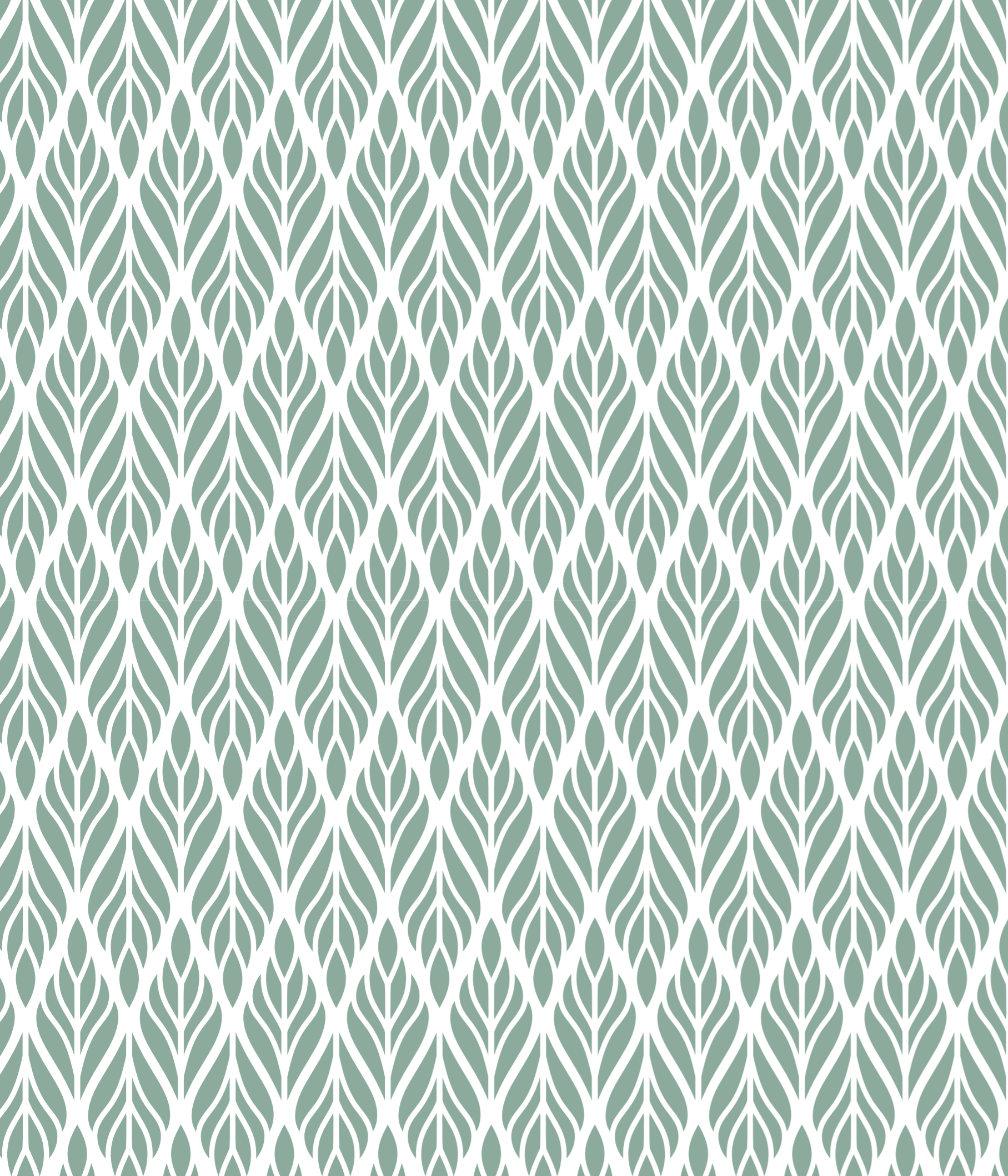
were benefited with medicine, medical and other supplies support. 68,760 people were reached with food aid that continued throughout the year; examination services were provided to 90,366 people. Within the scope of psychosocial support studies; 17,640 people participated in group interviews, 3,117 people benefited from individual psychological counseling support and 24,621 people received psych education.

Moreover, 74,4854 children participated in the child-friendly space event. Volunteer medical teams examined 1,081 people in Chad and Somalia, performed 42 surgeries and provided medication support to 767 people. Within the scope of eye healthcare projects, 25,422 eye examinations and 3,591 eye surgeries were carried out in Nigeria. It provided support for 3,000 sunglasses and 1,662 prescription glasses. A total of 16,919 people were examined in two different healthcare centers providing permanent service in Chad, 1,540 healthy births were performed, 6,791 laboratory tests were performed, and 1,705 mothers and 4,766 children were vaccinated. Furthermore, hygiene kits were provided to 10,740 people and medication support was provided to 12,560 people at the center. Again, a total of 27,921 examinations were carried out in two different nutritional healthcare centers in Chad and Somalia, 1,974 people benefited from nutritional treatment and 2,504 people were provided with medication support.

Finally, 1,866 animals were sacrificed in Benin, Chad, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Niger, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda, benefiting 332,050 people. In summary, Doctors Worldwide served more than 600,000 people in Africa by contributing to the local health system in 2023.

5. Conclusion

Although African countries have developed in many areas in the past two decades, they still remain below the world average in many areas. This gap will only begin to close in the long run. However, when we add Africa's aging population, pandemics, and political and economic instability to the equation, the distance that Africa has to cover will be even longer. For this reason, African countries attaching importance to their human capital and taking greater steps in education will enable them to both develop the healthcare sector and take advantage of their relatively young population.



Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Africa in 2023

19

Erman Akilli*

1. Introduction

In the digitalizing world order, dependence on technology is steadily increasing around the world. According to Statista data, the number of internet users worldwide has reached 5.35 billion people by 2024, while the number of social media users worldwide has reached 5.04 billion users.¹ So much so that the “Internet of Things (IoT)” and the number of smart device usage has reached 17 billion units worldwide by 2024 and is predicted to exceed the 30 billion units in 2029.² As is understood, internet use is steadily on the rise throughout the world, and many processes from daily life to business life are conducted around digital platforms for individuals. In this context, when we look at the African continent, we see the traces of the general trend that prevails throughout the world.

The unique demographic and socioeconomic structure of the African continent is among the important factors affecting the increase in digital infrastructure and internet usage. The number of internet users, which was approximately 600 million in 2022, is expected to reach 700 million in 2024, and this increase is expected to reach a new peak attaining 1.1 billion

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¹ Statista, “Number of internet and social media users worldwide as of January 2024”, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/617136/digital-population-worldwide/>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

² Statista, “Number of internet of things (IoT) connected devices worldwide from 2019 to 2023, with forecasts from 2022 to 2030”, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1183457/iot-connected-devices-worldwide/>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

users in 2029.³ This increase is considered an indicator of the technological adaptation capacity of the continent. The continued growth in internet usage in Africa over the past decade demonstrates the continent's interest in technology and its openness to digital transformation processes. This process progresses in parallel with the interest in advanced technologies, especially with AI.

The rising interest in AI technologies has an important place in both academic literature and applied research. In this section, the current status of AI studies, which reached their peak in 2023 on the African continent, will be examined.

2. AI in Africa in 2023

This dynamic change in Africa's digital ecosystem increases the demand for internet technologies and artificial intelligence applications across the continent. These technologies are of strategic importance as they have the potential to increase productivity in key sectors such as health, education and agriculture. The effective use of AI in Africa can provide innovative solutions to various challenges facing the continent as well as support socio-economic development.

In this context, research on the applicability of AI can accelerate the technological progress of the continent. The importance of policies and international collaborations tailored to local conditions needs to be emphasized, and Africa's digital transformation strategies need to be designed to take into account the continent's unique conditions. While these strategies encourage technological innovations, they can also facilitate integration into the regional and global economy.

Africa experienced significant AI developments in various fields such as healthcare, agriculture and digitalization in 2023.⁴ When the existing literature is examined, especially in 2023, although AI in Africa has shown its potential in areas such as radiology and clinical diagnosis⁵ it is acknowledged that further research regarding its⁶ potential applications in Africa is required.⁷ Some African countries, such as South Africa and Kenya, have started to use AI in animal husbandry.⁸

On the other hand, some studies published in 2023 emphasized ethical issues surrounding the development and use of AI in Africa, and emphasized the importance of transparency⁹ and compliance with the rules.¹⁰

Studies on the economic effects of the adoption of AI reveal the challenges and opportunities in this regard.¹¹ Therefore, AI can contribute to sustaina-

3 Statista, "Number of internet users in Africa from 2014 to 2029", <https://www.statista.com/forecasts/1146636/internet-users-in-africa>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

4 S. Kiemde ve A. Kora, "Towards an ethics of AI in Africa: Rule of education", *AI and Ethics*, 2(1), 2021, p. 35-40.

5 A. Tang, R. Tam, A. Cadrin-Chênevert, W. Guest, J. Chong, J. Barfett ve W. Shabana, "Canadian association of radiologists white paper on artificial intelligence in radiology", *Canadian Association of Radiologists Journal*, 69(2), 2018, p. 120-135.

6 R. Dias ve A. Torkamani, "Artificial intelligence in clinical and genomic diagnostics", *Genome Medicine*, 11(1), 2019.

7 Kiemde ve Kora, *ibid*, p. 37.

8 G. Mwanga, F. Mujibi, Z. Yonah ve M. Chagunda, "Multi-Country investigation of factors influencing breeding decisions by smallholder dairy farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa", *Tropical Animal Health and Production*, 51(2), 2018, p. 395-409.

9 A. Huriye, "The ethics of artificial intelligence: Examining the ethical considerations surrounding the development and use of AI", *American Journal of Technology*, 2(1), 2023, p. 37-45.

10 A. Jobin ve M. Ienca, "The global landscape of AI ethics guidelines", *Nature Machine Intelligence*, 1(9), 2019, p. 389-399.

11 R. Kabalisa ve J. Altmann, *AI technologies and motives for AI Adoption by countries and firms: A systematic literature review*, 2021, p. 39-51.

12 Huriye, *ibid*.

13 A. Rabaan, S. Alhumaid, A. Mutair, M. Garout, Y. Abulhamayel, M. Halwani ve N. Ahmed, "Application of artificial intelligence in combating high antimicrobial resistance rates", *Antibiotics*, 11(6), 2022, p. 784.

14 P. Ruamviboonsuk, V. Ruamviboonsuk ve R. Tiwari, "Recent evidence of economic evaluation of artificial intelligence in ophthalmology", *Current Opinion in Ophthalmology*, 34(5), 2023, p. 449-458.

15 N. Hendrix, D. Veenstra, M. Cheng, N. Anderson ve S. Verguet, "Assessing the economic value of clinical artificial intelligence: Challenges and opportunities", *Value in Health*, 25(3), 2022, p. 331-339.

16 R. Kaswa, A. Nair, S. Murphy ve K. Pressentin, "Artificial intelligence: A strategic opportunity for enhancing primary care in South Africa", *South African Family Practice*, 64(1), 2022.

17 V. Odunfa, T. Fateye ve A. Adewusi, "Application of artificial intelligence (AI) approach to African real estate market analysis: Opportunities and challenges", *Advances in Multidisciplinary & Scientific Research Journal Publication*, 29, 2021, p. 121-132.

18 M. Fahimirad ve S. Kotamjani, "A review on application of artificial intelligence in teaching and learning in educational contexts", *International Journal of Learning and Development*, 8(4), 2018, p. 106.

19 Q. Meng, Z. Hong, Z. Li, X. Hu, W. Shi, W. Jun ve K. Luo, "Opportunities and challenges for Chinese elderly care industry in smart environment based on occupants' needs and preferences", *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 2020.

ble development in Africa. However, concerns about its ethical use need to be effectively addressed.¹²

Studies published in 2022 and 2023 have widened the application of AI in various fields, such as antimicrobial resistance prediction and ophthalmology,¹³ or highlighted the various opportunities offered by AI.¹⁴ Nevertheless, challenges regarding the generalizability of AI in economic evaluation and clinical settings have been identified.¹⁵

In the African context, AI also offers strategic opportunities, such as improving primary healthcare¹⁶ and analyzing the real estate market.¹⁷ Discussions on the integration of AI in the educational environment have highlighted pedagogical models influenced by AI.¹⁸ Despite the opportunities offered by artificial intelligence, there are various debates, especially about whether it meets the specific needs and preferences of various populations.¹⁹

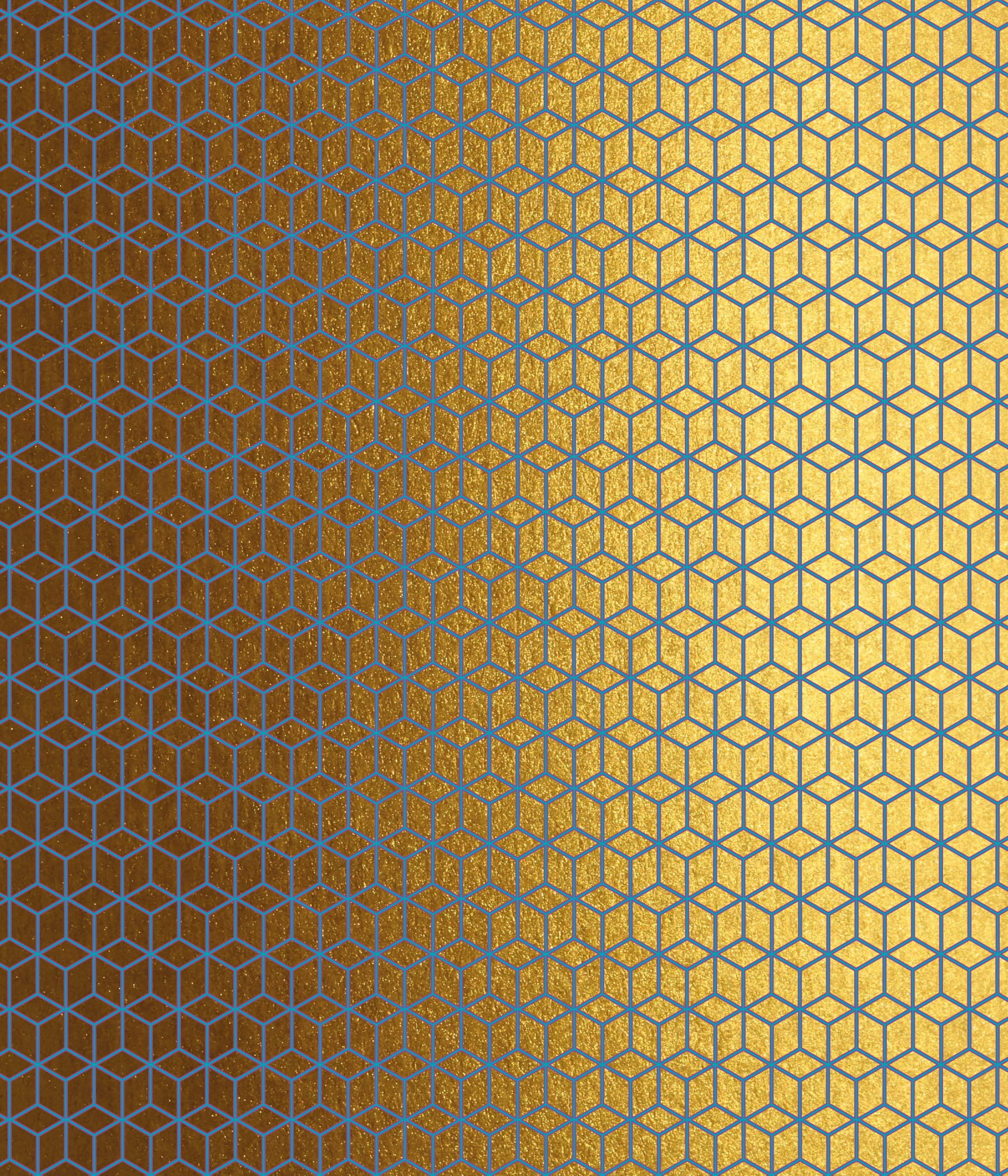
While AI holds great potential for a variety of applications in Africa, the need for increased research and investment to explore its ethical, economic and practical implications is clearly evident. If these aspects are addressed, AI will be usable and sustainable in various sectors in Africa.

3. Conclusion

Africa's digitalization journey is increasing in parallel with global technology trends. When examined as per 2023, with the current acceleration, the number of internet users is expected to increase from 700 million to 1.1 billion between 2024 - 2029. This highlights the continent's technological adaptability and the potential of its digital infrastructure. Focusing on the ethical, economic and practical dimensions of advanced technologies, especially AI, is critical for understanding how these technologies can be used more effectively in Africa.

Considering the potential of AI to support sustainable development in various sectors such as healthcare, education and agriculture, effective integration of this technology can help overcome the challenges faced by the continent. Therefore, Africa will need to adapt to this new digital age and be supported by policies that are sensitive to local needs and conditions.

Undoubtedly, international cooperation and local capacity building will play a critical role in this process. It is clear that Africa's digital transformation and acceleration in AI studies will need to be evaluated not only as technological progress, but also as an opportunity for social and economic development as well.



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Türkiye-Africa Relations in the Hundredth Anniversary of Our Republic: A Success Story of Türkiye

1

Şebnem Cenk* Elif Çomoğlu Ülgen**

1. Historical Background

Today, Africa is faced with many cross-border challenges. However, with vast variety of opportunities it offers such as a young population, rich natural resources and a growing common market with a high integration potential, strategic importance of the Continent continuously increasing. This encourages many countries to show increasing interest in Africa, improve their contacts with the African countries, develop new cooperation areas which all resulting in increased presence of the continent internationally.

Türkiye has developed a holistic, corporate and systematic framework for its relations with the continent and African countries with which it has long historical and humanitarian connections with the African Initiative Policy. Our cooperation with Africa which has been re-discovered by some countries has become a multi-dimensional and strong relation based on the principles of mutual respect and equality and transformed into one of the main pillars of our Enterprising and Humanitarian Foreign Policy. Contrary to the approaches which see Africa as a “strategic competition area” our country is open to negotiations with all actors which can benefit to the continent, open to coordination and collaboration under the right circumstances.

Our relations with the African countries are based on sharing our country’s historical experience, social, political and cultural knowledge, its experience in building a strong administrative system using national elements and developing a win-win relation which will benefit to our country and to these nations.

* Ambassador, Director General for West and Central Africa at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

** Ambassador, Deputy Director General for North and East Africa at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Turkish presence in Africa and relations with the continent dates back to almost one thousand years. Starting as early as 9th century, Turkish nations have left significant marks by triggering political, commercial, cultural and humanitarian interactions. The Ottoman Empire was present in the Northern and Eastern African shores for almost four centuries, which resulted in long-lasting bonds that we still see in every step.

Since the Turkish image in the continent has always been free of colonial mindset, relations between Türkiye and African countries have been developed based on mutual trust, respect and the principle of equality. The counterparts in Africa accept that our country which has never had a colonial approach to Africa engages with African countries with the benefit of the continent in mind and builds relations based on the principle of creating equal partnerships.

The Turkish War of Independence served as an inspiration for African nations which began to gain independence following World War II. Iconic figures of the decolonization process of Africa have mentioned numerous times that they inspired from our war of independence and modernization movements under the leadership of Atatürk.

Türkiye established its inaugural diplomatic mission on the African continent with the opening of an embassy in Cairo, Egypt, in 1925. This was followed by the establishment of an embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1926, marking the commencement of Turkish diplomatic activities in Sub-Saharan Africa. The number of our country's diplomatic representatives increased in parallel to the independence processes in the continent; Turkish embassies opened in Libya (1952), in Morocco, Tunisia and Ghana (1957) in 1950s, in Nigeria (1962), in Algeria, Senegal (1963) and Kenya (1968) in 1960s and in Democratic Republic of Congo (1974), Somalia and Tanzania (1979) in 1970s. Türkiye was one of the few UN Western European countries which showed diplomatic support to the struggle for independence of Zimbabwe and Namibia during this period. This support is still remembered well by the people of these countries and strengthens the trust in our bilateral relations.

2. From “African Initiative Policy” to “Africa Partnership Policy”

Our vision to build more intense and systematic political, economic and cultural relations with the African continent became more visible at the end of 1990s. In the process which began with the African Initiative Policy “ in 1988, the “Strategy to Improve Economic Relations with African Nations” became effective in 2003 and 2005 was declared as the “Year of Africa” in

our country and Türkiye was granted observer country status in the African Union in the same year. Türkiye was accepted as one of the strategic partners of the African Continent in 10th African Union Summit in 2008 and as a result of these improvements, African Initiative Policy was replaced by the “Africa Partnership Policy” in 2013.

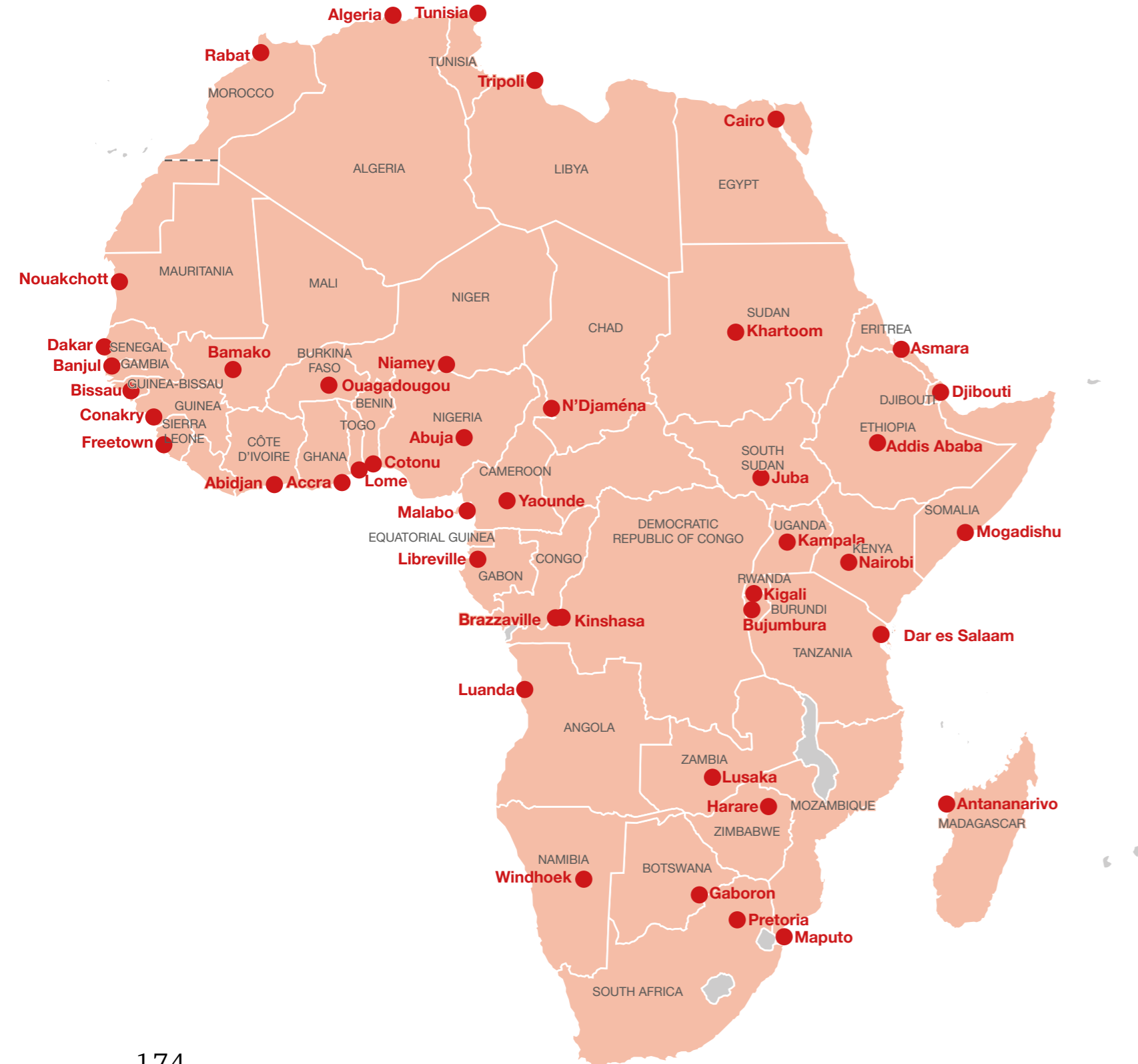
Our Africa Partnership Policy with the main goal of contributing to the economic and social development of the continent with peace and stability based on the principles of equal partnership and mutual benefits in line with the “African solutions to Africa's problems” is implemented with a holistic approach that includes the work of our government agencies, private sector and nongovernmental organizations. Our activities and operations are based on the priorities of our African partners, “African Union 2063 Agenda” which aims for political, social, economic and humanitarian improvements in Africa and Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

Another core principle which we apply in our relations with the African countries is to demonstrate a strong presence in the field increasing direct contacts with these countries, gaining comprehensive knowledge about the developments and following our partnership projects closely. In line with this principle while the number of embassies in Africa was only 12 in 2002, we have 44 embassies and 6 consulates on the continent today. Today, Türkiye is the fourth country following China, USA and France which have the highest number of diplomatic representations in Africa. On the other hand, African nations could not ignore our country's interest in them and the number of African embassies in Ankara which was 10 at the beginning of 2008 increased to 38 in 2023.

In addition to our embassies, our presence and activities continuously increase with the efforts of our organizations such as the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA), the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), Yunus Emre Institute, Turkish Maarif Foundation, Türkiye Diyanet Foundation, TRT, Anadolu Agency, and with the wide and strong flight network of our flag carrier Turkish Airlines.

The partnership between Türkiye and Africa, which was built on strong foundations, quickly gained recognition on the international platforms. The significant support received from African countries played a key role in Türkiye's election as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the 2009-2010 term. Having a similar approach and judgment in many areas is another factor that supports our relations with African countries. In this regard, Türkiye-Africa partnership includes consensus on

Türkiye's Embassies in Africa



the reform of international political and economic system. While Türkiye prioritizes the motto “the world is bigger than five” which refers to the unrealistic and unfair structure of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), African countries claim that the existing international order and especially UNSC does not allow a fair and just regional representation.

3. Türkiye, as a Strategic Partner of the African Union

In addition to Türkiye's bilateral relations with African nations, cooperation with the African Union (AU) gets stronger and more organized every day. Türkiye became an observer member to the AU in 2005 and was declared as a strategic partner of the continent during the summit held in January 2008 and our cooperation achieved a sustainable mechanism with the First Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit organized in Istanbul on August 18-21, 2008. Today, Türkiye is one of the nine countries/international organizations that the AU has established privileged relations in the form of strategic partnership.

With the “2015-2019 Partnership Implementation Plan” accepted after the Second Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit organized in Malabo, capital city of Equatorial Guinea between the dates of November 19-21, 2014, a five-year timeline was developed for the projects in various areas, which Türkiye would carry out together with the AU and African countries. With this implementation plan, projects that were identified according to the priorities of African countries in different areas including trade and investment, peace and security, education and culture, empowerment of young people and technology transfer, rural economy and agriculture, energy and transportation and carried out with the contribution of related organizations. Additionally, pursuant to the decision to organize for one time a “Ministerial Review Conference” between summits held every five years with the AU, the second Türkiye-Africa Ministerial Review Meeting was held in Istanbul on February 11-12, 2018.

And lastly, despite all the difficulties during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Third Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit was held in Istanbul on December 16-18, 2021 under the theme “Enhanced Partnership for Common Development and Prosperity” hosted under the auspice of H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan. In the summit in which 38 African states were represented and 16 heads of state and government and 100 ministers 25 of whom were foreign secretaries participated, “2022-2026 Türkiye-Africa Joint Action Plan” was accepted. All of our involved organizations and agencies continue to work in collaboration with our African stakeholders to implement the plan.

Third Türkiye-Africa Ministerial Review Conference is planned to be organized in an African country in 2024 as a preparation for the upcoming summit and to discuss and evaluate the progress of the implementation of the Joint Action Plan.

4. Significant Developments in Türkiye-Africa Relations in 2023

The year 2023 started with a devastating earthquake in our country, which has been labeled as the “disaster of the century”. Condolences were received from African countries at all levels, visits of African presidents and ministers to Ankara and to the earthquake affected area. In-kind and cash aids, as well as African search and rescue teams, were deployed to the area following the earthquake, which resulted in widespread destruction and the loss of tens of thousands of people. These actions showed that the years of contacts and relationships established with African countries have transcended mere organizational ties and have been internalized by the public, resulting in warm and friendly bonds between African communities and the Turkish public. It is clear that our Africa Partnership Policy is well-received by the African people.

High level visits which are an important part of our Africa Partnership Policy continued in 2023 and these visits allowed the parties to review all aspects of our cooperation with the related countries, and to discuss regional and global developments.

A high number of representatives of African countries participated in the inauguration ceremonies for our president on June 3, 2023 in Ankara.

Our president met with Head of the Sovereignty Council of Sudan Abdel Fattah al-Burhan on September 13, 2023 in Ankara, with the President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa while he was in New York for the 78th General Assembly of the UN on September 20, 2023; and with the President of Somalia Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on October 27, 2023 in Istanbul.

The then Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu visited the Republic of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Rwanda on January 8-12, 2023; on this occasion, the official opening of the service building of our Consulate General in Cape Town was also held. The visit to Zimbabwe was recorded as the first ministerial-level visit from Türkiye to Zimbabwe. In 2023 the foreign secretary of Senegal visited Türkiye; political consultations were held with Zambia and Djibouti; Türkiye participated in the 9. Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security in Africa; and deputy ministers from Türkiye visited Ethiopia, Niger and Mauritania.

Cooperation and development projects with African countries in many areas such as trade, investment, agriculture, security and military continued during the year. Bilateral relations with African countries as well as cooperation with regional organizations on the continent also continued in 2023.

The periodical evaluation meeting was held in October 2023 in Ankara with the objective of evaluating and implementing the outcomes of the III. Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit. The meeting was attended by representatives of the African Union.

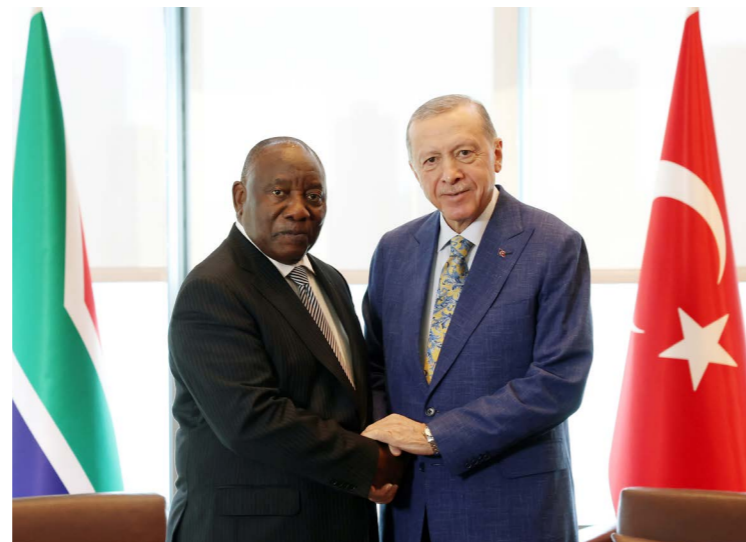
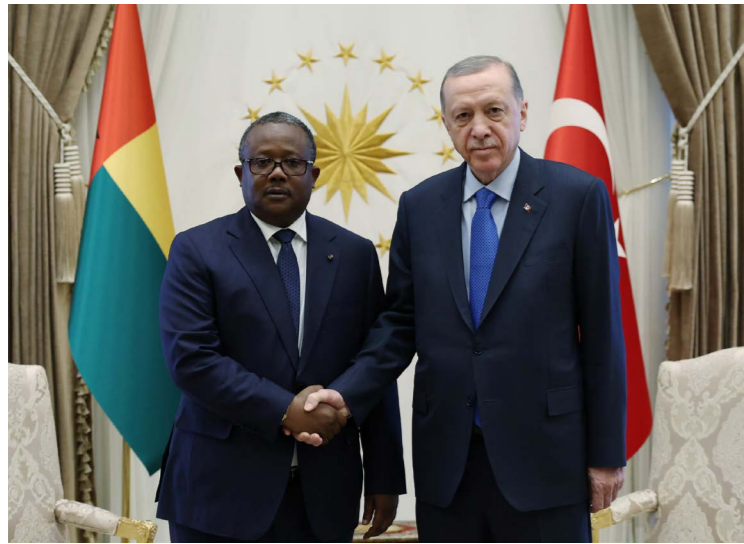
A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the African Union (AU) and the African Culture House located in Ankara was signed in the margins of the 78th General Assembly of the United Nations.

The Fourth Türkiye-Africa Economy and Business Forum was organized in Istanbul on 12-13 October 12-13, 2023 with the title “Addressing Challenges and Unlocking Opportunities: Building Stronger Türkiye-Africa Economic Partnerships”. There were 3 thousand participants in the forum including the President of the Union of Comoros, H.E Azali Assoumani and AU representatives, 26 ministers from various African countries, representatives of 39 associations and organizations and diplomats and business people and 9800 meetings were held to discuss investment and business opportunities in Africa.

In line with our goal to improve our cooperation with the regional organizations in Africa, our country joined the Group of Friends and Special Representatives of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), an intergovernmental organization of 12 countries in the Great Lakes Region, which plays an important role to establish stability, prosperity and security. With our membership to this group, we aim to add a new dimension to our Africa Partnership Policy and to our cooperation with the Great Lakes Region, establish close relations with the ICGLR and support the activities of the organization.

Türkiye became one of the founding members of the “African Virtual Investment Platform” which was founded in 2023 under the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and contributed to the founding budget of the platform.

Another important development during the year for our cooperation with Africa was when TRT Africa started to broadcast in English, French, Swahili and Hausa languages in March 2023.



Union of the Comoros The President of the Union of Comoros, Azali met with the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (October 13 2023)

Libya The Prime Minister of Libya, Abdul Hamid al-Dbeibeh met with the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (February 18 2023)

Sierra Leone The President of Sierra Leone Julius Maada Bio met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (March 07 2023)

Guinea Bissau The President Guinea Bissau, Umaro Mokhtar Sissoco Embaló met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (March 08 2023)

Egypt The President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi met with the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (September 10 2023)

Sudan The Head of the Sovereign Council of Sudan Abdel Fattah al-Burhan met with the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (September 13 2023)

The Republic of South Africa The President of the Republic of South Africa, Ramaphosa met with the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (February 16 2023)

Somalia The President of Somalia, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud met with the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (October 27 2023)

The year 2023 witnessed some significant developments on the continent.

Somalia, under the leadership of the President Hassan Sheikh Mahmoud has made significant progress in its offensive against Al-Shabaab terrorist organization and has recaptured some territories from this organization. The UN Security Council lifted arms embargo on the Federal Government of Somalia which was imposed over 30 years ago. Somalia met the criteria of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and became eligible for debt reduction of 4.5 million USD. The country successfully completed the process to join the East African Community (EAC) and became eighth member of this regional community. The conference titled “Security Sector Development Plan at the Somali Security” organized in New York on December 12, 2023 to discuss future security architecture showcased the successful steps taken by the Somalia government in security and stability in 2023 and revealed the actions to be taken and sources needed for the near future.

Our cooperation with Somalia which has been cemented and gained a strategic importance contributes significantly to the country’s success. Gorgor (Eagle) battalions trained and equipped by our country at TURKSOM Training Centre in Mogadishu form the backbone of Somalia National Army. With the opening of Mogadishu branch of Ziraat Katılım Bank (ZKB) on October 29, 2023, the first international bank to operate in Somalia for over fifty years was a Turkish bank.

Our consultations and coordination efforts with the states that contribute to the security and stability of Somalia continue at institutional level. Our participation in the meetings of Quint Somalia which consists of five countries (Türkiye, the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (USA), the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar) that play significant roles in the building security in Somalia is an indicator of Türkiye’s commitment to international cooperation and multilateralism. Our country hosted fourth meeting of this group in Ankara on October 11, 2023.

In Sudan which we have a long history like Somalia, the civil war started on April 15, 2023 has since caused major destruction and humanitarian crisis in the country could not be ended peacefully in 2023. The primary objective was to ensure the safety of our citizens residing in Sudan, given the onset of civil unrest. Consequently, a total of 2,382 individuals, comprising 1,961 Turkish citizens and 421 individuals from other countries, were successfully evacuated through our well-executed operation, which concluded on the 1st of May.

Türkiye supports all kinds of peaceful diplomatic work and initiative following the ending of the civil war. In this regard our country joined the “Extended Mechanism” within the AU and participates in the related meetings.

Our humanitarian aid continues to flow to Sudan to alleviate humanitarian crisis in the country. Türkiye has provided over 100 tonnes of humanitarian and medical supplies for the Sudanese people, through Turkish official institutions and various NGOs. In November 2023 one thousand tents were sent to N’Djamena to be used for Sudanese refugees fled to Chad; AFAD organized 1,000 parcels of humanitarian aid to the area. Furthermore, our country donated USD 200,000 financial aid within the framework of two commitment campaign organized by the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in 2023 and 2023 to help with the humanitarian crisis in Sudan.

Similarly, the Türkiye-Sudan Teaching and Research Hospital in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur region, has remained operational despite the numerous challenges it has faced and continues to provide healthcare services to the people in the region. The Western Africa and Sahel region, which has experienced six attempted coups in five countries over the past three years, continues to face a range of challenges, including terrorism, extremism, cross-border crime, climate change, food insecurity, migration, and poverty. The region has been going through an important transformation process with strategic implications. Türkiye continues to contribute to and be engaged with all countries to ensure stability through security, and economic and social development.

Another important development in Africa in 2023 is the granting of permanent membership status to the AU during the G20s summit in New Delhi. Our country is committed to enhancing the representation of Africa on international platforms and ensuring that its voice is heard. We were pleased to see our long-held advocacy for G20 permanent membership of the AU come to life at the AU Summit. This development marks a significant step towards the implementation of efficient multilateralism in international relations. Our support to ensure that Africa comes to the position which the continent rightly deserves in the international system will continue strongly.

One of the regions where negative effects of Russia-Ukraine war which has entered into its third year including food safety are felt is the African continent. Since the beginning of the civil war, our country has emphasized the importance of finding a solution to the problem based on international laws and worked to achieve this. African countries also have an approach similar

to our country. A delegation that included president and representatives of seven African nations started African Peace Initiative and visited Kiev and Moscow respectively in June 2023.

On the other hand, thanks to the Black Sea Initiative which we created with the UN, 33 million tons of grains were dispatched to global markets. This contributed to the food prices stability, made it possible to prevent a major food supply crisis on a global scale. Our efforts have been appreciated by our African partners.

5. Conclusion

“African Initiative Policy” and “Africa Partnership Policy” which our country has been implementing systematically and with a strategic perspective since the beginning of 2000s is one of the success stories of Türkiye’s foreign policy.

Multi-layered policies developed specifically for the continent and designed and implemented based on the needs and priorities of each African country have been appreciated by our African counterparts. Therefore, our close relations with the continent with a long history were aligned with a strategic framework.

Today, our close relations and cooperation which we have established with African countries and regional organizations including most notably the AU have brought concrete results in line with the win-win principle. Our trade volume with Africa increased 7-fold since 2003 and reached to USD 36.7 billion in 2023. Our direct investments in the continent have exceeded USD 6 billion. Turkish contractors have completed almost 2000 projects worth of USD 85 billion on the continent. Türkiye signed Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreements with 49 countries, Agreements on Encouragement and Mutual Protection of Investments with 32 countries and Agreements on the avoidance of double taxation with 17 countries; and with these agreements we have largely established the legal background for our trade and economic relations with Africa. Turkish Airlines fly to 62 destinations in 42 countries in Africa. Turkish Maarif Foundation provides education in 191 educational institutions in 26 African countries. We provide opportunities for education to more than 61,000 African students more than 15,000 of whom receive financial aid from the Türkiye Scholarship program. Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centers operating in 7 African countries close the gap between our country and the continent. 22 TİKA representative offic-

es provide support to the development efforts of the continent with country specific field projects.

Despite not being an African country, our country’s multidimensional relations with the continent have made it worthy of trust of African countries, a well-respected authority and reference point for African matters outside the continent.

Undoubtedly this network of beautiful and meaningful relations has been developed gradually with the sincerity and frequency of diplomatic relations and official contacts but also with the meticulous and devoted work of each of our organizations working in the continent and continuity of these relations depends on our commitment in these relations.

The “Africa Yearbooks”, meticulously compiled by the YTB, facilitate a comprehensive overview of these collective endeavours, offering invaluable insights and guidance to our government agencies and volunteers engaged in Africa-related initiatives. We extend our gratitude to the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, as well as all organisations and individuals who have contributed to these yearbooks.

Algeria The President of Algeria Abdelmadjid Tebboune met with the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (November 21 2023)





Antalya Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hakan Fidan met with his African counterparts. (ADF 2024)

Egypt Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt Sameh Shoukry met with the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Fidan (March 18 2023)

South Africa The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Dr. Naledi Pandor met with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (January 10 2023)

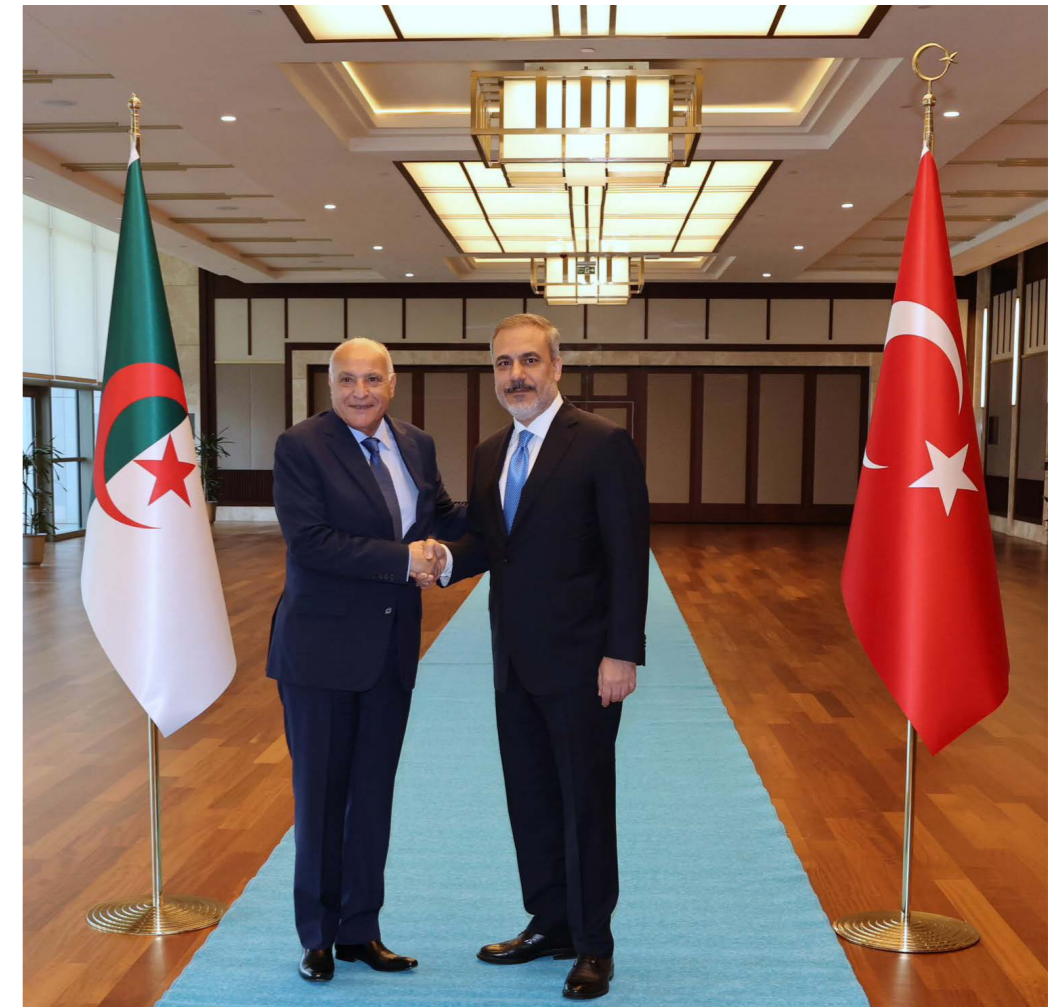
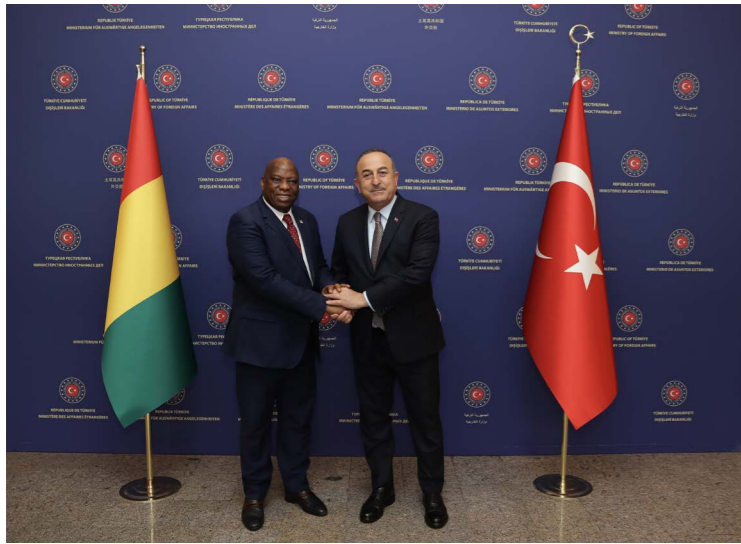
Guinea The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guinea Morissanda Kouyaté met with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (March 27 2023)

Libya The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Libya Necla El Manguş met with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (February 13 2023)

Equatorial Guinea The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Equatorial Guinea Simeón Oyono Esono Angue met with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (February 13 2023)

Rwanda The President of Ruanda, Paul Kagame met with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (January 12 2023)

Algeria The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hakan Fidan met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the National Community Abroad of Algeria, Ahmad Attaf (September 7 2023)



A Significant Contribution to the Power of Media and Communication with Developing Africa: Türkiye Partnership

2

Directorate of Communications

With the emergence of multipolar world and the post-colonialism developments Africa's importance in the global international system has continuously increased. The fast-developing continent has entered into the spotlight of many countries with its economic and trade potential as well as geopolitical importance and its potential to affect political power balances. Türkiye manages an effective and efficient process among the global power struggles of the actors over Africa including the United States of America (USA), China, Russia and European Union (EU). The process which was started with the "Africa Action Plan" in 1998 gained momentum with the declaration of 2005 as the "Year of Africa".¹ Türkiye's opening policy for Africa which started with the Africa Action Plan until 2008 transformed into something else when Türkiye was declared as "Strategic Partner" based on the decision taking during African Summit in 2008 and relations became more formal.²

Türkiye has adhered to the principle of "African solutions to African problems"³ during this process. On the other hand, with more than 50 visits to more than 30 countries, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has become the leader who has the highest number of visits by a non-African leader to Africa. Similarly, Türkiye has welcomed many African leaders and provides support for the development of Africa in many areas and follows the "win-win" principle to achieve this.

As one of the leading organizations of Türkiye for strategic communication, the Directorate of Communications is responsible for developing in-depth and multidimensional relations with national and international public, decision making actors and the media; ensuring quality representation

¹ Yunus Turhan, "Ak Parti Dönemi Afrika Politikası", *Bölgesel ve Küresel İlişkiler Bağlamında Erdoğan Dönemi Türk Dış Politikası*, Ed. Ahmet Özkan, Nobel Akademik Publishing, Ankara, 2023, p.193-195.

² Mürsel Bayram, "Türk Dış Politikasının Dönüşüm Sürecinde Afrika", *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası: Yeni Eğilimleri, Yeni Yönelimleri, Yeni Yaklaşımları*, Ed. İdris Demir, Dora Publications, Bursa, 2014, p.267.

³ TRT Haber, "İletişim Başkanı Altun: Türkiye bütün alanlarda Afrika'nın yanındadır" <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/iletisim-baskani-altun-turkiye-butun-alanlarda-afrikanin-yanindadir-757455.html>



← **Istanbul** The Head of Directorate of Communications Fahrettin Altun gave a speech at the TRT-African Union of Broadcasting (AUB) Broadcasting Summit held in Istanbul and TRT Africa Launch Ceremony. (Source: Anadolu News Agency).

of Türkiye in every area using all communication tools and methods and has the vision to strengthen Türkiye's brand. Furthermore, the Directorate manages relations with media and conducts strategic communication with the main focus on preventing potential misperceptions and disinformation in the field which may arise while organizations and agencies are performing social, economic, political and diplomatic activities in accordance with the Turkish foreign policy standards and priorities. The Directorate of Communications completed the following work regarding Africa in 2023.

1. Actions Taken by Directorate of Communications in Combating with Disinformation and Misinformation in African Media

Although Türkiye does not have any colonial past in Africa and has a humane and respectful approach in our interactions with the continent and has a special place with our historical connections, Türkiye is faced with significant challenges in its fight against disinformation in Africa.

Disinformation, defined as 'deliberately misleading information,' according to the Turkish Language Association (TDK), is a type of information that cannot be easily verified or falsified.⁴ Fast developments in the communication era and availability of mass communication tools and fast transfer of information makes the accuracy of information questionable. Especially in this period named as the "information era" information has huge economic and political impact on societies. While different repercussions of this reality can be seen in different parts of the world, Africa seems to be one of the most affected continents. Although using the internet to access information and social media has become common, it is not difficult to influence political orientations in this continent, which is relatively more unstable than the rest of the world. In particular, disinformation and misinformation – that is, false or inaccurate information that is deliberately intended to deceive – are methods employed not only by individuals or specific segments of society but also by governments, foreign governments, and multinational corporations. Disinformation and misinformation which causes antidemocratic developments, increases polarization in countries and allows colonization to continue has been used in critical political moments especially within the last years.⁵ Increasing use of Internet and increased political interaction is considered as an outcome of this.⁶

Reasons for disinformation campaigns against Türkiye in Africa are negative perceptions of Türkiye in the countries where such campaigns are run,

⁴ TDK, "Dezenformasyon", <https://sozluk.gov.tr/>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

⁵ Zeynep Kılıç, "Afrika ülkeleri seçimlere dezenformasyon gölgesinde gidiyor", *Siber Bülten*, 18.10.2020, <https://siberbulten.com/electionhacking/afrika-ulkeleri-secimlere-dezenformasyon-golgesinde-gidiyor/>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

⁶ Charles Manga Fombad, "Democracy And Fake News In Africa", *Journal Of International And Comparative Law*, 2022, p.131-132.

resistance and hostility against Türkiye created by Fethullah Terrorist Organization (FETO) and its affiliated organizations and the perceived threat of changing the existing power balance against Western countries as a result of Türkiye's foreign policies regarding Africa. On the other hand, fabricated news and disinformation that come with the increasing social media in Africa have a negative impact both on the political conditions in the region and on the healthy development of Türkiye-Africa relations.

Türkiye has established a Center for Combating Disinformation under the Directorate of Communications to prevent the dissemination of disinformation and fake news from local and international sources within the country, and to facilitate the sharing of best practices in this regard with friendly and allied countries.⁷ Experiences gained through the Center for Combating Disinformation have been shared during the meetings and conventions including media and communication summits with the African countries, which showed our contribution to combating disinformation in Africa. In addition to the above, informative presentations about digital media, public diplomacy, new generation journalism and combating disinformation were provided to Libyan government. Additionally, a group of leading journalists from Algeria participated in the training program organized by the Directorate and our experience and knowledge was shared with these journalists during this program.

2. Launching of TRT Africa and TRT-African Union of Broadcasting 1. Broadcasting Summit

A significant aspect of Türkiye's relations with Africa is its media and communication activities. The Directorate of Communications carries out joint education programs, makes agreements, contracts and develops projects with diplomatic actors and media in the international arena.

Various summits have been organized to strengthen Türkiye's relations with Africa. These summits the first of which was organized in 2009, second in 2014 and third in 2021 are important in their role for developing cooperation between the continent and Türkiye in different areas and monitoring the related processes.⁸ After the 3. Summit, the Directorate of Communications organized the second "Türkiye-Africa Media Summit" which lasted two days in Istanbul to celebrate Africa Day on 25 May 2022. The goal of this summit was to strengthen the cooperation and collaboration between Turkish and African media and communication organizations and to share experiences by improving partnership perspective.⁹ With the networks and

⁷ TRT Haber, "Dezenformasyonla Mücadele Merkezi, yalan içeriklerin önüne geçiyor", 23.12.2023, <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/dezenformasyonla-mucadele-merkezi-yalan-iceriklerin-onune-geciyor-823172.html>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

⁸ Muhammed Yasir Okumuş, "Zirvelerden Ufka Bakmak: 21. Yüzyılda Türkiye-Afrika İlişkileri", Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Toplulukları Başkanlığı (YTB), 25.02.2023, <https://ytb.gov.tr/haberler/zirvelerden-ufka-bakmak-21-yuzyilda-turkiye-afrika-iliskileri>, Date of Access: 16.04.2024.

⁹ T.C. İletişim Başkanlığı, "Türkiye-Afrika Medya Zirvesi başladı", 25.05.2023, <https://www.iletisim.gov.tr/turkce/haberler/detay/turkiye-afrika-medya-zirvesi-basladi>, Date of Access: 16.04.2024

connections established during the abovementioned summits, sustainable relations continue with the actors in the African media and communication industries.

Launching of TRT Africa and TRT-African Union of Broadcasting 1. Broadcasting Summit were the tangible outcomes of the summit, which allowed new cooperation opportunities and media organizations and managers from Türkiye and Africa met to discuss their ideas and experiences in broadcasting. In this way, by strengthening the interaction and cooperation between TRT and African media organizations, a new perspective has been brought to the continent in the field of media.¹⁰

3. The book titled "Türkiye's Friendly Hand to Africa" published in 2023

Strong relations established together with political and diplomatic communications with the continent are visible in many areas. These relations in a wide range of areas from trade to investment, from energy to agriculture, from healthcare to defense industry, from technology transfer to humanitarian aid increase every day. In addition to government and organizations support by the government, nongovernmental organizations and private organizations also provide support to this effort.¹¹ Using a strategy different from many countries Türkiye is perceived differently in the continent with its "equal partnership" and "win-win strategies". Türkiye has become a pioneer in the continent in delivering humanitarian aid and assistance. This shows that Türkiye's interest in African continent and African problems are not temporary and unilateral.

The book Türkiye's Friendly Hand to Africa, published by the Directorate of Communications in 2023, is a valuable contribution to the field of Türkiye-Africa relations. It places particular emphasis on the shared history between Türkiye and Africa, as well as on the multifaceted nature of relations between the two. Additionally, it provides insights into Türkiye's diplomatic, commercial, and cultural activities in Africa, while also underscoring the importance of Africa for Türkiye.

4. Cooperation Protocols and Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Media and Communications

Cooperation protocols and memorandum of understanding are among the media and communications outcomes of the relations in various areas

¹⁰ TRT Haber, "İletişim Başkanı Altun: Türkiye bütün alanlarda Afrika'nın yanındadır", 31.03.2023, <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/iletisim-baskani-altun-turkiye-butun-alanlarda-afrikanin-yanindadir-757455.html>, Date of Access: 16.04.2024

¹¹ Emrah Aydemir, *Kamu Diplomasisi*, 1. Ed., Kalkedon Publications, 2018, p.159-161.

TÜRKİYE'S FRIENDLY HAND TO AFRICA



between Türkiye and Africa. Similarly, our evaluation proposals for the co-operation protocols signed with Central Africa and Nigeria have been sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to relevant countries. Cooperation protocols on media and communications have been signed with Senegal and Guinea Bissau. There are also memorandums of understanding which have been prepared and still are being negotiated to be signed with many countries in Africa. In this regard, the process of signing of the memorandums of understanding sent to Niger, Somalia, Tanzania, Congo and Zambia continues and they are expected to be signed soon. These memorandums of understanding are written to maintain friendly relations between the countries, strengthen cooperation in media and communications, to ensure permanent and effective cooperation to the benefit of these nations, based on the principle of common understanding, respect for sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs. These memorandums are very important in that they allow sharing of information and experience and best practices in media and communications between two countries, establish cooperation in projects and initiatives which provide mutual benefit and interest.

5. Conclusion and Evaluation

As a conclusion, Türkiye's African policy which has political, humanitarian, economic and cultural aspects and includes bilateral, regional, continental and global relations has a very special position in global politics and history. The Directorate of Communications works to strengthen the cooperation and collaboration between Turkish and African media and communication organizations and to share experiences by improving partnership perspective. The Directorate continues to focus on the region believing in the importance of not only promoting Türkiye in Africa but also ensuring the recognition of African countries in Türkiye. This approach will gradually pave the way for more permanent partnerships, solidarity, and a sense of unity. Directorate of Communications aims to increase cooperation in critical areas, especially in combating disinformation, by strengthening partnerships with equivalent institutions in African countries. In consequence, the Directorate of Communications will persist in the implementation of projects designed to facilitate the development of journalist exchange programmes between Anadolu Agency, TRT, and other leading media organisations in our country and their counterparts in Africa. This will be achieved through the conclusion and ongoing negotiation of agreement protocols, the provision of support for the activities of African journalists in our country, and the promotion of good practices from Africa on an international scale.

Activities of the Ministry of National Defense in Africa in 2023

3

Republic of Türkiye Ministry of National Defense

In this period in which regional and global tension has increased, battles evolved into full-fledged wars, and security architecture has changed, the importance of defense and security has increased and therefore the implication of developments in Africa on global security has become more important.

Türkiye has strong historical and cultural ties with Africa. As a Strategic Partner of the African Union (2008) and in line with our Africa Partnership Program, in addition to our increasing economic and political relations with African countries, our relations in military and defense industry have also accelerated recently.

Security and stability in Somalia which is one of the most important African countries for Türkiye is not only important for Somalia but also for all the countries in the Horn of Africa region and the entire continent.

Relations between the two countries' military organizations are strong and there are many agreements that form the legal basis.

Turkish Ministry of National Defense has been providing training, consultancy and logistic support to the National Army of Somalia since January 2018 to restructure the Military of Somalia.

In this regard, many military personnel are trained to become military officers in the Somalia National Army at the Somalia Military Academy, NCOS High School, which is located on the same compound as the main hub of the Somali-Turkish Task Force (STGK), which was established on 30 September 2017. The Eagle (Gorgor) battalions, trained and equipped by Türkiye, form

Somalia "Somalia Eagles" are trained in Anadolu Barracks in Mogadishu. (Source: Anadolu News Agency).



the backbone of the Somalia National Army. Additionally, our ultimate goal and intention in Libya, another important region for Türkiye is to ensure an independent and sovereign Libya with territorial integrity and national unity in line with the motto "Libya is for Libyans".

Türkiye was the only country that gave a positive respond to the call of help of the official Libyan government to 5 countries and NATO in 2019.

The hospital run by Türkiye has provided healthcare service to almost 4 thousand Libyans and over 30 thousand of mines/IEDs/unexploded ordnance were neutralized under the scope of activities to normalize daily life.

Our training, aid and consultancy support to Libya in many areas from humanitarian aid to demining, and to irregular migration continue based on the bilateral agreements that conform to the international laws.

Furthermore, humanitarian aid and emergency relief after severe flooding in Libya and Somalia in 2023 was delivered by planes and ships of Turkish Armed Forces and Turkish citizens and citizens of other countries asking for help were evacuated with our military planes from Sudan after Sudan civil war had started.

Our relations in defense industry with African countries have also accelerated recently. Turkish defense industry products that are proved efficient and effective in the field have significant contribution to stability, security and war with terrorism in African countries.

In order to strengthen our relations including military and defense, the number of the offices of military attaché increased to 26 with the opening of 6 new offices in 2023. With these new offices of military attaché, we have established official relations with almost all of the countries in the continent.

Communications at high levels with African countries continued in 2023 and meetings were held with 17 ministers of defense and cooperation agreements were signed with 4 countries. With these agreements the number of African countries with which we have signed an agreement that constitute legal basis for our military relations has reached to 35.

In addition to education and training with the aim of establishing security and stability in African countries, contributions, support and active participation to Peace Support Operations and other multinational operations continue.

Türkiye's Friendly Hand in Africa: TİKA

Serkan Kayalar*

Africa has been home to many important civilizations for many centuries. However, global historiography leads to the disregard of the balance carried by the continent by scaling a time period ranging from the 16th century to today. The Kingdom of Kush founded in the 8th century BC in today's Sudan is now a UNESCO heritage site and this civilization gave the world the first examples of the Meoritic culture including hieroglyphics and alphabets and most notably Pyramids of Meroe which were built approximately 800 years before the Egyptian pyramids.¹ Another African heritage lies in the Great Zimbabwe city. This city with typical Iron Age city characteristics and a population of almost 20,000 was home to the Shona people. Furthermore, Great Zimbabwe had an economy based on animal husbandry, agriculture and gold trade by the Indian Ocean between 11-15th centuries AD. It was one of the important trade centers in the region.

Ghana Empire that ruled in Western Africa from 8th to 13th century AD was an important ancient civilization in the region. The empire built by the Soninke people stood out with its hierarchical administration, commercial life bound by rules.² Mali Empire which ruled from 13th century to 16th century is still remembered with the Djingareyber Mosque and the fortune and prosperity during the reign of one of the emperors, Mansa Musa has been noted by historians.³

When the above examples are evaluated according to Ibn Khaldun's political theory, it becomes clear that Africa has experienced several cycles of

* President of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA)

¹ Ömer Erdem, "Sudan'da Çölün Ortasındaki Saklı Hazine: Meravi piramitleri", *Anadolu Agency*, 28 January 2020.

² Hani Abdirachid Mohamed, "African Civilization: From Ancient Kingdoms to Modern Societies", *International Journal of Social Science And Human Research*, Vol. 06, No. 06, January 2023, p. 3294-3303

³ Nawal Morcos Bell, "The Age of Mansa Musa of Mali: Problems in Succession and Chronology", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1972, p. 221-234.

civilization. Therefore, it is important to review the outcomes of intellectual, cultural and economic climate in each cycle in Africa independent of other cycles and generalization and uniform approaches should be avoided.

After geographical discoveries, European actors left power play and wars of religion behind and focused on “capital accumulation” and assumed an approach based on this. “Triangular Trade” formulized in the book titled “Capitalism and Slavery” which was the dissertation paper of Eric Williams, first prime minister of Trinidad Tobago is an important reference point to understand today’s world. In his dissertation Williams tells us that a ship sailing from Liverpool and Bristol first stops at West Africa and then sails towards Caribbean Islands with its African passengers and there Africans are forced to work in sugar, cotton, tobacco and coffee plantations in horrific conditions. Williams also does not refrain from emphasizing that African people are preferred because of their strong physicality.⁴ As seen in the above example, since 16th century Africa has been exposed to systematic and heavy exploitation in many ways from its underground treasures to demographic potential. Colonial actors penetrated from media to historiography, from language to development agenda and used their relative economic dominance as a power tool on the continent.

Africa’s underground treasures and natural resources correspond to 20 percent of the total wealth of Africa.⁵ However, the continent’s social, political and economic and cultural memory is still deeply affected by its colonial past. In Africa where education, healthcare and economic infrastructures were built by colonial actors, it is only possible to get functional reward of such wealth by establishing real and sincere relations with the continent.

The share of Africa in global trade is only 2.3 percent although Africa’s populations correspond to 17 percent of the global population. There are also macroeconomic constraints on the continent that has a high potential. The continent is more affected by global crises such as food, energy, migration, climate and therefore political and social problems are bigger. External factors also exacerbate the problems and crisis experienced in African countries.

Despite this, Africa has very important opportunities, and natural resources. Today Africa has the youngest median population age of 19 among all of the continents (compared to 42 in Europe, 31 in Asia).⁶ Strategic importance, huge underground resources, human capital and economic potential of the continent offer great opportunities. Development grants and collaboration is very important in Africa where a global power struggle is

⁴ Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, The University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

⁵ African Union Commission (AUC)/OECD, *Africa’s Development Dynamics 2023: Investing in Sustainable Development*, AUC, Addis Ababa/OECD Publishing, Paris, 2023.

⁶ AUC/OECD, “Africa’s Development Dynamics 2023: Investing in Sustainable Development”.

ongoing, and such projects should serve for sustainable development by offering improvement on a local scale, reinforcing corporate infrastructure and contributing to employment. If the existing potential of the continent is combined with the constructive roles of other actors, it can lead to a serious development movement and synergy on a global scale.

1. Türkiye in Africa: Being a Fellow Traveler for the Continent Looking for its Potential

With its Africa strategy and its relations with African countries in its foreign policy which started at the end of 20th century and especially gained momentum in 2000s, Türkiye has positively differentiated itself from other actors. Türkiye’s approach can be summarized as a sincere, friendly approach that creates local solutions to local problems and prioritizes equal partnership principle which the continent countries need the most. The political will to develop relations with Africa which had been limited for many years was demonstrated with the “Africa Action Plan” accepted in 1998 and especially after the year 2005 was declared as the “Africa Year”, a great leap forward in relations was achieved with tangible cooperation and cooperation with African countries. Türkiye has become an expert in development cooperation and humanitarian aid as a “rising donor” and especially in the last 10 years Türkiye has been at the top of the list of “the most generous countries” in the world for official development aid and humanitarian aid compared to its national income. African countries are among the countries that benefit the most from development cooperation projects and from the development aids of Türkiye.

The role of our country in Africa has reached to its position today thanks to the contributions and collaborative work of our government agencies and nongovernmental organizations. The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) also carries out projects in development cooperation in line with Türkiye’s Africa strategies and foreign policy. TİKA opened its first office in Africa in Ethiopia in 2005 which was declared as “Africa Year” and the number and variety of projects and other activities of TİKA increased with the developments in relations after 2010.

Sincere and genuine collaboration and cooperation is important for African countries. However financial aids provided by various donors have also caused confusion in the region about the efficiency of sources.⁷ Therefore financial aids claimed to be planned professionally by different donors have

⁷ Carol Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*, University of Chicago Press, 2006.

not resulted in tangible improvements to solve economic problems and inequalities in the region.

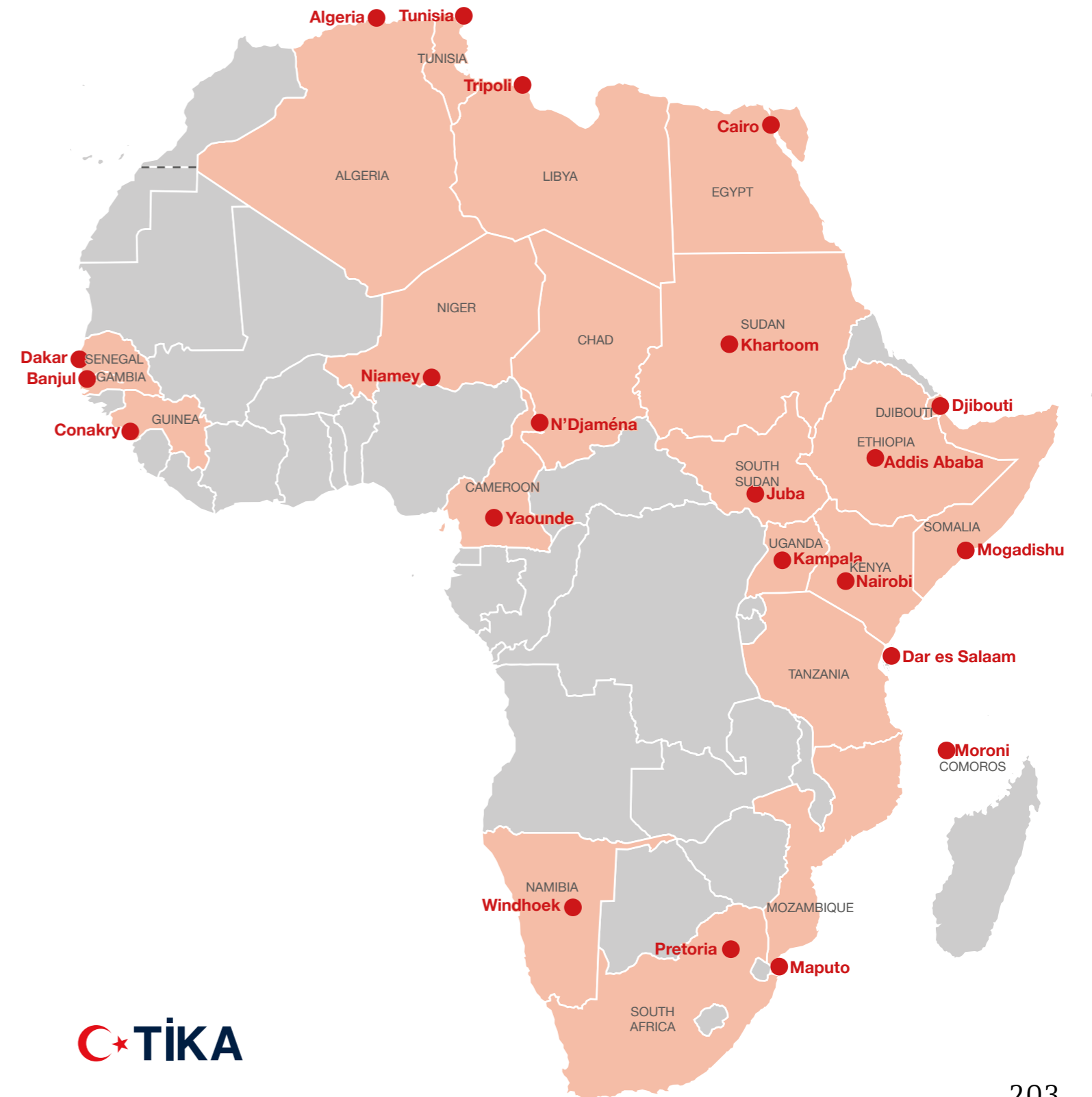
On the other hand, Türkiye, with its positive image and good relations with African countries, strives to develop a model that focuses on an equal partnership, authentic and long-term cooperation which will allow parties learn from each other and allow both parties win. Türkiye is aware of the richness of Africa and its potential and also prioritizes its contribution to the development, growth and welfare of African countries. Türkiye, which held the first African Summit in 2008, augmented its diplomatic presence across the continent, establishing 32 new embassies and raising the total number of its diplomatic missions on the continent from 12 to 44. Today, Türkiye comes fourth in the number of diplomatic missions in Africa, after the USA, China and France. Similarly, the number of embassies of African countries in Türkiye has increased to 38. In 2000s the USA and France were the biggest trade partners of Africa but then these countries were replaced by China and India and countries including Türkiye, Indonesia and Russia started to grow their relations and increase their effects on the continent.

2. The Model of Türkiye as a New Development Cooperation Approach and TİKA

TİKA, Türkiye's official development cooperation agency has become a global actor today with its increasing capacity. Established in 1992, TİKA has successfully completed over 30,000 projects to date. The number of TİKA offices has increased from 12 in 2002 to over 60 today, with the number of countries in which TİKA has implemented projects rising to 170. In addition to increasing number of offices and projects, the areas of activity have been expanded and become more varied and include all development areas according to the needs of African countries. TİKA carries out approximately two thousand projects and operations annually in line with the sustainable development goals and Africa is at the top of the list of regions with the highest number of TİKA offices and projects.

Türkiye continues to provide humanitarian aid in five continents through public agencies and nongovernmental organizations and Africa has always been one of the priority regions for Türkiye. Türkiye relations with African countries based on equal partnership and friendship are highly appreciated both on the field and by senior diplomats. The total value of official bilateral development aid provided to Africa by Türkiye between 2005 and 2022 is estimated to be approximately 2.4 billion USD. In the period between 1992

Representative Offices of TİKA in Africa





Mozambique Support from TIKA
Mozambique to the infrastructure of
vocational education in Mozambique
(Source: Anadolu News Agency).

and 2023, TİKA was responsible for the implementation of nearly 7,000 projects and operations in Africa and extended a friendly hand to African people. With its 22 offices on the continent TİKA carries out projects that touch the lives of African people and contributes to cooperation with projects in various areas from infrastructure to healthcare system, from employment in rural areas to education.

Africa probably comes first in the list of world regions which suffer the most from poverty and income inequality which is one of the biggest problems in this century. While 1.3 billion people are no longer considered as in extreme poverty thanks to improvements in economy in the last thirty years, contrary to this global development, the percentage of people in extreme poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa raised from 14 percent in 1990 to 57 percent in 2019.⁸ In a time period where extreme poverty is decreasing globally, such drastic increase in poverty in Africa is contradictory to the potential of the continent. Today, out of 46 least developed countries, 33 were from Africa and this is a striking fact in that it demonstrates the poverty and economic fragility of the continent.⁹ Despite a population of 880 million of the least developed countries, their share in global national income is less than 2 percent and their share in global trade is only 1 percent.¹⁰ Africa which is home to most fragile and the poorest countries needs sustainable projects that prioritize locals, focus on development and cooperation.

The future of African nations which are open for development with a high potential can be improved by building their own social, economic and human infrastructure. It is imperative that African countries take the initiative to narrate their own histories in order to bring about a conclusion to the era in which some countries exploited Africa, rendered the countries dependent on them and exercised control over the countries through affiliated groups with which they had long-standing ties. Türkiye does not have a colonial legacy or secret agenda therefore contributes to the writing of these narratives with its sincere approach with the objective of facilitating a future in which Africa's wealth is accessible to Africans and sustainable development is achieved. Therefore, with its image in Africa, Türkiye can create economic, diplomatic, cultural and social influences much faster than the traditional actors who still have a powerful influence on the continent.

⁸ Johannes Hoogeveen, Johan A. Mistiaen ve Haoyu Wu, "Accelerating Poverty Reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa Requires Stability", *World Bank Blog*, 05.03.2024.

⁹ The number of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) identified by the UN in 1971 is 46. Of these, 33 are located in Africa, 9 in Asia, 3 in the Pacific and 1 in the Caribbean. For details, see "Least developed countries", UNCTAD, <https://unctad.org/topic/least-developed-countries>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

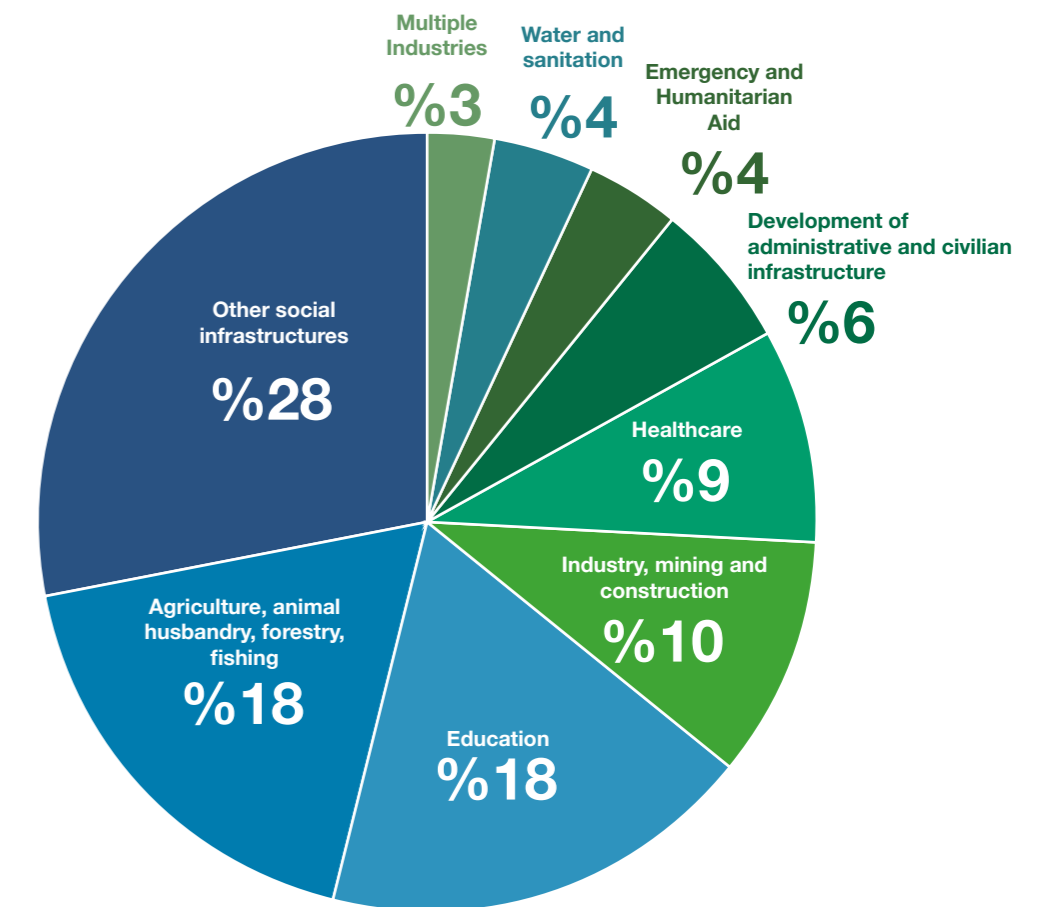
¹⁰ UNCTAD, "Least developed countries".

3. TİKA's Projects in Africa in 2023: A Multidimensional, Needs-Based Approach which Prioritizes People

Somalia, Libya, Sudan and Mauritania come at the top of the list for development aids delivered by TİKA to Africa in the last seven years. TİKA developed projects for people, which are production oriented and promote sustainable development in Africa in 2023. Figure 1 shows the projects completed per industry. Social infrastructure, agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry and fishery and education are the areas for which the highest number of projects was carried out.

Countries with the highest number of projects are Senegal, Algeria, Somalia, Djibouti, Uganda and Niger respectively. Examples to our infrastructure and sustainability projects implemented in 2023 are; renovation of a middle school in Somalia; visual and audio equipment delivered to the national assembly in Namibia; chamber of agriculture in Algeria; building of a greenhouse and tissue culture laboratory in Tunisia; rehabilitation of train-

Figure 1. TİKA's Projects in Africa (2023)



ing grounds of a sports school in Cameroon; building a greenhouse in a regional prison in Senegal; building a fish farm in Uganda, cocoa and banana farming project in Gabon; project to increase capacities of school in Tanzania.

On the other hand, TİKA helped to build a poultry farm in Somalia in 2023 and also supported building of an ice-cream factory called SOMADO. An agricultural teaching and practice greenhouse was built and machines and equipment were donated to the Department of Agriculture in Mogadishu University to strengthen agricultural infrastructure in Somalia. Investment on agricultural production infrastructure with drought in mind will encourage local production. In Niger where almost 60 percent of the population is under 18, more than half of the population does not have access to education. Vocational courses were organized and materials and equipment were provided to make the human force more qualified and reduce unemployment in the country.

Similarly, a corn grinding machine was delivered to the women's cooperative to support women who provide for their families in Tanzania and equipment was provided to beekeepers in Ethiopia. A Cezeri Laboratory and Cezeri Studio were built in Tanzania to provide practical education in addition to their theoretical education. Additionally, freezers and refrigerators were delivered to preserve fish for a longer time to support fishing industry which is one of the main income sources of Tanzania.

In Cameroon which is one of the biggest cocoa producers in the world, a cocoa facility (Fermentation and drying facility) was built to help cocoa farmers who were working in rudimentary conditions to have higher production efficiency. Improving production process of cocoa which is the biggest export income of the country is important both for farmers and for the country. Furthermore, a microbiology laboratory was built at the technology institute in Zimbabwe; the rehabilitation project of the obstetrics and gynecology department in Mozambique was completed and capacity improvement project at the fishery cooperative in Djibouti was implemented. TİKA provides local solutions to different problems of the continent and strives to achieve this with an equal partnership approach.

4. Conclusion and Evaluation: Cooperation Development Based on Equal Partnership

The richness of cultural and historical heritage stands out in African history similar to other geographies. However, the continent started to experi-

ence an identity crisis at the end of the 16th century as a result of colonialism. However, looking at the progress that many cities in Africa including Johannesburg, Nairobi, Abuja, Abidjan, Addis Ababa, Dar Es-Salaam have made to become global centers, it is possible to say that Africa has been building back its confidence it lost under colonial powers.

Similar to orientalist approach, global media organizations depict Africa with a deep and insurmountable poverty. This has caused significant damage to the image of the continent and this makes the actors that want to have economic, cultural and diplomatic relations with Africa have serious doubts and hesitations in their minds.

The African image created under these circumstances is basically anachronical now. However, it should be important to reevaluate Africa with its historical roots, its position in today's economy and global capitals and contribute to updating of Africa's image.

Türkiye has built positive relations in development cooperation as well as culture and economy. Türkiye has been writing a unique development cooperation story with development projects and programs in Africa without any hidden agenda, baggage or self-interest. Furthermore, TİKA supports the countries on the continent to write their own stories about the goals of sustainable development.

Türkiye assumes a demand-driven approach to development. TİKA designs and develops the strategies of the projects and activities according to the demands from the field. TİKA trusts the self-analyses that African countries have made and is careful about not to design or create projects that can create false needs based on a false agenda.

Being a fellow traveler of African countries Türkiye acts with an approach that support production to strengthen potential industrial and human force markets, create employment and share their experiences and capacity. As Türkiye's development cooperation agency TİKA shares its expertise and experience in the projects and programs it develops in Africa to support to build social, economic, human and corporate infrastructure that will transform the richness of Africa into prosperity. TİKA will continue with its projects that directly touch the lives of people to bring out the potential of the continent, to ensure sustainable development and most importantly to make Africa bring prosperity for the African people.

Activities of Yunus Emre Foundation in Africa in 2023

5

Yunus Emre Institute

1. Introduction

Yunus Emre Foundation is a public foundation which was founded under the law dated 05.05.2007 and numbered 5653 to promote Türkiye, Turkish language, its history and culture and art, make such related information and documents available for use in the world, provide services abroad to people who want to have education in the fields of Turkish language, culture and art, to improve the friendship between Türkiye and other countries and increase cultural exchange.

As an institution affiliated to the Foundation, Yunus Emre Institute organizes Turkish courses for foreigners in the cultural centers located in other countries to accomplish the purposes of this law, organizes cultural events to promote our country, and gives support to scientific research by establishing academic and scientific cooperation.

This report includes activities and events organized by Yunus Emre Institute in 2023.

2. Activities in 2023

A cooperation protocol signed between Yunus Emre Institute and CACSUP (Centre Africain de Complementarite Scolaire Universitaire et de Promotion) to organize online and in-person Turkish courses and joint events for CACSUP students in January 2023.

Our Institute opened a new representative office at Zanzibar University in Zanzibar on January 23, 2023. Dr. Mehmet Güllüoğlu, Turkish Ambas-

sador to Dar Es Salaam, Khamis Abdullah Said, Deputy Principal Secretary, Ministry of Communication, Youth, Culture and Sports of Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, Prof. Mohammed Awadelkarim Elhussein Elhasan, Vice Chancellor of Zanzibar University, academics, students, guests and Zanzibar people who are interested in Türkiye and Turkish culture were present at the opening ceremony.¹

“National Anthem and Commemoration of Martyrs Program” was organized on March 12, 2023 at Yunus Emre Cultural Centre in Cairo to celebrate 102th anniversary of the acceptance of our National Anthem (Independence March) by the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM). Ten stanzas of the National Anthem were read by heart by the Cairo YETKM course attendants.²

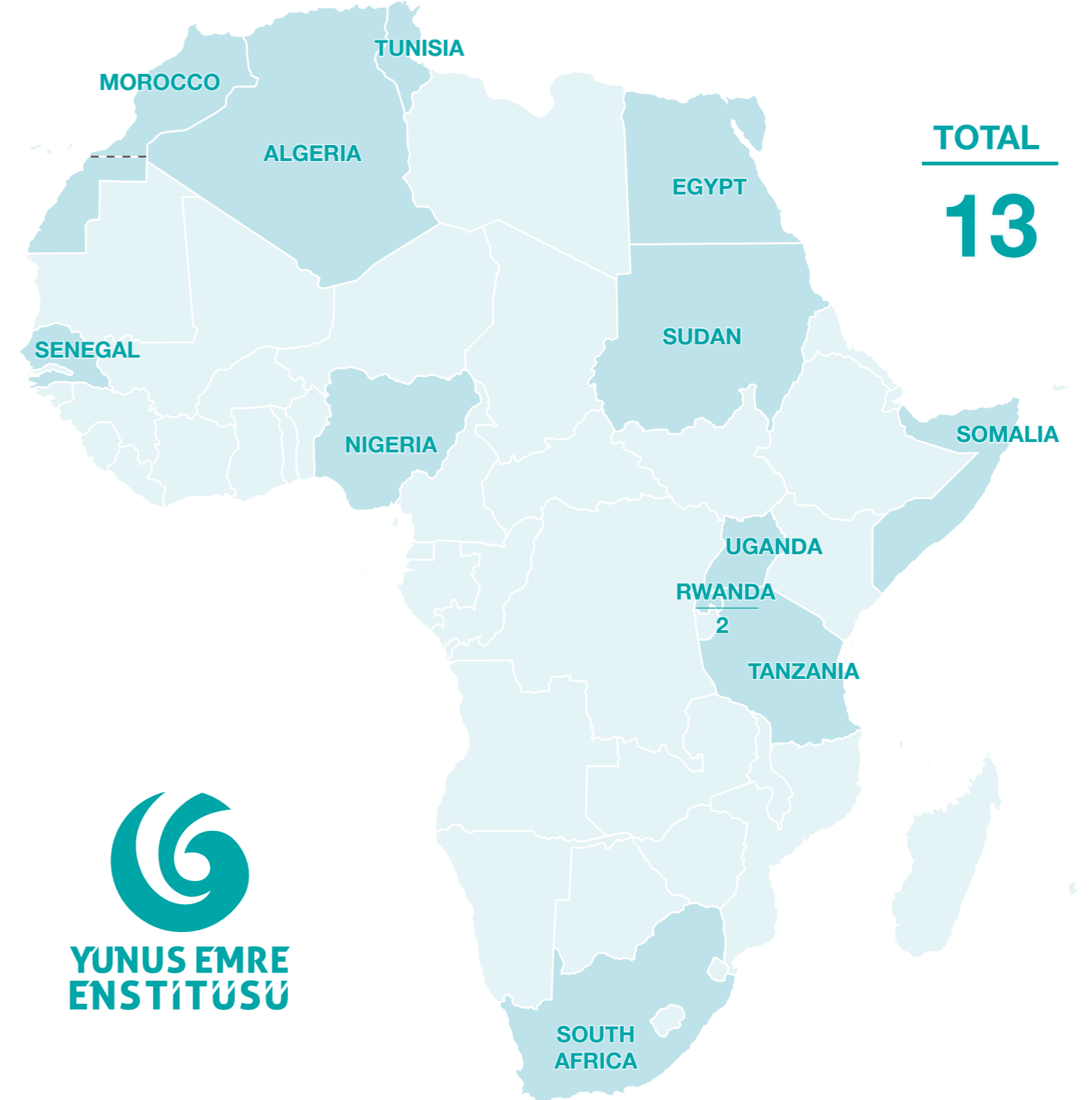
Various events and activities were organized by Yunus Emre Cultural Centre in Johannesburg and Turkish Embassy in Pretoria to celebrate anniversaries of the acceptance of National Anthem on 12 March and Martyrs Commemoration Day and Çanakkale Victory on 18 March.³

Yunus Emre Institute celebrated 23 April National Sovereignty and Children’s Day which the founder of the Turkish Republic Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk dedicated to the children of the world to celebrate in all of its offices abroad to show the importance of children in Turkish culture. The Institute organized colorful events to celebrate 23 April National Sovereignty and Children’s Day in cities all around the world including Abuja, Amsterdam, Budapest, Buenos Aires and Bucherest.⁴

Prof. Pierre Gomez, the Minister of Gambia Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology and a group of academics visited Prof. Dr. Şeref Ateş, President of Yunus Emre Institute on May 3, 2023. During the visit at the historical building of the Institute in Ulus, Istanbul, a presentation which explained cultural diplomacy, education diplomacy and science diplomacy and major projects of Yunus Emre Institute in Africa and in other parts of the world was made to the guests.⁵

Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center in Johannesburg organized a “Turkish Food and Culture Bazaar” on May 22, 2023 in Johannesburg in the biggest city of South Africa to provide support to those who were affected by the major earthquake in Türkiye. Turkish companies operating in South Africa including Turkish Airlines, DEFY, ASELSAN contributed to this event and products of Turkish cuisine and culture were sold and the proceeds of the sale were donated to earthquake victims in Türkiye.⁶

Yunus Emre Institutes in Africa



1 Yunus Emre Enstitüsü, “Yunus Emre Enstitüsünün Tanzanya’da Yurt Dışı Temsilciliğinin Açılışı Gerçekleştirildi”, <https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/yunus-emre-enstitusunun-tanzanyadaki-yurt-disi-temsilciliginin-acilisi-gerceklestirildi>, Date of Access: 18.04.2024.

2 YEE, “Kahire’de İstiklal Marşı’nın Dizeleri Yankılandı”, <https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/kahirede-istiklal-marsinin-dizeleri-yankilandi>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

3 YEE, <https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/johannesburgda-12-mart-istiklal-marsinin-kabulu-ile-18-mart-sehitleri-anma-gunu-ve-canakkale-0>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

4 YEE, “Johannesburg’da 12 Mart İstiklal Marşı’nın Kabulü ile 18 Mart Şehitleri Anma Günü ve Çanakkale Deniz Zaferi’ne Yönelik Etkinlik Düzenlendi”, <https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/yunus-emre-enstitusu-dunya-cocuklarini-23-nisanda-bir-araya-getirdi>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

5 YEE, <https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/gambiya-yuksekokretim-arastirma-bilim-ve-teknoloji-bakani-yunus-emre-enstitusunu-ziyaret-etti>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

6 YEE, “Gambiya Yükseköğretim, Araştırma, Bilim ve Teknoloji Bakanı Yunus Emre Enstitüsünü Ziyaret Etti”, <https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/guney-afrikada-turkiyedeki-depremedelere-destek-olmak-amaciyla-turk-yemek-ve-kultur-pazari>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.



Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center in Tunisia represented Türkiye at the International Carthage Festival organized under the auspice of the Ministry of Culture of Tunisia. Many countries participated in this festival which was organized for the 57th time at the Antique Roman Theatre of Carthage in Tunisia.⁷

Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center in Johannesburg organized “National Heritage Day” on which cultural heritage and treasures of Türkiye and South Africa were brought together. A high number of people including artists, art lovers and guest participated in this event organized by the Institute on September 24, 2023.⁸

7 YEE, “Tunus'ta Taksim Rüzgârı Esti”,
<https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/tunusta-taksim-ruzgari-esti>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

8 YEE, “Güney Afrika'da Ulusal Miras Günü Etkinliği”,
<https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/guney-afrikada-ulusal-miras-gunu-etkinligi>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

South Africa Yunus Emre Institute organized “National Heritage Day” event in South Africa (Source: Anadolu Agency).

On the occasion of inclusion of Poet Aşık Veysel in 2023 commemoration program by UNESCO and Presidency of Republic of Türkiye, Yunus Emre Institute organized a concert for Aşık Veysel music at the Zanzibar Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre on October 3, 2023. The songs of the famous poet were sang by a famous singer from Türkiye and applauded by the audience.⁹

A special event called “Turkish Cinema Days” was held in Dakar, the capital of Senegal, with the participation of Türkiye's leading screenwriters and producers. “Turkish Cinema Days”, organized within the scope of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Republic of Türkiye, in cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Dakar and Dakar Yunus Emre Institute, started with a gala night. Composer and pianist Zeynep Atakan gave a short recital of soundtracks of famous Turkish films before the screening of the film.¹⁰

Yunus Emre Cultural Centre in Cairo, Egypt organized an event called “Turkish Inspired Paper Marbling”. Egyptian Paper Marbling artist Hanan Rifai's works were exhibited in the event held in El-Menhel Palace in Cairo. Many representatives of Turkish and local organizations, diplomats and art lovers were present at the event.¹¹

Diplomats from Chad invited to Türkiye for the education program organized by the Diplomacy Academy Office of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs for foreign diplomats visited Yunus Emre Institute.

Diplomats were provided information about the projects of Yunus Emre Institute in Africa and in other parts of the world and about paper marbling, one of the traditional Turkish arts during the visit in the traditional building of the institute in Ulus, Istanbul. Additional potential cultural cooperation opportunities were discussed during the visit.¹²

A documentary called “Senegal's Star Hunters” which is about the career of the Senegalese astronomer Maram Kaire was shown in a movie theatre in Dakar with the cooperation of Dakar Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre and Turkish Embassy to Dakar.¹³

A runway show was organized in Dakar, the capital city of Senegal and 12 female ambassadors currently working in Dakar took the runway for the benefit of street children to celebrate 100th anniversary of the Republic of Türkiye. High number local and foreign guests watched the runway show organized during Dakar Fashion Week hosted by Turkish Embassy in Dakar and with the contribution of Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center.

9 YEE, “Tanzanyalılar Aşık Veysel'in Türkülerini Söyledi”,

<https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/tanzanyalilar-asik-veyselin-turkulerini-soyledi>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

10 YEE, “Senegal'de Düzenlenen “Türk Sineması Günleri”ne Yoğun İlgi”,

<https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/senegalde-duzenlenen-turk-sineması-gunlerine-yogun-ilgi>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

11 YEE, “Mısır'da “Türk Esintileri Ebru Sanatı” Etkinliği”,

<https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/misirda-turk-esintileri-ebru-sanati-etkinligi>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

12 YEE, “Çadlı Diplomatlara Geleneksel Türk Sanatı Tanıtıldı”,

<https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/cadli-diplomatlara-geleneksel-turk-sanati-tanitildi>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

13 YEE, “Dakar'da “Senegal'in Yıldız Avcıları” İsimli Belgesel Gösterildi”,

<https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/dakarda-senegal-in-yildiz-avciları-isimli-belgesel-gosterildi>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

The works of young designers who were included in the Dakar Fashion Week were exhibited in this programme. Following the runway show, two paintings were sold at auction, with the proceeds donated to the benefit of children living on the streets. This was achieved through the cooperation of the Türkiye Dakar Embassy and the Dakar Yunus Emre Institute, and it coincided with the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Türkiye.¹⁴

An “International Speech Club” was organized with the participation of course attendants who learned Turkish at the Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center in Cairo in January. Course attendants from various countries who were learning Turkish at the center gave information about their country and their culture in Turkish to their fellow course attendants.¹⁵

Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center in Rabat organized “Turkish Cinema Days in Tetouan” in cooperation with the Friends of Tetouan Cinema Association and Tetouan Mediterranean Film Festival Foundation. Moroccan moviegoers showed great interest in the selected examples of Turkish movies shown during this festival.¹⁶

“Historical Relics Exhibition” was opened in January in Johannesburg. During the visit of Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, a program was organized at the grave of Mehmet Remzi Bey who was the last ambassador of Ottoman Empire to South Africa. Relics of Mehmet Remzi Bey were exhibited and information about the activities of Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre was given.¹⁷

A cooperation protocol was signed in January between Yunus Emre Cultural Centre in Dakar and Complementary Centre for African University Education and Promotion.¹⁸

A ceremony to thank the personnel that came from Sudan to Türkiye to help with search and rescue work in Adıyaman after the earthquake was organized by Yunus Emre Cultural Centre in Khartoum with the participation of the Turkish Ambassador in Khartoum, İsmail Çobanoğlu.¹⁹

A charity event titled “Art Marathon” was organized to support the victims of the major earthquake in Türkiye with the cooperation of Turkish Embassy to Pretoria and Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre in Johannesburg. The artworks of artists from 14 countries were sold in the event and the proceeds of the sale were deposited in the charity account opened by the Turkish Embassy to Pretoria.²⁰

A charity event titled “Solidarity Night” was organized to support the victims of the major earthquake in Türkiye with the cooperation of Turkish Embassy to Dakar and Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre in Dakar.

¹⁴ YEE, “Senegal’de Kadın Büyükelçiler Sokak Çocukları Yararına Podyuma Çıktı”, <https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/senegalde-kadin-buyukelciler-sokak-cocuklari-yararina-podyuma-cikti>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

¹⁵ Yunus Emre Institute January Report-2023..

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

Fifty-one pieces of artwork and products donated by Senegalese artists, football players, fashion designers and art photographers were sold at the auction. The proceeds of the sale were deposited in the charity account opened by the Turkish Embassy to Dakar.²¹

“From Soil to Art Ceramic Workshop” was organized by the Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre in Dakar to promote traditional Turkish handicrafts in Senegal.²²

Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre in Johannesburg represented Türkiye in “2023 World Food Festival” hosted by Korean Cultural Centre with the participation of many cuisines and showcased delicious examples from the Turkish cuisine and traditional paper marbling.²³

Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Center in Tunisia represented Türkiye at the “57th International Carthage Festival” organized under the auspice of the Ministry of Culture of Tunisia.²⁴

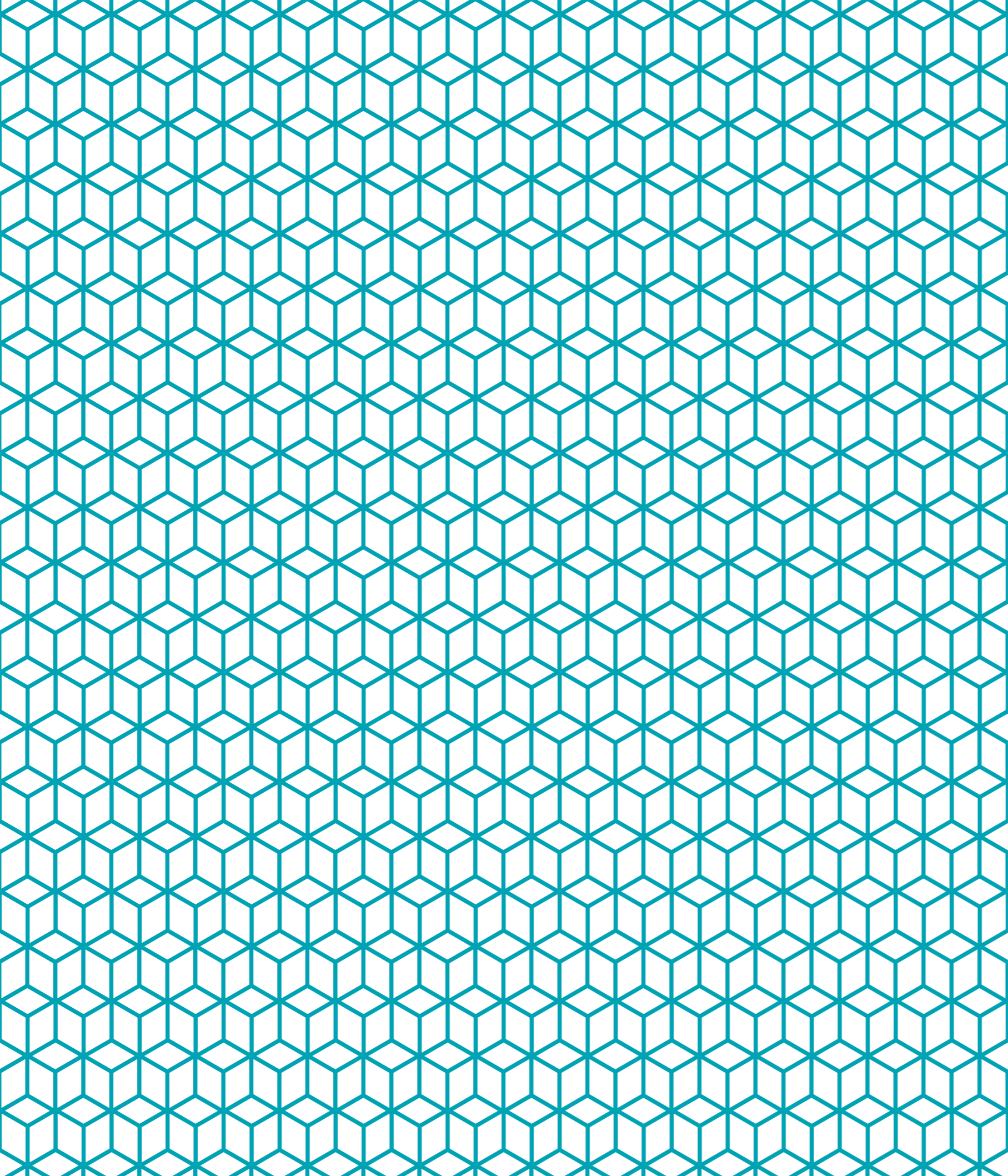
Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre in Kigali, in cooperation with Rwanda University, Rwanda Clinical Psychology Student Society and Ubuzima Innovation Centre, organized a conference titled “Women Empower Humanity” to celebrate International Youth Day.²⁵

3. Conclusion

Yunus Emre Institute considers all activities and events that improve cultural interaction and communication as its core mission therefore supports them fully. The Institute organizes hundreds of events and carries out many large-scale projects.

In 2023, a wide variety of exhibitions and events were organized in Africa. The Institute promotes Türkiye and Turkish culture in different parts of Africa with a wide variety of events and activities including traditional Turkish art courses, film screenings, Turkish cuisine events. The main goal of the Institute in all of its projects in Africa is to establish connections and friendship and improve existing relations with African countries and people using cultural diplomacy. The Institute is an organization that carries out cultural activities contributing to public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy of Türkiye in Africa.

The Institute, through its network of and cooperation with other national and international organizations carried out a high number of events in 2023 and is determined to increase its efforts in 2024.



Activities of Turkish Maarif Foundation in Africa

Turkish Maarif Foundation

A New Story “Worth the World” is Being Written

With its economic and political transformation started in 2000s, Türkiye embraced the new millennium with a sense of strength and confidence. Our country has reviewed its relations with the West and developed multidimensional and multilayered business models and has opted to have an active, entrepreneur and humanitarian foreign policy to become a regional power that influences on a global scale. Public diplomacy has become the most important foreign policy tool in this process and international education stood out as one of the most important political strategies.

Turkish Maarif Foundation (TMV) was founded in 2016 as a result of developments in recent years and made connections with communities and people of the world that have strong ties with Türkiye through language, religion, culture or history using humanitarian aid, development and infrastructure aids, culture and most importantly international education.

Turkish Maarif Foundation is essentially one of the most critical steps of the global expansion strategy of Türkiye. Therefore, TMV has a unique position not only in public and education diplomacy but also traditional diplomacy of Türkiye. TMV provides high quality and advanced education to the young generation of many countries in educational institutions it has opened abroad contributing to the development of human capital of these countries. In addition to this, the foundation helps raising young generations in different geographies, who are friends of Türkiye, know Türkiye well, can speak Turkish and know Turkish culture.

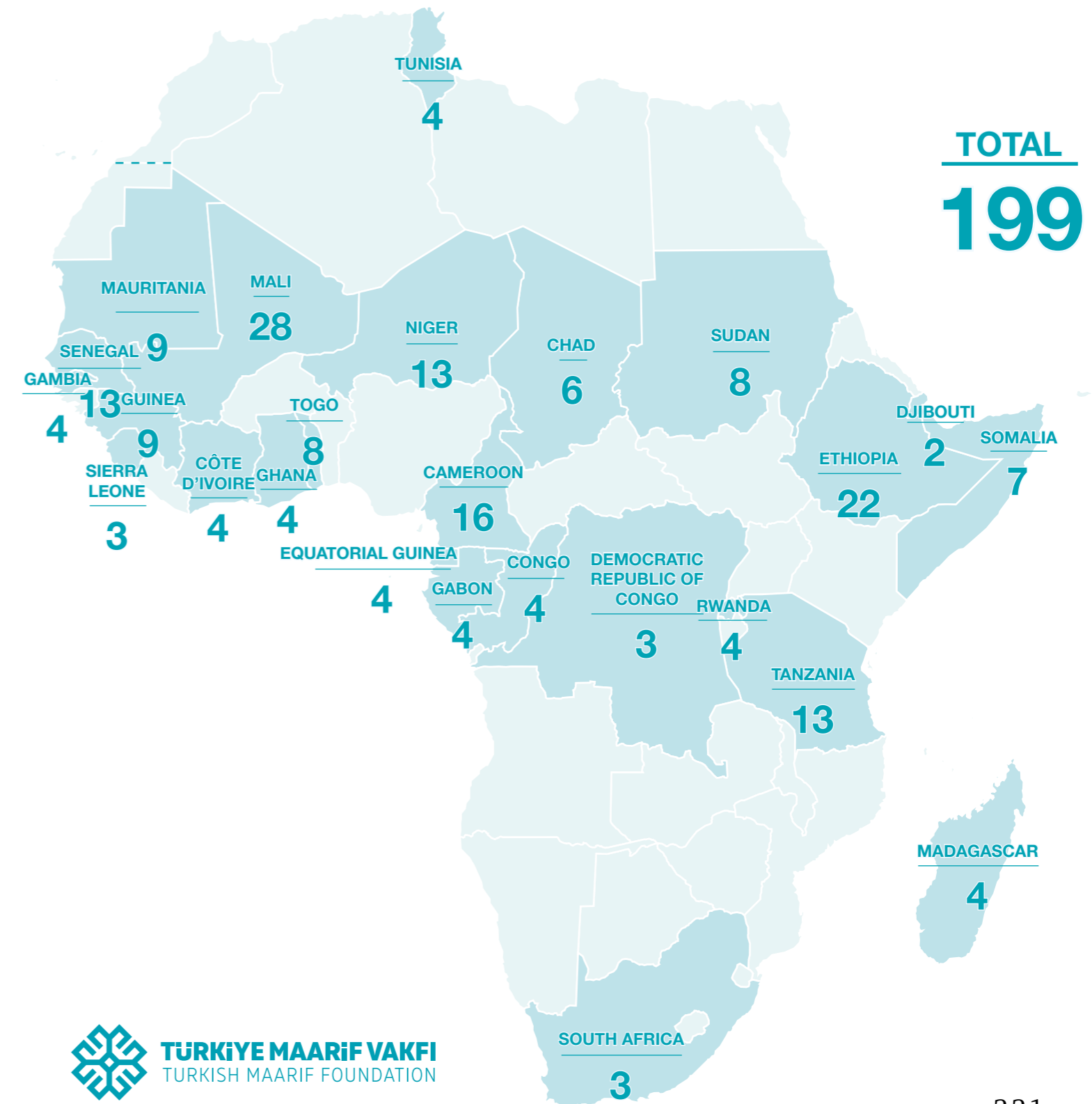
The Foundation has successfully overcome the challenges against its activities abroad and can meet the requirements of the host countries and in accordance with the local regulations and open and run schools in accordance with the local regulations. Furthermore, TMV has an advantage over international school networks built and supported by the respective governments such as French AEFÉ, German ZfA, English BSO, Chinese Confucius Institutes and Schools which have years of experiences, are well known and accredited and financially strong in the international education market. Thanks to its flexible structure as a foundation, TMV can stand out among competition and allow host countries to choose from local, international or IM (International Maarif) curriculums and offers a wide range of languages of education in schools. With the flexibility as a result of being a foundation, TMV can find solutions to have continuous education in the schools located in countries going through political, economic or social crisis and with its fast-decision-making capacity, can adjust quickly to political changes in host countries.

As of the end of 2023, TMV had 53 thousand students enrolled at 444 schools (K12 school), 1 higher education institution and 22 education centers. 230 of these educational institutions in 20 countries were FETO affiliated with FETO and have now been taken over by the Foundation as a result of effective diplomatic efforts. Additionally, TMV has a university in Albania and Türkiye Research Centers in Belarus, Cameroon, and Colombia. Selective courses on Turkish, Turkish culture, Turkish foreign policy, relations between Türkiye and other countries are given in these centers located in prestigious universities in these countries with the aim of promoting Türkiye at higher education level.

The Foundation is committed to carrying out educational activities based on universal values of humanity and the ancient knowledge and wisdom tradition of Anatolia. It does so in accordance with the strategies, goals, actions and indicators set forth in its Strategic Plans. TMV continued its work in the same way mentioned above at the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Türkiye which we celebrated with pride and excitement and started to implement the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan by focusing on “quality and sustainability” in accordance with the “The Century of Türkiye” vision presented by our president, H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

The core principle of the Foundation is to focus on the success of students in the Foundation schools not only individually but also as teams. The Foundation adopts and implements the approach that an educational institution

Turkish Maarif Foundation Schools in Africa in 2023





← **South Africa** Students from Maarif Schools in South Africa celebrated 23 April Children's day (Source: Anadolu Agency).

can only become a “distinguished school” when the school raises the bar not only through a couple of students’ successes but with the success of the entire organization.

Turkish Maarif Foundation continues to increase the number of schools and educational activities globally and completed its seventh year in Africa in 2023. The Foundation has been providing formal and non-formal education at every level from kindergarten to university in its 199 schools, 15 dormitories and 4 education centers in 25 countries in Africa. In this region, 21,037 students had education in these education institutions. Furthermore, Türkiye Research Centre continued its operations also in Cameroon.

1. Education in Africa

In addition to providing academic studies at educational institutions of Turkish Maarif Foundation in African countries, the Foundation also organizes curricular and extracurricular activities, workshops and clubs, vocational development courses to contribute education and development of students in science, art and sports. Although the country’s sociodemographic, economic and geographical conditions, local education program and curriculum and goals provide the basis for the Foundation’s educational activities, curriculums developed by the Foundation and international curriculums are also used for more diverse education.

The Foundation founded the Maarif Togo Sports High School to raise successful students in every sport at middle school and high school level in Togo. The school was opened during the 2023-2024 academic year and provides education and training in six sports including individual sports (athletics, tennis, table tennis) and team sports (football, basketball, volleyball) through a dedicated sports program. With these sports high school, the Foundation aims to contribute to better access by the young people of Togo to quality sports education.

The Foundation makes a valuable contribution to the country in which it operates through the organisation of engaging and popular events and projects in the field of education. It is the intention of the Foundation to implement similar events and projects in Maarif Schools in other countries, thereby extending access to innovations in education to a greater number of people in Africa. The following lists include the projects that stood out in 2023:

- Democratic Republic of Congo, project “Ask Arif”

- First Africa Maarif Games
- Ethiopia Maarif Career Days
- Ethiopia “Parents Accompanying Stories”
- Togo Culture Stakeholder Logo
- Togo Use of Unutilized Areas for Education
- Gabon “Technological Solutions for Daily Life”
- Senegal “Use of Innovative Technology in Turkish Language Teaching”

2. Turkish Language Education in Africa

The Foundation has been providing Turkish language education at every level from kindergarten to university in 25 countries in Africa.

As in previous years, public Turkish language courses organized again in 2023 as the most important tool to teach Turkish in formal education in many countries including Madagascar, Tunisia, Mali, Chad, Guinea.

In addition to Turkish courses for the public, Turkish courses are also organized for public servants depending on the request of the agency they work for. Protocols were made to teach Turkish language to military personnel in the countries where Foundation schools are present. Turkish courses for military personnel were organized in Gambia, Guinea and Mali in 2023. Some of the military personnel excelled in the language during courses and achieved B2 level in Turkish. The agreement with the Ministry of Vocational Education of Chad regarding the teaching of Turkish to Ministry personnel represents a significant development in the provision of Turkish language training in Africa. The Foundation continues to be an important asset for our country both in education diplomacy, military diplomacy and public diplomacy with its operations and work, as in previous years.

The Turkish language courses provided by TMV allow the attendants to learn Turkish at B2 level when they finish the course. At the beginning of the course, Turkish language level of every student is determined and the course program and other extracurricular activities are organized according to the language level of every student. Club activities are also important to improve Turkish language levels of students and to promote Türkiye. Club activities include those scientific activities that are specific to Turkish culture and specific to the culture of the country. Clubs allow students to establish connections and similarities between their own cultures and Turkish culture and achieve intercultural sensitivity.

Text books and recommended auxiliary book sets for reading are prepared as part of the Turkish language teaching program of the Foundation.

Education on Social Innovation Project was provided to allow our teachers in Maarif schools to develop projects in different areas, build teams of students to implement these project ideas. The education program which included 17 teachers from 6 African countries (Ethiopia, Cameroon, Sudan, Somalia, Togo, Tunisia) lasted for three months. Courses were given by Ramazan Asmatulu, Professor at Boeing Global Engineering, Mechanical Engineering Department of Wichita State University in the USA. Project topics are: Environment, Energy, Agriculture, Biology and Robotics.

3. IM Maarif Pre-School Education Program

Turkish Maarif Foundation organizes preschool education programs in 20 countries in Africa. IM Maarif Preschool Education Program developed by the Foundation and approved by the Turkish Education Board of the Turkish Ministry of National Education in 2022 started to be used after permission from the Ministries of Education of Mauritania, Madagascar, Djibouti and Congo was obtained in 2023 and the number of African countries in which this program was used increased to six.

In the countries in which Preschool Education Program was implemented, “Professional Development and Formation Education” was provided to teachers to improve their academic and pedagogical competency. For this purpose, in August 2023, an on-the-job training program was organized in Abidjan in Côte d’Ivoire for school teachers and administrators working in the Maarif schools in the French speaking region. 36 educators from 12 countries including Chad, Mali, Togo, Guinea, Gabon, Congo, Djibouti, Cameroon, Senegal, Madagascar, Côte d’Ivoire and Democratic Republic of Congo participated in the training program.

4. Maarif Agency Education Fairs

Maarif Agency organizes education fairs in different countries to contribute to the promotion of Turkish Universities abroad and to facilitate direct access of students to our universities.

Maarif Foundation organized fairs in Morocco, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia and Mali, with the participation of 59 state and foundation universities from Türkiye. The Fairs received great attention and around 12,000 people visited the fairs. As a result of the Foundation’s activities, students who had

previously been unaware of the higher education opportunities available in Türkiye have chosen to pursue their studies at Turkish universities. 3500 students graduated from foundation schools continue their education in 71 universities in Türkiye.

5. First African Maarif Games

TMV also organizes several events that aim to support physical development and athletic abilities of students. The primary objectives of these events are to bring out and improve the talents in students, develop their skills, support their physical and mental health, provide basis to give them healthy habits, to contribute to their focus, concentration, and time discipline. With these objectives in minds, First Africa Maarif Games were organized with athletes from 10 countries in Mali in 2023. The President of Turkish Maarif Foundation, Prof. Dr. Birol Akgün, Minister of Education of Mali Dedeou Ousmane, Minister of Youth and Sports of Mali Mossa Ag Attaher, Turkish Ambassador to Bamako Murat Mustafa Onart were present at the opening ceremony of 1st Africa Maarif Games which was covered by important media organizations. After the opening ceremony of Africa Games, “African Youth Session” with sports theme was organized.

In addition to Turkish Maarif Foundation schools in African countries, a high number of private and state schools in Mali also participated in Africa Maarif Games. 1500 athletes from 32 schools in 10 countries including Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Cameroon, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo and Mali competed in team sports including football, volleyball, basketball, handball, 400-meter relay race and in individual sports such as 400 meter, 100-meter running, javelin throw, shot put, long jump, high jump and swimming. All athletes who were successful were presented medals with a ceremony. 66 athletes won medals in individual sports which were watched by almost 6000 spectators and 7 trophies and 128 medals were handed out to the teams who were successful in team sports.

Rachid Shehu, a middle school athlete from Togo Maarif School won the gold medal in shot put competition at African Maarif Games. Awa Keita from Gambia International Maarif School won the silver medal in javelin throw. Jamila Véronique’e from Gabon Maarif Foundation Schools won the silver medal in long jump. Omou Konate, a 12th year student from Guinea Maarif Schools received two bronze medals in two different sports; swimming and long jump.

Bronze medal in swimming was also won by an athlete from Maarif Schools. Mohammed Julles Diori from Niger Maarif Schools won the bronze medal. Again, Haoudou Younoussa Aicha from Niger Maarif Schools succeeded to receive medals in two sports when she came second in running.

6. Achievements in 2023

Presenting a successful profile with their work in education in the countries they are located Maarif Schools show important achievements and success stories locally, nationally and internationally and let their names known. Individual and team success stories of the students of Maarif Schools in 2023 are listed below:

In June 2023, Aminata Dieye from Senegal Maarif Schools became the first in English in Concours General, one of the most prestigious exams in the country. Dileye received her award from the President of Senegal, Macky SalL.

Djenabou Fofana, a year 13 student from Guinea Maarif Schools became the first in 2023 Essay Writing Competition organized by UBA Bank and rewarded with 10 million Gnf. Fofona was accepted in the International Trade and Financing program in Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University with YTB scholarship.

International students were invited to Ethiopia Maarif Schools under the Maarif Model African Union (MMAU) program. This program received recognition from the African Union. This event is planned to be done in the African Union in 2024.

Education on personal hygiene, first aid and health awareness and parent education (psychological consultancy and health education) were provided during the project carried out by healthcare professionals in Ethiopia Maarif Schools. Furthermore, blood donation campaigns were organized in schools and a health screening program was done by healthcare professionals in Ethiopia Maarif Schools. As a result of these organizations, Ethiopia Maarif Schools received declaration of conformity for health and certificates of appreciation by the Ethiopian Ministry of Health.

A national contest titled “Hypothetical Case Competition” was organized for 11th year students by the regional education offices in cooperation with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in 2022-2023 academic year. Aymen Şemshedin and Fethiya İshak from Maarif Foundation Schools entered into the competition. The finals were held in Addis Ababa on May

22-27 2023. Fethiya Eshak was chosen as the best debater in the National Law Format Debate Competition organized in Addis Ababa.

25 students from Mali and Niger Maarif Schools were brought to Türkiye to perform their local folk dances and represent their countries in the “23 April International Children Festival” organized in Ankara and Istanbul in 2023. Additionally, students from Mali and Niger performed their folk dances in the folk-dance show organized by the Foundation together with the Directorate of Education in Istanbul at Atatürk Cultural Centre.

Ethiopia Sebata Campus students participated in the Regional Science Fair in 2022-2023 for high school students and became first for the region with their “Smart Agricultural Technologies”.

1,332 people had health screening under the health screening project carried out with the cooperation of Maarif Schools in Republic of Chad and Doctors Worldwide Türkiye. Teachers and parents received training on hygiene during the health screening program done in the local sister school of the Maarif School and the orphanage.

Students from Mauritania Nouakchott All Girl’s High School participated in the Model OIC Summit organized by the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation in Istanbul to give information about Mauritania and Maarif Schools.

Students of Guinea Maarif Schools achieved great success in the National Mock Tests. All of the students passed their middle school graduation exam successfully in 2023.

Christiane Gayelfleur Mangué Ekomi, a 6th year student from Gabon Maarif Schools achieved the top score in the national elementary school graduation exam (C.E.P.).

Students of Gabon Maarif Schools showed 100% success in national exams for elementary, middle and high school. Menie Diasso and Christ Lauren were the top scorers at elementary school level and Nguema Zoukoué had the highest score at middle school level in the country. A language festival was organized in the schools in Gabon and the students had the chance to showcase their Turkish, French, English and Spanish language skills.

Dozens of projects in environmental science, mechanics, robotics, software, chemistry, biology, physics participated in the 2. Gabon Maarif Schools Science Fair in 2023, one of the many events organized by Turkish Maarif Foundation. Projects that received prizes were exhibited.

Students from Tunisia Maarif Foundation Schools achieved great success in “Hippo International English Language Olympiad” and were invited to participate in the finals in Rome, Italy.

Students from 21 African countries participated in the International Maarif Photography Contest which is organized every year with different themes. Ally Abdulhamid’s photograph from Tanzania Maarif Schools became third in the general contest. The student was invited to Türkiye to receive his prize at the award ceremony at Istanbul Education Summit. Additionally, in the photography contest for Maarif teachers, Samuel Seifu from Ethiopia came second and Şükran Özcan from Mauritania came third.

Maarif School students in Niger achieved significant success in their academic exams. Imrane Adamou Harouna from Niger Maarif Schools came first in the region and second in the country in the BAC exams taken to enter a university in 2023.

Students of Maarif Schools in Chad achieved 100% success in BEF exams to enter high school and BAC exams to enter university.

Turkish Maarif Foundation has increased the number of schools and other educational institutions since the day it was founded and become popular in the countries it operates with the education models it has developed and combines old traditions of knowledge with the collective knowledge and universal values of humanity. Based on these values, the Foundation continues with its formal and non-formal education activities abroad with enthusiasm and dedication.

The Role of the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation in Reviving Today and Building the Future in Africa

Türkiye Diyanet Foundation*

7

Türkiye Diyanet Foundation¹ is a nongovernmental organization that provides religious and goodwill services in seven continents as a manifestation of Islamic civilization. Embracing the tradition of foundation of our ancient civilization TDF represents a movement of goodness that works to achieve social peace and inner peace, and religious, social and cultural development of the society and “prevalence of kindness in the world”. Since the day it was founded TDF has been working with the joint conscience of humanity in every area and become an example of public diplomacy movement. TDF has become the largest foundation of Türkiye with its 1003 offices in Türkiye and 149 offices around the world as of 2023. Working for the interest of both our country and the world in general, TDF is the flag bearer of the values it assumes.

* Türkiye Diyanet Foundation was established on March 13, 1975, by the then Head of Religious Affairs Dr. Lütfi Doğan, Vice Presidents of Religious Affairs Dr. Tayyar Altinkulaç and Yakup Üstün, and Personal Affairs Director Ahmet Uzunoğlu. For detailed information see .

<https://tdv.org/tr-TR/kurumsal/>

1. TDF's Activities and Operations in Africa

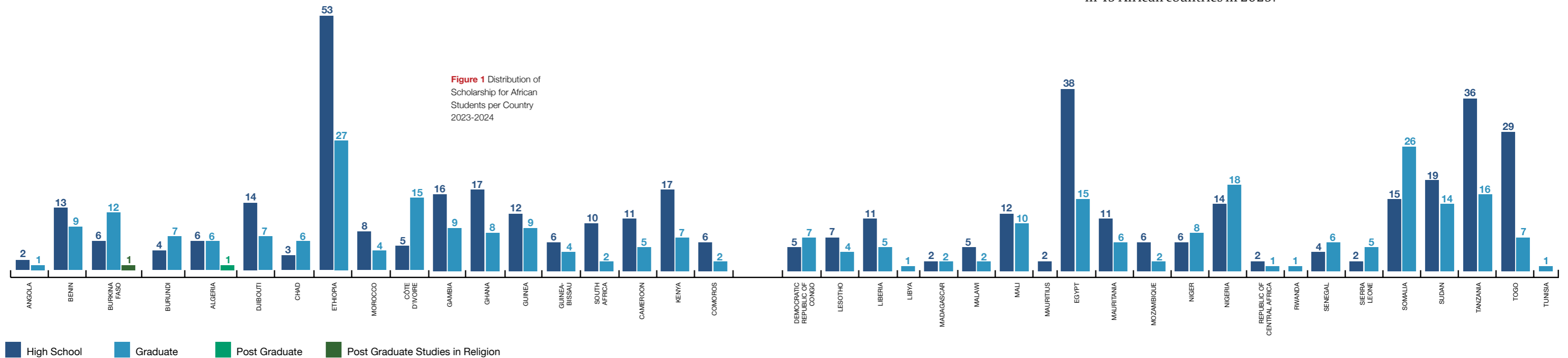
TDF builds its activities and operations in Africa with the motto “Act of Grace, Solidarity in Goodness”. In keeping with the traditions of foundation culture, TDF, like our ancestors, has a long history of goodness to the African people. Historical records show that our ancestors during the Ottoman Empire delivered food and other supplies on trains of camels to African countries to which it takes hours to reach even by plane. Therefore, TDF is “not one of those imperialist powers that took trains of camels empty to Africa and came back full but like our ancestors who took fully loaded trains of camels and received appreciation and affection in return.” TDF organizes programs and provides services in every area that is related with people in Africa.

a. Educational and Cultural Programs

Educational and cultural activities of TDF in Africa aim to contribute to the building of African societies and show both in theory and in practice that Africa belongs to Africans. Because the colonial period which started with the goal of seizing natural resources of Africa later focused also on education and culture and encompassed the entire continent. African nations that

have been exposed to French and English education were challenged with culture and language assimilation and were forced to abandon their culture and civilization. Today the continent struggles to educate enough people necessary for a structural educational reform which will be based on the cultural values of African nations. This represents a major obstacle for them to have a saying over their own people and use existing resources. Current situation encouraged TDF to start an education movement in Africa. TDF believes that building the future depends not only on sustainable development but also on educational services. Therefore, TDF has started an education campaign called “Diyanet Scholarship” to contribute to educational development of African nations.

TDF has started, in cooperation with related organizations, several scholarship and education programs including International Anadolu Imam Hatip High School Program, Project Schools for Hafız Scholarship Program, International Quran Courses Program, International Religious Studies Program, Academy of Theology Program, Special Support Academy Program, Master of Theology Academy Scholarship Program, and International Master of Theology Program. Since the very beginning, TDF has been involved in educational and cultural work and granted scholarships to middle school, high school students, to international students and academic researchers. 843 students were granted scholarship based on the interviews conducted in 43 African countries in 2023.



TDF accomplishes its mission of centuries-old foundation tradition by sharing its experience in education with our African brothers and sisters. In line with this mission, TDF also organizes curricular and extracurricular activities, workshops and clubs, vocational development courses to contribute education and development of the students whom the foundation invites to Türkiye as part of its scholarship program in science, arts and sports. TDF offers the programs for African students in Figure 1.

b. International Anadolu Imam Hatip High School Program (UAIHL)

TDF and the Ministry of Education work in cooperation to offer curriculum and programs of Imam Hatip High schools in Türkiye and provide education at this level. Female and male students between the ages of 14-16, who are not Turkish citizens and have completed middle school with good grades can apply to this program. Applications are accepted in January and February every year.

c. International Theology Program (UIP)

The objective of this program is to educate qualified and competent people who are needed in many areas including religious services and religious education, and to raise volunteer and cultural ambassadors. Female and male students between the ages of 18-25, who are Turkish citizens but have residency permit or dual citizenship in other countries and who are not Turkish citizens and have completed middle school with good grades can apply to this program. Applications are accepted in January and February every year.

d. Scholarship Program for International Postgraduate Religious Studies (UILUP)

The objective of this program is to educate students to become academics at higher learning institutions and to support development of academic staff.

e. International Support Program for Graduates of Imam Hatip High Schools

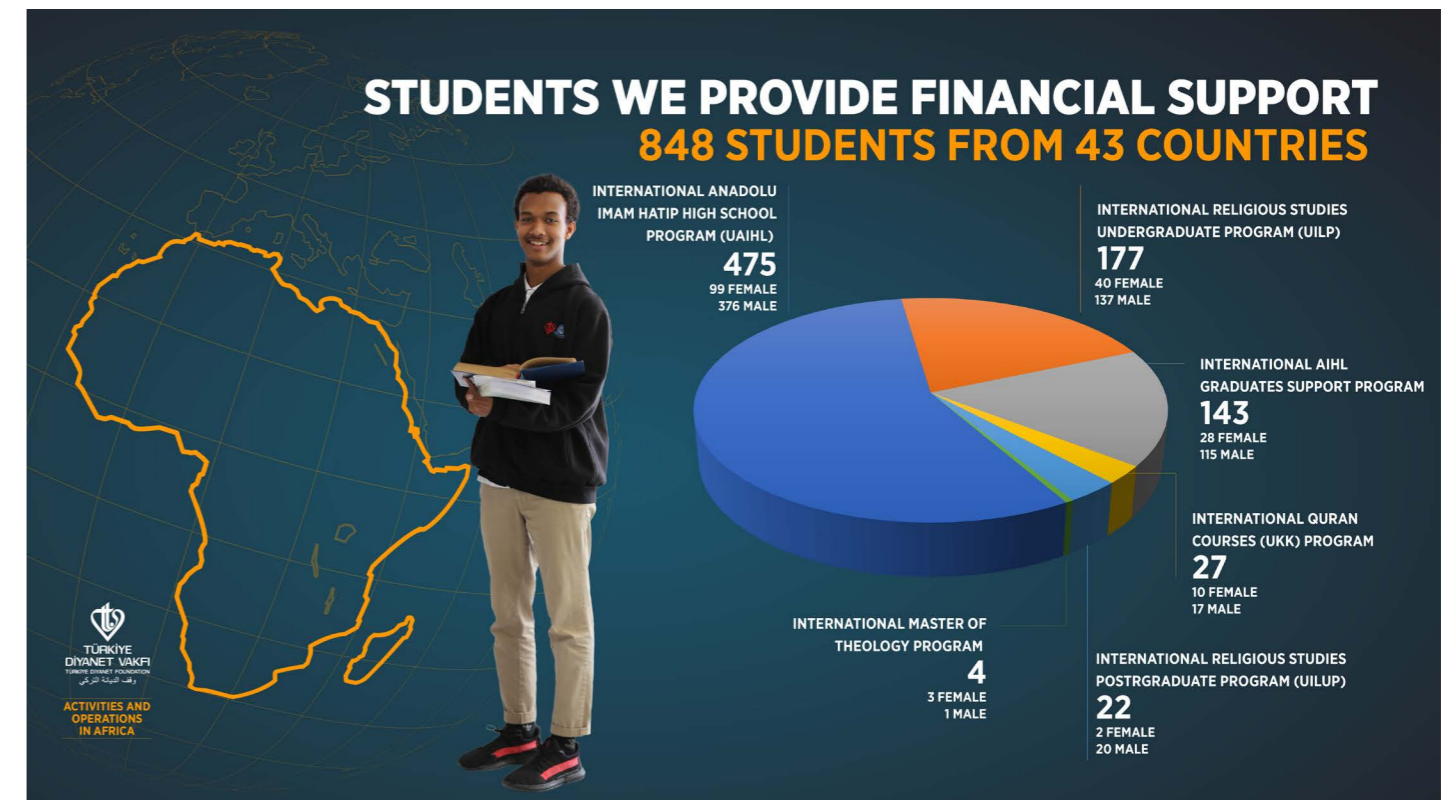
This program is designed for students who have completed their studies in the schools opened and promoted by our Foundation and in International Imam Hatip High Schools and want to continue their education in Türkiye with their own means. Applications are accepted in August and September every year.

f. International Quran Course Program (UKK)

The Presidency of Religious Affairs organizes Quran courses to contribute to the teaching of the Quran, train Hafiz, and prepare educators for Quran courses. All expenses of these students including transport, board and lodging, healthcare etc. are met by our Foundation. Students who are not Turkish citizens can also apply to the program.

g. International Master of Theology Program

International students studying in Master of Theology Centers of the Presidency of Religious Affairs to become preachers, muftis and Islamic chaplains and to train qualified personnel, are provided with scholarships, transport, health care, etc. by the Presidency of Religious Affairs. Graduates of departments of religious studies from the countries that are chosen every year can apply directly to the Presidency of Religious Affairs or through Religious Services Offices abroad.



h. Humanitarian Aid and Assistance

TDF aims to provide relief to victims of war, hunger, crisis and disaster from all religions, languages and nations and achieve a sustainable development with long term projects in these regions. The Foundation carries out its activities in African countries according to the sociocultural dynamics and sensitivities of the region. For this reason, TDF carries out its humanitarian work in accordance with “fundamental human rights and humanitarian norms”. TDF carries out its activities in collaboration with the international offices of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, our embassies and non-governmental organisations. The following lists shows humanitarian aid and assistance delivered in African countries:

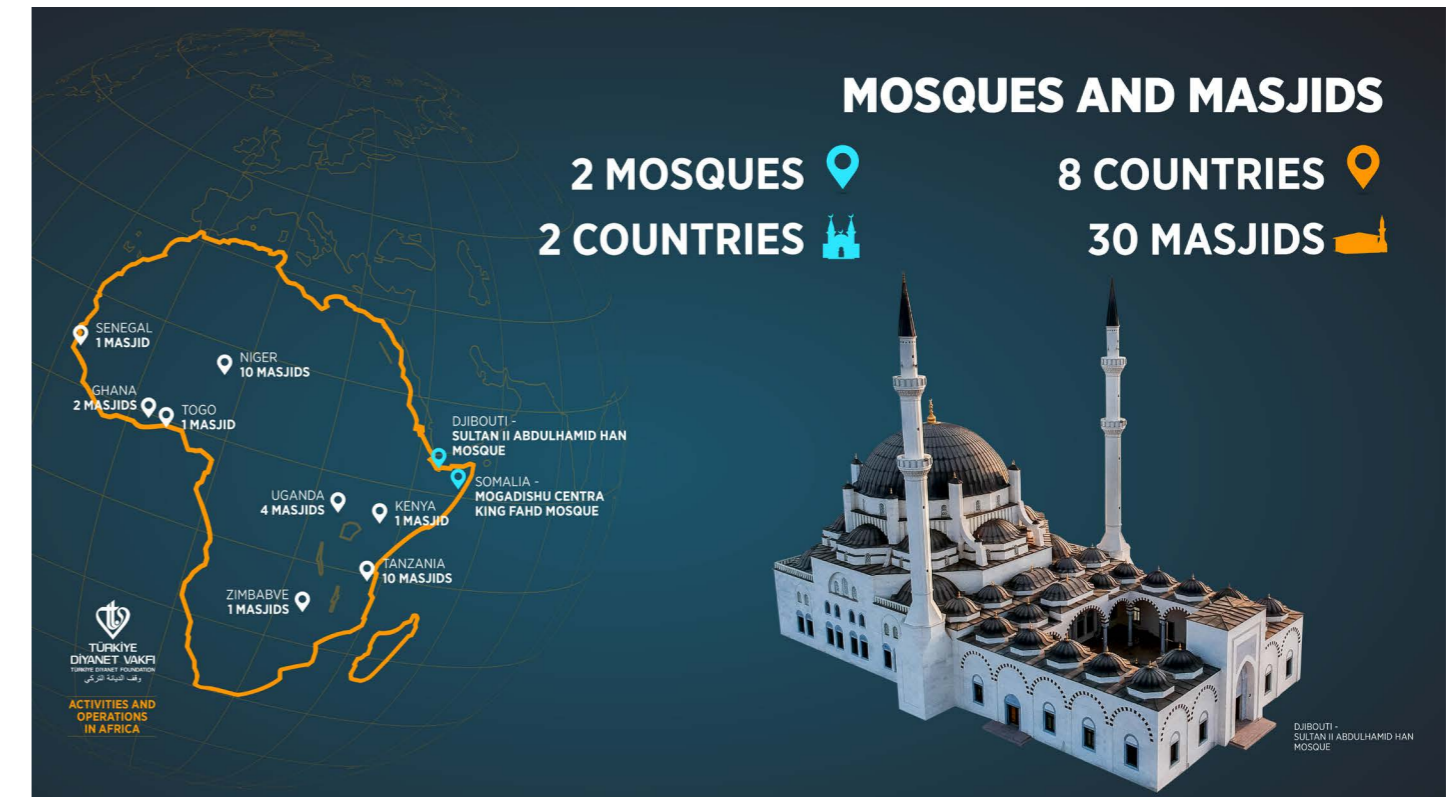
- Humanitarian aid and assistance delivered to conflict zones and disaster affected areas
- Healthcare aid
- Projects for water wells and fountains
- Qurban (sacrifice) by proxy
- Projects for building mosques, masjids and madrassahs
- Support to religious and social services

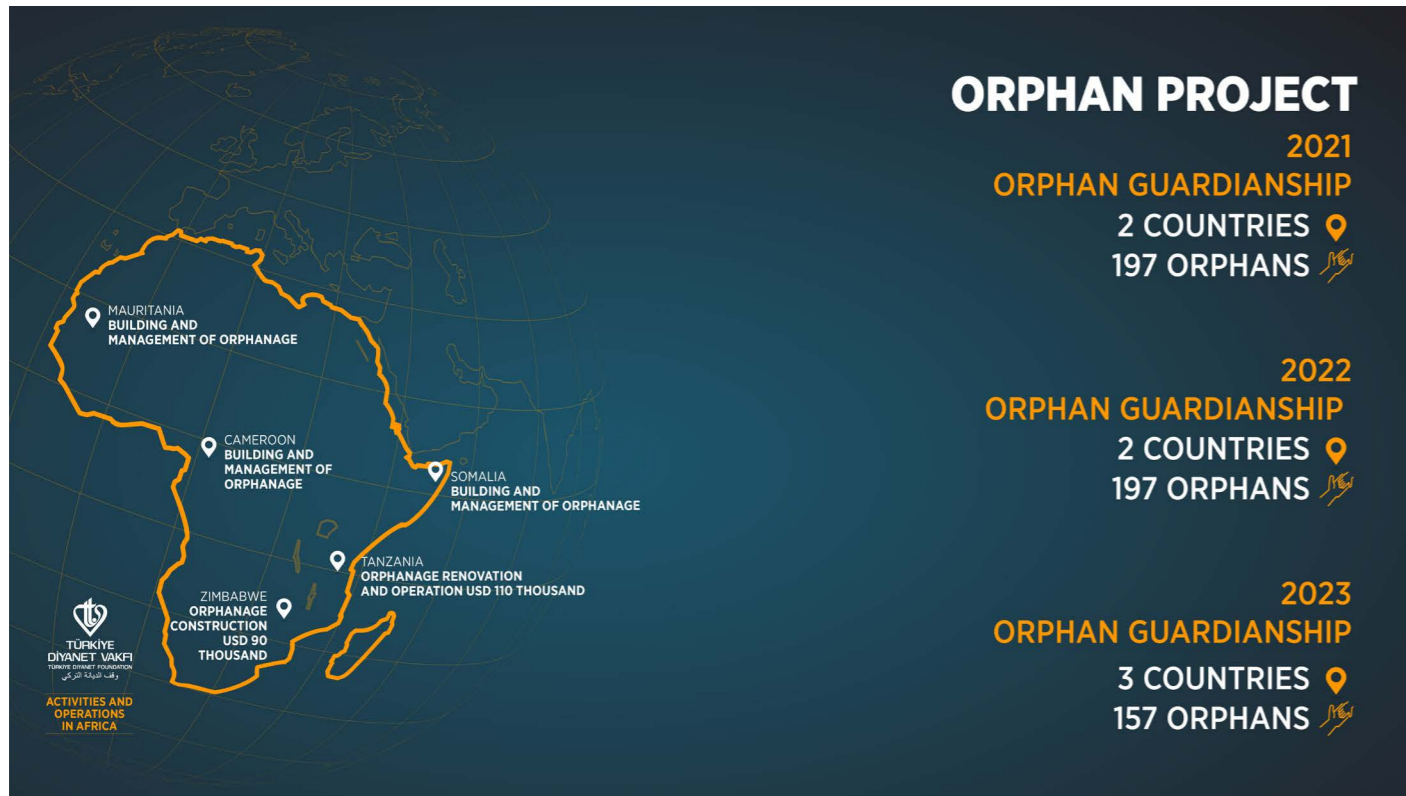
- TDF started “A Drop of Life” project to provide services in countries in which access to clean water is not possible due to financial problems on the African continent where majority of the population are Muslim.

The goal with the Water Well and Fountain project is to meet daily water needs of people in African countries and to improve agricultural productivity which is affected by droughts. With this goal in mind, 393 water wells were drilled and fountains were built in African countries in 2023. In total 1,178 water wells were drilled and fountains were built in Africa with this project.

The Foundation builds mosques and masjids in Africa mixing local architecture with the architectural characteristics of our civilization.

Mosques and masjids are very important for the African people since they serve as both as place of worship and place of learning. Requests for mosques and masjids from African countries as well as for copies of Quran and Islamic publications are met by TDF. During this process TDF provides these services taking into consideration language, sect, and even reading and writing differences in each African Country. In 2023 146,750 copies of Quran in 40 languages and dialects were presented as gifts to African students who were





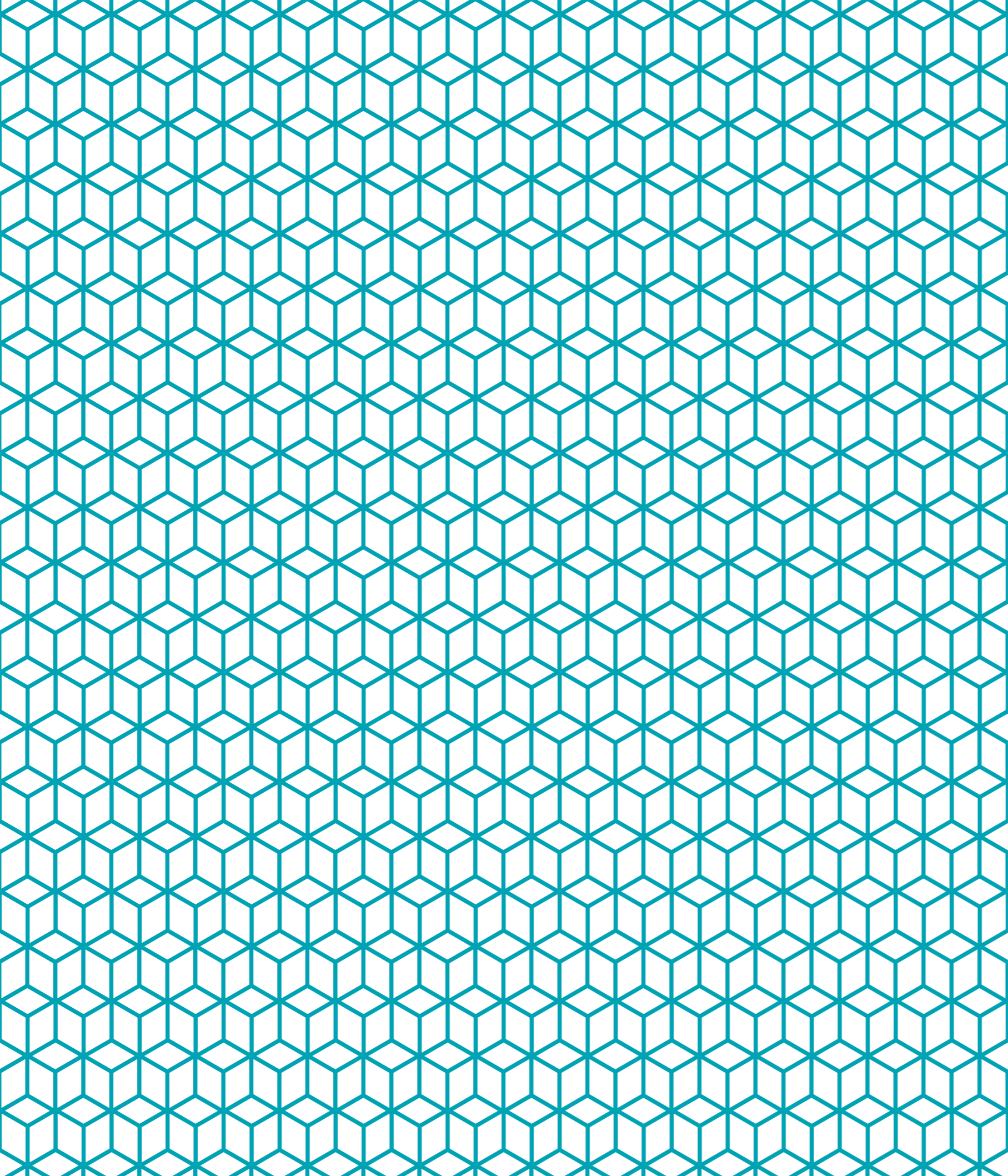
2. Evaluation

TDF is a movement of goodness based on Islam and the ancient culture of our country. TDF is a good example of Türkiye’s public diplomacy in Africa, working in all areas that involve people, from education and culture to social services. TDF’s activities and work in Africa has been increasing. Religious Services Offices in Africa under the Presidency of Religious Affairs help to increase and improve such activities. TDF’s presence in Africa continues to increase and create value with the support of our consultants and attachés in Tanzania, Chad, Mali, Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Nigeria, Niger, Ghana and Djibouti.

studying religious education in 54 African countries as part of the “My Present is Quran” campaign.

TDF delivers presents from our people to our brothers and sisters in Africa every year in Ramadan and Eid-al-Adha. In 2023 593,806 pieces of qurbani meat were delivered to people in need during the “Share Your Qurbani, Get Closer to Your Brother” campaign. Such campaigns were organized taking special care of the dignity of people with the motto “Until Goodness Prevails on Earth” These campaigns and organizations build a bridge of goodness between the Turkish people and African nations.

While building this bridge of goodness, TDF has also concentrated on improving the lives of orphans in Africa. Starting the “Orphan Guardianship” program with the motto “If You Neglect Him, He Remain Orphans”, TDF found guardians for 157 orphans in 3 countries in 2023.



Support of African Countries to Türkiye Following the Earthquakes on February 6, 2023

Mehmet Güllüoğlu*

1. Introduction

2023 has been a long year for Türkiye. More than 50 thousand people in 11 cities died in multiple earthquakes on 6th of February at the beginning of 2023. Thousands of people were injured and millions of people lost their homes. From the first moment of the earthquake the Ministry of Interior declared level 4 disaster and announced Türkiye's request for international help. The support of bilateral relations and international mechanisms were also felt during this process. Search and rescue teams, equipment and tools, search and rescue dogs, and later disaster relief kits and goods and financial assistance and support arrived thanks to these bilateral relations. Disaster relief supplies were also delivered to Syria which was much less affected from the earthquake, due to poorer conditions and limited resources in the country. Furthermore, many multilateral organizations such as United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) as well as international mechanisms also provided humanitarian aid and assistance.

* Turkish Ambassador to Dar Es Salaam

In short, hundreds of countries sent aid and assistance to Türkiye following the devastating earthquake. However, Africa needs to be discussed in detail and long in this process. Africa has been fighting against colonialism, survived through major wars, internal conflicts, drought and poverty for centuries. All countries in Africa have their own unique stories. Although each country in Africa has been host to several civilizations at different times in their history, they shared the same faith in the last century. Therefore, every country has been affected more or less by colonial rule. There are countries which fought against colonialists and won.¹ Or there are countries that have continued their relations with colonialists that use new colonialism methods or struggled to get out of this vicious circle.² This paper will discuss the support of African countries to Türkiye after the major earthquakes on February 6, 2023.

2. We Walk with Pride

Türkiye's relations with Africa have always been positive and close both in Ottoman times and in 21st century. Although there are differences in some countries' historical relations with the Ottoman Empire, the image of the Ottoman Empire is generally positive in most of the countries and nations ruled by the Empire. Ottoman Empire is reported to rule by respecting the language, religion and conditions of the local people and compared to colonialist powers, the nations ruled by the Ottoman Empire also report that the Empire had a different administrative approach. This approach allows Modern Türkiye to walk with pride in Africa which the country returned after a century and to justify the claim "we do not have any colonial legacy, we come here as brothers and sisters".

Especially since 2010s with the African Initiative Policy, Türkiye has continued to win the hearts of African people with increasing number of embassies in Africa, with Turkish Airlines flights, TİKA offices, Scholarships of YTB in Türkiye, with non-governmental organizations, investments on the continents, with its business people and courage in risky areas. These are directly reflected in the relations between ministries. Trade volumes which increase every year demonstrate this clearly. Our non-governmental organizations implement longer term development projects and open schools. In addition, Somalia and Türkiye are working together to run one of the best equipped hospitals in Somalia and to train hundreds of health workers. Around 200 Maarif Schools in Africa provide education to tens of thousands

¹ Like Morocco, Algeria.

² West African countries such as Niger and Mali.

³ Gökhan Kavak, "Aid from African Countries to Turkey After the Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes", *Olgu Journal of Sociology*, Vol.2, Issue:1, 2023, p.2., <https://doi.org/10.58632/olgusos.1308909>, Date of Access: 28.05.2024.

of students. There are many other examples to testify to this strong and close relationship.

A century seems like a short time in international relations and history. But the past century has been one of the longest in human history. For our country, a world war was fought and our Empire fell. And the new state both fought the War of Independence and strived to build the economic, physical and human infrastructure of the country. Türkiye became one of the first countries to engage in anti-colonialist resistance and emerge victorious. This continues to serve as an exemplar for Africa. For the continent of Africa, the experience of African citizens who were compelled to engage in armed conflict for the benefit of external powers during both the First and Second World Wars, while the legacies of colonialism and slavery remained, was characterised by a period of internal strife, economic deprivation and the eventual attainment of full and partial independence, achieved at considerable cost. However African countries should have been among the richest countries in the world if we compare their natural resources with those in other parts of the world.

Keeping this information at bay, devastating multiple earthquakes happened in Kahramanmaraş and Hatay on February 6, 2023. While all forms of assistance from around the globe are invaluable, the support and assistance provided by African countries holds a special significance for the Turkish people. Burundi, one of the most impoverished countries in the world in terms of income per capita, deployed a search and rescue team. Senegalese search and rescue teams demonstrated remarkable resolve in responding to the crisis, despite lacking the essential winter clothing and equipment. Business people and benevolent societies in South Africa immediately organized fund-raising campaigns and sent both financial and in-kind support to Türkiye.

Somalia, one of the countries that Türkiye has helped the most was also one of the African countries that helped Türkiye the most according to their income per capita. Somalia businesses and the public have collectively provided millions of dollars in humanitarian aid to Türkiye.

Disaster assistance and emergency relief, search and rescue teams, prayers and condolences as shown in the media by the countries were listed by Gokhan Kavak from Anadolu Agency.³ Accordingly:

"Although relations Türkiye has built with African countries have been strong since the Ottoman Empire times, steps taken especially in the last 20 years have a significant place in the foreign policy of Türkiye. The direction of these

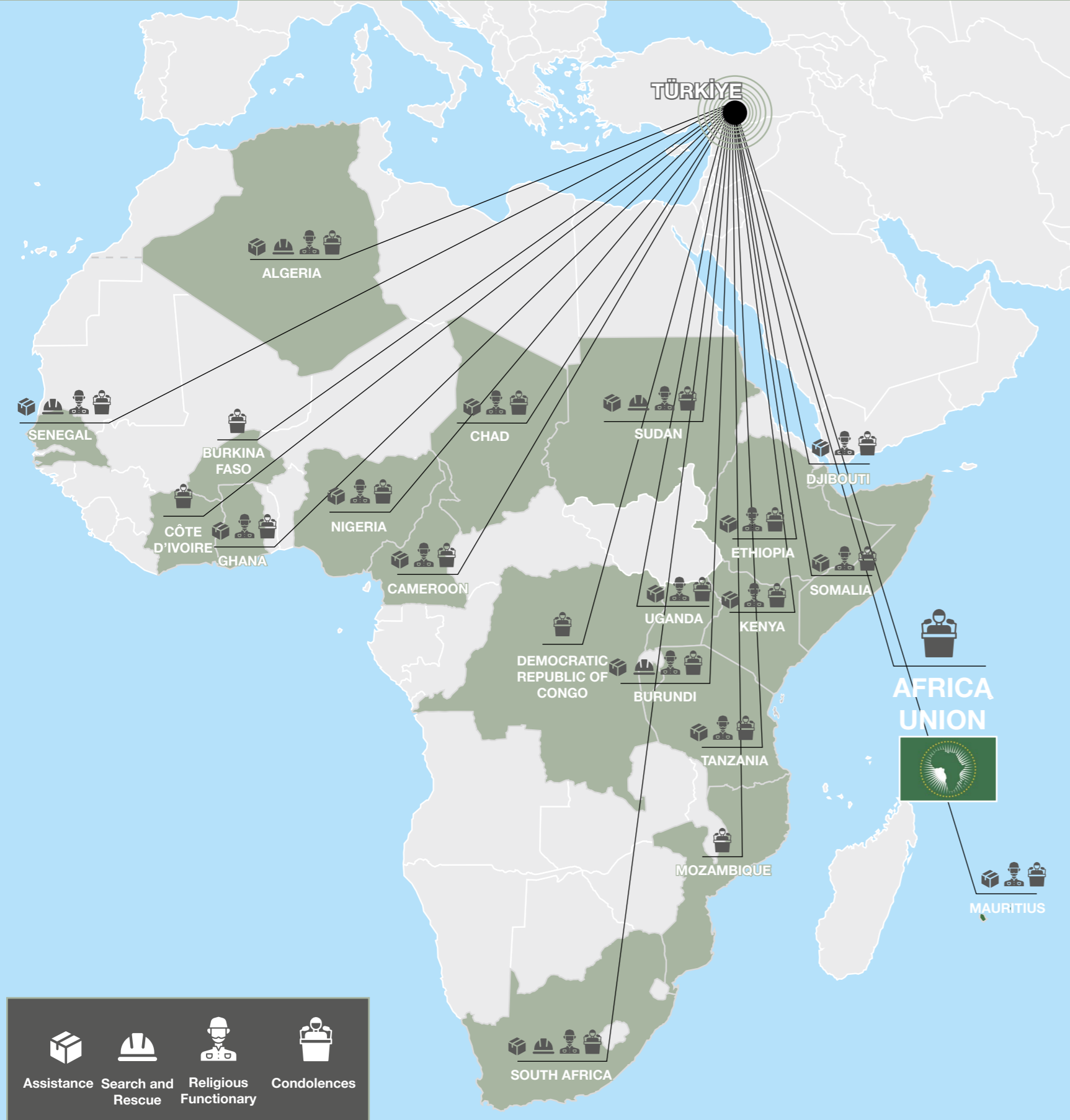


Figure-1: Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Aid from African Countries to the Earthquake Affected Areas (Source: Gökhan Kavak, "Aid from African Countries to Turkey After the Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes", Samsun Üniversitesi Olgu Sosyoloji Dergisi, Vol.2, No.1, 2023, p. 20-35.)

relations in different areas has been mostly from Türkiye to African countries. However, after the devastation and loss of thousands of lives in the earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş on February 6, disaster assistance and relief and support messages flowed from Africa to Türkiye. This study examined help and support of African governments and non-governmental organization and also individuals following the appeal for international assistance following the devastating earthquake in Türkiye. This study investigated humanitarian response from African countries to Türkiye and messages of support and condolences from the continent following the earthquake. On the other hand, the research investigated the help and support of African students studying in Türkiye to earthquake victims. This research revealed and evaluated the actions and steps taken by African countries to help Türkiye in those difficult times."

Some of these countries were able to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian relief aid despite the ongoing internal conflicts and economic challenges they were facing. Financial assistance and other forms of emergency aid were delivered to Türkiye via diplomatic missions, government agencies, and non-governmental organisations based in Türkiye. Many African countries prayed for Türkiye and Turkish people and those who could help did help during the difficult times of Türkiye. Not only African people living in faraway lands but also African students studying and African people living in Türkiye physically helped, or provided financial and moral support to relief campaigns. The devastating earthquakes resulted in very difficult times for Türkiye and this special period between Türkiye and Africa which showed that the bonds between Türkiye and Africa were indeed strong. The Turkish proverb "He who gives more gives from his wealth, he who gives less gives from the heart," was proved to be correct for the African countries after the earthquakes in Türkiye. Not only the riches but ordinary people of these countries made donations into disaster relief accounts. People who sent one or five dollars demonstrated solidarity with Türkiye.

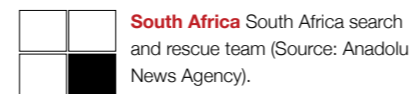
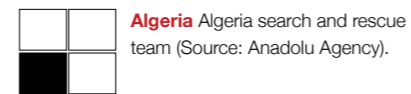
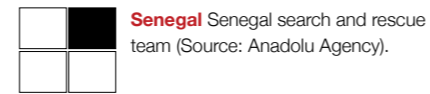
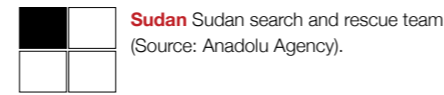
3. What's Next

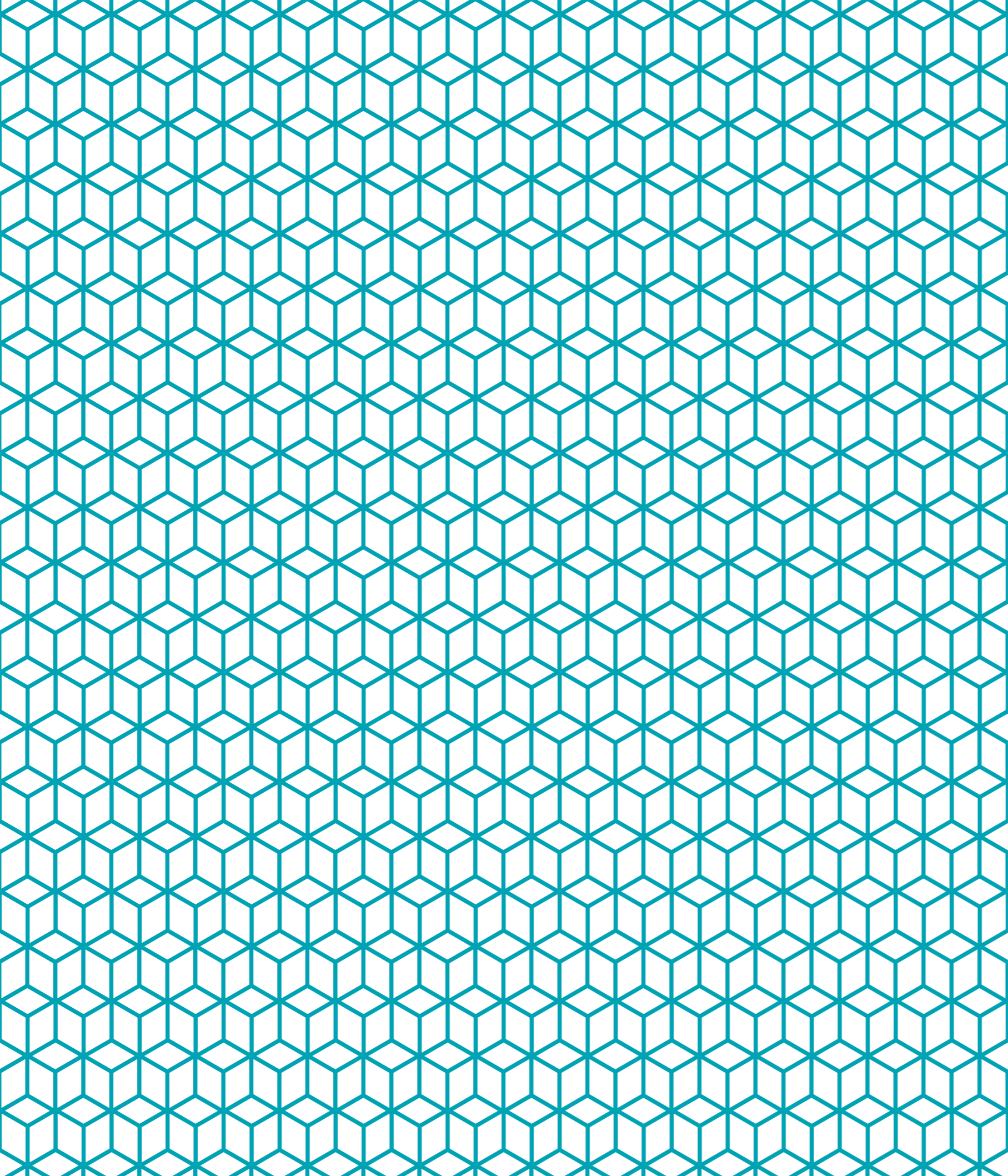
The disaster management process is still the subject of discussion in many countries around the world, with attention focused on the successes and challenges encountered. Disasters will continue to be in the agenda of every country. Each country experiences different types of disasters, which they should be prepared to respond. African countries should be prepared against these disasters while continuing with their development efforts. While disasters are a significant concern for all countries, they present a particularly

acute challenge for developing countries, as they can impede economic and social development. Therefore, there are many lessons to be learned for African countries from this painful experience and successes and failures of the organizations in Türkiye. Türkiye has experienced a multitude of disasters including most notably earthquakes and floods. This creates a major learning opportunity for friendly nations with the country's vast experience in such disasters.

4. Conclusion

The relationship between Türkiye and Africa is undergoing a period of significant growth and strengthening. Despite the challenges faced, the relationship between Türkiye and Africa has grown stronger over time. Cooperation among organizations is also a part of this relation. African nations and Türkiye are like two people who stay lifelong friends. And this shows in win-win relations that can be seen in many areas. This relation is growing stronger with 44 embassies in 54 African countries, Turkish Airlines that fly to the highest number of destinations in Africa, Turkish Maarif Foundation with its hundreds of schools on the continent and with nongovernmental organizations that contribute to development aid and humanitarian aid. Additionally Turkish companies are popular companies in public bids for construction of railways, ports, public buildings. Finally, this relation that can grow with people who care for Africa is very valuable. Both Turkish people and African people are known to be emotional. However, this relation should be transformed into win-win relations in commercial, cultural, academic, social and other areas of life. It should be remembered that many old and new actors lie in wait for any opportunity to exploit these nations and lands.





Türkiye’s Heart Line: Turkish Airlines

Turkish Airlines

1. Introduction

Turkish Airlines commenced operations in 1933 with a fleet of five aircraft and 24 personnel. By the end of 2023, it had become the first airline to fly to the highest number of destinations and countries, with a fleet of 440 aircraft and a workforce of almost 84,000 personnel. The first international flight was to Athens in Europe in 1947, the first flight to Africa was to Cairo in 1956, the first flight to Far East was to Singapore in 1986 and the first flight to the USA was to New York in 1988. Its wide network contributes to its profitability but also to the development of cultures and economies.

In 2023, Turkish Airlines carried its one billionth passenger. The airline has set a goal of doubling its capacity and increasing the number of aircraft to more than 800 over the next ten years. This expansion is intended to facilitate connections between countries, cultures, and people. It is part of the Airline’s 2023-2033 Strategic Plan and is designed to enhance its reputation as a valuable brand in the aviation sector. This paper will cover the operations of Turkish Airlines that connects the two worlds in 2023.

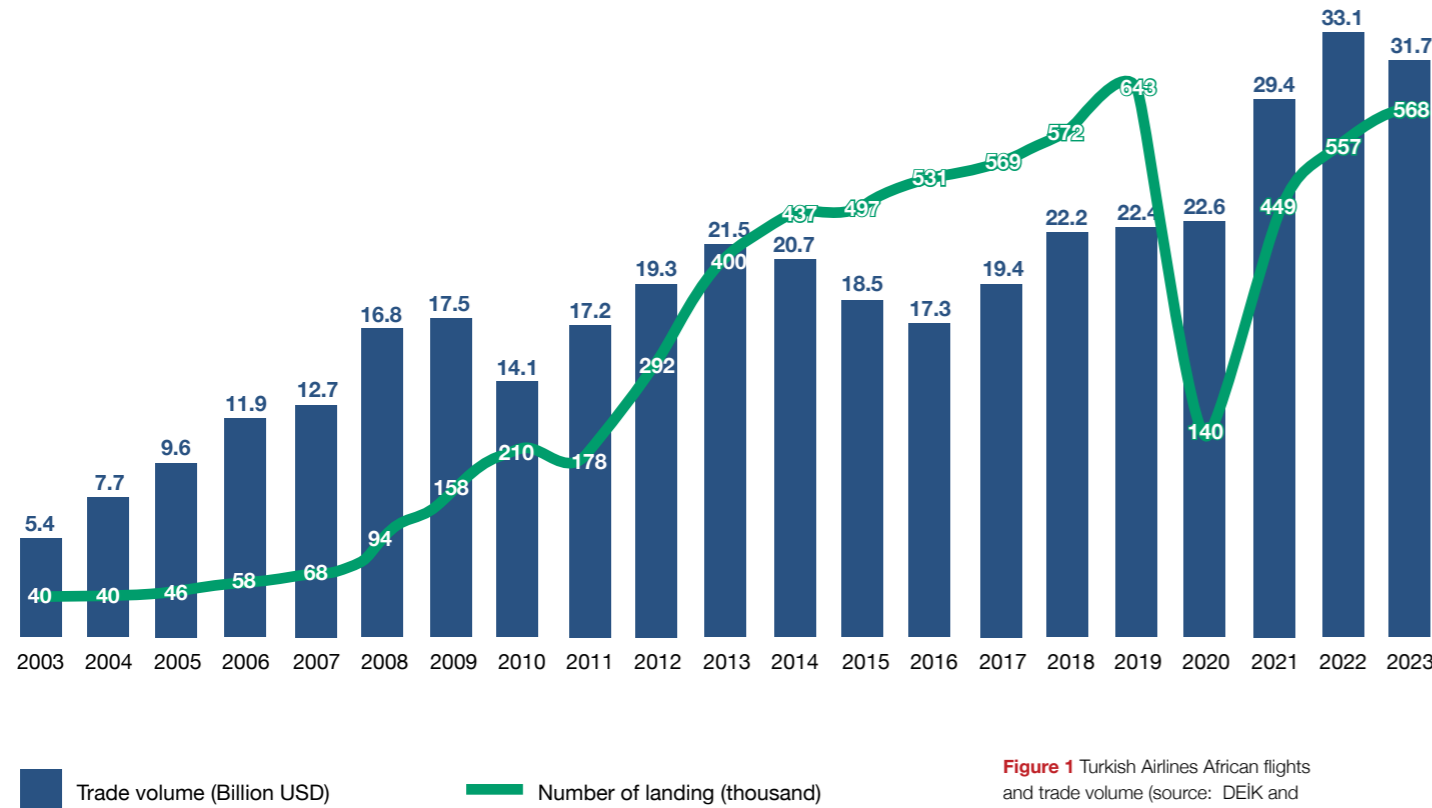


Figure 1 Turkish Airlines African flights and trade volume (source: DEİK and Turkish Airlines)

important countries such Nigeria,¹ Ghana,² Senegal,³ were added and the total number of destinations reached to 18.

Turkish Airlines bought Boeing 737-900ER aircrafts with auxiliary fuel tanks in 2011 and used single-aisle aircrafts for longer hauls improving its route variety and depth. Starting from 2012, in addition to short and medium haul flights, Turkish Airlines started to fly medium and long-haul flights with wide-body aircrafts and the number of destinations in Africa increased to 33 by the end of that year. Turkish Airlines increased its capacity by 38 percent in 2012 compared to the previous year and the number of passengers for Africa also increased by 50 percent. Turkish Airlines increased the number of cities it flies significantly by increasing the flight frequency and adding new destinations in several African countries including Tanzania, Nigeria, Ghana and South Africa. Turkish Airlines's African operations became more effective with the use of wide-body aircrafts and the number of passengers increased significantly in 2016.

In 2020 Turkish Airlines had to suspend its operations temporarily just like the other airlines in the industry due to the pandemic. However, Turkish Airlines continues to be present in Africa with cargo flights and flights for humanitarian aid during the pandemic. It carried medical supplies and food to help the countries on the continent in their fight with the pandemic. Turkish

¹ Africa's 4th largest economy with the highest population.
² The country has rich natural resources.
³ The country is one of the important trade centers

Airlines' performance returned back to its 2019 level in the post-pandemic period in 2022 and in 2023 it increased in capacity by 8 percent compared to pre-pandemic period strengthening its position on the continent.

Turkish Airlines increased its passengers flying to Africa more than 17-fold and the number of weekly flights more than 15-fold in the last 20 years thanks to African Initiative Policy and following strategy. In 2023 the number of passengers for the African region increased by 7.7 percent compared to 2022 reaching to 3.9 million and the share of passengers to and from this region was 8 percent of the total international passengers of Turkish Airlines. Similarly, the income from the region corresponded to 8 percent of the total income of Turkish Airlines in 2023.

4. Turkish Airlines Cargo Flights to Africa

Just like passenger flights, cargo flights also affect the development of commercial relations between countries. Turkish Airlines contributes to the African Initiative to the world and to the growth of the economy of the region not only with passenger flights but also with cargo flights and in 2023 in addition to existing destinations, Turkish Airlines had cargo flights to 13 other destinations and the amount of freight carried by the airline increased by 6.7 compared to the previous year reaching to 137 thousand tons. Turkish Airlines delivered perishable products including flowers, fruits and vegetables fast and safely to the rest of the world.

5. The Door to Trading with Africa

Air traffic between countries has a direct effect on the development of these countries' economy and trade volume. Each new destination or increased frequency for a destination increases commercial and cultural interactions between countries and between African and the rest of the world. Turkish Airlines increasing presence in Africa has acted like a catalyst to increase the trade volume between Türkiye and the African continent.

For example, between the years of 2003-2013 the number of countries in Turkish Airlines' flight network in African region increased 5-fold and the trade volume between Türkiye and Africa saw an increase of 4-fold. Between the years of 2013-2023 the number of countries in Turkish Airlines' flight network in African region increased 1.6-fold and the trade volume between Türkiye and Africa saw an increase of 1,5-fold.



Source: Turkish Airlines

6. Conclusion

Turkish Airlines have become a global brand with its stability and innovativeness in the aviation industry since 1933. Turkish Airlines' operations in Africa have made significant contributions not only commercially but also in humanitarian aid and diplomacy. The wide flight network of Turkish Airlines in Africa has increased economic and cultural interactions in the region contributing significantly to the integration of Africa to global markets.

Turkish Airlines continues to work with the goal of connecting more countries and more people in line with its sustainable growth strategies and aims to strengthen its presence on the African continent. The goals of Turkish Airlines are to create new success stories and reinforce its position as a leader in the global aviation industry.

With the value it has created in the aviation industry and successful operations in Africa Turkish Airlines will continue to be an important regional and global actor.



Activities of Anadolu Agency in Africa in 2023

Anadolu Agency

10

1. Introduction

Anadolu Agency (AA) is one of the most prominent news agencies in the world covering all geographies from Europe to Asia and from Africa to Americas. Therefore, the African continent which is expected to have more global influence in the future and has a great economic and human force potential is also among the natural relation network of AA. Africa's ground and underground sources, human capital, culture, young population, economies that are open for development, and improving political stability demonstrate that the continent will be at the heart of global agenda in the future.

Activities of AA on the African continent focus on building relations in three different areas; bilateral agreements, education programs and content creation. Therefore, this paper will provide information about these relation processes. The paper will first discuss bilateral agreements then education programs and provide more information about content creation process which includes the most intense network of relations of AA in Africa.

2. Bilateral Agreements

Bilateral agreements constitute a significant part of AA's relations with Africa. The majority of these agreements are concerned with the exchange of content, and allow the parties to engage in educational visits and to share experiences. These agreements are generally about sharing certain number of news, photos and videos on a monthly basis. Therefore, the respective countries can have information from direct primary sources. The significance of such content lies in its capacity to facilitate the acquisition of distinctive coverage and visual materials during periods of exceptional circumstances, wherein only the most efficacious news agency within a given country is granted access to information sources.

AA has entered into agreements with news agencies in various African countries at different stages of the contractual process. The aforementioned agreements may be classified into the following categories: (1) valid and effective agreements, (2) agreements that have expired, (3) agreements that are still being negotiated, and (4) agreements that are expected to be signed. AA is in the process of making or has already made bilateral agreements with 18 news agencies in 54 countries in Africa. Lack of an equivalent news agency or having no response from news agencies to requests for cooperation are the reasons why the number of bilateral agreements with news agencies in Africa is limited for the moment. However, it is expected that this will be improved with the developments in politics in Türkiye, Africa and in the world and the number of bilateral agreements which are a significant part of AA's relations with Africa will increase in the future.

3. Education and Training Courses

Education and training courses constitute an important part of the activities of AA in Africa. These educational programs organized by AA, in which people from many countries participate are also popular in Africa.

414 people have participated in AA educational programs in Africa. Participants from Egypt to South Africa, from Ethiopia to Burkina Faso participate in a wide variety of education and training programs. These include war reporting course and courses on international media, economy-finance journalism, new generation journalism, journalism in crisis and conflict situations, energy journalism to name a few. The countries which are most interested in AA courses are Algeria, Ethiopia, Morocco, Gambia, Cameroon, Kenya, Egypt, Namibia, Nigeria, Sudan, Somalia and Tunisia.

These courses allow news agencies to have access to a wide variety of training and education which are very difficult to find on the continent and provide opportunity for AA to have contacts and develop relations with new agencies in Africa.

4. Content Creation

With the goal of becoming one of the biggest news agencies in the world AA is interested in all regions of the world and shows its interest in Africa with the content it creates. Africa News Office plays an important role in this process. With 10 employees and freelance journalists working all around the continent, Africa News Office of AA reports news both in Turkish and in other languages. In addition to AA Africa News Office, AA reports news in the original language or news translated into 13 languages in which the agency broadcasts regularly.

Africa News Office which plays a central role in AA's relations with Africa has a branch in Abuja, Nigeria. However, AA had to close its office in Khartoum because the civil war started on 15 April in Sudan affected Khartoum heavily and it became difficult to keep the office safe. On the other hand, AA Africa News Office has two senior journalists in Senegal and Istanbul, one journalist in South Africa, one in Cameroon, one in Nigeria and two journalists in Istanbul. In addition to the above there are freelance journalists working for AA in Somalia, Chad, Sudan and a freelance journalist who occasionally work for AA in Central Africa.

In 2023 the devastating civil war and displacement of millions of people in Sudan, coups in Mali and Burkina Faso and later in Niger, and military taking over government in Gabon in West Africa following elections made their marks on the African continent in 2023. Antagonism against France in Francophone Africa after the coups in previous year continued this year and France had to withdraw all military force which it had moved to Africa as part of Operation Barkhane. In addition to above, French ambassadors were declared persona non grata; bilateral commercial agreements were cancelled and French was removed from the list of official languages of countries. In 2023 there were presidential elections in many countries including Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Madagascar, Sierra Leone and Democratic Republic of Congo.

All the above-mentioned events were made into news by Africa News Office with photos and graphics and serviced everywhere in the world to inform the public about what was happening in Africa. Bola Ahmet Tinubu won



the presidency election in Nigeria and Tinubu who at an advance age was battling with health problems had to run the country with many problems including terrorist organizations, crime syndicates and a serious economic crisis. AA covered the election process on-site and created fast news using a wide variety of visuals. In 2023 terrorism and violence continued in the problematic regions of Africa and events in Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Republic of Central Africa, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, South Sudan and Cameroon were made into news. AA covered the negotiations about the Great Renaissance Dam built by Ethiopia, which has caused tension between Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia in the eastern Africa for many years.

One of the important agenda of AA in Africa has been the image of Africa. Human stories were made into news to improve the image of Africa in the world, which has been on the news with numerous coups, conflicts and poverty. Many visuals including photos and videos were used in these stories which show the nature, colorful culture and human life in Africa to contribute to a more positive image for Africa both in the national and international media. Special news that touched human life was made from South Africa, Cameroon, Senegal, Nigeria, Sudan and Somalia where there were AA journalists.

The number of routine news of Africa News Office was 3,583 in 2023. The number of exclusive news was 202 and journalists working in the office took more than one thousand photos and more than 100 videos to make the news more visual.

The goals of AA for the coming years are to cover more news from Africa with more journalists and photo journalists, to deploy more journalists in the field, to send journalists to important and influential countries of the region, to provide news services in more languages, to increase the interests of new journalists in Africa. AA aims to employ journalists in more countries to become one of the most powerful and effective news agencies in Africa. AA plans to hire new journalists who are interested in Africa and know the languages spoken in Africa or send existing ones to Africa and to cooperate with journalism schools on the continent via Turkish organizations operating in Africa including TİKA, Turkish Maarif Foundation, Yunus Emre Institute.

In addition to journalism in Africa, field management and international visibility is also important for AA. For this purpose, in 2023 AA participated in Africa CEO Forum which is organized annually in Côte d'Ivoire. AA conducted a lot of interviews in the forum and had meetings to evaluate cooperation opportunities with other organizations. Based on the work of AA in

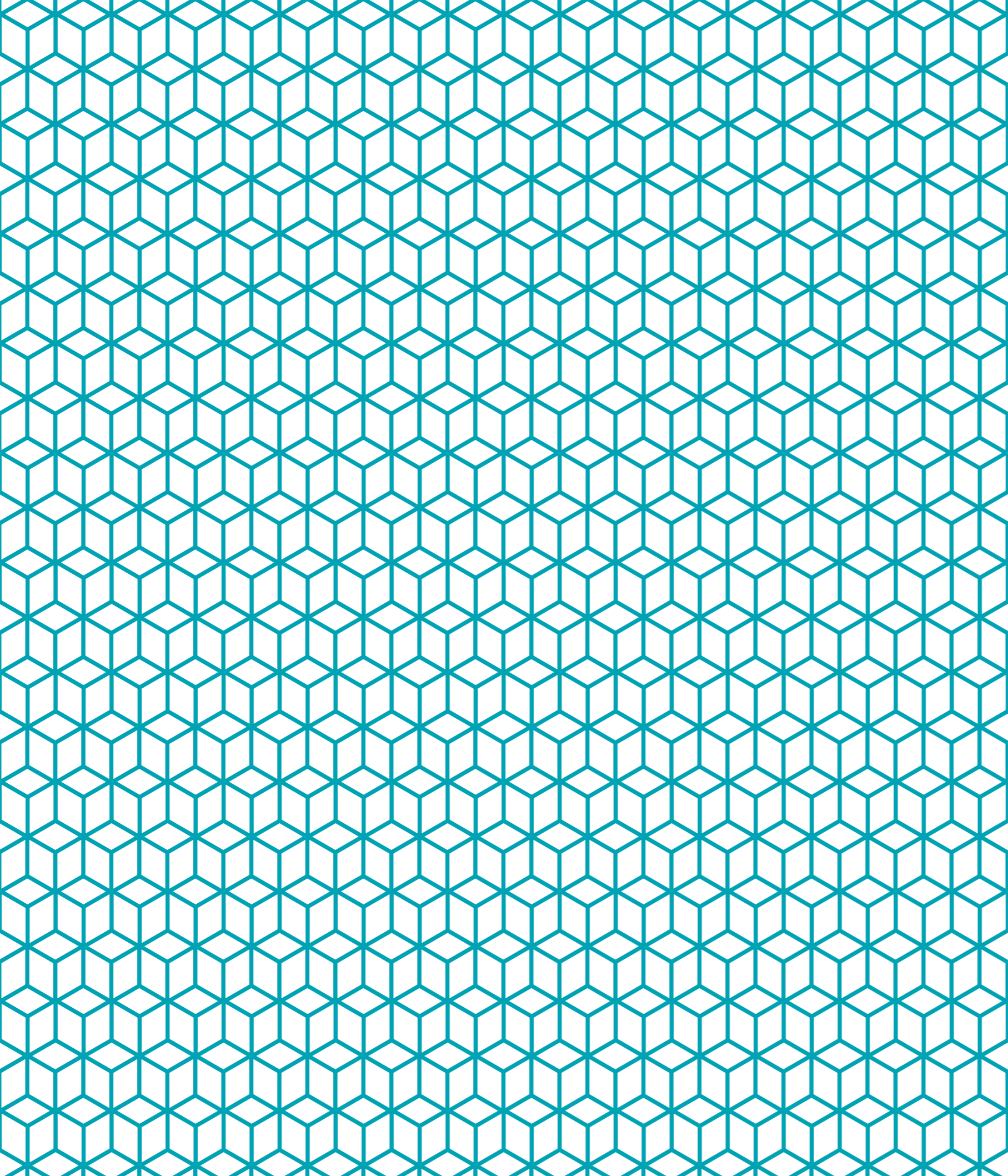
this forum, the organizers appointed AA as the communication sponsor at the World Education Forum organized in Qatar.

In 2023 5,426 photographs, 727 videos and 44 graphics were used in the news from Africa. In addition to Africa News Office, English News Office delivered a total of 1,767 news stories and 195 exclusive news about Africa; Arabic News Office a total of 741 news stories; French News Office delivered a total of 1,111 news stories, 31 photos, 29 videos about Africa; Russian News Office delivered a total 88 news stories with the keyword 'Africa'; Persian News Office delivered 229 news stories, 16 photos, 16 videos and 2 graphs about Africa; Kurdish News Office delivered via translation from Turkish 69 news stories, 6 photo galleries, 29 videos; Macedonian News Office delivered 69 news stories, 6 photo galleries, 29 videos; Albanian News Office delivered 97 news stories, 6 photo galleries and 18 videos about Africa in 2023. All these data give an idea about the statistics of the content created by AA about Africa and a qualitative indicator of its interest in the continent.

5. Conclusion

As a conclusion, as one of the leading news agencies in the world AA has direct contacts with the African continent, creates its own content about Africa and when this is not possible, has direct access to primary sources of information. AA's relation with Africa includes signing bilateral agreements with local and international news agencies; establishing direct contacts through courses and educational activities that also include employees of the news agencies working on the continent and posting regular news with visual content created by its journalists working in the field.

AA's relations with Africa have been improving and have established more relations in recent years and the number of AA journalists in the field has been increasing. Africa, with its population nearing 2 billion by 2050, is estimated to have more influence and presence in every area in the world in the coming years according to 2050 projections and AA is expected to develop its relations with the continent.



TRT Africa: Telling Africa as it is

TRT Africa

1. Introduction

Started broadcasting on March 31, 2023 TRT Africa has since become a reliable source of information for both local and international media outlets. With its international team broadcasting in four languages, TRT Africa provides its audiences with immediate access to information about significant events occurring across the globe. TRT Africa uses social media and new media content and tools effectively to meet the requirements of a universal news source.

Africa has been subject to exploitation by the West for centuries and Western news agencies and media organizations have continued this fashion. Africa is depicted by these news agencies and organizations very different and more backward from what the continent actually is. TRT Africa started with the aim of showing Africa “as it is” and as an alternative to mainstream Western media.

TRT Africa was created as the reflection of Türkiye’s people-centered, inclusive and peaceful foreign policy and Türkiye’s improving relations, strengthening ties with the African continent and in addition to being a soft power tool, TRT Africa is accepted as a quality alternative and true news source for the people on the continent.

This paper will discuss the 4 languages the channel broadcasts in, its content and other operations of TRT Africa.

Istanbul TRT-African Union of Broadcasting (AUB) Broadcasting Summit and TRT Africa Launch Ceremony was held in Istanbul. The Head of Communications Fahrettin Altun, Somalia's Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism Daud Aweis Jama (left 2), CEO of the African Union of Broadcasting Gregoire Ndjaka (right 2) and TRT General Director Mehmet Zahid Sobaci (right) sent their first posts on the social media accounts of newly launched TRT Africa (source: Anadolu Agency)



2. TRT Africa English

Broadcasting in English has become a prerequisite to broadcast to all corners of the world and has become an integral part of international broadcasting with the advancing technology and changing history. TRT Africa broadcasts in English with the goal of becoming an important alternative for those who experience difficulties in having access to other regions of the world and to sources in local languages. TRT Africa has been mentioned as the source many times both in the country and abroad and the channel's success was celebrated. In addition to the website in English, TRT Africa's social media accounts are also in English. Showing considerable success in social media platforms TRT Africa takes firm steps towards its goals. TRT Africa uses its Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok accounts to tell the world about Africa and is proud to be a media organization that actively uses new communication tools. TRT Africa has approximately 1.5 million followers on its social media accounts that broadcast in English and delivers news about the continent to the continent and to the rest of the world and news about the world to Africa. Considered as a soft power tool for Türkiye, TRT Africa is not only a news channel but also continues to support the activities of Türkiye winning the hearts of African people.

3. TRT Africa French

As a result of centuries long colonization, many colonialist states imposed their cultural codes to the countries they colonized. Some of these countries were known as “the colonial empire on which the sun never sets” to signify the vastness of their colonial reach while the others had effects which we still see in politics and in the society. One of the best examples to this is the French speaking countries in Africa.

French is the official language of many countries in Africa. Therefore, TRT Africa French fills an important gap in communication in the Francophone world. Delivering news from Africa and other parts of the world not just to Africa but to Europe, TRT Africa French is followed closely by many people. TRT Africa French has approximately 1.5 million followers on its Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok accounts and continues to broadcast more people every day.

4. TRT Africa Swahili

While speaking about languages in Africa, local languages and especially Swahili should be mentioned. Swahili is a local language spoken by millions of people and the language of one of the channels of TRT Africa. TRT Africa Swahili is geared for the communities that speak Swahili in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and in other countries. This channel combines local events with universal ones strengthening the communication between Türkiye and Africa. TRT Africa Swahili has around 1 million followers on its social media accounts and continues to be an important source for Türkiye and the world by keeping the finger on the pulse.

5. TRT Africa Hausa

Hausa is one of the most common languages spoken in the African continent along with Swahili. Therefore, for a broadcasting organization as TRT Africa that broadcasts to the entire continent it was a necessity to have a channel broadcasting in this language. TRT Africa Hausa is one of the very few international channels that broadcast in this local language. The channel has become a good alternative source of news for the nations of the continent and also contributes to the relations between Türkiye and Hausa speaking communities. TRT Africa Hausa has gained 1.5 million followers on its social media accounts in only one year and become a favorite channel to follow both in and outside the continent.

TRT Africa is an important indicator of Türkiye's increasing impact on the continent through sociocultural events and political interactions and as an official news channel of Türkiye in Africa, it does not only talk about governments and bureaucracy but also about Türkiye's foreign policy that prioritizes people. TRT Africa also assumes the mission to correctly convey Türkiye's policies on Africa and has an attitude that fights against disinformation contrary to Western media organizations. Made a name for itself with this attitude TRT Africa is mentioned as the source by many international organizations, news websites and news agencies. The news agencies that mention TRT Africa as the source include many international news organizations such as Al Jazeera, BBC, The Guardian, Middle East Eye, The New Arab, CNN Indonesia and magazines and websites such as Foreign Policy, Pan African Review, The Defense Post, Istituto Analisi Relazioni Internazionali. TRT Africa is often cited in local media and it is not only seen as a

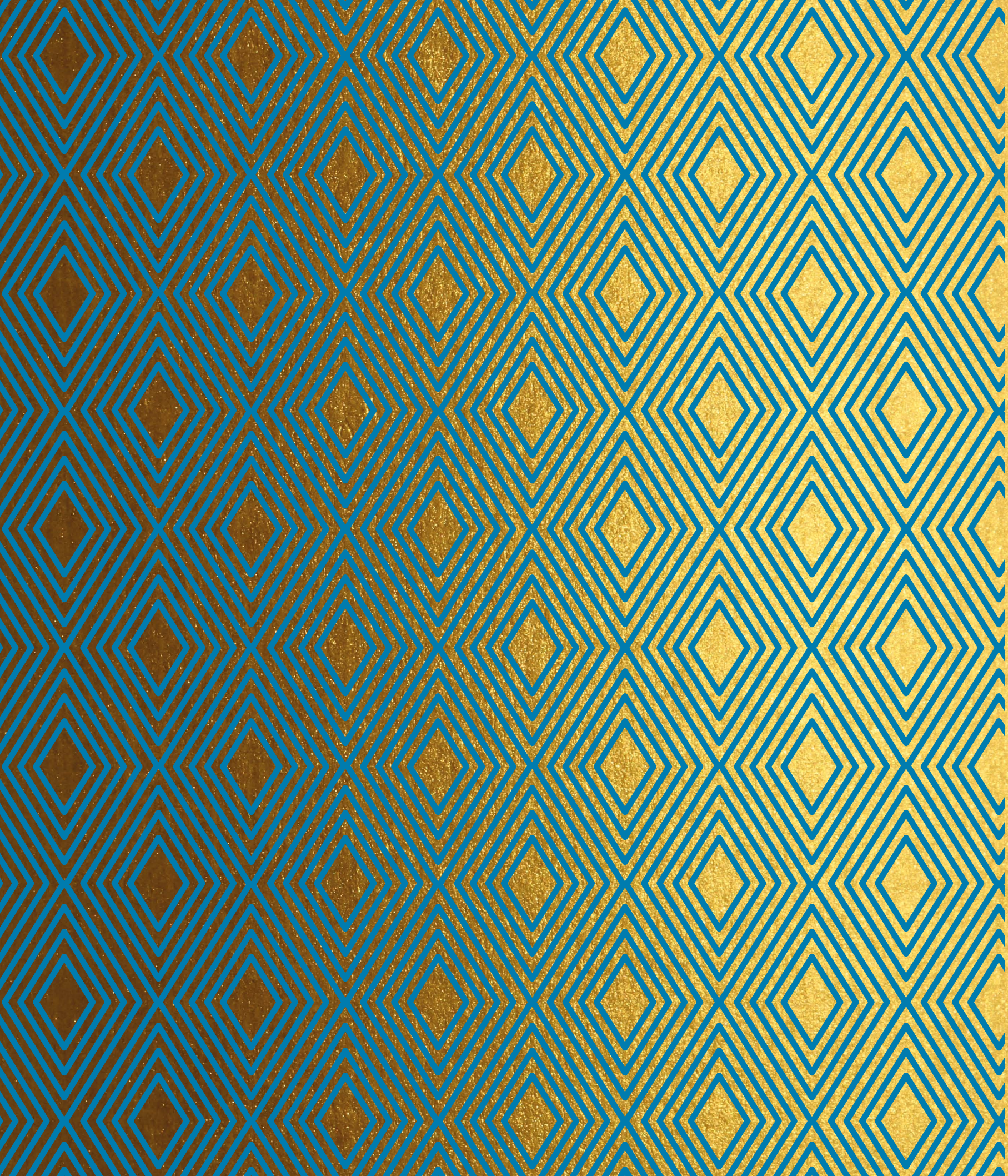
source of political and financial news but also followed by many news channels and organizations including National Geographic and Das Wetter.

TRT Africa is not a news source only for the international media but also for the media on the continent including Madagascar Tribune, African Arguments, Liberian Observer and is becoming its position in the industry. Almost 5.5 million followers in just only one year on its social media accounts is a proof to its success. TRT Africa has accomplished a wide variety of successful work in a short time and continues to act as a bridge between Türkiye and Africa with real news and real comments at the right time.

6. Conclusion

TRT has been uniting people with its unbiased and up-to-date news ever since it first started broadcasting, by opening a window to the world for Türkiye. TRT celebrated its 60th anniversary this year and continues to widen its audience and its content. With the goal of broadcasting to the world from Gibraltar to Indian Ocean, from Hazar Sea to Pacific Region, TRT continues to walk towards its goal with several channels broadcasting in the languages of the world.

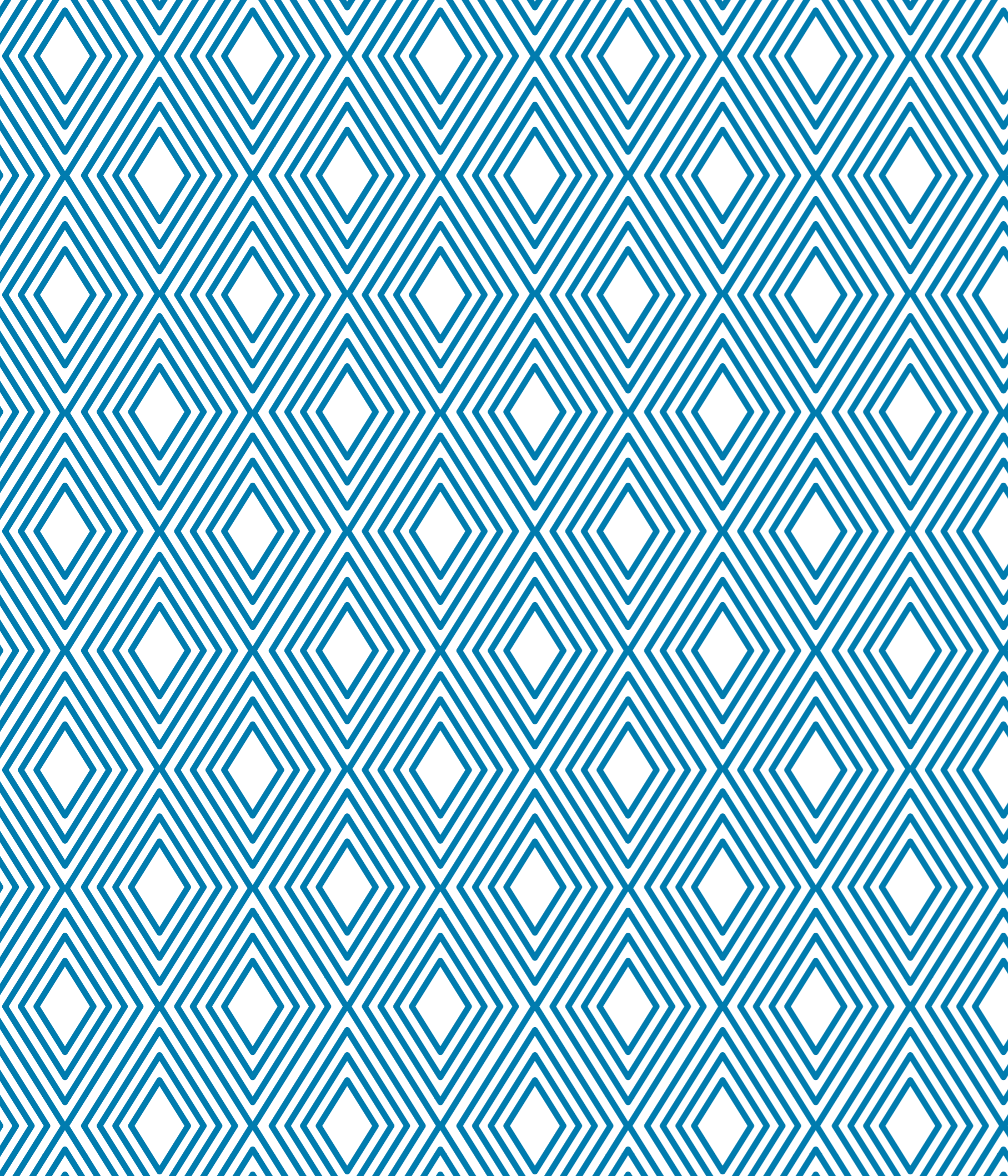
TRT grows and gets stronger with each channel it launches to deliver real news to the right people at the right time and with the new TRT Africa it again proves that it is one of the strongest players in the industry and promotes its ties with Africa.



Global and Regional Actors' Relations with Africa



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BRICS-Africa Relations in 2023

1

Betül Özyılmaz Kiraz*

1. Introduction

As one of the new actors of the international arena, BRICS is comprised of five emerging markets and developing countries. Consisting of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa, this partnership was first conceptualized in 2001 and quickly became official.

The core founding values of BRICS are to restructure the political, economic and financial architecture in a fair, balanced and representative manner, based on multilateralism and international law.¹ Defined as common determination, these values have gradually gained breath and scope, leading BRICS to be closely interested in Africa. Based on this interest, this study focuses on the development of BRICS-Africa relations in 2023. Since the study focuses on BRICS as a whole and as a group rather than individual policies of the BRICS countries towards the continent, BRICS documents are used as data.

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¹ BRICS 2023, "Evolution of BRICS",
<https://brics2023.gov.za/evolution-of-brics/>,
Date of Access: 12.04.2024.



XV BRICS SUMMIT

BRICS-AFRICA OUTREACH AND BRICS PLUS DIALOGUE

South Africa The 15th BRICS Summit was held in Johannesburg, hosted by the Republic of South Africa. (Source: Anadolu Agency)

2. BRICS-Africa Relations

The year 2023, when South Africa took over the BRICS presidency, witnessed important developments in terms of BRICS-Africa relations. The presidency rotates among member countries on an annual basis. In determining the year's events and priorities through a calendar, the president hosts the summit and all related meetings.²

As of January 1, 2023, when it took over the presidency, South Africa determined the annual theme as "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism." The 15th BRICS Summit was held in Johannesburg on August 22-24, 2023, within the framework of this theme. President of South Africa and Chairman of 2023 BRICS, Cyril Ramaphosa accepted this theme on behalf of BRICS, stating that Africa is of vital importance for the sustainable development of the world. The summit in question was held with the participation of representatives of 61 countries. The fact that 46 of these countries are from the African continent and almost half of them attended the summit at the level of heads of state and government is an indication that African countries are not indifferent to BRICS despite BRICS's interest in Africa.³

3. Areas of Cooperation Between BRICS and Africa

In accordance with the theme determined for 2023, the priorities of the BRICS partnership were defined as follows: (1) Opening the doors of opportunity through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA); (2) Developing a partnership towards an equitable and just transformation; (3) Transforming education and skills development for the future; (4) Strengthening post-pandemic socioeconomic recovery and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and (5) Strengthening multilateralism, including real reform of global governance institutions and strengthening women's meaningful participation in peace processes.⁴

Accordingly, the first of these priorities is directly and specifically related to Africa. AfCFTA is the world's largest free trade area, bringing together the 55 member countries of the African Union and eight Regional Economic Communities to establish a unified market across the continent. The goal is to ensure the free flow of goods and services across the continent and strengthen Africa's commercial position in the global market.⁵ The aim of BRICS countries, is to develop AfCFTA's trade and investments in Africa, especially infrastructure development, and to create a predictable environment.⁶

² BRICS 2023, "BRICS Architecture", <https://brics2023.gov.za/brics-architecture/>, Date of Access: 12.04.2024.

³ BRICS 2023 Newsletter, "15th BRICS Summit Heralds New Chapter for the Group", No 4, September 2023, p. 3.

⁴ AfCFTA, "Purpose of the AfCFTA", <https://au-afcfta.org/purpose-the-afcfta>, Date of Access: 14.04.2024.

⁵ AfCFTA, "Purpose of the AfCFTA", <https://au-afcfta.org/purpose-the-afcfta>, Date of Access: 14.04.2024.

⁶ XV. BRICS Summit Johannesburg II Declaration, 23.08.2023, p. 11.

⁷ BRICS 2023 Newsletter, "BRICS Well Positioned to Create Equitable World Order", No 2, 23.08.2023, p. 8.

⁸ BRICS 2023 Newsletter, "Call to Accelerate Implementation of AfCFTA", No 3, 24.08.2023, p. 3.

⁹ BRICS 2023 Newsletter, "Continental Free Trade Area Key for Africa's Growth", No 4, September 2023, p. 11.

¹⁰ XV. BRICS Summit Johannesburg II Declaration, 23.08.2023, p. 11.

¹¹ XV. BRICS Summit Johannesburg II Declaration, 23.08.2023, p. 11-12.

Developing and bolstering the relationship and cooperation between BRICS and AfCFTA was discussed many times both during the summit held in Johannesburg and in the Johannesburg II, Declaration published at the end of the summit. In his speech at the summit, President Ramaphosa expressed his satisfaction with the ongoing relations of the BRICS countries with Africa in the spirit of partnership and mutual respect, emphasizing that once the AfCFTA becomes fully operational, it shall unlock the benefits of the continental market and provide mutually beneficial opportunities for both Africa and the BRICS countries.⁷

The President of the BRICS Business Council, Patrice Motsepe, stated that there has been a desire to increase trade between the African continent and BRICS countries from the very beginning, and that the doors of opportunity are now open to expand trade, investment, and business connections between South Africa, Africa, and BRICS countries. In this context, Motsepe called for the implementation and acceleration of the AfCFTA. As a step in this direction, Motsepe also urgently called for ensuring the significant reduction and elimination of both trade tariff and non-tariff barriers.⁸ In addition, at the China-Africa roundtable meeting, both parties, particularly Chinese President Xi Jinping, emphasized the importance of the AfCFTA in terms of its potential to transform and positively impact all sectors of African economies. The Chinese side stated that it supports Africa's regional economic integration by strengthening Africa's intra-continental trade, promoting investment and facilitating the arrival of supply chains.⁹ These views expressed during the summit were also included in the Johannesburg II Declaration published after the summit.

BRICS countries reiterated their support for efforts towards African integration, including the activation of the AfCFTA. It was underlined that the AfCFTA was ready to create a predictable environment, especially for the development of infrastructure on the continent, and to coordinate with partners on cooperation, trade and development on the African continent.¹⁰ While BRICS' interest in Africa was pointed out, the declaration also mentioned that the African continent remained on the edge of the global trade system and would benefit from cooperation with BRICS. It stated that the cooperation between AfCFTA and BRICS would provide opportunities as the continent moves away from its historical role as a goods exporter, become more productive and produce high value-added products.¹¹

Focusing specifically on Africa in 2023, BRICS demonstrated that, in addition to its other defined priorities, it would also be taking an active stance

towards the African continent. BRICS also points to long-term solutions for ensuring education and skills development for the future of Africa, and the elimination of poverty. In this regard, BRICS has emphasized the strengthening of existing cooperation and initiatives for knowledge creation and exchange in Africa to unlock future opportunities. Accordingly, since Africa has a young population with high digital connectivity and urbanization, it is possible to develop these initiatives and turn them into investments.¹²

The priority of boosting the socioeconomic recovery after the pandemic and achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda brings with it the production of solutions to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In particular, sustainable development goals, such as health and quality of life and gender equality are seen as focal points for BRICS-Africa cooperation. Accordingly, the Ministry of Health, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and the BRICS Business Council Southern Africa Division hosted a successful dialogue on future epidemics. The parties who came together following the BRICS Summit focused on the potential African Union and BRICS framework for epidemic readiness, prevention and response.¹³

Important negotiations such as the Women Advancement Fund and the development of BRICS tourism were highlighted at the Women's Business Association (WBA) Africa Trade Conference and a partnership agreement was signed in order to ensure gender equality.¹⁴ BRICS Women's Cooperation viewed the African Trade Conference as a great success, considering it an initiative with high economic value for women. More than 500 women from 18 countries attended this conference, which gained attention for bringing together women-led small- and medium-sized businesses. Zambia, the DRC, Saudi Arabia, Ghana, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and other African countries attended the conference.¹⁵

4. Conclusion

Attention was drawn in the Johannesburg II Declaration to prioritizing the reform of global governance institutions for Africa and strengthening multilateralism. In this context, it was stated that the principle of "African solutions to African problems" should form the basis on conflict resolution for African countries. It was emphasized that international actors involved in initiatives to maintain peace and security on the continent should act by

considering the balance of mutual respect, consensus and legitimate interests, taking into account regional actors.¹⁶

Consequently, the year 2023, in which South Africa, also an African country, held the presidency of BRICS, has become a year in which the intention of BRICS to develop its relationship with Africa and the importance given to this goal remained on the agenda. Undoubtedly, BRICS countries' interest in the continent is not new. Its natural resources, investment opportunities and new markets have deemed Africa as a part of global competition for a long time. It is a significant stance that BRICS-Africa relations have become a priority agenda, especially during the South African Presidency. BRICS-Africa relations have gained significant attention, especially during South Africa's presidency. Notably, South Africa is positioning itself as the gateway to Africa for BRICS, showcasing its ambition to emerge as the continent's regional power. This vision was clearly articulated by President Ramaphosa during the BRICS Summit in Johannesburg:

"From a South African perspective, there is massive untapped potential for investment in our country and on the African continent. Africa is a continent of great opportunity in the industrialisation process in a variety of sectors. Africa is a continent rich in the critical minerals that will drive business success in the 21st Century. The continent has resources of lithium, vanadium, cobalt, platinum, palladium, nickel, copper, rare earth minerals, rhodium and many others. These factors all position Africa as the next frontier of productivity and growth. BRICS countries have an opportunity to contribute to and participate in Africa's growth story. This can be achieved through greater cooperation in areas such as infrastructure, agriculture, manufacturing, new energy and the digital economy."¹⁷

Consequently, during the South African Presidency, BRICS-Africa relations were chosen as the theme of the year, whereas the annual summit, and annual priorities determined were closely related to Africa. It is not surprising that two of the six countries, Egypt and Ethiopia, were invited at the annual summit to become full members of BRICS starting from January 1, 2024. It is also known that the African countries Algeria and Senegal applied to become BRICS members in 2023. Accordingly, it is possible to assess that BRICS is bound to boost its influence in Africa and expand on the continent in the coming periods.

¹² BRICS 2023 Newsletter, "President Ramaphosa Calls for Investment in Africa", No 2, 23.08.2023, p. 2.

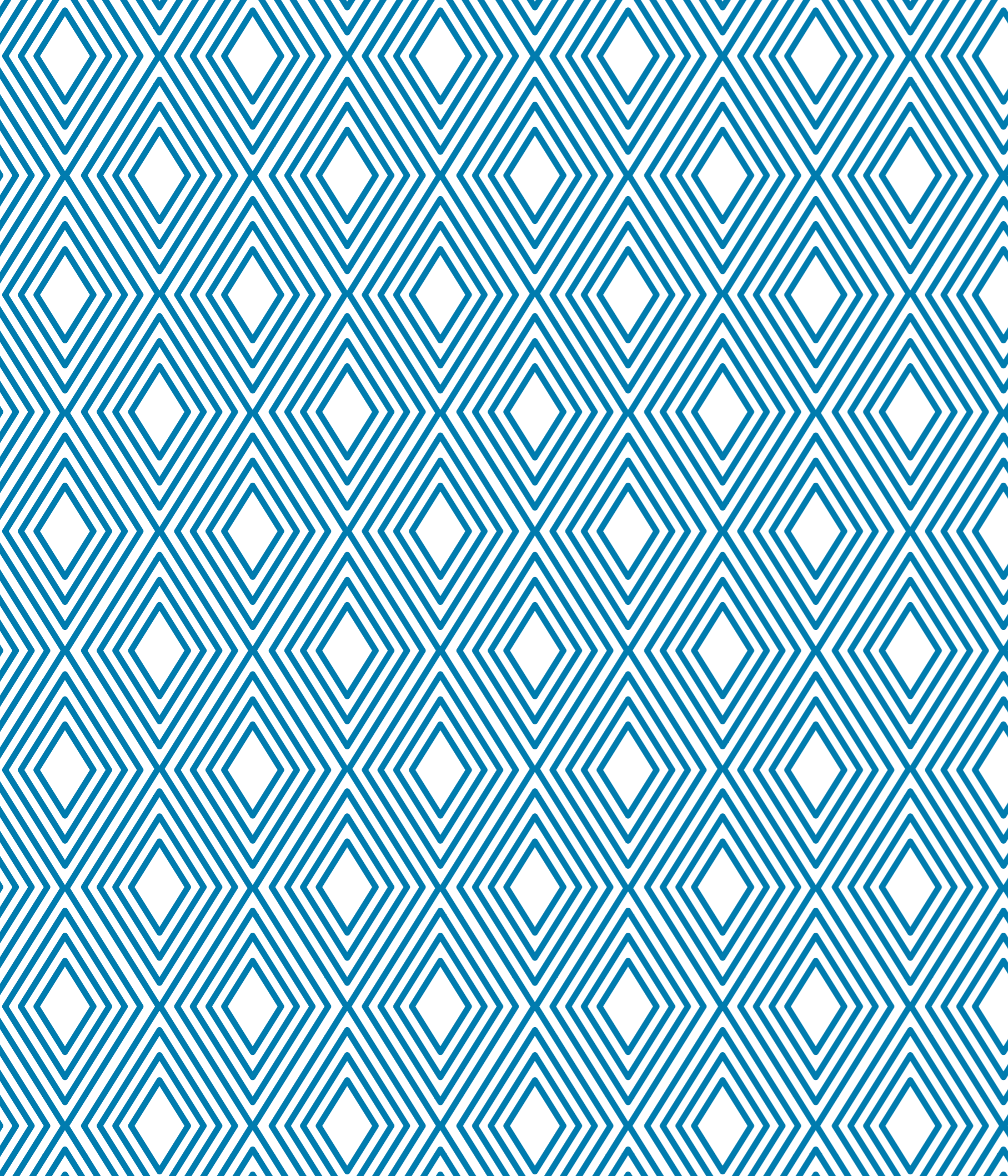
¹³ BRICS 2023 Newsletter, "BRICS, Africa CDC Commit to Work with Business on Future Pandemics", No 4, September 2023, p. 6.

¹⁴ BRICS 2023 Newsletter, "Since the Beginning of South Africa's Chairship of BRICS, the Following Objectives Have Already Been Achieved", No 2, 23.08.2023, p. 13.

¹⁵ BRICS 2023 Newsletter, "BRICS Women Business Alliance Strategic Catalysts for Economic Development", No 4, September 2023, p. 9.

¹⁶ XV. BRICS Summit Johannesburg II Declaration, 23.08.2023, p. 5.

¹⁷ BRICS 2023 Newsletter, "President Ramaphosa Calls for Investment in Africa", No 2, 23.08.2023, p. 2.



US-Africa Relations in 2023

2

Buğra Sari*

1. Introduction

Africa has gained importance in the traditional foreign policy of the United States when it aligns with the country's strategic objectives. The US's interest in Africa, which was relatively low in 1945-1976, increased in parallel with Soviet activities on the continent. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the USA emerged as the world's sole superpower. Therefore, since the US interest in Africa during the Cold War was primarily a response to Soviet intervention, Africa inevitably fell out of focus for the United States strategic priorities during the post-Cold War era. Despite this fluctuating interest, it is still possible to observe a general continuity in the US's Africa policy. The reason for this continuity is that Africa has never been an area of main political priority in US foreign policy.¹

The US indifference towards Africa in the post-Cold War period caused it to disappear in a short time with the emergence of China as a rival to the US's

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¹ Buğra Sari, "Amerikan Ulusal Çıkarları ve Afrika", *Ankara Üniversitesi Afrika Çalışmaları Dergisi*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2012, p.97-98.

global hegemony and its extensive involvement in Africa following new oil discoveries.

Since the 1990s, China's presence in Africa has diversified and deepened dramatically, with extensive economic investments, intense educational, cultural and political interactions, and increasing military ties.² Faced with this situation, the US realized that it needed to engage with the continent more seriously. In this regard, while competition was at a light to medium level during the Clinton and Bush administrations, it intensified with the Obama, Trump, and Biden administrations. For instance, Obama's Secretary of State Hillary Clinton openly criticized China's presence in Africa during her 11-day trip to the continent, warning African countries about cooperating with powers that exploit the continent's resources.³

In the new Africa strategy announced by the Trump Administration's National Security Advisor John Bolton on December 13, 2018, China-US competition has become even more evident. In this context, Bolton announced that the US's strategy is more about China than Africa.⁴ He emphasized that China's activities in Africa represent a national security issue for the US, and concerns about China's growing presence on the continent have persisted under the Biden administration. As a matter of fact, the "US Strategy for sub-Saharan Africa" document published in August 2022 emphasized that China's activities in Africa aim to weaken the US's relations with African governments and people.⁵ In this context, the Biden administration, which wants to strengthen its relations with the African continent, announced at the "US-Africa Leaders Summit" held in 2022 that the USA aims to invest \$55 billion in Africa in the next three years.⁶

In this context, in 2023, the USA took steps to balance China's existing and increasing presence in Africa and to strengthen its relations with African countries accordingly.

Therefore, the developments in 2023 have witnessed a significant effort by the United States to revitalize its relations with Africa. Following the 2022 US-Africa Leaders Summit, 2023 has been spent focusing on economic and security cooperation and a renewed emphasis on African subjectivity.

Accordingly, the study shall review the relations of the USA with the African continent in 2023. However, while doing this, the basic pillars of the US presence in Africa in general will be touched upon in order to create an infrastructure for the developments in 2023.

² Buğra Sarı, "Making sense of the new episode of great power rivalry in Africa through neorealist lenses: The Sino-US competition", *Meridiano 47-Journal of Global Studies*, Vol. 20, 2019, p. 3.

³ David Smith, "Hillary Clinton launches African tour with veiled attack on China", *The Guardian*, 01.08.2012, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/aug/01/hillary-clinton-africa-china>, Date of Access: 23.04.2024.

⁴ Cornelia Tremann, "The new US Africa strategy is not about Africa. It is about China", *The Interpreter*, 20.12.2018, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/new-us-africa-strategy-not-about-africa-it-s-about-china>, Date of Access: 23.04.2024.

⁵ The White House, "US strategy towards Sub-Saharan Africa", 07.2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/U.S.-Strategy-Toward-Sub-Saharan-Africa-FINAL.pdf>, Date of Access: 18.04.2024.

⁶ US Department of State, "2022 US-Africa leaders summit overview", 18.12.2023, <https://www.state.gov/2022-u-s-africa-leaders-summit-overview/#:~:text=The%20U.S.%2DAfrica%20Leaders%20Summit,over%20the%20next%20three%20years>, Date of Access: 18.04.2024.

2. US Presence on the African Continent

In this regard, military bases were established across the continent under the supervision of the Africa Command (AFRICOM) and various military aid programs were provided to African countries. The establishment of AFRICOM as an independent command in 2008 demonstrates how Africa's position in the strategic projections of the US is changing from the periphery to the center, in parallel with rising US security interests on the continent.

On the other hand, AFRICOM is not designed as a typical military command unit that serves only security and defense purposes. Instead, it has a multi-functional position, including various functional features such as military activities, development programs and humanitarian aid. Nevertheless, AFRICOM's military activities are considered to be aimed primarily at promoting regional security and stability in order to create a safe environment for US companies operating on the continent and to ensure the flow of oil to the US. In this regard, AFRICOM's core tools include the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), the Africa Deployment Assistance Partnership Team (ADAPT), the African Partnership Station (APS) and the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI).⁷

Within the framework of AFRICOM's humanitarian aid missions, the USA also conducts activities aimed at preventing HIV/AIDS, combating pandemics, increasing the level of preparedness against disasters, and strengthening medical and veterinary capabilities. Key tools used by the United States in humanitarian efforts include the Department of Defense HIV/AIDS Prevention Program (DHAPP), humanitarian assistance, Epidemic Disease Response Program, Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP), and Veterinary Civic Action Program (VETCAP).⁸

In viewing the economic relations of the US with Africa, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) adopted by the Clinton administration in 2000 holds an important place. Thanks to AGOA, which aims to increase trade volume and thus accelerate development, especially by providing duty-free access to the US market for sub-Saharan African countries, the trade volume between the USA and Africa, which was approximately \$38.5 billion in 2000, reached a peak of \$142 billion in 2008. Later, the US and Africa trade volume decreased to as low as \$67.5 billion in 2023. While \$28.5 billion of this amount was exports to the USA, \$39 billion was realized as imports.⁹

⁷ Sarı, "Making sense...", p. 9-10.

⁸ Sarı, "Making sense...", p. 10.

⁹ US Census Bureau, "Trade in goods with Africa", <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c0013.html>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.



USA U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken (on the right) met with South African Minister of Foreign Affairs Naledi Pandor (on the left) at the Department of State in Washington, D.C. (Source: Anadolu Agency)

3. The Course of US-Africa Relations in 2023

The most visible development in the US's activities in Africa in 2023 was the record number of high-level contacts and visits to the continent. As a matter of fact, in 2023, ministers and senior bureaucrats of the Biden administration made official visits to 26 African countries in order to deepen US-Africa ties. Notable examples in this context include Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to Egypt in January and US Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield's tour covering Ghana, Mozambique, Kenya and Somalia. Furthermore, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen visited Senegal, Zambia, and South Africa, and then President Biden's wife, Jill Biden, visited Namibia and Kenya.¹⁰ These visits are important indicators of Africa's increasing importance on the US foreign policy agenda and the flexibility of the desired relations to be established.

The main feature of the US's Africa policy in 2023 has been the effort to go beyond the traditional foreign aid-focused engagement model. Thus, the main emphasis of the Biden administration in Africa is shaped on promoting trade and investment relations. In this regard, the USA and African countries provided support and facilities in 547 items with a budget of approximately \$14.2 billion through agreements they signed between themselves. Compared to 2022, these agreements correspond to a 67% increase in the number and value of agreements signed.¹¹ In conjunction, the US Department of Commerce launched its cooperation strategy with Africa and announced that it will promote long-term cooperation and partnerships in the fields of digitalization, clean technology, creative industries, climate-friendly agriculture and infrastructure in 2023.¹² Based on economic cooperation, these incentives are complementary to the memorandum of understanding signed between the USA and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) on December 14, 2022, which aims to increase commercial investments between the two parties.

One of the most striking developments in 2023 within the scope of US investments in Africa was the selection in May 2023 of the Lobito Corridor on the African continent as the first project support of the Biden administration's Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGI) fund, which has a volume of \$600 billion. Within this context, PGI decided to finance three basic infrastructure projects worth approximately \$1.5 billion in the Lobito Corridor, which runs from the Atlantic to the Indian oceans and from there across the continent. The projects in question are aimed at promoting clean energy, strengthening of digital radio signals and developing

¹⁰ US Department of State, "2022 US-Africa leaders..."

¹¹ Carol V.D. Falk, "US invests in Africa in effort to counter Chinese influence", *Voa News*, 14.12.2023, <https://www.voanews.com/a/us-invests-in-africa-in-effort-to-counter-chinese-influence-/7399128.html>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024

¹² The White House, "FACT SHEET: Accelerating the US – Africa partnership after the 2022 US-Africa leaders summit", 13.12.2024, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/12/13/fact-sheet-accelerating-the-u-s-africa-partnership-after-the-2022-u-s-africa-leaders-summit/#:~:text=In%20the%20past%20year%2C%20the,of%20closed%20deals%20over%202022>, Date of Access: 24.04.2024

railway transportation infrastructure, in particular in the Angola branch of the Lobito Corridor.¹³

On the other hand, the issue of human rights and democratic governance continued to be a challenging issue in the US-African relations in 2023. Case in point, it was observed that the US State Department reported human rights violations for many African countries within the scope of human rights practices country reports throughout 2023.¹⁴ In this regard, the United States finds itself in a constant dilemma in its relations with African countries that have authoritarian tendencies but are considered strategic partners. For instance, the United States has historically maintained close relations with Ethiopia despite its poor human rights record. In 2023, although it revoked Ethiopia's trade privileges under AGOA due to the Tigray conflict, the United States was careful not to jeopardize an important regional partner while under pressure to address human rights concerns.¹⁵

Furthermore, in 2023, the USA had to face the consequences of military interventions across Africa, including Burkina Faso, Niger and Gabon. The US reaction to the military interventions regarding this matter was 'measured.' Accordingly, while the United States condemned unconstitutional seizures of power, it also avoided excessively punitive measures and tried to demonstrate it recognized the public dissatisfaction which often triggers coups.¹⁶

On the other hand, it has been observed that security concerns play an important role in shaping the USA's cooperation with Africa in 2023, whereas it is safe to say that security-related issues continue to be a cornerstone of US-Africa relations. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the USA underwent a complex process regarding security issues related to Africa in 2023. Within the context of existing conflict areas, violent extremism and political instability in Africa, the United States placed emphasis on continuing its counterterrorism efforts, especially in the Sahara region. AFRICOM-based efforts have focused on combating Jamaat Nusra al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) and ISIS-affiliated terrorist groups by providing training and equipment support to countries such as Niger and Mali. Moreover, in conjunction with the Federal Government of Somalia, the USA conducts regular operations in Somalia against the terrorist organization al-Shabaab.¹⁷ Based on its fight against terrorism, the United States prepared a 10-year strategic plan in March 2023 for West Africa, as well as for Haiti, Libya, Mozambique, and Papua New Guinea. In addition, a revised "Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability" has been published in order to facilitate counter-terrorism partnerships in Niger and the Sahara region.¹⁸

13 Invest.Lobito Corridor, "Partnership for global infrastructure and investment (PGI) celebrates signing of finance agreements for Republic of Angola projects", <https://www.lobitocorridor.org/post/partnership-for-global-infrastructure-and-investment-pgi-celebrates-signing-of-finance-agreements>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

14 US Department of State, "2023 country reports on human rights practices", 22.04.2024, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/>, Date of Access: 27.04.2024.

15 African Growth and Opportunity Act, "US official reveals Ethiopia's request for AGOA eligibility 'still pending', decision unlikely at upcoming forum", 27.10.2023, <https://agoa.info/news/article/16347-us-official-reveals-ethiopia-s-request-for-agoa-eligibility-still-pending-decision-unlikely-at-upcoming-forum.html>, Date of Access: 27.04.2024.

16 Michael Hernandez, "Why is US pursuing diplomacy in Niger?", Anadolu Agency, 11.09.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/why-is-us-pursuing-diplomacy-in-niger/2989062>, Date of Access: 27.04.2024.

17 AFRICOM, "US counterterrorism operation in Somalia", 23.05.2023, <https://www.africom.mil/pressrelease/35212/us-counterterrorism-operation-in-somalia>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

18 James J. Carafano, "US-Africa policy adrift", GIS Reports, 08.09.2023, <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/us-africa/>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

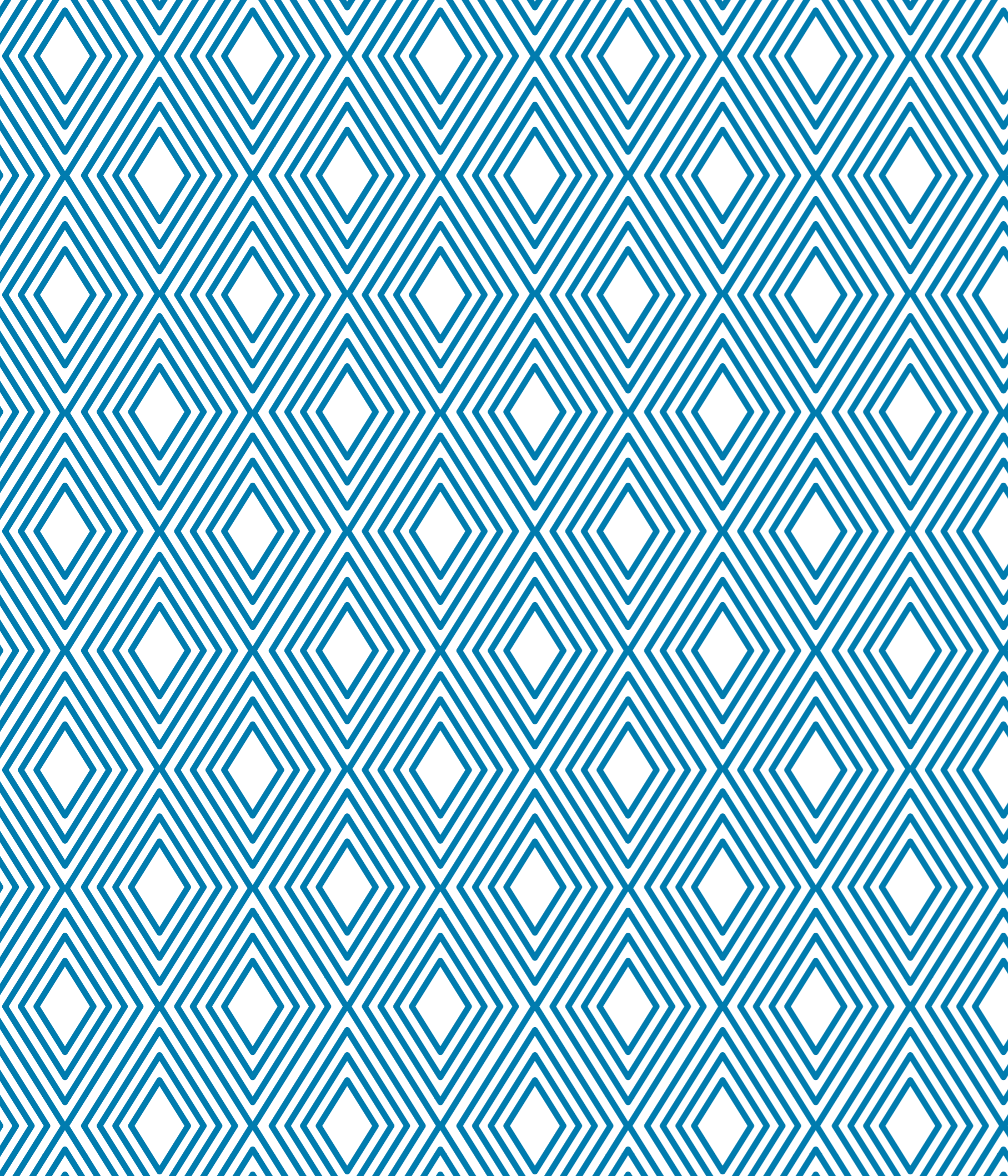
Following the overthrow of President Mohammed Bazoum in a military coup that occurred in Niger in January 2023, the USA, which had long established good relations with Niger, was faced with a complex situation. As a matter of fact, Niger's uranium deposits are of critical importance for the US nuclear program. Furthermore, Niger is a region of strategic value for the US's counter-terrorism operations in West Africa and is valuable as it hosts an American air base. Therefore, the military coup jeopardized the existing interests of the USA in Niger.¹⁹

4. Conclusion

The developments in US-Africa relations in 2023 indicate a serious economic transformation. As a matter of fact, the security-centered African policies of the US have diversified to an extent, showing the potential to meet the needs of Africa. Nonetheless, despite the progress made in US-Africa relations in 2023, it is possible to talk about the presence of significant difficulties. As a matter of fact, it is clear that past cooperation has turned into an asymmetrical dependency relationship resulting from the fact they benefited the USA rather than African countries.

In this regard, it is vital for long-term success that the United States ensure fair trade practices and establish true partnerships with African businesses. However, concerns about the longevity of cooperation commitments made by the USA in 2023 are strengthening, especially considering possible changes in the US administration.

19 Gilles Yabi, "The Niger coup's outsized global impact", Carnegie Endowment, 31.08.2023, <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2023/08/the-niger-coups-outsized-global-impact?lang=en>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.



Continuity Efforts in France-Africa Relations: “New” Africa Strategy

Mücahid Gürbüz*

1. Introduction

It appears France-Africa relations have deteriorated due to events that have occurred on the continent in recent years. Coups, particularly in the Sahel region (Mali in 2020 and 2021 and Burkina Faso in 2022), have led France to restrict its relations with Africa. The presence of alternative actors such as Russia, China and Türkiye in Africa noticeably diminishes France's level of relations. These developments on the continent prompted French President Emmanuel Macron, who took office in 2017, to state that there would be changes in France's relations with Africa.

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After being re-elected as president in 2022, Macron frequently reiterated that he had developed a new strategy and approach towards Africa. Similarly, prior to embarking on a tour of Central Africa on February 27, 2023, he outlined his 'new' Africa strategy and approach, which he claimed would constitute a break with his country's past relations with Africa. In this context, he stated plans were underway to reduce the number of military units in Africa. Macron, emphasizing a "renewed partnership" with African countries, has highlighted that there is a desire to move away from the "French *pré carré*" even if he has not developed a new discourse. In the following days, Macron travelled to Central Africa (Gabon, Angola, Congo, and the DRC) on March 1-4, 2023 to hold high-level talks.

Since his election in May 2017, Macron has visited 25 African countries, making him the French leader who has established the most diplomatic contacts with African countries.¹ Due to the recent developments, concerns were raised about the impact of France's high-level diplomatic visits. Especially as a result of the successive coups that occurred in Niger (July 26, 2023) and in Gabon (August 26, 2023), relations that France tried to re-establish with Africa began to be questioned.

Accordingly, this study will discuss the course of relations that France attempted to re-establish with Africa during the Macron era and the events that occurred in 2023.

2. Macron's Central African Tour and Expectations

Emmanuel Macron was re-elected president during the second round of presidential elections held on April 24, 2022. After being elected for the first time in 2017, Macron repeated many times as he declared in his Ouagadougou speech that he was trying to determine a new route in Africa which aimed to end asymmetrical and paternalistic (nepotist) relations with the continent.² At the start of his second term in power, Macron insisted that Africa was a priority during his trip to Cameroon, Benin and Guinea-Bissau on July 25-28, 2022.³ Similarly, on February 27, 2023, Macron repeated his past rhetoric in his speech on France-Africa relations before going on a tour of Central Africa to meet with the leaders of four countries.

In this context, Macron stated there has been a noticeable decrease in the presence of French military units in Africa. Case in point, following the de-

The DRC During his visit to the DRC, French President Emmanuel Macron held a joint press conference with DRC President Felix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo in the capital Kinshasa. (Source: Anadolu Agency).

¹ Lise Lesigne ve Alain Antil, "Le voyage d'Emmanuel Macron en Afrique centrale: Retour sur un exercice diplomatique difficile", *IFRI*, 10.05.2023, p. 2.

² *Africanews*, "Les relations entre la France et l'Afrique restent à réinventer", 09.11.2023, <https://fr.africanews.com/2023/11/09/les-relations-entre-la-france-et-lafrique-restent-a-reinventer/>, Date of Access: 07.04.2024.

³ *France 24*, "Macron embarks on African visit to 'renew relationship' with continent", 25.07.2022, <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20220725-macron-embarks-on-african-visit-to-renew-relationship-with-continent>, Date of Access: 07.04.2024.



parture of the 4,500-strong Operation Barkhane force from Mali in August 2022, French troops withdrew from neighboring Burkina Faso on February 18, 2023.⁴

Relations between France and Burkina Faso began to deteriorate since the coup that brought Captain Ibrahim Traore to power on September 30, 2022. Although France withdrew its troops from Mali and Burkina Faso in recent years, it still has thousands of troops in the Sahel region, including Niger and Chad.⁵ Although France has tried to soften its military presence, especially in the Sahel region, rather than a withdrawal, Macron has described this situation as a “reorganization” of the French military presence.⁶

Macron visited the former French colony of Gabon, the former Portuguese colony of Angola, the former French and subsequently Belgian colony of the DRC for the Environment Summit, which he attended as part of his Central Africa tour to develop a new “mutual and responsible relationship” with African countries. This trip is notable as it was a continuation of Macron’s previous efforts to develop ties with English- and Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa, as well as with Francophone countries. In a conscious effort to mitigate accusations against France regarding cronyism and security concerns, he structured his four-day trip around the themes of saving African forests, improving agriculture, investing in African businesses and supporting the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy.⁷

During the first part of his tour in Central Africa, Macron attended the Single Forest Summit held in Gabon. Hosted by Gabon President Ali Bongo, who was ousted in August 2023, and Macron, the conference focused on conservation and scientific research in the Congo Basin, the second largest rainforest that reduces carbon emissions after the Amazon.⁸ It was during his visit to Gabon that Macron reiterated the “Françafrique” period, which was used to express France’s post-colonial relations with Africa, had ended once and for all.⁹

Macron then called on Angola, the leading oil producer of sub-Saharan Africa, for the second stop of his Central Africa tour. This visit marked the fourth time a French president had visited Angola within the scope of bilateral cooperation between the two countries since 1982. The previous visit to Angola was made by former President François Hollande in July 2015. Furthermore, as part of the effort to strengthen ties between France and Angola, a new partnership agreement was signed during this visit to develop the agricultural sector. During this visit, Macron thanked Angola for its role as a strategic partner for France throughout the region.¹⁰ Indeed, as a regional

4 Thiam Ndiaga, “Burkina Faso marks official end of French military operations on its soil”, *Reuters*, 19.02.2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/burkina-faso-marks-official-end-french-military-operations-its-soil-2023-02-19/>, Date of Access: 09.04.2024.

5 Mamadou Faye, “Les pays qui accueillent encore des bases militaires françaises en Afrique, et pourquoi”, *BBC*, 18.09.2023, <https://www.bbc.com/afrique/articles/cpdm7jg0yd2o>, Date of Access: 06.05.2023.

6 *Le Monde*, “Macron plans ‘noticeable reduction’ of French troops in Africa”, 27.02.2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/politics/article/2023/02/27/macron-plans-noticeable-reduction-of-french-troops-in-africa_6017548_5.html, Date of Access: 09.04.2024.

7 Paul Taylor, “Macron’s Africa reset struggles to persuade”, *POLITICO*, 13.03.2023, <https://www.politico.eu/article/france-emmanuel-macron-africa-reset-strategy-francafrique/>, Date of Access: 13.04.2024.

8 Muhammad Raza, “President of France visits Central Africa to foster new ‘responsible relationship’”, *The Diplomatic Insight*, 03.03.2023, <https://thediplomaticinsight.com/president-of-france-visits-central-africa-to-foster-new-responsible-relationship/>, Date of Access: 13.04.2024.

9 Andrew Naughtie, “Afrika’da darbe silsilesi: Fransa’nın eski sömürge toprakları üzerindeki etkisi azalıyor”, *Euronews*, 04.09.2023, <https://tr.euronews.com/2023/09/04/afrikada-darbe-silsilesi-fransanın-eski-kolonial-topraklari-uzerindeki-etkisi-azaliyor>, Date of Access: 13.04.2024.

10 Élysée, “Déplacement en Angola”, 03.03.2023, <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2023/03/03/deplacement-en-angola>, Date of Access: 15.04.2024.

11 Lise Lesigne ve Alain Antil, “Le voyage d’Emmanuel Macron en Afrique centrale: Retour sur un exercice diplomatique difficile”, *IFRI*, 10.05.2023, p. 5.

12 Muhammad Raza, “President of France visits Central Africa to foster new ‘responsible relationship’”, *The Diplomatic Insight*, 03.03.2023, <https://thediplomaticinsight.com/president-of-france-visits-central-africa-to-foster-new-responsible-relationship/>, Date of Access: 18.04.2024.

13 *Jeune Afrique*, “Coup d’État au Niger: Emmanuel Macron a échangé avec Mohamed Bazoum”, 28.07.2023, <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1468141/politique/coup-detat-au-niger-emmanuel-macron-a-echange-avec-mohamed-bazoum/>, Date of Access: 18.04.2024.

14 *Voanews*, “France embassy in Niger closed ‘until further notice’: Ministry”, 02.01.2024, <https://www.voanews.com/a/france-embassy-in-niger-closed-until-further-notice-ministry/7421561.html>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

15 Serhat Orakçı, “2023 Afrika gündemi: Darbeler ve siyasi istikrarsızlık”, *Anadolu Agency*, 05.01.2024, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/analiz/gorus-2023-afrika-gundemi-darbeler-ve-siyasi-istikrarsizlik/3100883>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

diplomatic power, Angola had played the mediator role in conflicts between the DRC and Rwanda, as well as between the Central African Republic and Chad.¹¹

In calling upon both the Republic of Congo and the DRC to wrap up his Central African tour, Macron announced that France was trying to deepen its relations with both Central African countries in the fields of science, education, health, research, culture and defense.¹²

3. The Effect of Coups on the Continent on the “New” Discourse and Strategy

Following this trip, the President of Niger Mohammed Bazoum was ousted by a military coup on July 28, 2023. Macron did not recognize the military coup that forcibly removed Bazoum as legitimate.¹³ While the developments in uranium-rich Niger once again confirmed France’s loss of power in the Sahel region, paving the way for an alliance between Mali and Burkina Faso and Niger. This situation led to questioning the effectiveness of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which considered intervening in the coup, thus bolstering claims that Russia had gained influence in the region. France subsequently closed its embassy in Niamey in December and was obliged to withdraw its 1,500 soldiers stationed in Niger.¹⁴

Following Niger, the series of coups adversely affecting the French presence in Francophone African countries since 2020 continued in Gabon, which had been ruled by the Bongo Family since 1967. On August 26, 2023, four days after Ali Bongo declared victory in the presidential election, the military took over the government.¹⁵ These developments in Gabon are important as they show that Macron’s visit in the spring left behind a negative outcome.

France’s new partnership discourse towards Africa does not align the events unfolding on the continent, and furthermore, indicates that it has no equivalent. As a result of the military coup, the rule of the Bongo Family, which had maintained good relations with France since Gabon’s independence, came to an end. These developments, Macron’s discourse towards the continent, the value of high-level visits and the relations desired to be developed, were all rendered null and void.

On September 18, following the developments in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, France announced that visas would no longer be allocated to students coming to France from these countries. Considering there are more than 6,000 young people who come to France from these three countries for

education, this matter seems to be a significant problem. Moreover, France announced that it had suspended the visas of artists, as well as students and interns, on the grounds they had boycotted France. Furthermore, it is seen that France's security relations with the military-led governments in West Africa have deteriorated.¹⁶

In addition to these events, after Mali withdrew from the G5 Sahel Joint Force in 2022, Niger and Burkina Faso also abandoned the multinational military alliance on December 2, 2023. This alliance, established in 2014 to combat armed groups in the unstable Sahel region, was supported by France. The collapse of the alliance due to the ongoing tense relations with France as a result of the military interventions in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger has led to questioning France's effectiveness in ensuring permanent peace in the region of the G5 Sahel, whereas it has become uncertain whether it will continue to exist.

In addition to all these developments, Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali signed a mutual defense agreement to form the Union of Sahel States in order to assist one another against external threats.¹⁷ This situation put Macron, who highlighted France's role in the security of the region, in a tough position and caused France's influence in the Sahel region to diminish.

A National Assembly report on relations between France and Africa was published on November 8, 2023. In the report in question, especially in the assessment of the relationship between France and Africa, it was emphasized that "normalization is theoretical." Furthermore, the report stated that the contradictions inherent in France's geopolitical interests and its quest for stability in Africa led to "anger and disappointment" on the part of Africans.¹⁸ Since this report emphasized that the discourse described as new in the Macron era is theoretical, it has been stated that it has no equivalent in the field. Concurrently, the report also emphasized that the foreign policy practices during the Macron era were perceived negatively by Africans and led to the breakdown in relations.¹⁹

4. Conclusion

Considering the developments in recent years, it can be seen that the innovative change of discourse in France-Africa relations introduced during the Macron era was forced by the events and conditions experienced on the continent. This situation shows that France's Africa policy, the new discourse of establishing a "reciprocal and responsible relationship" with Afri-

ca in the context of developments and geopolitical changes on the continent, is theoretical and not compatible with the reality of the continent.

Moreover, it appears that France has generally failed to achieve the necessary transformation in its relations with Africa in response to the developments and geopolitical changes on the continent, while trying to maintain the dominant relationship style of the past. This situation causes Africans to react greatly to France and makes them not want to continue their cooperation with France.

¹⁶ Shola Lawal, "Au revoir, Sahel: Did 2023 crush France's influence in Africa?", *Aljazeera*, 31.12.2023,

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/12/31/au-revoir-sahel-did-2023-crush-frances-influence-in-africa>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

¹⁷ Shola Lawal, "Au revoir, Sahel: Did 2023 crush France's influence in Africa?", *Aljazeera*, 31.12.2023,

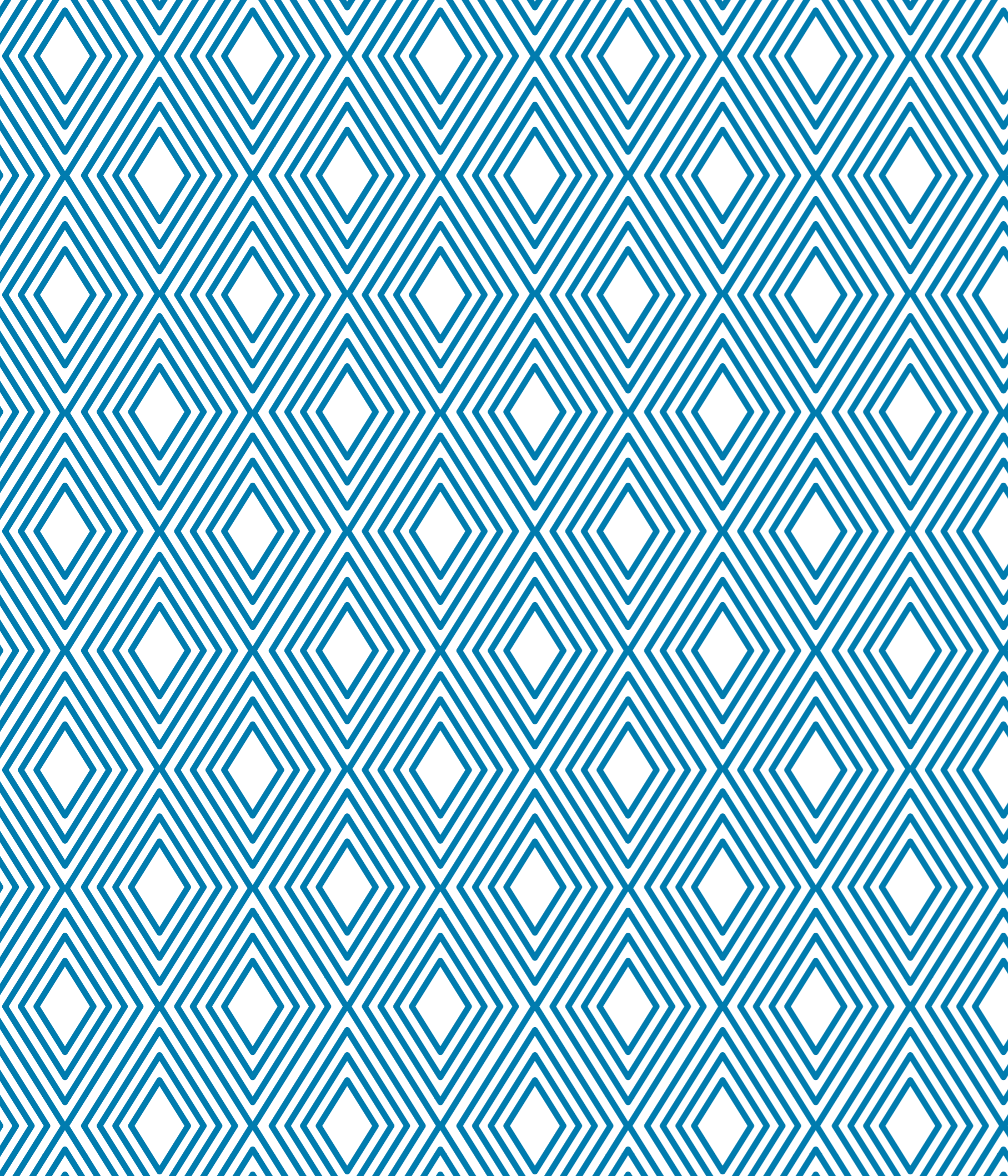
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/12/31/au-revoir-sahel-did-2023-crush-frances-influence-in-africa>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

¹⁸ *Vie Publique*, "Afrique: La France, un pays contesté à l'image dégradée", 23.11.2023,

<https://www.vie-publique.fr/en-bref/291916-africaine-france-pays-conteste-image-degradee>, Date of Access: 28.04.2024.

¹⁹ Bruno Fuchs ve Michèle Tabarot, "Rapport d'information sur les relations entre la France et l'Afrique", *Assemblée Nationale*, 08.11.2023,

https://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/dyn/16/rapports/cion_afetr/116b1841_rapport-information#, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.



UK-Africa Relations in 2023

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1. Introduction

In a speech he gave during his visit to Nigeria in August, British Foreign Secretary James Cleverly talked about the existential challenges posed by demographic changes and ideas that clashed once again.¹ According to this statement, Britain's policy towards the continent has two basic dynamics: migration mobility towards European countries and the increasing influence of Russia and China on the continent. For instance, there are concerns that the ongoing instability in Ethiopia over the last few years along with the civil war that began in Sudan will lead to a wave of migration towards Europe.² The coup in Niger is considered an example of the Wagner Group's, and consequently Russia's, expansion into the Sahel.

In this context, England conducts African politics with instruments such as development aid, security and defense partnerships, infrastructure and climate finance supports. In this regard, the UK is considered an important actor throughout the continent in the fields of development, defense and diplomacy. Nonetheless, the fact that a number of middle and major powers are increasingly offering alternative forms of support to African countries gives rise to the perception that the UK's influence on the continent is diminishing.

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¹ James Cleverly, UK-Africa Relations: UK Foreign Minister Visits Nigeria For Climate Projects, Trade, Youtube, 01.08.2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0FVXMR4pw8>, Date of Access: 30.04.2024.

² RUSI, "Furthering Global Britain? Reviewing the Foreign Policy Effect of UK Engagement in East Africa", <https://static.rusi.org/furthering-global-britain-review-paper.pdf>, Date of Access: 28.04.2024.

In discussing UK-Africa relations in 2023, the migration agreement signed with Rwanda constituted the main item on the agenda. While the bill caused controversy in both the British and the Rwandan public, the Supreme Court in England vetoed the bill, whereas efforts to revise the agreement were initiated. King Charles' visit to Kenya and Cleverly's Africa tour were amongst the prominent developments. On the other hand, agreements made and projects announced in the fields of climate, environment and energy constituted another important agenda item during the year. Moreover, the place of Africa in the revised policy documents and the developments in Sudan and Niger are also essential points worth mentioning.

2. Africa in Policy Documents

Post-Brexit British foreign policy is conducted within the framework of the "Global Britain" policy, which aims to redefine the country's relations with the world. In the relevant strategy document, attention is drawn to the increasing importance of the Indo-Pacific, while Africa is also pointed out as a continent in which the UK will be more active in the post-Brexit era. Separate reference is made in the document to "important partners" such as East Africa and Nigeria.³ Attention was drawn in the same document to relations with the African continent pertaining to matters such as reducing poverty, combating climate change, combating irregular migration and combating radicalization.

The policy document published by the British Ministry of Defense in 2023 also included noteworthy statements regarding Africa. Accordingly, while it has been stated that the intertwining of actors and regions is increasing, for example, the increasing presence of Russian mercenaries in Africa is perceived as a threat.⁴ According to the same document, the importance of the British Peace Support Team stationed in Kenya in the fight against terrorism, especially in the Horn of Africa, was emphasized. On the other hand, al-Shabaab has been considered a threat to Euro-Atlantic security. The defense document in question said that importance would be given to bilateral relations in the Sahel Region and the Gulf of Guinea for maritime security, while specifically mentioning Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya in the context of security. In the face of threats posed by proxy actors and terrorist organizations in North Africa, Egypt, Algeria and Morocco are stated as partner countries.

³ UK Parliament, "Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy", 16.03.2021, p. 46, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/global-britain-in-a-competitive-age-the-integrated-review-of-security-defence-development-and-foreign-policy>, Date of Access: 05.04.2024.

⁴ UK Ministry of Defense, "Defence's response to a more contested and volatile world", June 2023, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64b55dd30ea2cb000d15e3fe/Defence_Command_Paper_2023_Defence_s_response_to_a_more_contested_and_volatile_world.pdf Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

⁵ EuroNews, "İngiltere'nin Ruanda Planı nedir, göçmenleri sınır dışı edecek plan nasıl işleyecek?", 25.04.2024, <https://tr.euronews.com/2024/04/25/ingilterenin-ruanda-planini-nedir-gocmenleri-sinirdisi-edecek-plan-nasil-isleyecek>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ BBC, "What is the UK's plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda?", 18.04.2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/explainers-61782866>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

⁸ Melanie Gower, Patrick Butchard & CJ McKinney, The UK-Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership, UK Parliament, 06.12.2023, <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9568/CBP-9568.pdf>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

⁹ Rhoden-Paul, A., "UK paid Rwanda an extra £100m for asylum deal", BBC News, 08.12.2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-67656220>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

¹⁰ For the letter dated December 7th 2023 written by the UK Minister of the Interior Sir Matthew Rycroft to the relevant committees of the Parliament, please see https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6572215b58fa30000db140fe/Matthew_Rycroft_letter_to_PAC_and_HASC_-_FINAL_071223_2_1.pdf, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

¹¹ UK Ministry of Internal Affairs, 26.06.2023., <https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/51897/documents/3699>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

3. Migration and Development Agreement with Rwanda

Within the context of the 'Rwanda Plan' prepared in April 2022, The UK announced its goal of sending irregular immigrants and those who entered the country illegally and requested asylum to Rwanda.⁵ While the dispatching of the first plane was found inappropriate by the European Court of Human Rights, the legal process in England concluded that said bill was deemed unlawful in November 2023.⁶ The Supreme Court ruled that an earlier version of the program was unlawful on the grounds that it could not ensure that Rwanda was a safe third country to send vulnerable asylum seekers.

Following the Supreme Court decision, the government introduced a bill making it clear that Rwanda is a safe country in British law.⁷ The main strategic goal of the bill is to deter illegal entry into the UK by making clear that illegal entry would result in detention and rapid deportation to a safe third or home country.⁸

The total amount paid by the UK Government to Rwanda in the 2022-23 financial year was £140 million. The payment was made through the Economic Transformation and Integration Fund (ETIF) for Rwanda's economic development and growth.⁹ A payment of £100 million was made in April 2023 under the Economic Transformation and Integration Fund. The UK Government envisages a further payment of £50 million during fiscal 2024-25 under the ETIF, which was agreed with the Rwandan Government when the Migration and Economic Development Partnership was signed.¹⁰ In this context, the UK Government makes its payments to Rwanda under the heading of 'Rwanda's development.' One of the justifications for the payments in question is to reduce accommodation expenses of immigrants in the UK, which amount to £8 million per day. Although the estimates made by the Ministry of Internal Affairs indicate that the average cost per person of hosting in a third country is higher than on-site support, it is thought this policy will increase deterrence and will be in the public interest in the long-term.¹¹

4. Diplomacy

In looking at the developments in the field of diplomacy, it is noteworthy that Britain King Charles made his first trip outside Europe as a monarch to Kenya. This visit further reinforced the role Kenya plays in Britain's engagement in Africa. As one of four African countries mentioned in the Integrated Review, Kenya is considered a financial center and a strong partner state in an unstable region.

Immediately following the coup in Niger and the second Russia-Africa Summit held in St. Petersburg, Foreign Minister Cleverly carried out a visit to Africa, with talks in Nigeria, Ghana and Zambia. This tour was considered part of the goal of combating the increasing influence of Russia and China in Africa.¹² In an interview conducted with the Financial Times before his visit to Africa, Cleverly stated that they seriously evaluated the 'army capacity building and training' requests from African countries and that Wagner was using "unmet needs."¹³ In this context, the African tour can be regarded as a response.

Cleverly's visit to Nigeria aimed to improve relations between the two countries through increasing bilateral trade and investment and strengthening security cooperation. As part of the visit, a £10 million UK-backed facility was announced in Lagos, aiming to fund 'climate-friendly' infrastructure projects.¹⁴ Minister of Foreign Affairs Cleverly discussed the details of the international climate finance program, otherwise known as Propcom+, which targets rural economic development in Nigeria.¹⁵

Apart from these visits, bilateral meetings were held between African countries and the UK on the sidelines of international meetings, whereas high-level dialogue mechanisms were maintained. In this context, a meeting was held amongst the delegations between the AU and the UK in London on October 30.¹⁶ Additionally, ministers of African countries paid visits to London to attend various fairs and investment meetings. For instance, the visit of the Gambian Minister of Energy to hold talks with energy investors in London,¹⁷ and a London exposition visit by the South African Minister of Tourism¹⁸ can be regarded amongst these.

5. Sudan

According to the foreign policy document published in 2021 and updated in 2023, one of the countries the UK attaches importance to is Sudan. Fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) that began on April 15 was viewed with concern by the United Kingdom. As for the developments in question, some British Government officials described it as 'an unjust war' and 'a meaningless conflict'. Consequently, the UK Government imposed sanctions on companies linked to leaders of the SAF and RSF, the military groups behind the ongoing conflict in Sudan. According to the sanctions announced on July 12, a total of six companies determined to be affiliated with either SAF or RSF were included within this scope.¹⁹

12 Kristiina Cooper, "James Cleverly accuses Russia of new low in Africa speech", BBC, 01.08.2023,

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-66371445>, Date of Access: 06.05.2024.

13 Lucy Fisher, "UK needs to step up engagement with Africa on security, says foreign secretary", Financial Times, 30.07.2023,

<https://www.ft.com/content/12fa65a1-3fa3-4152-bb2f-4b41c401c9e7>, Date of Access: 06.05.2024.

14 Vanguard, "UK foreign secretary visits Nigeria for climate projects, trade", 01.08.2023,

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/08/uk-foreign-secretary-visits-nigeria-for-climate-projects-trade/>, Date of Access: 06.05.2024.

15 Ibid.

16 UK Ministry of Foreign Affairs Policy Document, 02.11.2023,

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-level-dialogue-between-the-united-kingdom-and-the-african-union-commission-2023-joint-communique/high-level-dialogue-between-the-united-kingdom-and-the-african-union-commission-2023>, Date of Access: 27.04.2024.

17 Gayle Meikle, "Honourable Nani Juwara, the Minister of Energy and Petroleum, The Gambia will lead a delegation to London for the Africa Energies Summit", Frontier Energy Network, 10.04.2023,

<https://www.frontierenergy.network/news/the-minister-of-energy-and-petroleum-the-gambia-will-lead-a-delegation-to-london-for-the-africa-energies-summit>, Date of Access: 27.04.2024.

18 Government of South Africa, 07.04.2023,

<https://www.gov.za/news/media-statements/minister-patricia-de-lille-participates-annual-world-travel-market>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

19 UK Government Press Release, 12.06.2023,

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sanctions-businesses-funding-sudan-wars>, Date of Access: 30.04.2024



Kenya The King of England, Charles III met with Kenyan President William Ruto in Nairobi (Source: Anadolu Agency).

6. Controversial British Military Presence in Kenya

The opening of a parliamentary investigation into a murder allegedly committed by a British soldier in 2012 was one of the prominent developments in 2023. In a statement to Foreign Policy magazine, the British Gov-

ernment reiterated that “the jurisdiction of this investigation lies with the Kenya Police Service and that the British Government is working closely with its Kenyan counterparts to expedite the process.”²⁰ Within the framework of these developments, Britain’s military presence in Kenya was opened to debate once more. Britain has stationed around 200 military personnel in the country permanently since Kenya gained its independence from Britain in 1963. The British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) provides counter-terrorism training to approximately 1,000 Kenyan soldiers. In this context, Kenya’s National Assembly Defense, Intelligence and Foreign Affairs Committee announced on August 11 that an official investigation had been launched into BATUK’s activities.²¹

7. Development and Aid

The development heading is one of the fundamental elements of the UK’s relationship with the region. In fact, the British Government’s decision a few years ago to close the Department for International Development (the merger of two different departments to become FCDO)²² and reduce the overseas aid budget caused a bit of adverse reaction. The UK considers development aid as an important instrument. A senior UN diplomat for the country told a meeting on Africa that “development is an important way to prevent conflict.” Case in point, both bilateral and multiple development assistance mechanisms were utilized between the UK and African countries in 2023.

The African Development Bank operates the Africa Disaster Risk Financing Program to help countries strengthen their resilience and improve their response to climate shocks. In this context, the UK Government committed an additional £7.4 million in funding to the program in question on the sidelines of COP28 held in November.²³ Over the next three years, the program will focus particularly on Somalia, one of the country’s most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. This commitment was also appreciated by the Federal Government of Somalia.²⁴

Another development transpired about the same time regarding the cooperation between the African Development Bank and the UK Government. According to a statement announced on December 9,²⁵ the ADB approved the loan capacity to be provided to South Africa by the UK Government. Thus, a \$1 billion guarantee program was approved that will allow the Bank to increase lending capacity to support South Africa’s Just Energy Transition. This confirmation came at a time COP28 when increasing climate finance was a hotly debated matter.

²⁰ <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/09/06/batuk-british-soldiers-kenya-wanjiru-murder/> Date of Access: 01.05.2024.

²¹ Parliament of Kenya, 11.08.2023, <http://www.parliament.go.ke/node/20575> Date of Access: 02.05.2024.

²² Ministry of International Development and Ministry of Foreign Affairs are merged.

²³ African Development Bank, “COP28: United Kingdom commits £7.4 million additional funding to African Development Bank’s Africa Disaster Risk Financing Programme”, 12.12.2023, <https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/press-releases/cop28-united-kingdom-commits-ps74-million-additional-funding-african-development-banks-africa-disaster-risk-financing-programme-67026> Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ African Development Bank, “South Africa: African Development Bank approves \$1 billion guarantee from the United Kingdom to support SA’s Just Energy Transition”, 09.12.2023, <https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/press-releases/south-africa-african-development-bank-approves-1-billion-guarantee-united-kingdom-support-sas-just-energy-transition-66885> Date of Access: 28.04.2024.

Setting a precedent for fair energy transition partnerships (JETP) in sub-Saharan Africa, the green energy conversion program in question is the result of an agreement signed by the governments of the EU, France, Germany, the UK and the USA in 2021.²⁶ In fact, France, Germany, the EU, the UK and Canada signed a JETP with Senegal in Paris on June 22, 2023. This agreement included a €2.5 billion package that would contribute to accelerating the deployment of renewable energies and increase Senegal’s share of electricity capacity to 40%.

Another development regarding climate finance in 2023 is the announcement of the first projects of the Room-2Run guarantee program, which was announced in 2022 in cooperation with the African Bank and the UK Government.²⁷ The first projects announced under the program, an €80 million wastewater project in Egypt as well as a €37 million water sanitation project in Senegal both focus on clean water supply and sanitation.

8. Discussions Regarding African Artefacts in the British Museum

One of the developments regarding British-Africa relations in 2023 were the Benin bronzes stored in the British Museum. Subsequent to a burglary incident at the museum, the Nigerian National Museums and Monuments Commission Director, Abba Isa Tijani stated he found the claim not to return the bronzes on grounds they would not be safe in Nigeria absurd.²⁸ Similarly, the Nigerian Minister of Arts, Culture and Creative Economy, Hannatu Musa Musawa stated that his country would ensure the return of national works such as the Benin bronze, which were formerly shipped off by British colonialists.²⁹

9. Conclusion

As stated in the relevant policy documents, the UK considers irregular migration, radicalization and the increasing influence of Russia and China on the continent as threats. The nature of the UK’s pursuit of a more autonomous foreign policy after Brexit, remains to be seen. In assessing the developments in UK-Africa relations of 2023, it can be said that migration, development and green transformation were the primary topics. A clearer assessment is possible by looking at the relations of other countries, especially those such as the USA, China, Russia and Türkiye, with the continental countries.

²⁶ European Commission, https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/international-cooperation/key-partner-countries-and-regions/sub-saharan-africa_en, Date of Access: 27.04.2024.

²⁷ African Development Bank, “United Kingdom announces first water infrastructure resilience projects in Egypt and Senegal under its Room2Run guarantee program”, 26.05.2023, <https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/press-releases/united-kingdom-announces-first-water-infrastructure-resilience-projects-egypt-and-senegal-under-its-room2run-guarantee-program-61503>, Date of Access: 06.05.2024.

²⁸ Sadiya Chowdhury, “Nigeria demands return of Benin bronzes after thefts from British Museum”, Sky News, 24.08.2023, <https://news.sky.com/story/nigeria-demands-return-of-benin-bronzes-after-thefts-from-british-museum-12946236>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

²⁹ Joseph Eshanokpe, “Culture minister pledges to return national artefacts”, 31.08.2023, <https://thenationonlineng.net/culture-minister-pledges-to-return-national-artefacts/>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

The Rising Role of Russia: New Dynamics of Relations with Africa

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5

1. Introduction

While the war in Ukraine, which began in February 2022, caused irreparable wounds on Russian-Ukrainian and Russian-Western relations, it also led to significant positive developments in Russia's relations with other non-Western countries, especially China. The West's efforts to isolate Russia from the international system have led Moscow to pursue a more proactive foreign policy in the Far East and Africa. The multi-faceted deepening of Russia-Africa relations after 2022 is one of the most obvious geopolitical consequences of the Russia-Ukraine war. Although the Kremlin's official return to Africa began with the Russo-African Country Summit held in Sochi in 2019, the ongoing war in Ukraine has both accelerated this process and brought about certain changes in Russia's Africa strategy. While the primary driving force behind pre-war Africa-Russia relations was cooperation in the field of economy and trade, in the new period, ideological elements, as well as the military-security dimension, have emerged as important components, as was seen in the Soviet Union era.

The Global South plays a major role behind the recent development of Russia-Africa relations in Moscow's efforts to create a multipolar/centered international relations system. Another important element is Russia's desire to thwart the West's attempt to isolate it from the international system after the Russia-Ukraine war, and the fact that Africa, with its population of 1.5 billion and significant consumption potential, has come to the fore as a crucial commercial partner on the back of economic sanctions imposed by the West, has led to the recent rapprochement. In this regard, a second Russia-Africa Summit, held in St. Petersburg on July 27-28, 2023, allowed views pertaining to Russia-Africa relations which were presented at the

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2019 Sochi Summit to further deepen, diversify and gain new dimensions, especially from a military and security aspect.

Accordingly, this study will examine Russia's activities related to Africa as of 2023.

2. Multipolar World Order and Neocolonialism

Africa is not only viewed as an important economic partner for Russia during the post-Ukraine War era, but also as an important power hub of a multipolar world system Moscow wants to create. Undoubtedly, Moscow had pursued this goal in previous periods as well. However, this strategy has gained more traction in the new geopolitical reality shaped after the war. In addressing the general session entitled "Russia-Africa in the Multipolar World" held in the State Duma within the framework of the 2nd Russia-Africa International Parliamentary Conference on March 20, 2023, Vladimir Putin emphasized that Africa will become one of the leaders of the new multipolar world order being shaped.¹

In order to achieve the goals mentioned above, the Kremlin must achieve complete political, economic, military and cultural independence from the former colonial capitals of Africa. From this viewpoint, both neocolonialism and anti-Westernism stand out as the principal ideological elements of Russia's new-era Africa policy. Unlike the previous foreign policy concept adopted in 2016, the new foreign policy strategy document adopted in 2023 underlines Moscow's support for the effort of African countries to create a more just and multipolar world order and to eliminate socioeconomic problems and inequalities rendered by the neocolonial policies of developed countries.² In this regard, Russia's strategy of breaching Western hegemony in global politics and creating a multipolar world system and Africa's goal of becoming a subject within the framework of a multipolar world system.

As a result, Russia's new era Africa policy reflects a stance against neocolonialism and focuses on bolstering the region's national sovereignty and economic independence. This policy offers an important opportunity for Africa to play a more active role in the multipolar world order, at a time when the global balance of power is changing.

3. The West's Attempts to Isolate Russia

Another important reason behind Russia's increasing interest in Africa is its desire to thwart the West's efforts to isolate Moscow from the internation-

al arena. With the Ukraine War, the West aims to completely isolate Russia by calling on many countries to participate in economic sanctions against Russia, reduce diplomatic relations to the lowest level, and support resolutions against Russia in the UN. For Russia, which has been largely excluded by the West, it is crucial for countries in Africa to compensate for their economic losses and for its theses to be widely accepted by the UN and other international organizations. The aim is to increase the legitimacy of the military operation conducted in this way. In line with this goal, Moscow uses its soft power, military, technological and economic elements inherited from the Soviet era to strengthen its presence in Africa. In this context, it organizes bilateral and multilateral summits with African countries, conducts mutual high-level visits and contributes towards solving the military, security, energy and food problems faced by these countries.

There was a significant increase in mutual visits and contacts between the two sides in 2023. Delegations from more than 40 African countries attended the "Russia-Africa" interparliamentary conference, held within the State Duma in Moscow on March 19-20, 2023. In similar fashion, 45 delegations, 17 of which were represented at the head of state level, attended the Russia-Africa Summit held in St. Petersburg in July of the same year.³ On the other hand, it is known that 45 heads of state and government from 54 African countries were represented at the opening summit in 2019.⁴ Less than twice the previous summit, this turnout reflects the impasse of African countries caught between Western powers and Russia. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the participation of 45 out of 54 countries underlines Russia's ability to break the intended isolation, albeit with reduced representation.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's visits to Africa in January, February and May 2023 are considered evidence of a clear shift towards permanent Russian engagement with African states.⁵ Lavrov called on the Republic of South Africa (RSA), Eswatini, Angola and Eritrea in January; Mali, Mauritania and Sudan in February; and Kenya, Burundi, Mozambique and RSA again in May. In addition to the numerical increase in visits, notable changes have been observed in terms of the countries covered and the topics negotiated.

Unlike the visits in 2022, the recent visits emphasized military, strategic, and security issues, particularly cooperation in the field of energy.⁶ For instance, during the RSA visit issues were discussed such as organizing a military naval exercise with the participation of China and Russia;⁷ providing the necessary tools to increase the defense capacity in Eritrea, strengthening

¹ "Состоялось пленарное заседание Россия-Африка в многополярном мире", *Официальный сайт Государственной Думы*, 20.03.2023, <http://duma.gov.ru/news/56646/>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

² "Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации от 31.03.2023", *Официальный сайт МИД РФ*, 31.03.2023, <https://www.mid.ru/detail-material-page/1860586/>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

³ LENTA.RU, "В Петербурге прошел саммит Россия-Африка". О чем африканские лидеры попросили Путина и что готовы предложить взамен?", 28.07.2023, <https://lenta.ru/news/2023/07/28/rusafrique/>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

⁴ "Подведены итоги первого Саммита и Экономического форума Россия – Африка. Росконгресс продолжит работу на африканском треке в период до следующего Форума", 25.10.2019, <https://summitafrica.ru/archive/2019/summit-outcomes/>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

⁵ Галина Сидорова, "Африканские встречи. О визите С.В. Лаврова в Африку", *Interaffairs*, 20.03.2023, <https://interaffairs.ru/news/show/39493>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

⁶ Андрея Волкова, "Россия и Африка в условиях полицентричного мира: политика, культура, спорт", *РСМД*, 13.06.2023, <https://russiancouncil.ru/blogs/a-volkov/rossiya-i-afrika-v-usloviyakh-politsentrichnogo-mira-politika-kultura-/>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

⁷ Владимир Кулагин, Глеб Мишутин, Илья Лакстыгал, "Лавров нашел в Африке новые возможности для России", *Vedomosti*, 13.02.2023, <https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/articles/2023/02/13/962679-lavrov-nashel-v-afrike-novie-vozmozhnosti>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

military cooperation and establishing a military naval base in the Red Sea.⁸ In Mali, cooperation in the fight against terrorism in the Sahel-Saharan region was discussed.⁹ During his visit to Sudan, it was seen that issues such as the development of logistics support points for the Russian navy were also brought to the agenda.¹⁰

Although the practical purpose of these visits was the preparations for the 2023 Russia-Africa Summit, the fact these visits covered practically the entire geography of Africa, including countries that had not been visited before, and Russia's efforts to explain its theses regarding the war in Ukraine, meant these contacts would increase Russia's global influence and showed that it was part of a strategy to strengthen its presence in Africa.

Against the West's isolation efforts, Putin has demonstrated the importance he attaches to the food security of these countries by skillfully using the grain agreement¹¹ and Russia's restrictions on fertilizer exports. Throughout 2023, Putin frequently addressed this issue at events attended by representatives of African countries and in articles he wrote about relations with Africa. According to Putin, Russia supported the grain agreement with the aim of ensuring global food security, reducing the threat of famine and helping the poorest countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.¹² Nevertheless, it was stated that the West did not fulfill its commitments, most of the grain exported from Ukraine was bought and resold by large European companies, and even the fertilizer kept in European ports due to sanctions was not sent to the African countries in need.¹³ In an effort to come up with a solution to this problem, Putin spoke at the general session of the Russia-Africa Economic and Humanitarian Forum within the scope of the 2023 Russia-Africa summit, announcing that 25,000-50,000 tons of grain would be provided free of charge to Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Mali, Somalia, the Central African Republic and Eritrea.¹⁴ Consequently, while Putin commended the West's opportunity to use the grain agreement against Russia, he also showed African countries his important role in ensuring food security.

While some African states voted against Russia at the UN, the fact that none of them imposed sanctions on Russia and did not cut diplomatic relations or mutual visits shows that these countries attached importance to their relations with Russia, but also revealed deep flaws in the isolation policy.

Another important reason the African dimension of isolation failed is that the West pressured these countries, which benefit from trade with Russia, to choose sides. African countries that reject this approach need Russia's

8 Дмитрий Бавырин, "Россия лишает Запад мировой кладовой природных ресурсов", RIA, 30.01.2023, <https://ria.ru/20230130/amerika-1848304735.html>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

9 "К рабочему визиту Министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации С.В.Лаврова в Республику Мали", Официальный сайт МИД РФ, 07.02.2023, https://www.mid.ru/ru/press_service/vizity-ministra/1852638/, Date of Access: 23.04.2024.

10 "Выступление и ответы на вопросы СМИ Министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации С.В.Лаврова в ходе совместной пресс-конференции с и.о. Министра иностранных дел Республики Судан А.Ас-Садиком Али по итогам переговоров, Хартум, 9 февраля 2023 года", Официальный сайт МИД РФ, 09.02.2023, https://www.mid.ru/ru/press_service/vizity-ministra/1853269/, Date of Access: 23.04.2024.

11 The 'Grain Agreement/Food Agreement/Black Sea Initiation' are agreements signed by Russia, Ukraine, Türkiye and the UN in Istanbul on July 22, 2022. The documents envisage the creation of a safe corridor for the safe transport of agricultural products through Ukrainian ports via the Black Sea, provided that Western restrictions on food exports from Russia are lifted.

12 "Статья Владимира Путина "Россия и Африка: объединяя усилия для мира, прогресса и успешного будущего", Kremlin.ru, 24.07.2023, <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/71719>, Date of Access: 23.04.2024.

13 "Статья Владимира Путина...".

14 "Путин заявил о готовности бесплатно поставить нескольким странам Африки по 25-50 тыс. т зерна, Interfax.ru, 27.07.2023, <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/913558>, Date of Access: 23.04.2024.



Russia 2023 Russia-Africa Summit, Russia, St. Petersburg (Source: Anadolu Agency).

15 Андрей Резчиков, Анастасия Куликова, "Россия нанесла удар в Африке по военному престижу США", Vedomosti, 03.03.2024, <https://vz.ru/world/2024/5/3/1266420.html>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

support in matters such as ensuring energy and food security and the fight against terrorism.

4. Increased Military Involvement

In the new era of Russia's Africa strategy, its efforts to increase direct military engagement with the countries of the continent are drawing attention. Unlike previous periods, Moscow is now seeking to strengthen cooperation in the military-security and defense fields directly with the relevant governments, without depending on any third actor. Russian Presidential Press Secretary Dmitry Peskov stated that Moscow is interested in defense cooperation with African countries and is developing relations with these countries in various fields, including the field of defense.¹⁵

In the past, although not officially approved, the Kremlin, through private military companies such as the Wagner Group (WG), worked with its African partners to play a decisive role in the fight against terrorism and separatism

and in the training of military units in countries such as Libya, Mozambique, Central African Republic, Mali, the DRC, Madagascar, Zimbabwe and Sudan.¹⁶ Nonetheless, the rebellion of WG leader Yevgeni Prigozhin against Moscow on June 23-24, 2023 and his death as a result of a plane crash in August of the same year initiated the liquidation process of this group and also led significant changes in the military dimension of Russia's Africa policy. According to a researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Grigory Lukyanov, rather than military-technical support provided through private military companies a new cooperation format is being created under the direct control of the Ministry of Defense.¹⁷

The foundations of this new model are being laid out by Russian Deputy Minister of Defense Yunus-Bek Yevkurov.¹⁸ For this purpose, Yevkurov met with important leaders in various African countries in 2023. Meeting with the leader of the Libyan National Army, General Khalifa Haftar, in August, Yevkurov went on to held meetings with Burkina Faso's interim President Ibrahim Traore in September. He also met with Mali President Assimi Goita, Defense Minister Sadio Kamaru and Niger Defense Minister Salifa Modi.¹⁹ Yevkurov met again with his colleague General Modi while visiting Niger in December.²⁰

The general purpose of these visits was to develop a new cooperation model with African countries within the Russian Ministry of Defense and to provide military-technical support against the activities of cross-border terrorist organizations these countries face. After Yevkurov's contacts, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger announced they had established a military alliance under the name of the Sahel States Alliance. The aim of the alliance is to create a "collective defense architecture."²¹ The main driving force in the formation of this alliance are the economic sanctions imposed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the threat of military operations against Niger and the fight against terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State that these countries face.²²

The presence of groups in the administration of these three West African countries that want to establish good relations with Russia may allow Moscow to increase its influence in this part of the continent, where it has not been influential before. Nonetheless, the need for these countries to fight cross-border terrorism and counter ECOWAS' economic and military measures may lead them to need Moscow more for military equipment and training. In accordance with the cooperation reached with three countries, Russian experts, initially comprised of 100 people, reached Burkina Faso on

16 Adem Özer, "Rusya'nın Afrika'daki Hibrit Savaş Stratejisi: Wagner Grubu ve 2022 İnsan Hakları Tartışmaları", *Afrika Yılığ* 2022, Eds. Elem Eyryce Tepeciklioğlu ve Mürsel Bayram, YTB Publications, Ankara, 2023, p. 176.

17 Илья Лакстыкал, Нурлан Гасымов, "Россия укрепляет военные связи с Африкой", *Vedomosti*, 05.12.2023, <https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/articles/2023/12/05/1009330-rossiya-ukrepyaet-voennie-svyazi-s-afrikoi>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

18 According to Russian news reports, Moscow is currently creating a special-status African Corps under Yunus-Bek Yevkurov's leadership, which will be subordinated to the Ministry of Defense, including the Wagner formations operating in Africa. Although the existence of this corps has yet to be confirmed by the official authorities, the fact that Yevkurov's visits to the above-mentioned countries, where the WG had previously operated, and that former Wagner soldiers signed new contracts with the Ministry of Defense and continued their operations strengthen the authenticity of these allegations. For detailed information, see: "Маршруты Африканского Корпуса. Зачем Россия Расширяет Военное Присутствие В Африке", *Afrinz.ru*, 21.11.2023, <https://afrinz.ru/2023/11/marshruty-afrikanskogo-korpusa-zachem-rossiya-rasshiryaet-voennoe-prisutstvie-v-afrike/>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

19 "Малийское телевидение: Евкуров встретился с министром обороны Нигера в Мали", *Kommersant*, 16.09.2023, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/6222745>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

20 "Министр обороны Нигера встретился с замглавы МО РФ Евкуровым в Ниаме", *Tass*, 04.12.2023, <https://tass.ru/armiya-i-opk/19446621>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

21 "Россияне развернулись в Африке", *Kommersant*, 25.01.2024, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/6467569>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

22 Иван Лошкарев, "Альянс государств Сахеля: стартовые трудности как ресурс развития", *РСМД*, 18.12.2023, <https://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/alyans-gosudarstv-sakhelya-startovye-trudnosti-kak-resurs-razvitiya/>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

January 24, and Niger on April 12, 2024.²³ These numbers are expected to increase further in the coming days.²⁴ The apparent purpose of Russian military experts is stated as training the military forces of these countries in the fight against terrorism and providing close protection to the heads of state.²⁵

On the other hand, the deep cooperation of this region with Russia, which had been under the military, political and economic influence of France since the colonial period, and the adoption of an anti-Western policy by France in particular, turns this part of the continent into a new arena of struggle with the West for Russia. This situation makes it possible for Russia to further strengthen its military presence in Africa.

5. Conclusion

While Russia-Africa relations experienced their golden age in the modern period in 2023, there were significant changes in Moscow's strategies and policy tools towards the region. Russia's efforts to bolster its presence in Africa after the Ukraine War were shaped as a reaction against the West's isolation policies, further strengthening the relations of African countries with Russia. In this process, Russia's interest in Africa increased, whereas this interest in economic, military-strategic and ideological dimensions deepened. The summits held in 2023 and the visits of Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov and Deputy Defense Minister Yunus Bek Yevkurov in particular have concretized the transformation in relations between Africa and Russia. The fact that these visits include military-strategic and security dimensions as well as economic cooperation revealed that Moscow aims to fortify its military presence in Africa and play a more active role in regional security issues.

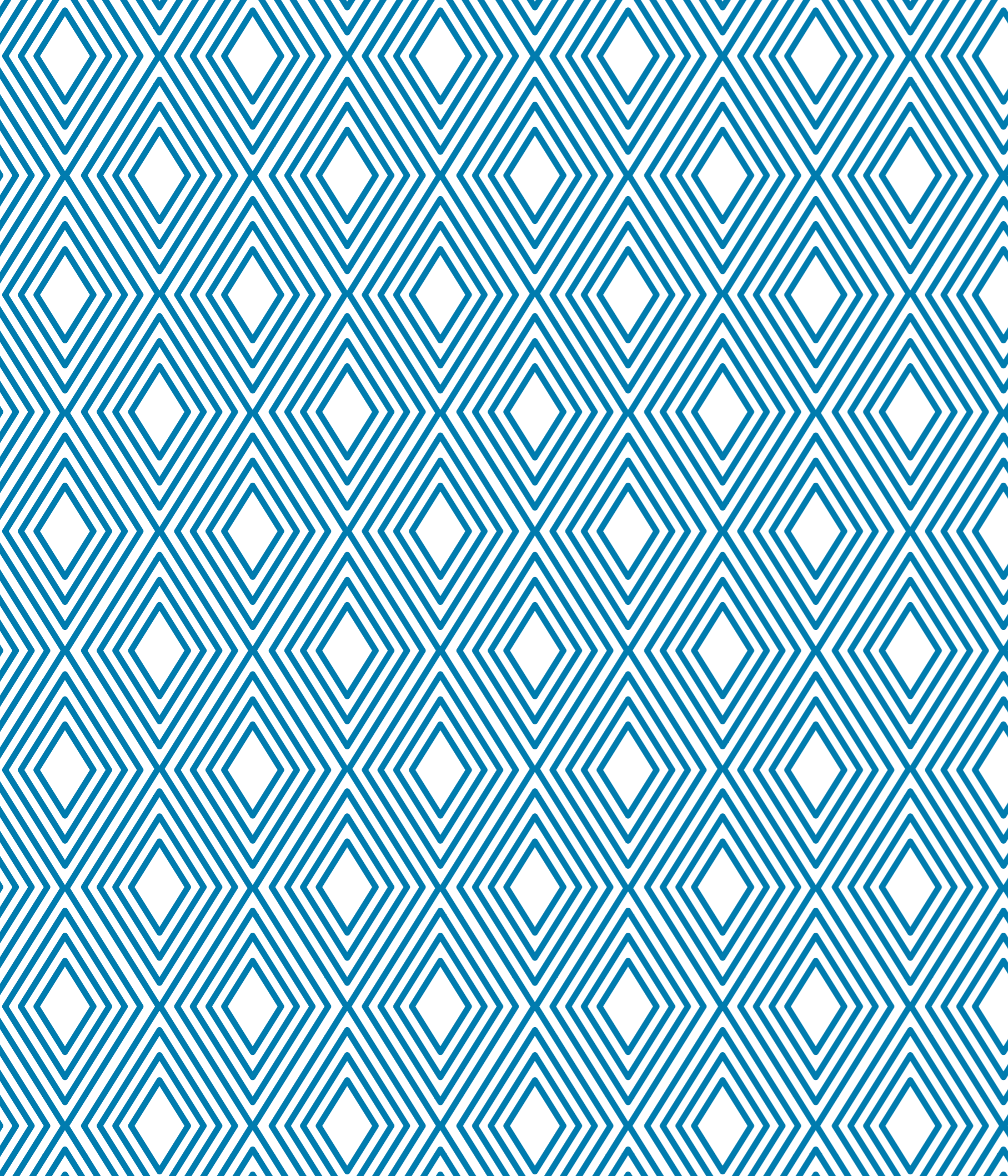
Russia not only views Africa as an economic partner, but also supports Africa's potential central role in the multipolar world order, in parallel with the changes in the global balance of power. In this regard, the Kremlin's efforts to transform Africa into a more effective actor in the global balance of power and strengthen the national sovereignty of the region have become prominent.

For this purpose, anti-Westernism and its stance against neocolonialism which have a decisive influence in the region, constitute the ideological dimension of Russia's regional policy. Russia's initiatives in African countries' energy, food security and fight against terrorism reveal the West's shortcomings in these areas, highlighting it as a viable partner for these countries.

23 "Пентагон: российские силы и военные из США находятся на одной базе в Нигере", *RIA*, 03.05.2024, <https://ria.ru/20240503/pentagon-1943603196.html>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

24 "Россияне развернулись в Африке", *Kommersant*, 25.01.2024, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/6467569>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.

25 "В Буркина-Фасо прибыли российские военные с техникой и оружием. Они будут охранять президента страны", *The Insider*, 24.01.2024, <https://theins.ru/news/268577>, Date of Access: 05.05.2024.



China-Africa Relations in 2023

Hasan Aydin*

1. Introduction

There has been a significant development in China-Africa relations in the 21st century, with several important factors supporting this development. Its rapid industrial growth and its increasing need for raw materials and markets has directed China's attention towards Africa. Similarly, infrastructure investments by Chinese companies in Africa affect China's influence on the continent and economic capacity of African countries. On the other hand, the Beijing Government's bolstering its political relations with African countries has facilitated the development of China-Africa relations and deepened the cooperation of the parties on international issues. It is assumed China's initiatives in areas such as education, culture and health in Africa have positively shaped the social development of the continent's countries and their citizens' perceptions of China. Therefore, China is among the most impactful and discussed external actors in Africa today.

It is possible to encounter both positive and negative assessments regarding China's increasing presence in Africa. Those who adopt a negative perspective argue that Beijing endangers the political-economic independence of African countries, weakens their local economies and harms their

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South Africa Chinese President Xi Jinping was welcomed by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in Johannesburg, where he came to attend the 15th BRICS Summit. (Source: Anadolu Agency).

democratization tendencies. The concept of debt trap diplomacy, which has come to the forefront recently, forms the basis of this perspective. On the other hand, those who prefer a positive perspective believe that improving relations with China and benefiting from Beijing's development experiences provide African countries a number of significant benefits. Those who adopt this view can list accelerating trade relations, increasing mutual investments, employment opportunities provided by China's activities in Africa, African countries' access to developing Chinese technology and professional knowledge, access of local products in Chinese markets, and deepening cooperation in international issues as amongst the positive points. Regardless of these perspectives, the inroads made in China-Africa relations in the 2000s shows the satisfaction of leaders on the continent with China's emergence as an important alternative to the West in Africa.

This study shall focus on China-Africa relations in 2023. First, a basic framework of the political and economic relations in the specified year will be drawn up. Secondly, the "China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo," "China-Africa Leaders Dialogue" and "16th Senior Officials Meeting of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)," which are the initiatives that support and strengthen these relations, will be examined. In the conclusion section, a brief evaluation of the issues raised in the study will be conducted.

2. Political Relations, Trade and Investment: A General Overview

In terms of political visits and relations between China and African countries, 2023 was a much more dynamic year compared to the previous year. As his counterparts have done since 1991, Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang made his first foreign visit to Africa in January 2023. Qin Gang visited Ethiopia, Gabon, Angola, Benin, Egypt and the African Union between January 9-16 as part of his African tour.¹ Approximately seven months later, Chinese President Xi Jinping also travelled to South Africa to attend the BRICS Summit, whereas in addition to the BRICS summit, the China-Africa Leaders Summit was held with the participation of leaders from Africa.²

Similarly, heads of state/government or foreign ministers of more than 20 African countries visited China to attend bilateral or multilateral meetings.³ The primary agenda of these visits by Chinese and African leaders was the development of trade and investment opportunities. Increasing cooperation on security and international issues were also among the important matters raised during the meetings. In this regard, Qin Gang reiterated China's desire to play a leading role within the Initiative of Peaceful Development in

¹ Africanews, "China's new foreign minister heads to Africa for first trip", 09.01.2023, <https://www.africanews.com/2023/01/09/chinas-new-foreign-minister-heads-to-africa-for-first-trip/>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

² MFA of PRC, "Xi Jinping arrives in Johannesburg to attend the 15th BRICS summit and pay a state visit to South Africa", 22.08.2023, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202308/t20230824_11132423.html, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

³ Hannah Ryder, "What's in store for China-Africa relations in 2024?", *African Business*, 28.07.2022, <https://african.business/2023/11/trade-investment/whats-in-store-for-china-africa-relations-in-2024>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

the Horn of Africa in order to come up with a permanent solution to conflicts in the region and ensure economic stability.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs emphasized that Beijing was capable of taking a more proactive stance on African issues. The Minister regarded the Tigray matter as Ethiopia's internal affair and rejected possible foreign interventions. This indicated that there was no significant change in the Chinese government's approach of not interfering in the internal affairs of countries on the continent.⁴

From an economic standpoint, China was Africa's largest trading partner in 2023, as it was for the past 14 years. Moreover, although this country's foreign trade volume worldwide decreased by approximately 5%, its trade volume with African countries increased by 1.5% compared to the previous year, reaching \$282.1 billion. In this regard, China's exports to African countries increased by 7.5% compared to 2022, reaching \$173.1 billion, while its imports from the continent decreased by 6.7%, falling to \$109 billion. This resulting picture resulted in Africa's trade deficit, which was \$46.9 billion in 2022, rose by approximately 36.5%, reaching \$64 billion in 2023.⁵ The decrease in the prices of natural resources and precious metals and fluctuating exchange rates were effective in increasing the trade deficit in China-Africa relations in 2023. As a matter of fact, Beijing's trade with South Africa, Angola, Nigeria, the DRC and Egypt, which are among its main commercial partners and rich in natural resources, decreased compared to the previous year. In response, the Chinese Government has announced it aimed to increase imports of agricultural products from Africa, reduce customs duties on some products of African origin, and increase imports from Africa to up to \$300 billion by 2025 in order to solve the foreign trade deficit problem.⁶ Although it may seem difficult to achieve these goals for now, Jiang Wei, Head of the West Asian and African Affairs Department of the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, described the growth in total trade volume in 2023 as "a reflection of the durability of China-Africa trade."⁷

China's investments in Africa continued to increase in 2023. While more than 3,000 Chinese companies made direct foreign investments worth \$1.8 billion on the continent during the first six months of the year, this amount equated to an annual increase of 4.4%.⁸ In conjunction, there was also a 47% increase in construction contracts and a 114% increase in investments in African countries along the Belt and Road Initiative route.⁹ Countries that are rich in natural resources, such as the DRC, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mali and Tanzania, have become among the leading investment locations.¹⁰ On

4 MFA of China, "Qin Gang talks about the progress of the 'outlook on peace and development in the Horn of Africa' in Ethiopia", 01.11.2023,

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjw_663304/zjzg_663340/tzs_663828/xwlb_663830/202301/t20230111_11005837.html, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

5 DiploFoundation, "China-Africa trade reaches \$282 billion in 2023, yet widening trade deficit in Africa, attributed to commodity price influences", 01.02.2024,

<https://www.diplomacy.edu/updates/china-africa-trade-reaches-282-billion-in-2023-yet-widening-trade-deficit-in-africa-attributed-to-commodity-price-influences>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

6 Jevans Nyabiage, "China-Africa trade hit US\$282 billion in 2023 but Africa's trade deficit widens, with commodity prices a key factor", *South China Morning Post*, 01.02.2024,

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3250552/china-africa-trade-hit-282-billion-2023-africas-trade-deficit-widens-commodity-prices-key-factor>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

7 *The Froniter Post*, "Trade turnover between China and Africa reached \$282 billion", 01.02.2024,

<https://thefroniterpost.com/trade-turnover-between-china-and-africa-reached-282-billion/>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

8 Wang Qingyun, "Chinese investment in Africa hits \$1.8b in 1st half of 2023", *China Daily*, 25.10.2023,

<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202310/25/WS653873d9a31090682a5ea8c0.html>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

9 Christoph Nedopil, "China Belt and Road Initiative Investment (BRI) Report 2023", *Griffith University Asia Institute*, February 2024, p. 10.

10 Jevans Nyabiage, "Global green transition is re-energising China's investments in Africa after pandemic slowdown", *South China Morning Post*, 16.02.2024,

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3252032/global-green-transition-re-energising-chinas-investments-africa-after-pandemic-slowdown>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

11 Lauren Johnston, "China-Africa relations in 2023: Key moments and events to remember", *The Conversation*, 12.12.2023,

<https://theconversation.com/china-africa-relations-in-2023-key-moments-and-events-to-remember-218721>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024; Ryder, "What's in store...".

12 Hema Narang, "Infrastructure diplomacy the key to China's influence in Africa", *East Asia Forum*, 07.02.2024,

<https://eastasiaforum.org/2024/02/07/infrastructure-diplomacy-the-key-to-chinas-influence-in-africa/>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

13 *State Council Information Office*, "China-Africa expo sees highest-ever participation", 03.07.2024,

https://www.english.scio.gov.cn/international/exchanges/2023-07/03/content_90824308.htm, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

14 Xiong Xinyi ve Tu Lei, "Third China-Africa economic and trade expo successfully concludes with new historical highs", *Global Times*, 02.07.2023,

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202307/1293581.shtml>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

15 CGTN, "The 3rd China-Africa economic and trade expo achieves unprecedented milestones", 02.07.2023,

<https://news.cgtv.com/news/2023-07-02/The-3rd-China-Africa-Economic-and-Trade-Expo-closed-with-milestones-1171iqFlqf6/index.html>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

16 Johnston, "China-Africa relations...".

the other hand, amongst China's important investment commitments in Africa in 2023 were the Lekki Open Sea Port, which went online in Nigeria, the Lagos Rail Public Transport System project, the first phase of which was completed in connection with the port, road improvement agreements in Zambia, a green industrial park agreement worth \$40 million in Mozambique, as well as an agreement to establish Uganda's first Huawei-supported 5G digital cement factory.

Moreover, at the Leaders' Summit held in August, it was decided to provide more aid, investment and financing to industrialization programs on the continent.¹¹ China's completion of the Zimbabwe parliament worth \$200 million, which it financed and built, and gifted to this country in 2023, is one of the remarkable examples of infrastructure diplomacy in its relations with Africa.¹² In an environment where African statesmen demand more investment in every meeting they hold with their Chinese counterparts, the Beijing Government prioritized natural resources and infrastructure construction in its investments on the continent in 2023.

At this point, a number of activities such as the China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo, China-Africa Leaders' Dialogue and 16th Senior Officials Meeting of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) were organized in 2023 in order to further develop political and economic relations.

3. Special Initiatives Aiming to Improve Political and Economic Relations

Held in Changsha city in China's Hunan province between 29 June 29 – 2 July, the 3rd China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo was the most comprehensive trade event organized in 2023. Representatives of 53 African countries with diplomatic relations with Beijing, as well as 12 international organizations, more than 1,700 Chinese and African companies, the business world, chambers of commerce and financial institutions had attended the forum.¹³ Compared to the previous forum, there were 70% more participants and a 166% increase in the number of products of African origin.¹⁴

Agreements for 120 projects worth a total of \$10.3 billion were signed at the forum held with the theme "Common Development for a Shared Future."¹⁵ The projects in question include many different products, from essential oils to jewelry, from wood carvings to flowers, from dried fish to vegetables and fruits.¹⁶ The forum held in Hunan, one of the most active provinces in China's economic relations with Africa, impacted significantly on the acceleration of commercial activities. The import of 53 tons of dried

Kenyan anchovies exhibited by Kenyan businesses at the forum to China in the following few months is a notable example in this regard.¹⁷

The second important event in 2023 was the China-Africa Leaders' Dialogue. Held in Johannesburg, where Xi Jinping went to attend the BRICS Summit between August 21-24, this event was co-chaired by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.¹⁸ Matters related to cooperation in international issues and Africa's development efforts were mainly discussed at the leaders' summit. The necessity of working together on issues such as promoting a fair and equitable international order, creating a peaceful and safe global environment, and creating an open and inclusive world economy within the scope of cooperation in international issues was emphasized.¹⁹

President Xi Jinping announced three fundamental plans for Africa's development. These plans are intended to support Africa's industrialization, agricultural modernization, and efforts to develop skilled manpower.²⁰ Amongst the issues mentioned at the summit were encouraging regional integration initiatives in Africa, increasing imports in an effort to alleviate the China-Africa trade deficit, which is unfavorable to the continent's countries, encouraging tourism and developing financial services. Therefore, adding a new dimension to China-Africa cooperation and supporting the continent's economic integration and modernization efforts were on the agenda as the main objectives of the summit.²¹

Another important event, 16th Senior Officials Meeting of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), which was attended by high-level officials from China, 53 African countries and the African Union Commission, as well as observers from various regional and international organizations and held in Beijing on October 23, 2023.²² Like previous senior officials' meetings, this meeting served essentially two purposes. First, it was checked whether the recommendations and commitments made during the 8th FOCAC summit, held in Dakar, the capital of Senegal, in 2021, were fulfilled. In this context, Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Deng Li announced that significant progress had been made in the implementation of the recommendations and commitments of the eighth summit.²³ The second objective of the meeting was to determine the main agenda items of the ninth FOCAC summit, which was slated to be held in China in 2024. In other words, this meeting, held in the last quarter of 2023, was to take up political, economic, sociocultural, security, etc. issues between China and African countries until 2027. This was important as it shapes the basic framework of relations and cooperation initiatives in these fields.²⁴

¹⁷ Montel Kamau, "Kenya's inaugural 52-tonne 'Omena' export to China enhances bilateral trade ties", *Serrari Group*, 11.09.2023, <https://serrarigroup.com/kenyas-inaugural-52-tonne-omena-export-to-china-enhances-bilateral-trade-ties/>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

¹⁸ Ovigwe Eguegu ve Hannah Ryder, "The latest China-Africa leaders dialogue: What has changed?", *The Diplomat*, 06.09.2023, <https://thediplomat.com/2023/09/the-latest-china-africa-leaders-dialogue-what-has-changed/>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

¹⁹ Xinhua, "Full text: Remarks by Chinese president Xi Jinping at China-Africa leaders' dialogue", 26.08.2023, https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202308/26/content_WS64e9365cc6d0868f4e8ded72.html, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

²⁰ Femy Francis ve Anu Marija Joseph, "China's ties with Africa - explained", *The Hindu*, 28.01.2024, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/chinas-ties-with-africa-explained/article67787001.ece>, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

²¹ Zhou Pingjian, "Bigger stage for China-Africa cooperation", *The Star*, 12.09.2023, p. 17.

²² MFA of China, "The 16th senior officials meeting of the forum on China-Africa cooperation held in Beijing", 24.10.2023, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjbxw/202310/t20231024_11167121.html, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

²³ Deng Li, "Co-chair of the Chinese follow-up committee of the forum on China-Africa cooperation and vice minister of foreign affairs of China At the opening ceremony of the 16th senior officials meeting of the forum on China-Africa cooperation", *Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)*, 24.10.2023, www.focac.org/eng/zfzs_1/202310/t20231024_11166789.htm, Date of Access: 04.05.2024.

²⁴ MFA of China, "The 16th Senior...".

4. Conclusion

Momentum attained in China-Africa relations during the 21st century was maintained and developed in 2023. In this context, Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang made his first foreign trip of the new year to Africa, whereas many African dignitaries visited China to participate in various events. During these visits, the primary agenda of which was the development of trade and investments, the desire to create a more equitable international system was also frequently expressed. The parties continued their criticism of the international system as well as reform expectations during 2023.

In economic terms, a relative increase was observed in the mutual trade volume and China's investments in the continent. Case in point, China-Africa trade volume exceeded an unprecedented \$282 billion. The foreign trade deficit, which is against African countries, was one of the main concerns in relations in 2023. With events such as the "China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo," "China-Africa Leaders' Dialogue" and "16th Senior Officials Meeting of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation" held during the year, Goals such as increasing mutual political interactions, developing cooperation in international relations, diversifying economic relations, reducing the foreign trade deficit, eliminating China and transferring China's development experience to African countries were pursued.

Thus far, the Beijing Government has become Africa's leading economic partner in 2023 and continues to stand out as an important political alternative for the continent's countries.

Africa-India Relations in 2023

7

Hilal Karakoyunlu*

1. Introduction

India has 40 diplomatic missions in Africa, including embassies, consulates general, and high commissions.¹ There are diplomatic representations of 21 African countries at embassy level in India.² While Indian prime ministers have made 76 visits to the African continent since the 1960s, more than 100 African leaders have visited India between 2015 - 2022.³

India stands out as one of the main partners for African countries in terms of economic and commercial partnership as well as diplomatic relations. According to 2021 World Integrated Trade Solutions (WITS) data, India ranked second on the list among sub-Saharan Africa's largest trade partners with \$19.8 billion.⁴ There are various collaborations in the fields of security and military between India and African countries. For instance, 23 countries from the African continent participated in the multinational military exercise named AFINDEX 2023, which was held in March 2023.⁵ Relations established with India and African countries are not limited to these, but have a multi-dimensional structure that includes mutual culture, education, energy, infrastructure services, agriculture, coastal security and professional military training.

The study examines developments in 2023 between India and African countries in the fields mentioned. It begins by analyzing diplomatic relations, highlighting mutual visits, agreements, and summits. The exploration then moves to educational cooperation between India and African nations. Next, the study assesses economic and commercial relations, including agreements signed in 2023 and the dynamics of imports and exports. Finally, it evaluates military security agreements, joint military training, and exercises conducted between India and African countries throughout the year.

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¹ Embassies, "Indian diplomatic missions in Africa", <https://embassies.net/india-in-africa>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

² Cybex, "List of foreign embassies in India and inclusive data of consulates in India", <https://www.cybex.in/international-trade-resources/foreign-embassies-in-india.aspx>, Date of Access: 30.04.2024.

³ Paul Nantulya, "Africa-India cooperation sets benchmark for partnership", Africa Center for Strategic Studies, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/africa-india-cooperation-benchmark-partnership/>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

⁴ World Integrated Trade Solution, "Sub-Saharan Africa trade", <https://wits.worldbank.org/CountrySnapshot/en/SSF>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

⁵ The Economic Times News, "India-Africa military exercise begins in Pune", 24.04.2024, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-africa-military-exercise-begins-in-pune/articleshow/98876298.cms?from=mdr>, Date of Access: 21.03.2023.



Ethiopia Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, 24 August 2023 (Source: Anadolu Agency).

2. 2023 Africa-India Diplomatic Relations

In terms of Africa-India relations, the year 2023 was a very active one. The prominent development in Africa-India relations in 2023 was the G-20 Summit, which was held for the 18th time in September 2023 and hosted by India. In his opening speech in New Delhi, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the process was completed, saying, "I invite the representative of the African Union to take his place as a permanent member of the G-20."⁶ It was stated that India's intense lobbying activities had an impact on the African Union becoming a permanent member of the G20.⁷ In evaluating the diplomatic relations between Africa and India, the full membership of the AU to the G-20 and the statements made by Indian Prime Minister Modi are considered a reflection of the developing diplomatic relations between the parties. In a statement he made at the summit, Modi mentioned that India's most important priority is Africa and emphasized the term "Global South," stating they had fought against colonial powers in their common past and shaped their modern relations on these historical foundations.⁸

Diplomatic developments between India and African countries in 2023 were not limited to the G-20 Summit and the participation of the AU at the

⁶ TRT Haber, "G20 ülkeleri Afrika için anlaştı: Daimi üye statüsü verilecek", <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/ekonomi/g20-ulkeleri-afrika-icin-anlasti-daimi-uye-statüsü-verilecek-794308.html>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

⁷ Paul Nantulya, "Africa-India cooperation sets benchmark for partnership", *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/africa-india-cooperation-benchmark-partnership/>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

⁸ Paul Nantulya, "Africa-India cooperation sets benchmark for partnership", *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/africa-india-cooperation-benchmark-partnership/>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

⁹ Sudha Ramachandran, "India's deepening bonds with Egypt", *The Diplomat*, 01.07.2023, <https://thediplomat.com/2023/07/indias-deepening-bonds-with-egypt/>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

¹⁰ The Times of India, "PM Modi to visit South Africa from august 22-24 on sidelines of BRICS summit", 18.08.2023, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/pm-modi-to-visit-south-africa-from-august-22-24-on-sidelines-of-brics-summit/articleshow/102840983.cms>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

¹¹ PMINDIA, "PM's meeting with PM of the republic of Ethiopia", 24.08.2023, https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/pms-meeting-with-pm-of-the-republic-of-ethiopia/, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

¹² Brian Oruta, "Kenya, India sign five deals to boost bilateral relations", *The Star*, 05.12.2023, <https://www.the-star.co.ke/in-pictures/2023-12-05-photos-kenya-india-sign-five-deals-to-boost-bilateral-relations/>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

¹³ Business Standard, "ITT Madras establishes first international campus in Tanzania Zanzibar", 06.11.2023, https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/iit-madras-establishes-first-international-campus-in-tanzania-s-zanzibar-123110600630_1.html, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

¹⁴ Fana Broadcasting Corporate, "Ethiopian police university, India's NFSU sign MoU", 24.11.2023, <https://www.fanabc.com/english/ethiopian-police-university-indias-nfsu-sign-mou/>, Date of Access: 24.04.2024.

¹⁵ Paul Nantulya, "Africa-India cooperation sets benchmark for partnership", *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 12.12.2023, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/africa-india-cooperation-benchmark-partnership/#:~:text=India's%20total%20investments%20in%20Africa,and%20leading%20entrepreneur%20and%20investor>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.



summit. On June 24-25, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a visit to Egypt, where four agreements were signed between the parties. Egypt and India signed three memorandums of understanding on agriculture, archeology and the protection of historical monuments, whereas issues such as renewable energy, health and infrastructure were also discussed during the meeting. During the visit, Egypt-India relations were based on historical background.⁹

About two months after this visit in June, Narendra Modi travelled to Johannesburg, South Africa to attend the 15th BRICS summit, held from August 22nd to 24th 2023. He met with President Cyril Ramaphosa during his visit to South Africa.¹⁰ Modi also met with leaders of different countries. Narendra Modi also met with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed within the framework of the 15th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg on August 24, 2023. The two leaders met on mutual development and capacity building issues and discussed various issues such as trade, investment, defense cooperation and agriculture.¹¹

In December 2023, Kenyan President William Ruto paid a two-day visit to India, during which five memorandums pertaining to the health, trade, energy and SME sectors were signed between the two countries.¹² Relations between Africa and India are not limited to diplomatic level relations.

On the other hand, there have also been some noteworthy developments in the educational and cultural fields. One of these is the inauguration of a technology institute in Zanzibar, Tanzania by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras on November 6, 2023. It was announced that the institute in question would initially provide education in the fields of data science and artificial intelligence at the undergraduate and graduate levels.¹³ Apart from Madagascar, Ethiopia also signed a memorandum of understanding with India in the field of education in 2023, whereas a press release stated there would be education, training and academicians exchange between the Ethiopian Police University and the Indian National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) as well as joint cooperation in the fields of capability development.¹⁴

3. 2023 Africa-India Economic and Trade Relations

The share of trade between Africa and India has increased steadily since 2003, reaching \$103 billion in 2023, with an annual growth of 18%, making India Africa's third largest trade partner after the European Union and China. Today, India's total investments in the continent amount to \$70 bil-

lion. It is also planned to further expand commercial relations that have been on the rise since 2003. Within the framework of this plan, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) announced it aims to boost trade relations to \$150 billion by 2030.¹⁵ The share of trade between the African continent and India is increasing exponentially every year. The rapidly growing population of both sides, their market potential and various agreements regarding natural resources offer great commercial opportunities to both Africa and India. India has trade agreements with many African countries such as Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, South Africa and the Seychelles.¹⁶

It is evident that the share of trade between the African continent and India has grown significantly over the last decade. Once at a \$68.5 billion level between 2011-2012, trade tallied a significant increase in the 2022-2023 fiscal year.¹⁷ In November, Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar announced that trade between India and Africa reached \$98 billion during the 2022-2023 fiscal year (April 1-March 31), registering a 9.3% increase compared to the previous fiscal year.¹⁸ In examining trade values between African countries and India, it is observed that the data is broken down by region. For instance, according to the latest data, over \$74 billion of trade was conducted between India and sub-Saharan countries in the 2022 fiscal year. It was observed that goods traded include rice, medicine, biological and petroleum products and cotton fabrics.¹⁹

The table below shows the volume of India's trade with the African continent on 2018-2023 (\$ Billion) =:

Year	2018-2019	2019- 2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	CAGR (5 Years)
India's Exports	22.65	23.55	22.93	33.08	42.85	17.27
India's Imports	35.4	32.15	23.89	41.77	39.27	2.62
Total Trade	58.05	55.7	46.82	74.86	82.13	9.06
Trade Balance	-12.75	8.6	-0.96	-8.69	3.57	

4. Africa-India Military Cooperation and Agreements

As of 2023, the number of active military personnel of the Indian Army, including combat units, logistics support personnel and administrative personnel, was recorded as 1,455,550.²¹ India's defense budget in 2023²² was INR 5.94 trillion (\$73.8 billion) in 2023, making it the country with the third-largest defense budget after the USA and China.²³ According to

¹⁶ Government of India Ministry of Commerce and Industry, "India-Africa trade agreement", <https://commerce.gov.in/international-trade/trade-agreements/india-africa-trade-agreement/>, Date of Access: 30.04.2024.

¹⁷ Malancha Chakrabarty, "Time for a new chapter in India-Africa relations", Observer Research Foundation (ORF), 08.02.2024, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/time-for-a-new-chapter-in-india-africa-relations#:~:text=India's%20trade%20with%20Africa%20has,billion%20between%201996%20to%202022>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

¹⁸ Ecofin Agency, "India-Africa Trade up 9% in FY 2022/2023 to \$98bn", 16.11.2023, <https://www.ecofinagency.com/public-management/1611-45052-india-africa-trade-up-9-yoy-in-fy-2022/2023-to-98bn>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

¹⁹ Statista, "Value of Indian trade with the Sub-Saharan Africa region from financial year 2012 to 2022", 01.02.2023, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/651695/trade-value-ssa-with-india/#statisticContainer>, Date of Access: 26.04.2024.

Table 1: Bilateral Trade of India and sub-Saharan Africa (\$ Billion) (sub-Saharan Africa Region includes the Eastern, Western, Central and Southern Regions and constitutes 48 countries.)²⁰

²⁰ Government of India - Ministry of Commerce and Industry, "Foreign Trade (Africa)", 02.01.2024, <https://commerce.gov.in/about-us/divisions/foreign-trade-territorial-division/foreign-trade-africa/>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

²¹ Brigadier Defence Academy, "Indian army strength in 2023", 20.11.2023, <https://brigadierdefenceacademy.in/indian-army-strength-in-2023/#:~:text=As%20of%202023%2C%20the%20Indian,support%20personnel%20and%20administrative%20staff>, Date of Access: 30.04.2024.

²² INR: Indian Rupee.

²³ Karl Dewey, Fenella McGerty, Viraj Solanki, "Personnel vs. Capital: the Indian Defence Budget", International Institute for Strategic Studies, 14.04.2023, <https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/military-balance/2023/04/indian-defence-budget/>, Date of Access: 08.05.2024.

²⁴ Global Fire Power (GFP), "2024 India military strength", https://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.php?country_id=india, Date of Access: 24.04.2024.

²⁵ The Economic Times News, "India-Africa military exercise begins in Pune", 21.03.2023, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-africa-military-exercise-begins-in-pune/articleshow/98876298.cms?from=mdr>, Date of Access: 24.04.2024.

²⁶ Defence Web, "India and Tanzania strengthen strategic defence partnership", 01.12.2023, <https://www.defenceweb.co.za/joint/diplomacy-a-peace/india-and-tanzania-forge-strategic-defence-partnership/>, Date of Access: 24.04.2024.

²⁷ Africa Defense Forum (ADF), "India's approach to Africa Envisions developing 'together as equals'", 23.01.2024, <https://adf-magazine.com/2024/01/indias-approach-to-africa-envisions-developing-together-as-equals/#:~:text=In%20September%202023%2C%20a%20group,to%20%24150%20billion%20by%202030to%2520%2524150%2520billion%2520by%25202030>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

Global Firepower Index (GFP) data, India ranks 4th among 145 countries and is among the top five major military powers at the global level.²⁴ Considered one of the most powerful armies globally, India also shares its military knowledge and experience with African countries.

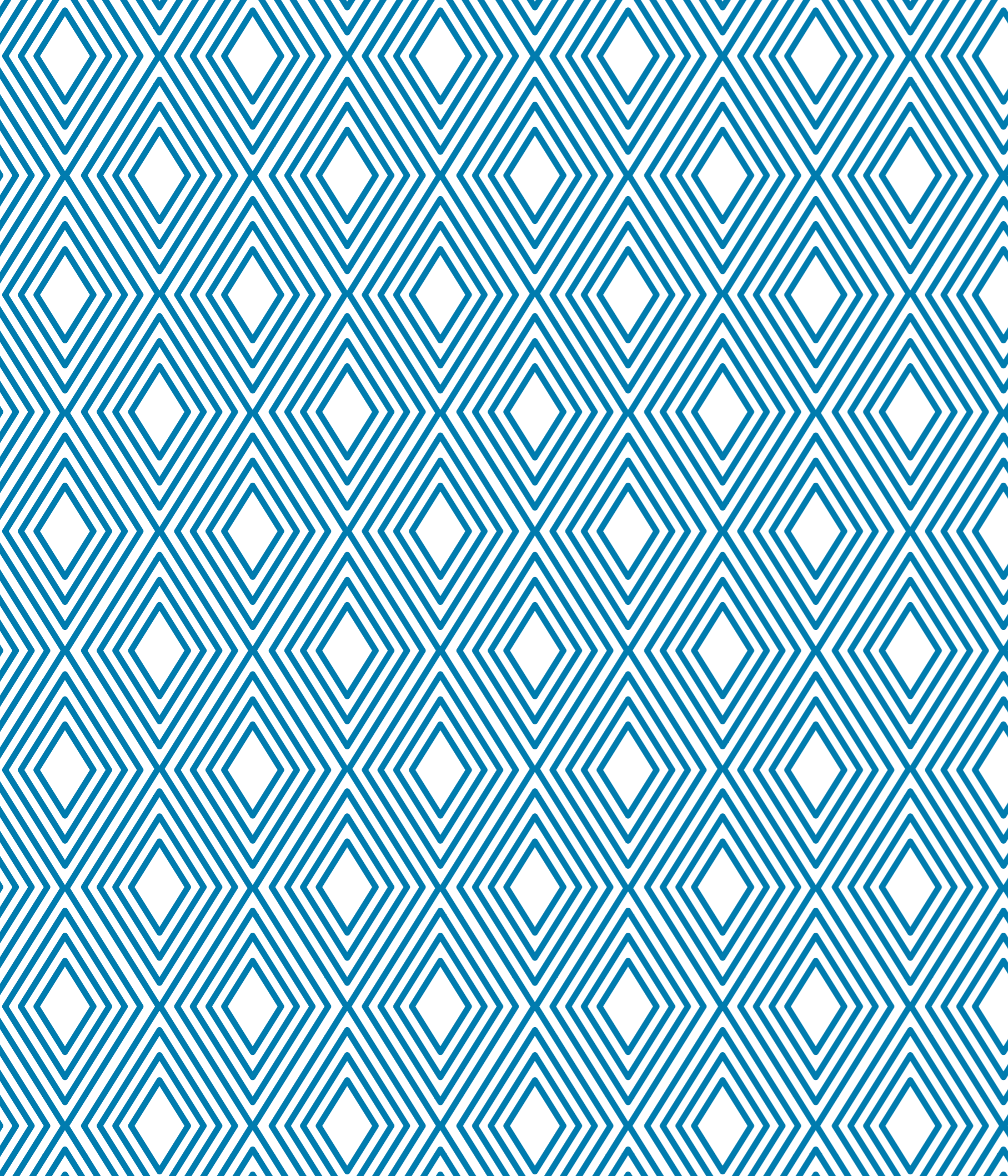
25 African countries, including Botswana, Egypt, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Niger and Nigeria participated in a nine-day military training entitled 'Africa-India Field Training Exercise' (AFINDEX) and organized between March 16-29, 2023. Held in Pune, India, the training was organized to demonstrate to the participating countries a range of new generation military equipment produced in India.²⁵

On October 8, Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan visited New Delhi to sign a new partnership agreement based on defense cooperation between the two countries. According to the agreement, military training and maritime cooperation, capacity building, the fight against terrorism and defense industries were discussed.²⁶

5. Conclusion

In examining the course of Africa-India relations in 2023, it is seen that various cooperation and agreements were established in the diplomatic, economic and military arenas. Undoubtedly, the most important development in terms of Africa-India relations in 2023 was the G-20 Summit. Developments such as established diplomatic relations, commercial and military partnerships, and the inclusion of the African Union in the G-20 show that India pursues an equal partnership in its relations with Africa. The mutual sharing of experience and knowledge, the setting up of commercial partnerships and developing relations instead of aid show India's approach to African countries. As a matter of fact, Veda Vaidyanathan said in a statement, "One thing we have heard from our African colleagues is that India does not act or talk like a donor. While India takes on the role of facilitator, it focuses on creating space to work together on an equal basis by ensuring that the African side demonstrates representation and leadership."²⁷ Making such statements is a stance which shows relations are based on mutual benefit and have an egalitarian structure.

The ever-improving relations between the African continent and India indicate that deeper and more comprehensive cooperation shall be established between the parties in the coming years, and are interpreted as a sign that India will continue its presence in Africa.



Brazil-Africa Relations in 2023: From Stagnation to Strengthening Ties

Gökhan Albayrak*

1. Introduction

According to the World Bank’s current data, as of 2022, Brazil is the 11th largest economy in the world in terms of gross domestic product.¹ Again, according to the military power index prepared by “Global Fire Power,” Brazil ranks 12th in the world, as of 2024.² Moreover Brazil is the 5th largest state in terms of surface area. From these standpoints, Brazil constitutes one of today’s economic and military powers.

As the state with the largest population in the Latin American region (215 million people), Brazil has begun to flex significant influence both in its region and in the world. Especially as it was one of the founding actors of the BRICS structure, which began to be formed in 2006, Brazil is trying to develop its economic relations internationally.

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¹ World Bank, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?most_recent_value_desc=true, Date of Access: 26.03.2024.

² Global Fire Power, <https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.php>, Date of Access: 26.03.2024.

It is observed that Brazil has fostered close relations with African countries as well as with other economic powers. It is known there is some cultural and historical backdrop behind these close relations. First of all, Brazil and African countries have a common colonial past. Brazil remained a Portuguese colony until 1808 and gained its independence in 1822. As a remnant of the colonial period, the official language of Brazil is Portuguese. Along with Brazil, former Portuguese colonies which gained independence during the 20th century are found on the African continent. Today, Portuguese is spoken in many countries in Africa and is the official language of six countries.³ Therefore, Brazil has the opportunity to communicate with many African states using their official language.

Apart from this, there is also ethnic unity between Brazil and Africa. As a result of the slave trade, today 51% of the Brazilian population is of direct African descent.⁴ At this juncture, one can emphasize that African culture has a great influence on Brazilian culture.

Brazil-Africa relations were limited and fluctuating, especially at the start of the post-decolonization period. Africa's rise to prominence in Brazil's foreign policy agenda began with Lula da Silva, who was elected president in 2002.⁵ Particularly over the past 20 years, the area occupied by Africa in Brazilian foreign policy has begun to increase. It should be said that Lula's leadership also had an impact on this. In this regard, 2023 has been a year in which Brazil-Africa relations began to deepen once more with Lula taking office again.

2. The Course of Brazil-Africa Relations in 2023

The year 2023 has been quite active in terms of Brazil-Africa relations. With the 2022 election results, the right-wing conservative Jair Messias Bolsonaro Government ended with the start of the third term of the leftist Lula da Silva Government. With the Lula Government, the discourse of strengthening relations with Africa has come to the forefront once more in Brazilian foreign policy.

2023 was a crucial year in terms of the BRICS Leaders' Summit being held in Johannesburg, South Africa and the noteworthy decisions taken at this summit. The leaders of Brazil, China, India and host South Africa attended this summit, which was held on August 22-24, 2023. Due to the arrest warrant issued against him by the International Criminal Court, Russian President Putin attended the summit to convey his views via video conferencing. The decisions taken at this summit are important, and emphasis was placed

South Africa Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva arrived in Johannesburg with his wife Rosângela Da Silva for the 15th BRICS summit in South Africa on August 21, 2023. (Source: Anadolu Agency).

³ Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe and Equatorial Guinea.

⁴ Gerhard Seibert, "Brazil-Africa Relations from the 16th Century to the 20th Century", *Brazil-Africa Relations: Historical Dimensions and Contemporary Engagements From the 1960s to the Present*, Ed. Gerhard Seibert, Paulo Fagundes Visentini, James Currey, Suffolk, 2019, p. 12.

⁵ Analúcia Danilevicz Pereira, "Brazil-Africa Relations: The Strategic Importance of the South Atlantic", *Insight on Africa*, Vol 6(1), 2014, p. 4.



on reducing the impact of the US dollar in trade between BRICS countries, focusing on agriculture and green economy, and increasing measures regarding food security.

Brazilian President Lula's statement at the summit that the creation of a common currency amongst BRICS countries would have positive impact on trade is described as a discourse that strengthens the de-dollarization policy.⁶ After the summit, President Lula continued his diplomatic trip with Angola. The visit to Angola is important as it shows Brazil's will to bolster its relations with Africa. As a result of this visit, seven memorandums of understanding were signed between the two countries on tourism, health and agriculture.⁷ Moreover, during his visit to Angola, Lula stated that Angola hosts the largest Brazilian community⁸ in Africa and that they wanted to open a consulate general there.⁹ After his visit to Angola, Lula attended the 14th Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Union of Portuguese Speaking Countries held in São Tomé and Príncipe. Also referred to as the Lusophone Union, the main agenda item of the relevant conference of this organization was youth and sustainability. At the conference, President Lula drew attention to the fight against climate change and youth unemployment and emphasized that Africa can become an agricultural center with various aids.¹⁰

The expansion of BRICS, an important tool of Brazilian foreign policy, with the summit decision taken in 2023 and the participation of two African countries in the organization¹¹ (Egypt and Ethiopia) will undoubtedly further expand the dimension of Brazil-Africa relations.

In September, the messages conveyed by world leaders at the United Nations General Assembly have an important place in diplomacy. On this occasion, Brazilian President Lula appears to have devoted Africa an important place in his speech at the meeting in New York on September 19, 2023. In this speech, Lula touched upon the situation in Africa, focusing particularly on the issues of hunger, conflicts and unequal distribution of wealth.¹² President Lula pointed out that deforestation in the Amazon had been reduced by 48% during the time he took office, and stated that Brazil had developed dialogue with African and Asian countries at this point. Moreover, Lula stated that the low representation of African countries in the IMF and the World Bank was unacceptable.

Another important development in Brazil-Africa relations in 2023 was the Brazil-Africa Forum held in São Paulo, Brazil on October 31-November 1. The Forum brought together Brazilian investors through economic and

6 Pramod Kumar, "BRICS Summit 2023: Major Outcomes and Relevance", *Australian Outlook*, 12.10.2023, <https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/brics-summit-2023-major-outcomes-and-relevance/>, Date of Access: 27.03.2024.

7 Africa News, "Angola and Brazil agree to strengthen and relaunch cooperation", 26.08.2023, <https://www.africanews.com/2023/08/26/angola-and-brazil-agree-to-strengthen-and-relaunch-cooperation/>, Date of Access: 27.03.2024.

8 About 30,000 people.

9 MercoPress, "Lula quiere que Brasil refuerce su presencia en África", 27.08.2023, <https://es.mercopress.com/2023/08/27/lula-quiere-que-brasil-refuerce-su-presencia-en-frica>, Date of Access: 27.03.2024.

10 Agência Brasil, "Portuguese-speaking countries address youth and sustainability", 28.08.2023, <https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/en-internacional/noticia/2023-08/portuguese-speaking-countries-address-youth-and-sustainability>, Date of Access: 27.03.2024.

11 Iran and the United Arab Emirates are two other countries that have joined BRICS. Argentina was invited to join the organisation, but the Milei government withdrew from the accession period.

12 Presidência da República, Speech by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at the opening of the 78th UN General Assembly, 19.09.2023, <https://www.gov.br/planalto/en/follow-the-government/speeches/speech-by-president-luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva-at-the-opening-of-the-78th-un-general-assembly>, Date of Access: 29.03.2024.

trade cooperation that converged the African Development Bank and Portugal with African Lusophone countries.¹³ From this standpoint, the Forum is an important development to further expand and deepen the Brazil-Africa trade volume, which has risen to \$20 billion.

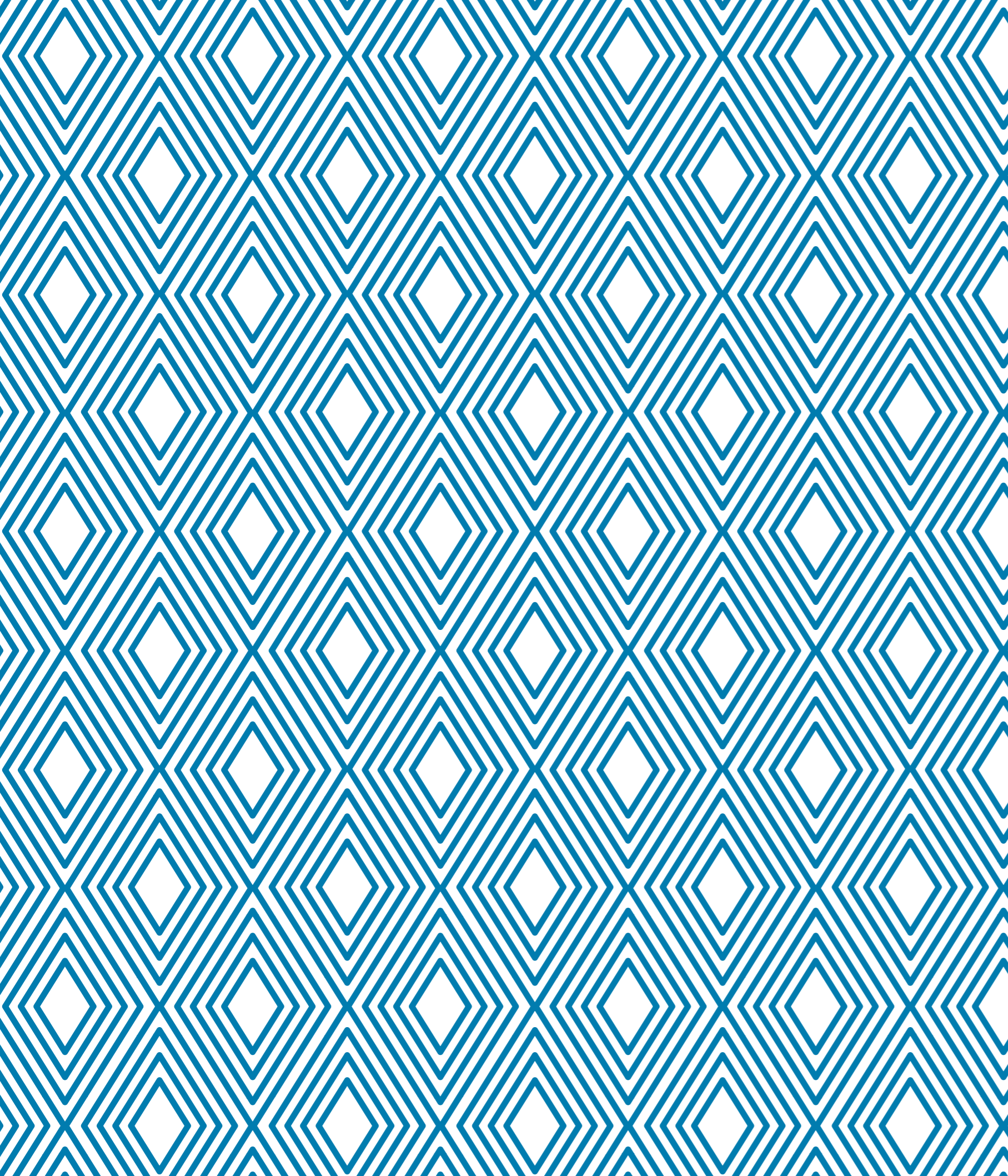
3. Conclusion

2023 was a year of change in line for Brazilian foreign policy. The end of the Bolsonaro Government, which was anti-multilateralism, South-South cooperation and climate policies¹⁴ and the return to power of the Lula government undoubtedly affected Brazil-Africa relations.

Lula's visits and statements to Africa in 2023 have signaled that Brazil will revive its African policy again. In the same light, Lula's speech as the guest of honor at the African Union summit in Ethiopia on February 17, 2024 can be viewed as evidence these signals are getting stronger. At this point, it must be said that the potential of Brazil-Africa relations is great. As an emerging power, Brazil strengthens its image as a more reliable partner compared to the interventionist United States, Europe with its colonial past, or China with its prominent authoritarian nature.

13 African Development Bank Group, "Brazil-Africa Forum 2023: African Development Bank Group calls for increased Brazilian investment in infrastructure and logistics", 3.11.2023, <https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/press-releases/brazil-africa-forum-2023-african-development-bank-group-calls-increased-brazilian-investment-infrastructure-and-logistics-65523#:~:text=In%202021%2C%20Brazil%2DAfrica%20trade,exports%20are%20destined%20for%20Africa.>, Date of Access: 29.03.2024.

14 Dawisson Belém Lopes, Thales Carvalho, Vinicius Santos, "Did the Far Right Breed a New Variety of Foreign Policy? The Case of Bolsonaro's "More-Bark-Than-Bite" Brazil", *Global Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 2(4), 2022, p. 1-14.



Israel-Africa Relations in 2023

Muhammed Yasir Okumuş*

1. Introduction

In line with the country's strategic interest in the continent, Israel's relations with Africa have transformed over the years. Israel's strategic interest in Africa, which has been fighting for sovereignty, legitimacy and existence against Palestine - and naturally against the international community that supports the Palestinian cause - since the day it was founded, has been shaped according to the dynamics and intensity of this war. In trying to rebuild its relations with Africa in the 1980s, Israel lost interest with the end of the Cold War. However, the continent has regained importance in the country's foreign policy since the 2000s due to its rivalry with Palestine and, especially, Iran.¹

The year 2023 was one of significant breaks in Israel's relations with Africa, especially due to its policies towards Palestine. Although the normalization process with regional countries, initiated under the guidance of the USA in 2020, opened the door to significant opportunities for Israel in Africa, the potential gains from this normalization appear to have diminished, particularly following the events of October 7, 2023.

Accordingly, this study will evaluate the trajectory of Israel's relations with African countries in 2023, highlighting key developments that are significant for international public opinion.

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¹ Yotam Gidron, "Israel and Africa", *Routledge Handbook on Israel's Foreign Relations*, Ed. Joel Peters ve Rob Geist Pinfold, Routledge, London, 2020, p. 352; 361.



Sudan Sudanese Sovereignty Council President General Abdulfettah al-Burhan (right) received Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen (left) at the Presidential Palace in the capital Khartoum (Source: Anadolu Agency).

2. Israel's Observer Status in the African Union

In July 2021, Israel was able to acquire observer status in the African Union (AU), which it had been waiting for nearly 20 years. This decision taken by the President of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, created controversy amongst member states. At the African Union Summit in 2022, Macky Sall, the AU Chairperson-in-Office, noted that the issue had caused significant disagreements among member states and could potentially lead to the disintegration of the union. He suggested that the matter should be resolved by a commission of heads of state in 2023.²

As a result, Israel was not invited to the summit in 2023, but Israeli Ambassador Sharon Bar-Li, who attended the program, was removed from the meeting hall. Israel's observer status was reduced due to reasons such as Israel's actions in Palestine, lack of consensus amongst member states, and lack of transparency in the process of granting observer status.

South Africa, Algeria and Nigeria were the leading countries in this process. Following the relevant decision, Israel accused these countries by extremism³ and even being under the influence of Iran.⁴

3. Official Visits

Mahamat Idriss Deby, the President of Chad, which not had diplomatic relations with Israel since 1972, visited Israel and, alongside Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, opened the Chadian Embassy on February 1. This

² "African Union postpones debate on Israel's observer status", *Aljazeera*, 07.02.2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/7/african-union-postpones-debate-on-israels-observer-status>, Date of Access: 17.05.2024.

³ Nosmot Ghadamosi, "African Union ousts Israeli diplomat", *Foreign Policy*, 22.02.2023, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/02/22/african-union-summit-israel-palestine-diplomat/>, Date of Access: 29.04.2024.

⁴ "Israeli foreign minister visits Kenya for African Union meeting", *Zenger*, 16.07.2023, <https://www.zenger.news/2023/07/16/israeli-foreign-minister-visits-kenya-for-african-union-meeting/>, Date of Access: 17.05.2024.

⁵ Lazar Berman, "Chad's president meets with Netanyahu and Mossad chief ahead of embassy opening", *The Times of Israel*, 01.02.2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/chads-president-meets-with-netanyahu-and-mossad-chief-ahead-of-embassy-opening/>, Date of Access: 17.05.2024.

⁶ "Israel FM Cohen visits Sudan as Khartoum and Tel Aviv step closer to 'normalisation'", *Dabanga Sudan*, 03.02.2023, <https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/israel-fm-cohen-visits-sudan-as-khartoum-and-tel-aviv-step-closer-to-normalisation>, Date of Access: 17.05.2024.

⁷ Lahav Harkov, "Kenyan president visits Western Wall, adviser prays on Temple Mount", *The Jerusalem Post*, 09.05.2023, https://www.jpost.com/western_wall/article-742534#google_vignette, Date of Access: 17.05.2023.

⁸ Rina Bassist, "On Kenya visit, Cohen meets leader of African country with no ties to Israel", *Al-Monitor*, 1707.2023, <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/07/kenya-visit-cohen-meets-leader-african-country-no-ties-israel>, Date of Access: 17.05.2024.

⁹ Yotam Gidron, "Israel and Africa", p. 358.

¹⁰ Aidan Lewis ve Nafisa Eltahir, "Israel, Sudan announce deal to normalize relations", *Reuters*, 03.02.2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/israeli-foreign-minister-heads-delegation-discuss-sudan-normalisation-2023-02-02/>, Date of Access: 18.05.2024.

¹¹ Rina Bassist, "Israel eyes normalization with Mauritania, Indonesia to expand Abraham Accords", *Al-Monitor*, 07.03.2023, <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/03/israel-eyes-normalization-mauritania-indonesia-expand-abraham-accords>, Date of Access: 18.05.2024; "In Nairobi, FM said to meet with leader of African country with no ties to Israel", *The Times of Israel*, 17.07.2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/in-nairobi-fm-said-to-meet-with-leader-of-african-country-with-no-ties-to-israel/>, Date of Access: 18.05.2024.

step was important for the relations of the two countries, which restarted their diplomatic relations in 2019. Deby also visited the Temple Mount and the Western Wall. Afterwards, the two leaders stated that they wanted to further develop bilateral relations.⁵

Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen travelled to Sudan on March 3 and met with the President of the Sovereign Council Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan. The main agenda item of the meeting was the normalization process of bilateral relations, and they agreed to sign a peace agreement in 2023.⁶

Kenyan President William Ruto, one of the few countries that can be considered an ally of Israel in Africa, visited Israel for the first time during his presidency on May 9, and later prayed at the Western Wall.⁷ Eli Cohen also visited Kenya on May 8 and met with different African leaders, especially the Kenyan President and Foreign Minister. During this visit, which coincided with the AU coordination meeting, Israel's observer status in the AU was brought to the agenda.⁸

4. Normalization Process with African Countries

Starting from 2015, Sudan⁹ shifted from the Iranian axis to the Saudi Arabian axis. The effect of this axis shift, coupled with the removal of Sudan from the list of countries supporting terrorism by the United States, led Sudan to sign an agreement on October 23, 2020, under the mediation of the Trump administration, to normalize relations with Israel.

As a result of studies carried out, the two countries agreed to sign a new agreement for the normalization of relations following the establishment of a civilian government in Sudan on February 2, 2023.¹⁰ Israel announced it had begun normalization efforts with Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Somalia in March 2023.¹¹

5. Reactions from Africa to Israel After the Gaza War

In viewing the scene that emerged after October 7, it is clear that Israel's relations with African countries suffered significantly. Relations with the AU and normalization processes were damaged, and the reactions of African countries towards Israel in the international arena worsened.

African countries' approach to the unfolding events differed. The demographic characteristics of African countries were effective in their attitudes towards Israel. It was observed that countries with a majority Muslim population had a harsher attitude towards Israel, while countries with a major-

ity Christian population have a softer attitude.¹² However, considering the economic, political and military relations established with Israel, it is clear that African countries have avoided harsh approaches towards Israel on the Palestine issue.¹³ Despite statements released by Kenya, Ghana, the DRC and Zambia in support of Israel, countries such as Sudan, Djibouti and South Africa called for a ceasefire with a tone supporting Palestine.

The President of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, stated that the difficult conditions of the Palestinians and their lack of basic human rights are the main source of the problem and that the two-state solution should be adopted.¹⁴

Chad's decision to re-establish relations with Israel in 2019 was shelved after October 7, when the country suspended diplomatic relations with Israel. On November 4, Chad's ambassador to Israel was recalled to the country.¹⁵ South Africa's attitude towards Israel has hardened as a result of its historical responsibility against Apartheid.¹⁶ The South African Parliament, which met on November 21, made a recommendation to sever diplomatic relations with Israel.¹⁷ President Cyril Ramaphosa attended the Palestine-themed program of the United Ulama Council of South Africa on December 18, made a press statement together with Muslim opinion leaders, described Israel's actions in Gaza as genocide and collective punishment, and declared that they supported the struggle of the Palestinian people.¹⁸

Israel's normalization processes with African countries were also disrupted after October 7. Many demonstrations against Israel were held in Morocco as public anti-Israeli sentiment increased.¹⁹ Former Prime Minister Saadeddin Osmani, who signed the normalization agreement, also expressed his regret about the agreement.²⁰

Most African countries supported the United Nation resolutions, voted on December 12, calling for an immediate ceasefire. Even countries such as Kenya and Ghana, which declared their support for Israel, supported these decisions. Liberia voted against the relevant resolutions, while Cameroon, South Sudan, Malawi, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea and Togo abstained.²¹ This situation shows the impact of Israel's actions in Gaza on its image in Africa.²²

12 Asher Lubotzky, "Africa and the war in Gaza: Analyzing Israel's current standing and future prospects in Africa", *The Institute for National Security Studies-Tel Aviv University*, Ocak 2024, https://www.inss.org.il/strategic_assessment/africa-gaza/, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

13 Fuat Emir Şefkatli, " Hamas-İsrail çatışması Afrika'da nasıl yankı buldu?", *ORSAM*, 17.10.2023, <https://www.orsam.org.tr/tr/hamas-israil-catismasi-afrikada-nasil-yanki-buldu/>, Date of Access: 17.05.2024.

14 "How African countries have split over Israel-Gaza conflict", *The Star*, 09.10.2023, <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/africa/2023-10-09-how-african-countries-have-split-over-israel-gaza-conflict/>, Date of Access: 19.05.2024.

15 "Chad recalls its ambassador from Israel", *TRT Afrika*, 05.11.2023, <https://www.trtafrika.com/africa/chad-recalls-its-ambassador-from-israel-15697974>, Date of Access: 17.05.2024.

16 Ran Greenstein, "South Africa and Israel: From alliance to estrangement", *New South African Review* 4, Ed. Gilbert M. Khadiagala vd., Wits University Press, Johannesburg, 2014, p. 302.

17 "South Africa legislators vote to suspend ties with Israel, close embassy", *Africa News*, 22.11.2023, <https://www.africanews.com/2023/11/22/south-africa-legislators-vote-to-suspend-ties-with-israel-close-embassy/>, Date of Access: 19.05.2024.

18 Zahid Jadwat, "Ramaphosa condemns Israel's 'genocidal onslaught' after meeting with Muslim leaders", *Salaamedia*, 19.12.2023, <https://salaamedia.com/2023/12/19/ramaphosa-condemns-israels-genocidal-onslaught-after-meeting-with-muslim-leaders/>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

19 "Arab public opinion about the Israeli war on Gaza", *Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies*, 10.01.2024, <https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/News/Pages/arab-public-opinion-about-the-israeli-war-on-gaza.aspx>, Date of Access: 17.05.2024.

20 Imad K. Harb, "Normalization survives despite the Gaza War", *Arab Center Washington D.C.*, 11.01.2024, <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/normalization-survives-despite-the-gaza-war/>, Date of Access: 19.05.2024.

21 "UN General Assembly votes by large majority for immediate humanitarian ceasefire during emergency session", *UN News*, 12.12.2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/12/1144717>, Date of Access: 20.05.2024.

22 Asher Lubotzky, "Africa and the War in Gaza..."

23 Ilham Rawoot, "'Jolt to reality': Gaza war shakes up South Africa's election campaign", *Aljazeera*, 28.02.2024, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2024/2/28/jolt-to-reality-gaza-war-forces-voter-rethink-ahead-of-south-africa-poll>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

24 Imraan Buccus, "Will the ANC win the votes of many Muslims?", *Al-Qalam*, 01.03.2024, <https://alqalam.co.za/will-the-anc-win-the-votes-of-many-muslims/>, Date of Access: 27.04.2024.

6. South Africa's Application Against Israel to the International Court of Justice

On December 29, South Africa filed a lawsuit against Israel, citing violations of the Genocide Convention in response to the destruction caused by Israel in Gaza during the war that began on October 7, as well as the violence against the Palestinian people that reached genocidal levels. With this case, relations between the two countries experienced an unprecedented rupture. There are three important reasons why the South African government complained about Israel to the ICJ: (i) South Africa's Apartheid experience has an ontological impact on determining the country's policies towards Israel; (ii) the socio-economic and political power of Muslims, one of the country's prominent religious minorities, was effective in the government's taking steps towards Israel; (iii) in connection with this, the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), wants to provide the voter support it needs before the general elections slated for May 29, 2024.²³

It is expected the ANC government will consolidate its voter base and increase its support, especially among Muslim voters, through the lawsuit filed at the International Court of Justice.²⁴ South Africa's lawsuit is a historic event in that it forces Israel to answer before international law for the first time in its history.

7. Conclusion

When assessing the course of Israel-Africa relations in 2023, it is evident that major shifts are likely to occur. For Israel, 2023 began with the goal of improving relations with African countries and advancing normalization with nations such as Sudan, Morocco, and Chad. However, the year ended with many of these processes, including efforts to resolve the observer status crisis with the African Union, being disrupted or failing. The most important reason for this situation is the disproportionate attacks that Israel launched in Gaza after October 7 and exhibited problematic behavior in terms of international law. As a matter of fact, the most important event of the year for Israel was South Africa's application to the International Court of Justice in December on the grounds that the Genocide Convention was violated. The possibility of Israel-Africa relations, to recover in 2024, which have been negative especially since the last quarter of 2023, seems remote.

Relations of Nordic Countries with Africa in 2023

Burak Şakir Şeker*

1. Introduction

Due to the similarities in the socioeconomic models and foreign policy approaches of the Nordic countries¹ are often, and mistakenly, viewed as a unified group. However, these countries also have many differentiating points. Moreover, the “Nordic Approach”, which expresses common areas, includes normative values such as peaceful resolution of conflicts, equality in society, fair distribution of assets, support for international organizations in realizing these values and assistance to developing countries.

In this regard, when the historical process is examined, it can be seen that although the Nordic countries follow different policies, they directly or indirectly support the liberation and independence movements in Africa. This support, which is seen mostly in the form of humanitarian aid, has been based on relations between different continents and countries over time.

On the other hand, in the recent period of Nordic-Africa relations, it is evident that the foreign policies of the Nordic countries, with their focus on justice and development, have evolved into a more nationally targeted approach. Policies for the protection of national interests range from facilitating access to Africa’s natural resources through the development of economic relations to preventing migration flows. In fact, in previous periods, climate change, peace and security, the fight against corruption, and

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¹ Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Finland and the islands connected to these countries.

cross-border problems were at the forefront, and each Nordic country has taken a different approach to these issues.

The main argument of this study is that the relations of the Nordic countries with other African countries have shifted their focus over the years and have evolved from humanitarian aid to commercial relations and the protection of best interests. As a basic plan, this argument will be examined specifically for the year 2023, whereby the five Nordic countries will be evaluated under separate subheadings and policy differences will be touched upon. Consequently, it will be shown that the Nordic countries, unlike other European countries, began their relations by supporting independence processes. These relations evolved into a focus on maintaining peace and have now reached a stage where national interests are prioritized. The results in question will be assessed by looking at the data of international organizations and the results of agreements made between countries.

2. Overall Situation

The relationship between Africa and the Nordic countries has developed significantly over time across various dimensions. The involvement of Nordic countries in the continent's affairs dates back to the struggles against colonialism and apartheid. Initially, the focus of this involvement was on supporting African liberation movements. However, the relationship gradually expanded beyond ideological solidarity to include broader cooperation.

Founded in 2000, the Nordic-African Foreign Ministers Meeting (NAUM) exemplifies the special relationship between these regions. What initially included five Scandinavian countries and ten African countries, the forum aimed to underscore the political importance of Africa beyond development cooperation. Annual ministerial meetings are held alternately between African and Nordic countries in an environment where the number of African participating countries has risen to 30, mutual concerns are discussed and a platform is created where relations are expanded beyond development cooperation.²

Nordic countries have strongly supported the African Peace and Security Architecture³ (APSA). However, African governments contribute to conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping and peace building efforts in Africa through initiatives with the African Union (AU)⁴ regional economic communities, civil society and research institutions.

While Nordic countries remained committed to development and cooperation, they also attached importance to Africa's role on the global stage.

² NUPI, "Re-imagining African-Nordic relations in a changing global order", 2022, https://www.nupi.no/content/pdf_preview/25077/file/220117%20NUPI%20African_and_Nordic_Multilateral_Cooperation_corr.pdf Date of Access: 05.04.2024.

³ African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

⁴ African Union (AU).

⁵ Cedric de Coning and Angela Muvumba Sellström, "African-Nordic peace and security cooperation", *Accord* 2023, <https://www.accord.org.za/analysis/african-nordic-peace-and-security-cooperation/#:~:text=The%20Nordic%20countries%20%E2%80%93%20Denmark%2C%20Finland%2C%20Iceland%2C%20Norway%2C,communities%20and%20mechanisms%2C%20civil%20society%2C%20and%20research%20institutions,> Date of Access: 07.04.2024.

⁶ Anne Hammerstad, "Africa and the Nordics", *Africa and the World*, Eds. D. Nagar, C. Mutasa, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2018.

⁷ Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

⁸ Government Offices of Sweden, "International Development Cooperation Strategies from Ministry for Foreign Affairs", <https://www.government.se/international-development-cooperation-strategies/2021/12/strategy-for-swedens-humanitarian-aid-provided-through-the-swedish-international-development-cooperation-agency-sida-20212025/>, Date of Access: 07.04.2024.

⁹ SIDA, "Strategy for Sweden's regional development cooperation with Africa 2022–2026", <https://www.government.se/contentassets/2502ac84eda145f2836cc3aa555ef579/strategy-for-swedens-regional-development-cooperation-with-africa-2022-2026.pdf>, Date of Access: 08.04.2024.

¹⁰ SCB, "Continued stronger exports of goods compared to imports of goods in the fourth quarter", <https://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/trade-in-goods-and-services/foreign-trade/foreign-trade---exports-and-imports-of-goods/pong/statistical-news-exports-and-imports-of-goods-quarter-4-2023january-december-2023-in-current-prices-and-in-constant-prices/>, Date of Access: 09.04.2024.

¹¹ Arne Tostensen, "Norway's Africa Policy", *The Nordic countries and Africa - old and new relations*, Ed: Lennart Wohlgenuth, Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, 2002, p. 34-41.

¹² African Development Bank Group, "Non-regional member countries, Norway", <https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/non-regional-member-countries/norway>, Date of Access: 09.04.2024.

Thus, Nordic countries are establishing strategic partnerships in order to boost the economy and global influence in Africa.⁵ As advocates of the ideal of solidarity and global justice, Nordic countries appear to be interacting with Africa in a problem-solving manner regarding refugees.⁶

3. Sweden's Humanitarian Aid Policies and Commercial Relations in Africa

With its aim to save the lives, alleviate suffering and protect human dignity of those affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters or other crises, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA⁷), directs Sweden's humanitarian aid. Its focus areas are armed conflict zones, disaster-affected areas and vulnerable populations.⁸

SIDA developed a strategy with a budget of €80 million for 2023 within the framework of Sweden's Regional Development Cooperation with Africa (2022-2026). Within this context, its goals are to create better living conditions for people living under poverty and oppression, while focusing on strengthening society's resilience against crises arising from climate change and conflicts.⁹

Nevertheless, in 2023 Sweden's exports to the African continent increased by 4% compared to the previous year and had a 2% share in total exports. Imports from African countries decreased by 8% compared to last year and received only a 1% share in the total share.¹⁰

4. Norway's Humanitarian Aid Policies and Commercial Relations in Africa

Including missionary activities, Norway's interaction with Africa dates back to the mid-1800s. Over time, these relations have evolved to include modern trade, investment and development cooperation.¹¹

Norway has been a member of the African Development Fund since 1973 and the African Development Bank since 1982. Norway promotes economic development, democratization, human rights, good governance and measures to lift people out of poverty.¹²

Norway has significantly increased its interaction and intervention in the Sahel region. Norway's integrated and targeted approaches include financing for development, humanitarian assistance and stabilization (approximately \$3.2 million). The tangible results of this approach include providing protection, food, clean water and shelter to 21 million people in need, sup-

porting education and climate-resistant food production, increasing public security, laying the foundations for sustainable development, and facilitating peace and reconciliation efforts. However, although these efforts have positive results, undoubtedly some difficulties are experienced due to the changes in the administrations of the Sahel countries.¹³

Norway allocated approximately \$35 million from its humanitarian aid budget in 2023 to meet urgent needs in the Horn of Africa, and \$17 million from its development budget to increase food security in the region.

However, Norway's exports to the African continent in 2023 decreased by 21% compared to 2022 and had a share of 1.2% in total exports. While imports from African countries increased by 18% compared to last year and the total share was 1.6%, it is noteworthy that the amount of minerals, fuel and oils in the import sector increased by 134% compared to the previous year.¹⁴

5. Denmark's Humanitarian Aid Policies and Commercial Relations in Africa

Denmark aims to become a leading "green country" which attaches importance to climate action, nature protection and environmental sustainability. For this reason, Denmark supports efforts that will benefit vulnerable people and create a sustainable world by implementing a development cooperation program and allocates approximately 20% of its development aid to green initiatives.¹⁵

Beyond climate change, Denmark also supports local people affected by increasing global tensions, geopolitical challenges and complex conflicts around the world within the framework of democracy and human rights. Denmark calls on African countries, neighbouring regions and affected Europe, which are in crisis due to refugees and illegal migration, to take precautionary measures. Out of its €2.7 billion aid budget, Denmark allocated €83 million to bilateral country programs regarding Africa¹⁶ 65 million to climate, conflict and migration problems,¹⁷ €78 million to education and peace-making activities,¹⁸ and €51 million to partner countries and initiatives.¹⁹ If the humanitarian aid budget of €270 million, which it has allocated in addition to the 10% aid specifically for Africa, is included here, Denmark has increased its aid budget for Africa to 20%.²⁰

Nevertheless, Denmark's exports to the African continent in 2023 were similar to the previous year and had a share of approximately 1% in total exports. Imports from African countries decreased by 50% compared to last

13 Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Strategy for Norway's efforts in the Sahel region (2021–2025)", <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/strategy-for-norways-efforts-in-the-sahel-region-20212025/id2863044/>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

14 Statistikkbanken, "External trade in goods", <https://www.ssb.no/en/statbank/list/muh>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

15 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, "The Government's Priorities for Danish Development Cooperation 2022-2025", p. 13-14. <https://um.dk/en/-/media/websites/umen/danida/strategies-and-priorities/priorities-of-the-danish-government/the-governments-priorities-for-danish-development-cooperation-2022.ashx>, Date of Access: 11.04.2024.

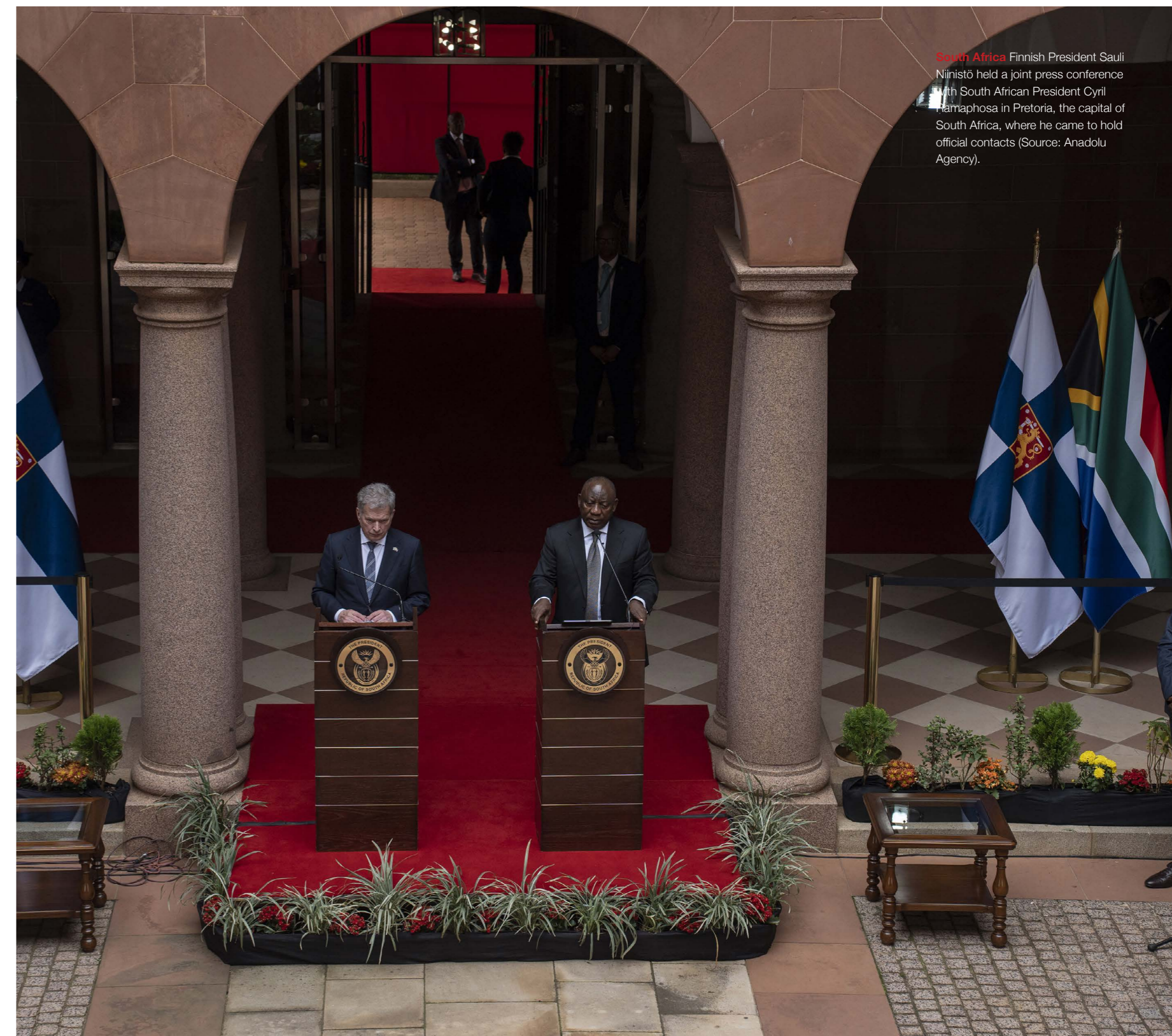
16 Bilateral country programmes, NGOs, strategic partnerships, etc. (Niger, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Mali, Bangladesh, etc.).

17 Neighborhood programme (Ukraine and Georgia) and regional programme on climate, conflict, displacement and irregular migration, with a particular focus on the Sahel and the Horn of Africa.

18 Multilateral contributions targeting counter vulnerability efforts. For example Sahel, Horn of Africa, Middle East, Afghanistan (including contributions allocated through UNDP and UNICEF for 'Education Cannot Wait', etc.).

19 Initiatives in conflict affected and vulnerable states of partner countries, programmes related to refugees in major host countries that are not considered to be eligible for green development assistance (Niger, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Afghanistan, etc.).

20 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, "The Government's Priorities for Danish Development Cooperation 2023-2026", p. 9-12. <https://um.dk/en/-/media/websites/umen/danida/strategies-and-priorities/priorities-of-the-danish-government/the-governments-priorities-for-danish-development-cooperation-2023.ashx>, Date of Access: 12.04.2024.



South Africa Finnish President Sauli Niinistö held a joint press conference with South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in Pretoria, the capital of South Africa, where he came to hold official contacts (Source: Anadolu Agency).

year and the total share was 0.2%. It is noteworthy that the decrease in imports, especially in terms of volume, is South Africa (65%), Libya (99%), Algeria (51%) and the increase is Nigeria (1874%).²¹

6. Iceland's Humanitarian Aid Policies and Commercial Relations in Africa

Iceland's area of cooperation for international development is based on four sectors: human rights and gender equality, human and social infrastructure, climate and natural resources, and humanitarian aid for stability and peace. According to Icelandic approach, the need for aid in Africa has increased due to global conflict, instability, climate change, and economic challenges. Iceland collaborates with specialized UN agencies and funds, including OCHA,²² CERF,²³ UNHCR²⁴ ve WFP²⁵ to address humanitarian needs globally and channels its funding through registered civil society organizations.²⁶

Iceland allocated 24% of its total African continent aid budget of \$14.3 million to Uganda, 3.5% to Malawi, 1.5% to Mali and 1.2% to South Sudan. The areas where the highest share was allocated in this aid were food security and protection. At the same time, this aid was transferred to the aforementioned UN organizations and allocated in accordance with their areas of duty.²⁷

Nevertheless, Iceland's exports to the African continent in 2023 were similar to the previous year and had a share of approximately 1.2% in total exports. Imports from African countries remained below 1%, the same as the previous year.²⁸

7. Finland's Humanitarian Aid Policies and Commercial Relations in Africa

According to its humanitarian policy, Finland states that it serves to save lives, alleviate suffering and protect human dignity in emergencies caused by natural disasters, armed conflicts and other crises. The aid in question is financed from Finland's development cooperation funds. Due to conflict, food insecurity and the impact of climate change, Finland has more than doubled its global humanitarian aid needs and directed its aid to the most vulnerable groups, especially people with disabilities. Another focus for Finland is promoting food security and supporting the protection of refugees in major humanitarian crises around the world.²⁹

²¹ Estimations performed separately.

For the compiled information please see. Statistics Denmark, "Imports and exports of goods and services,"

<https://www.dst.dk/en/Statistik/emner/oekonomi/betalingsbalance-og-udenrigshandel/import-og-eksport-af-varer-og-tjenester>, Date of Access: 13.04.2024.

²² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

²³ Central Emergency Response Fund.

²⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

²⁵ United Nations World Food Programme.

²⁶ Government of Iceland, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, "Humanitarian Assistance",

<https://www.government.is/topics/foreign-affairs/international-development-cooperation/humanitarian-assistance/>, Date of Access: 14.04.2024.

²⁷ Financial Tracking Service, "Iceland, 2023", <https://fts.unocha.org/donors/4845/summary/2023>, Date of Access: 14.04.2024.

²⁸ Statistics Iceland, "Trade in goods and services",

<https://www.statice.is/statistics/economy/external-trade/trade-in-good-and-services/>, Date of Access: 15.04.2024; World's Top Exports, "Iceland's top 10 exports", https://www.worldstopexports.com/icelands-top-10-exports/?expand_article=1, Date of Access: 15.04.2024.

²⁹ Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, "Guideline concerning humanitarian assistance and the use of funding",

<https://um.fi/documents/35732/0/avustus-humanitaarisen+avun-toimeenpanoon-hakuohje-jarjestoille-2019+%283%29.pdf/50aaa715-1b89-65d7-3efc-184e73027cf9?t=1646981970230>, Date of Access: 16.04.2024.

Finland's humanitarian aid budget in 2023 totaled €121 million. This aid is used to meet urgent needs in global aid coordinated by the UN and based on calls from partners. While Finland allocated approximately 10% of its development aid appropriations to humanitarian aid, it has increased this share to approximately 15% in recent years. While ICRC³⁰ ve IFRC³¹ receive the largest share from the aid program with 15%, the next largest shares are received by WFP, OCHA, UNHCR and CERF. Ukraine and the African continent benefit most from the regional distribution of aid, with a share of 20%. It is noteworthy that Ethiopia leads the African continent with a share of approximately 35%.³²

Nonetheless, Finland's exports to Africa in 2023 decreased by 12% compared to the previous year and had a 2% share in total exports. Imports from African countries decreased by 44% compared to last year and the total share was 1%. The change in the export-import balance is rather striking.³³

8. Conclusion

Although the geographical location of the Nordic countries might suggest uniformity in their foreign policies, this is clearly not the case when considering their relations with Africa. Therefore, Africa-Nordic countries relations, which date back to the colonial period, vary for each country in parallel with the political history.

In assessing the Nordic countries' approach to Africa, the first thing that stands out in common is that they all prioritize humanitarian aid. In the period when relations develop, Nordic countries either highlight a region (Sahel, South, North, East, and West Africa) or a specific country. Generally, the situation that comes to the fore is sometimes related to the extent of humanitarian crises, sometimes based on commercial interests, and sometimes due to the emergence of social problems related to the displacement problem or its spread to Europe.

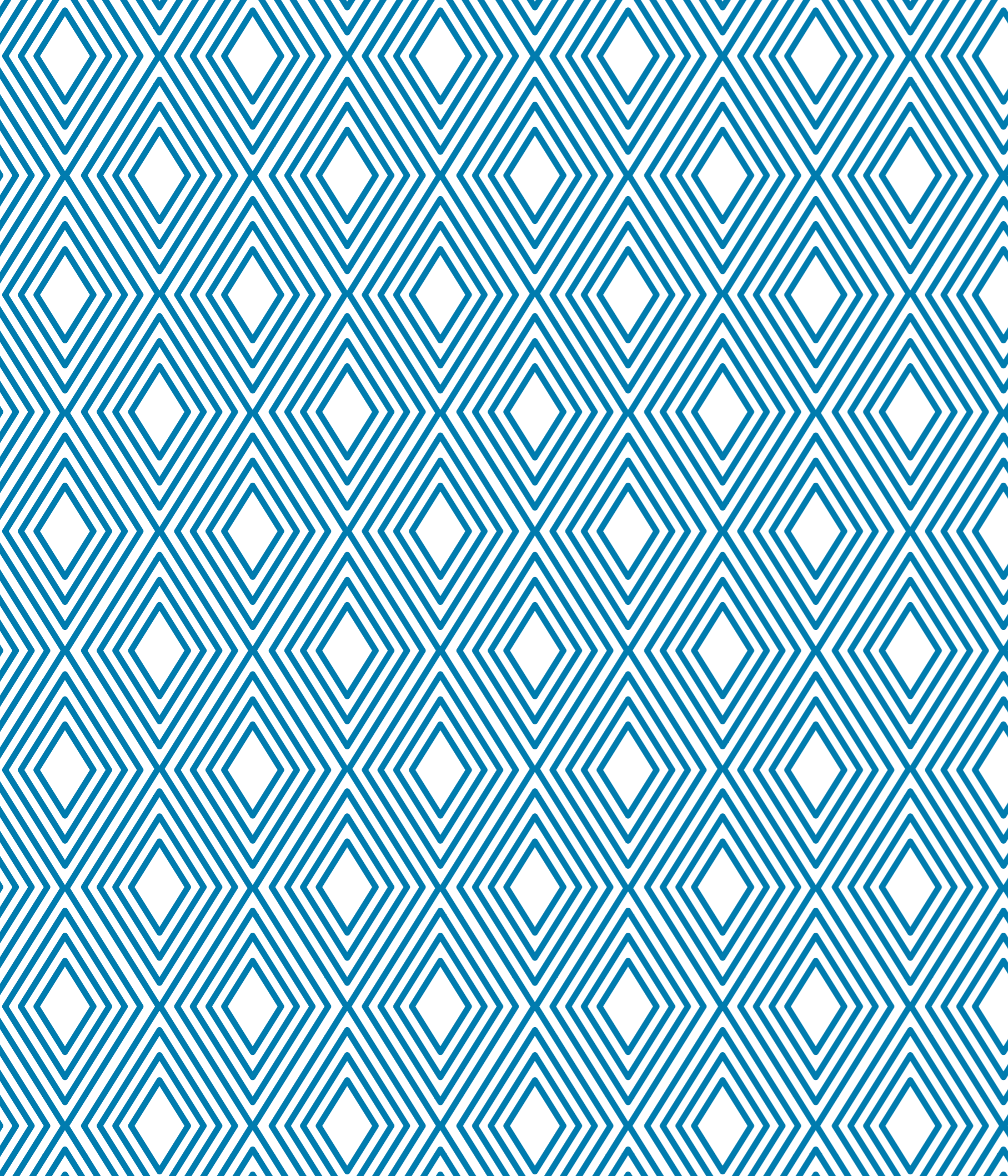
It appears that in 2023, while some of the aid of the Nordic countries shifted to Ukraine, one of the regions receiving the largest share is still Africa. For this reason, it can be predicted that the aid process will continue for each Nordic country for the region/country it prioritizes and the problem areas it focuses on. However, with meetings held within the scope of the Nordic-African Foreign Ministers Meeting or bilateral relations, it is observed that African countries invited Nordic countries to their countries to access minerals that need to be obtained within the framework of renewable energy, discourses outlining paths to be taken to boost trade volumes of the Nordic countries have come to the forefront.

³⁰ International Committee of the Red Cross.

³¹ The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

³² Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, "Humanitarian aid brings relief in times of need", <https://um.fi/humanitarian-aid>, Date of Access: 16.04.2024.

³³ Estimations performed separately. For the compiled information please see. Statistics Finland, "12gq - International trade in goods and services, quarterly, 2013Q1-2023Q4", https://pxdata.stat.fi/PxWeb/pxweb/en/StatFin/StatFin__tpulk/statfin_tpulk_pxt_12gq.px/, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.



Germany's New Africa Strategy

Ismail Akpınar*

1. Introduction

In terms of geopolitics, economy, natural resources, climate and security, the African continent has a strategic importance for Germany. Many institutions and organizations have recently published various strategies and research on Germany's relations with Africa.

All of these studies have demonstrated that Germany needs a new common strategy for Africa. The Scholz Government announced that it was to review Germany's current Africa policies in 2023 and commission the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs to create a new common Africa strategy.


Thus, the primary reasons for Germany's need to create a new common strategy for Africa will be touched upon, and then the basic principles and important objectives of this strategy in its final form in 2023 and their applicability will be taken up in this study.

2. Main Reasons for the New Strategy

The COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's attack on Ukraine have shown the dependence of the German economy on China and Russia highlighting Africa as a strategic alternative. It is inevitable that strengthening African countries economically will offer Germany new opportunities with their large populations and natural resources.¹

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¹ Afrika-Verein der deutschen Wirtschaft, "Afrika: Ein Kontinent im Aufbruch", 20.11.2023, p. 9-39.

 https://www.afrikaverrein.de/fileadmin/user_upload/KPMG_Afrika-Studie_2023_bf_sec.pdf,
Date of Access: 17.4.2024.



Nigeria Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu met with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz at the German-African Investment Summit in Berlin (Source: Anadolu Agency).

Irregular migration from Africa is not only an internal security problem for Germany, but also presents an opportunity for recruiting qualified personnel for its economy.² Germany's perception as a colonial power in Africa negatively affects its political and economic interests.³ Moreover, Germany's powerful rivals on the continent such as China, Russia and Türkiye pose challenges to its political stance.⁴ Nevertheless, it is possible to see the reflection of different political ideologies in Germany's social democratic, green and liberal coalition government's new partnership strategy for Africa.⁵

3. Basic Principles of the New Africa Strategy

In 2023, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) published the "Africa Strategy" and the Federal Government published the "National Security Strategy." These studies on the subject show that Germany's common Africa strategy is based on two basic principles.

Experts note a frequent lack of coordination in Germany's Africa policy.⁶ Therefore, the government's primary objective is to boost the effectiveness of the Africa strategy by establishing a common ground and coordination between units.⁷

Against a backdrop of postmodern criticisms of colonialism, Germany advocates an "equal partnership" to Africa as its second fundamental principle.⁸ For this purpose, they plan to cooperate at "eye level" with NGOs, opposition politicians, media and the diaspora in Germany, as well as official institutions in Africa.⁹ This proposal aims to compete more effectively with rival countries. Germany aims to influence African countries by promoting Western-style democracy and a free market economy on the continent, seeking to gain a strategic advantage for the West in the international power struggle.¹⁰

4. New Ideologies, New Strategic Priorities

Germany's new Africa strategy covers topics such as democracy, justice and human rights, as well as new topics such as civil society, feminism and LGBTQ rights. Germany follows a "feminist development policy" (Feministische Entwicklungspolitik) that aims to ensure the equal participation of women and homosexuals in politics, economy, justice system and social life in Africa. That said, strategically important issues such as climate, environment, migration and renewable energy are also thought to play a role.¹¹

2 Die Bundesregierung, "Integrierte Sicherheit für Deutschland-Nationale Sicherheitsstrategie", 21.06.2023, p. 27, <https://www.bmvg.de/resource/blob/5636374/38287252c5442b786ac-5d0036ebb237b/nationale-sicherheitsstrategie-data.pdf>, Date of Access: 15.4.2024.

3 Adrian Schlegel, Aram Ziai, "Die deutsche Afrikapolitik: Erneuerung einer ungleichen Zusammenarbeit?", *Études de l'Ifri (Ifri)*, 01.09.2021, p. 32-33, https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/schlegel_ziai_deutsche_afrikapolitik_2021_002.pdf, Date of Access: 16.04.2024.

4 Afrika-Verein der deutschen Wirtschaft, "Afrika: Ein Kontinent...", p. 14.

5 SPD, "Koalitionsvertrag 2021-2025 zwischen SPD, Grünen und FDP: Mehr Fortschritt Wagen", 07.12.2021, p. 116-117, 119-121, 124, https://www.spd.de/fileadmin/Dokumente/Koalitionsvertrag/Koalitionsvertrag_2021-2025.pdf, Date of Access: 19.4.2024.

6 Julian Bergmann, "Kohärenz stärken: wie ein integrierter Ansatz in der deutschen Afrikapolitik gelingen kann", *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*, 13.12.2023, <https://www.swp-berlin.org/publikation/mta-joint-futures-34-ein-integrierter-ansatz-fuer-die-deutsche-afrikapolitik>, Date of Access: 21.4.2024.

7 BMZ, "Gemeinsam mit Afrika Zukunft gestalten - Die Afrika-Strategie des BMZ", 24.01.2023, p. 30-32, <https://www.bmz.de/resource/blob/137600/bmz-afrika-strategie-de.pdf>, Date of Access: 21.04.2024.

8 Julia Fath, Christoph Retzlaff, Denis Tull, "Make the Better Offer! - Das ist der Schlüssel", *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*, 25.09.2023, <https://www.swp-berlin.org/publikation/mta-joint-futures-02-interview-mit-botschafter-christoph-retzlaff>, Date of Access: 15.4.2024.

9 BMZ, "Gemeinsam mit...", p. 24-26.

10 Schlegel, "Die deutsche...", p. 31.

11 BMZ, "Gemeinsam mit...", p. 7, 21-26.

5. The Economy

While more than 1.3 billion people live in Africa, a new market worth \$3.4 trillion has been created with the launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Seeing this potential, Germany gives priority to increasing trade and economic relations with African countries.¹²

With its new strategy announced in 2023, BMZ aims to support the economic development and transformation of African countries within the framework of a fair social and ecological balance. In this context, the ministry has begun to implement many projects in the fields of entrepreneurship, social, finance, energy, transportation, digitalization, climate and agriculture in Africa.¹³

About 1,000 German companies operate in Africa. Many of these companies operate in the mining sector.¹⁴ Germany provides financial incentives and guarantees to its private companies through various programs to enable them to compete in Africa. Despite this, German companies' investments and business activities in Africa are at a lower level compared to other industrialized countries.¹⁵ German companies face challenges in Africa such as corruption, political instability, bureaucratic obstacles and lack of infrastructure.¹⁶ The Federation of German Industries demands that the federal government address these difficulties and change the development policy and foreign trade incentives towards Africa in favor of German companies.¹⁷

6. Natural Resources

With its new energy strategy, Germany plans to completely abandon fossil and nuclear energy and turn to renewable energy sources by 2045. However, since renewable energy is difficult to control and storage possibilities are limited, it is considered that Germany's future energy source will be "green" hydrogen. Germany aims to convert water into "green" hydrogen gas with renewable energy by following a climate-friendly strategy. The country is a leader in hydrogen technology and is evaluating Africa's potential to produce hydrogen using solar energy. Germany aims to import "green" hydrogen gas from Africa by transferring hydrogen production technology to Africa.¹⁸

Germany needs rare raw material resources from Africa to continue the development of digitalization and electromobility technologies. Germany's heavy dependence on foreign sources of natural resources shows that the matter of raw materials will hold a significant place in the common African strategy.¹⁹

12 BDI, "Neustart der deutsch-afrikanischen Beziehungen", 29.11.2022, p. 5, 10-11, <https://bdi.eu/artikel/news/handlungsempfehlungen-fuer-neustart-der-deutsch-afrikanischen-beziehungen>, Date of Access: 19.04.2024.

13 BMZ, "Gemeinsam mit...", p. 9-18.

14 BDI, "Neustart der...", p. 7, 16.

15 Schlegel, "Die deutsche...", p. 16-17, 23-24.

16 Afrika-Verein der deutschen Wirtschaft, "Afrika: Ein...", p. 34-35.

17 BDI, "Neustart der...", p. 8, 25-28.

18 BDI, "Neustart der...", p. 12-14.

19 BDI, "Neustart der...", p. 16-17.

7. Security and Migration

Germany conducts various studies regarding external and internal security issues in Africa. Germany's military units serve in different regions of Africa as part of international missions.²⁰ However, Germany was obliged to announce it would withdraw its soldiers from both countries in 2023 due to the pressure of the military administrations in Mali and Niger.²¹ This development indicates that Germany finds itself in dire straits on the continent in terms of foreign policy and military.

As a consequence, with its new National Security Strategy, rather than military solutions, Germany aims to ensure stability in regions where various security problems are experienced, including Africa, by developing international solutions on human rights, democracy, justice, economy, migration and climate issues. Irregular migration threatens Germany's internal security. Germany makes migration agreements with African states to prevent irregular migration and to return rejected asylum seekers to their countries of origin.²² This cooperation also encompasses the hiring of African young people as qualified personnel in Germany after receiving vocational training in their countries.²³ Moreover, Germany contributes to the fight against terrorism, smuggling and irregular migration originating from Africa by participating in NATO's "Sea Guardian" operation in the Mediterranean.²⁴

8. Feasibility of the Strategy

Due to the ideological differences of its parties, the federal government has difficulty in creating a common strategy for Africa. Although the strategy was slated to be announced in 2023, it has been postponed to a later date.²⁵ This situation indicates that the government cannot find sufficient common ground on this issue, resulting in ongoing uncertainty in Germany's Africa policy. This uncertainty is expected to negatively impact the field and provide advantages to rival countries.

The exposure of the African diaspora in Germany to racism undermines the credibility of the "equal partnership" principle in Germany's Africa strategy.²⁶ Another criticism is that the real needs of Africa are ignored due to the lack of field knowledge of German bureaucrats.²⁷ The fact that African countries are generally composed of Muslims and Catholics who attach im-

²⁰ Schlegel, "Die deutsche...", p. 18.

²¹ Ines Trams, "Mali-Abzug: Niger blockiert vorerst weiter", *ZDF Heute*, 19.12.2023, <https://www.zdf.de/nachrichten/politik/ausland/mali-niger-bundeswehr-abzug-pistorius-100.html>, Date of Access: 20.4.2024.

²² Die Bundesregierung, "Integrierte Sicherheit...", p. 11-17, 26, 27, 42, 43.

²³ BMZ, "Gemeinsam mit...", p. 14.

²⁴ Bundeswehr, "Mittelmeer-Sea Guardian", 29.03.2023, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/einsaetze-bundeswehr/mittelmeer-unifil-irini-sea-guardian/sea-guardian-nato-operation>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

²⁵ Deutscher Bundestag, "Drucksache 20/7807: Die Implikationen Frankreichs neuer Afrikastrategie für Deutschland", 17.07.2023, <https://dserver.bundestag.de/btd/20/078/2007807.pdf>, Date of Access: 18.04.2024.

²⁶ Integrationsbeauftragte, "Rassismus in Deutschland", 11.01.2023, p. 30-32, <https://www.integrationsbeauftragte.de/resource/blob/1864320/2157012/77c8d1dd-deea760bc13dbd87ee9ea415f/lagebericht-rassismus-komplett-data.pdf?download=1>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

²⁷ Schlegel, "Die deutsche...", p. 32.

²⁸ Stefan Friedrich, Mathias Kamp, "Intressen-statt Weltrettungspolitik", *Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung*, 25.09.2023, p. 4-6, <https://www.kas.de/documents/259121/22950811/Interessen-statt-Weltrettungspolitik.pdf/34d498db-651e-381e-da94-9ff684073a64?version=2.1&t=1695712588831>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

²⁹ David Luke, Jamie MacLeod, "Eine neue Handelspolitik für Afrika bitte!", *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*, 13.06.2023, p. 9-10, <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/international/20401.pdf>, Date of Access: 20.4.2024.

³⁰ Friedrich, "Intressen-statt...", p. 8-9.

³¹ Schlegel, "Die deutsche...", p. 27.

³² Friedrich, "Intressen-statt...", p. 6.

portance to traditional family values will make it difficult to implement the "feminist development policy" that Germany wants to follow in Africa and will be perceived as cultural pressure.²⁸

One of the principle reasons for the low trade levels between Africa and Germany is that African business people face bureaucratic obstacles when exporting and cooperating with Germany. These obstacles include factors such as visa, customs and technical standards.²⁹ Finally, the "Supply Chain Duty of Care Law" (*Lieferkettensorgfaltspflichtengesetz*), which came into force in Germany on January 1, 2023, was added to these obstacles. While this law aims to produce products in accordance with human rights and the environment in the countries where the products are produced, it is clear it will have an adverse effect on investments and commercial relations in Africa.³⁰

Although Germany's plan to produce "green" hydrogen in Africa seems beneficial in terms of climate and economy, it brings with it some risks. Solar panels positioned over vast areas will cause people living in the region to have to migrate and nature will be exploited.³¹ It is considered that Germany's requirement to use only renewable energy for hydrogen production in natural gas and coal-rich African countries will be to the detriment of these countries and that this strategy will not be widely accepted.³²

9. Conclusion

In recent years, as the African continent has gained more importance in the world, Germany has lost its former power in Africa, necessitating the creation of a new common Africa strategy. The strategy aims to implement the principle of "equal partnership" to African partners in a harmonious manner amongst relevant units.

Germany's new common strategy aims to focus on classical issues, as well as issues such as migration, climate, renewable energy, feminism, and democratization and free market economy in the Western sense. Some contents of Germany's common Africa strategy do not seem realistic in terms of applicability on the ground. This and the failure to publish the common strategy on time due to ideological differences within the government will further deepen Germany's loss of power on the continent.

Iran's Africa Policy in 2023

Mustafa Caner*

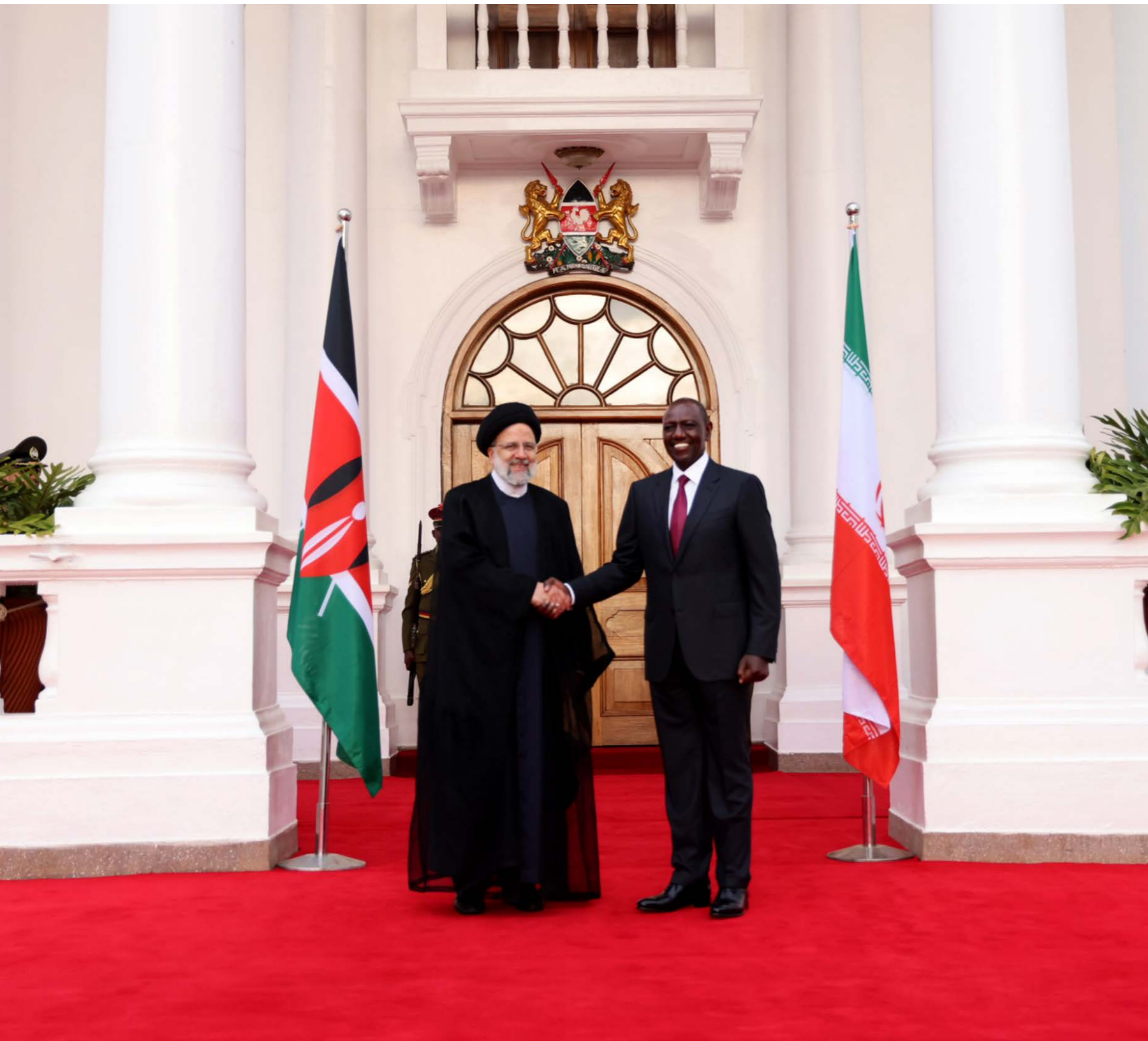
1. Introduction

Iran has increased its interest in Africa in recent years. The main reason for this is to strengthen its economic relations and diversify its economic resources, as well as to bolster its political position. It is evident Iran needs to increase the number of economic partners due to the US sanctions it has been faced to in recent years. Africa also attracts Iran's attention due to both its raw material resources and investment and trade potential. On the other hand, the crisis within the Western-oriented global system has paved the way for gains based on the alternative global vision that Iran also advocates. While structures such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation stand out as institutional frameworks that challenge the Western-centered paradigm, Iran has also sought new partners by reinforcing non-Western formations such as the "Global South" in these structures. In this sense, the support sought by Iran has been sought to be provided by new partners on the African continent.

The ideological core of Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi's policy, formulated as 'Looking to the East,' is linked to accelerating this pursuit. For this purpose, after a long time, visits to Africa have been conducted from Iran at the level of the head of state. These visits, which took place in 2023, were aimed at accelerating this pursuit. Considered a concrete indicator of Iran's importance and interest in Africa, these visits are also an indication of its willingness to compete in the African market with powerful countries such as the USA, China, Russia, France and Türkiye.

Accordingly, the study will look at the activities followed by Iran across Africa in 2023.

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Kenya President of Iran, Ibrahim Raisi, arrived in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi on an official visit. Raisi was welcomed by Kenyan President William Ruto with an official ceremony. (Source: Anadolu Agency)

2. Raisi's Africa Tour

The President of Iran, Raisi made a significant trip covering Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe on July 12-13, 2023. This visit of Raisi was recorded as the first visit of an Iranian president to Africa in 11 years. President Raisi, who held contacts in Kenya at the first stop of his journey, met with his counterpart William Ruto and held a joint press statement. While Ruto described this visit as “quite productive,” he stated that there was an eight-fold increase in Kenya’s tea exports to Iran during the first quarter of 2023 compared to the same period the previous year. Stating that cooperation in the field of technology is developing between the two countries, Ruto stated that Iran intends to establish a motor vehicle assembly facility in Mombasa and that they are hopeful about this project. Iranian President also expressed this visit and the agreements as a “turning point” for relations between the two countries. Raisi expressed his hope that the development of economic relations in various fields would lead to regional cooperation.¹

Raisi went to Uganda and met with his counterpart Yoweri Museveni there, expressing Iran’s intention to establish a domestic oil refinery and pipeline in Uganda. Opposed by environmentalists and European countries, Iran offered its support to Uganda’s development projects and reiterated its anti-Western stance.² He also announced that Raisi supported the latest law passed in Uganda, which includes heavy sanctions against homosexuality. Raisi expressed support for Uganda on this issue by stating that homosexuality is perceived as a threat to the family institution and national culture. He also mentioned that they were cooperating with Uganda in this regard.³ The law in question has received harsh criticism from Western countries and human rights organizations. With these words, Raisi showed that he repeated his anti-Western political stance.

At the last stop of his journey, Raisi dropped into Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, last visited at the head of state level 14 years ago, and met with his counterpart Emmerson Mnangagwa. Emphasizing the cordial atmosphere of the meeting, Mnangagwa referred to Raisi’ as “my brother.” Recalling Iran’s support in Zimbabwe’s struggle for independence, Mnangagwa stated that Iran has always been their friend. Raisi also emphasized the cooperation potential of the two countries and declared his intention to improve relations with the entire continent. This was followed by the signing of 12 cooperation agreements between the two countries. Amongst these were an agreement committing Iran to set up a tractor factory in Zimbabwe as well as energy sector agreements.⁴

¹ Mariama Diallo, “Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi kicks off Africa tour in Kenya”, VOA, 12.07.2023,

<https://www.voanews.com/a/iranian-president-visits-kenya-in-effort-to-boost-economic-ties/7177325.html#>, Date of Access: 10.05.2024.

² “Iranian leader pledges deeper ties with Uganda during Africa trip”, TRT Afrika, 13.07.2023,

<https://www.trtafrika.com/africa/iranian-leader-pledges-deeper-ties-with-uganda-during-africa-trip-14016825>, Date of Access: 12.05.2024.

³ “Iran’s leader, visiting Africa, attacks western support for homosexuality as among ‘dirtiest’ things”, AP, 12.07.2023,

https://apnews.com/article/kenya-iran-africa-president-visit-3ee4f376b66442cfe1c734a5a429aea2?utm_source=copy&utm_medium=share, Date of Access: 12.05.2024.

⁴ “Iran signs agreements with Zimbabwe as Raisi wraps up Africa tour”, Al Jazeera, 13.07.2023,

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/7/13/iran-signs-agreements-with-zimbabwe-as-raisi-wraps-up-africa-tour>, Date of Access: 12.05.2024.

At the start of 2023, Zimbabwe's Minister of Industry and Trade, Sekai Nzenza, visited Iran to express his country's desire to expand relations with Iran in all matters. Emphasizing cooperation not only in the economic but also in the political arenas, Zimbabwean Minister Nzenza stated they could also cooperate with Iran on international political issues such as the fight against sanctions.⁵ Iran's Minister of Labor Seyyed Sovlat Mortazavi also stated that he expected trade volumes between Iran and Zimbabwe to exceed \$500 million after the agreements were made.⁶

3. Mutual Visits and Cooperation Agreements

Algeria is one of the African countries with which Iran has close relations. Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmed Attaf visited Iran on July 8, 2023, whereas the ministers of both countries gave a joint press conference after the meeting and expressed complimentary words about each other's countries and bilateral relations. Accordingly, it was seen that both countries agreed on a gradual plan to abolish mutual visas. Afterwards, both parties announced they agreed to increase cooperation in many fields such as science, agriculture, technology and medicine.⁷ In September, Burkina Faso Foreign Minister Olivia Ragnaghnewende visited Tehran and met with the President. In these talks, Raisi praised Burkina Faso's anti-colonial struggle, while the guest minister stated they regarded the Iranian Islamic Revolution as an example.⁸ In June, a delegation from Burkina Faso's Ministry of Foreign Affairs visited Tehran and stated they intended to develop bilateral relations and desired to open an embassy in Tehran.⁹

South Africa-Iran Joint Commission of Cooperation meeting was held on August 10, 2023 in the South African capital of Pretoria. After the meeting, a memorandum of understanding was signed between Iran and South Africa. Iranian Foreign Minister Hussein Emir-Abdollahiyan received the support he requested from South Africa for his country's BRICS membership, whereby his counterpart Naledi Pandor announced they expressed their support for Iran on this issue. Both sides lodged similar criticism of the international system regarding Palestine.¹⁰

Two weeks after this meeting, BRICS 2023, during which Iran wanted to become a member, was held in Johannesburg, the capital of South Africa, on August 22-24, 2023. This summit was crucial for Iran. With the decision taken at the summit, Iran was officially invited to become a member of BRICS as of January 1, 2024. At the same summit, Egypt and Ethiopia were also invited to become members of BRICS.¹¹

5 "Zimbabwe ready to cooperate with Iran in all fields: Minister", MEHR, 22.01.2023, <https://en.mehrnews.com/news/196465/>, Zimbabwe-ready-to-cooperate-with-iran-in-all-fields-minister, Date of Access: 11.05.2024.

6 "Iran-Zimbabwe annual trade expected to exceed \$500m", MEHR, 05.02.2023, <https://en.mehrnews.com/news/197040/>, Iran-Zimbabwe-annual-trade-expected-to-exceed-500m, Date of Access: 12.05.2024.

7 "Iran-Algeria relations 'on right track' as FM Attaf visits Tehran", Press TV, 08.07.2023, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2023/07/08/706668/Iran-Algeria-relations-on-right-track-Amir-Abdollahian>, Date of Access: 10.05.2024.

8 "Iran lauds Africa's struggle against colonialism", Tasnim, 04.09.2023, <https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2023/09/04/2951902/iran-lauds-africa-s-struggle-against-colonialism>, Date of Access: 12.05.2024.

9 "Burkina Faso to open embassy in Iran", Tehran Times, 18.06.2023, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/485916/Burkina-Faso-to-open-embassy-in-Iran>, Date of Access: 11.05.2024.

10 Jack Dutton, "Iran, South Africa sign agreement in Pretoria ahead of BRICS summit", Al Monitor, 11.08.2023, <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2023/08/iran-south-africa-sign-agreement-pretoria-ahead-brics-summit>, Date of Access: 11.05.2024.

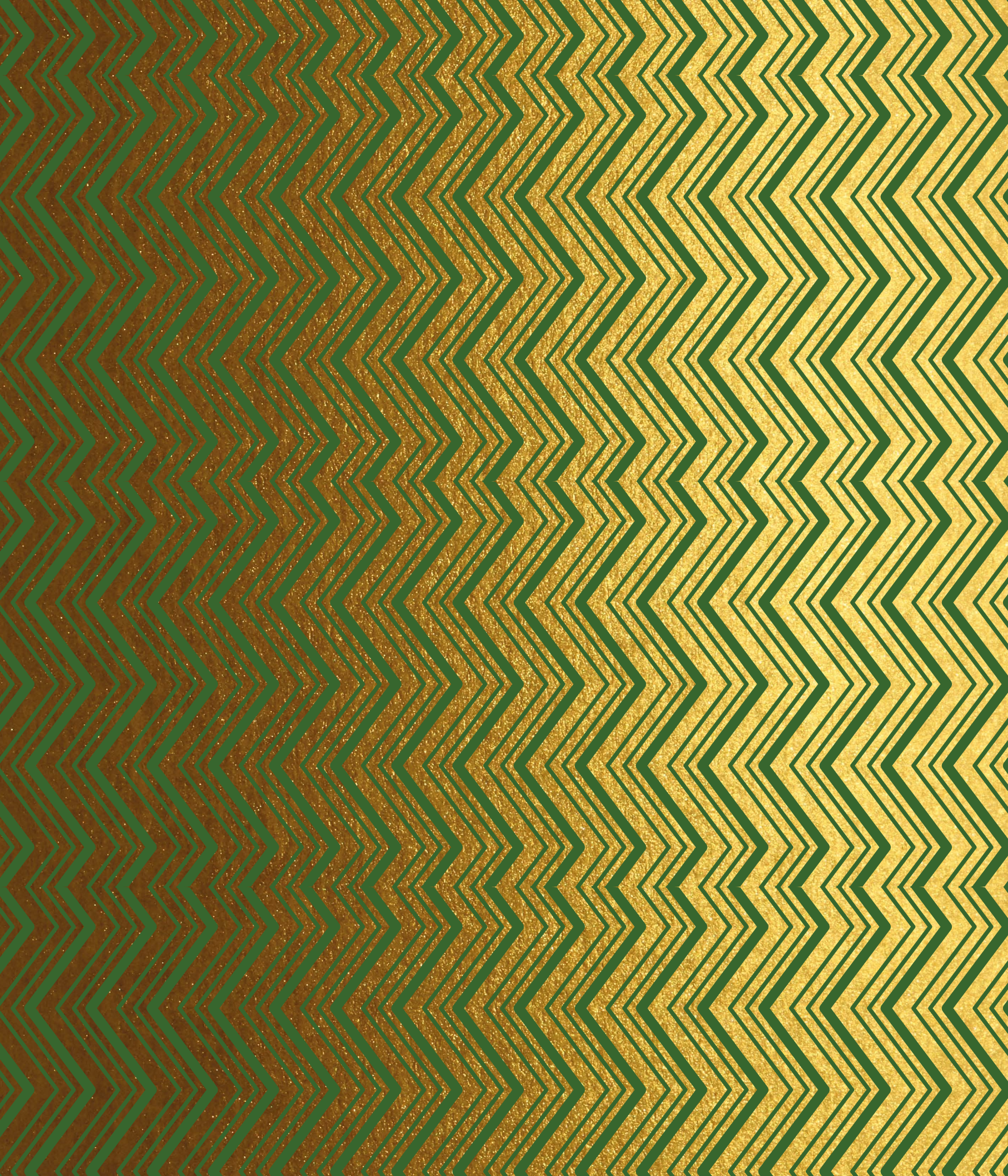
11 Sumayya Ismail, "Saudi Arabia, Iran among six nations invited to join BRICS", Al Jazeera, 24.08.2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2023/8/24/saudi-arabia-iran-to-join-brics-as-grouping-admits-six-new-members>, Date of Access: 12.05.2024.

4. Conclusion

With the desire of expanding its sphere of influence in foreign policy beyond its immediate geography, Iran has turned to the continent for economic and political reasons. In particular, in order to compensate for the adverse US sanctions, Iran is exploring investment and trade opportunities by offering its knowledge and capacity in areas such as infrastructure, production and energy that the continent's countries need. Thus, Iran increases its influence by taking effective steps in the economic arena, attempting to ensure that political relations progress on a stable basis through mutual dependencies. In taking important steps in this regard in 2023, Iran signed agreements and made mutual visits to improve its economic relations with many regional countries.

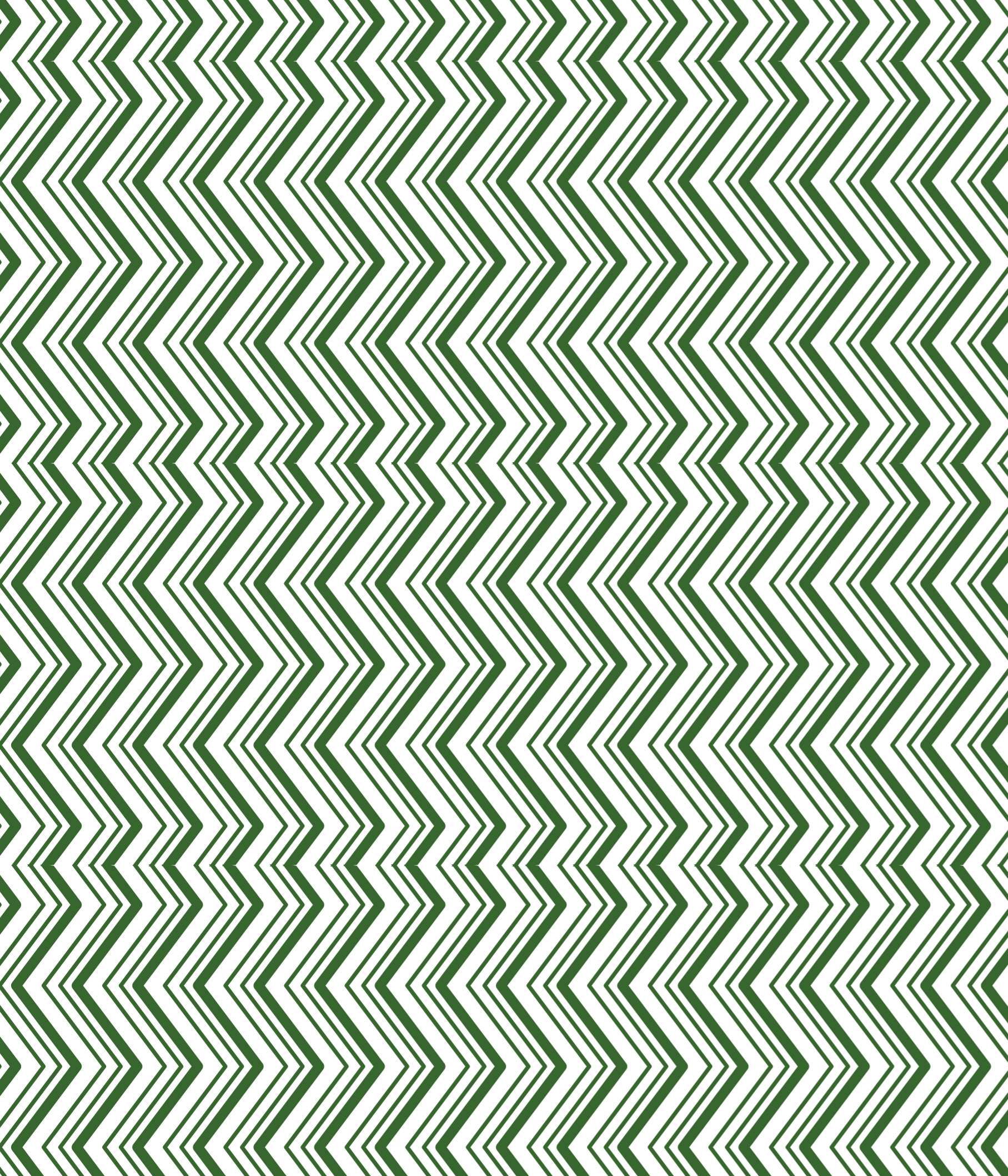
On the other hand, Iran's increasing criticism against US hegemony at every opportunity has also found its echo in its approach towards Africa. Approaching African countries with anti-colonialist language, Iran is trying to build ideological harmony on issues such as Palestine, especially with its anti-Western and anti-colonialist stance. This matter was reflected in press statements released during mutual visits, whereas the parties stated that bilateral relations were progressing not only on an economic basis but on a political basis as well.

It is expected Iran's interest in the continent will continue to rise in the coming period, whereby it will be possible to measure the progress Iran has made by following the outcomes of the signed economic agreements in the coming years.



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The Role of Türkiye Alumni in Shaping Somalia's State-Building Initiatives

Abdulkadir Mohamed Nur*

The historical relationship between Somalia and Türkiye, deeply rooted in time, reached a new level with the landmark visit of Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye, to Somalia in 2011. This visit, etched permanently in the memory of the Somali people, brought renewed hope to a nation grappling with the challenges of civil war, terrorism, and severe drought. Despite facing numerous challenges, including the worst drought in a century, ongoing civil strife, and a peak in terrorist activity, Mr. Erdoğan's visit represented a pivotal moment of solidarity and support for Somalia.

The power vacuum resulting from the near-collapse of state capacity in post-civil war Somalia devastated mechanisms essential for meeting the basic humanitarian needs of its citizens. While the international community launched initiatives to both address these needs and reconstruct the Somali state apparatus, these efforts often faltered for various reasons. Chief among these reasons was the tendency of many international actors in Somalia to adopt superficial, inadequate, and sometimes even malicious policies. In contrast, Türkiye pursued a markedly different strategy from that of other nations previously engaged in Somalia.

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1. Witness to Sincere Friendship

Before Mr. Erdoğan's visit, I had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the excitement among Turkish officials involved in bilateral discussions and the thousands of humanitarian workers who came to our embassy in Ankara to apply for visas. I observed directly how the Turkish people eagerly competed to support Somalia with their acts of kindness. Similarly, during Mr. Erdoğan's visit, I was fortunate to experience the genuine emotional moments that unfolded in Somalia. Subsequently, I participated in various significant events, both visible and behind the scenes, striving to enhance Turkish-Somali relations both as a Somali citizen and in different governmental roles.

Based on my observations, I can assert that the efforts Türkiye has undertaken in Somalia will be better understood and valued in the future, embodying the practical application of what I have adopted as the wisdom of Anatolia. Turkish people, consistently proving themselves sincere friends to Somalis, have taken it upon themselves to stand beside their Somali brothers and sisters whenever needed.

2. The Turkish Approach to Humanitarian Assistance

Under the leadership of Mr. Erdoğan, Türkiye fostered a responsive framework dedicated to understanding and addressing the issues and necessities of Somalis. Central to this approach was the initiation of a humanitarian aid process aimed at fulfilling the essential needs of Somalis. By synergizing its institutional and civic capacities, Türkiye aimed to empower the Somalis, opting to teach them the sustainable and enduring skill of fishing, rather than simply providing the fish.

In this endeavor, a multitude of state bodies, including the Presidency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of National Defense, the Directorate of Religious Affairs, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency Presidency, the Turkish Red Crescent, the Turkish Maarif Foundation, and a myriad of civil society organizations whose names would overflow pages, executed critical operations in Somalia. When one examines the breadth of the work undertaken by these entities and NGOs, it is evident that Türkiye's approach to Somalia is a multifaceted policy engaging multiple stakeholders and numerous strategies. The key to Türkiye's success has been in harmonizing these diverse actors towards a common humanitarian goal.

3. Building Somalia's Future

The collapse of state capacity in Somalia, due to previously mentioned factors, posed the greatest challenge to the execution of fundamental humanitarian processes. As a result, the political support, economic assistance, and humanitarian aid rendered by various foreign states and related organizations in Somalia served merely as a stopgap. While any assistance is vital for those displaced by terror and drought – often in dire need of shelter or food – such stopgap measures only perpetuated Somalia's dependency. The vision that will forge Somalia's future and shatter the cycle of reliance must be rooted in a strategy that transcends these immediate interventions.

Until the Somali state can mobilize its abundant resources for the benefit of its people, the cycle of dependency will persist indefinitely. Türkiye has broken this cycle by choosing a distinct path, thereby winning the hearts of the Somalis. Through its investments in Somalia's future, Türkiye has provided an exceptional contribution to the nation-building efforts there. Central to this approach is the commitment to invest in the Somalis, especially the youth, to rejuvenate the Somali state.

4. The Impact of Türkiye Alumni on Somalia's Development

While various Turkish institutions have assumed distinct roles in this process, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) has secured a special place in the hearts of Somali youth by investing in the future of Somalia. This special place stems from the YTB's pivotal role in rebuilding the human capacity crucial for Somalia's resurgence. In this endeavor, thousands of Somali youths have traveled to Türkiye to pursue world-class education, supported by Turkish scholarships and their personal resources.

YTB is actively supporting the personal and professional growth of Somali youth, who are poised to shape the future of Somalia, through a range of initiatives including educational scholarships, vocational training, and leadership development. These programs do more than just enhance their knowledge and skills; they also motivate these young individuals to contribute to the socioeconomic progress of Somalia upon their return. With the education they've received in Türkiye, these youths go back to Somalia and make impactful contributions in sectors such as commerce, defense, agriculture, education, health, and technology, thereby aiding in the nation's development.



(Source: Abdulkadir Mohamed Nur).

Somali students who arrived in Türkiye through YTB's initiatives not only received formal education but also immersed themselves in the Turkish language, absorbing Turkish culture and business practices. Crucially, their educational journey unfolded under the influence of Türkiye's ancient state tradition, a significant aspect for Somalia, where the state authority has been fragmented during both colonial and modern times. Furthermore, many of these young Somalis were part of a new generation unfamiliar with institutional and bureaucratic mechanisms, previously unaware of the value of effective and inclusive state institutions. Thus, in addition to their academic and personal growth, these students gained insights critical to supporting their country's developmental process. They are poised to use their experiences and lessons learned in Türkiye to enhance the institutional development and governance mechanisms of the Somali state. Undoubtedly, these experiences in Türkiye will inform all their future responsibilities and contributions.

Moreover, Somali students studying in Türkiye serve as vital bridges between the two nations, significantly bolstering the growing relations between the two communities. These students have rapidly established deep connections with Turkish people and culture, coming to regard Türkiye as their second home, inspired by the warm hospitality they have received.

Today, much of the political, economic, and cultural cooperation between Somalia and Türkiye is driven by Turkish-educated Somali graduates. In meetings between delegations from the two countries, Turkish is often used as the common language rather than English, reflecting the deep integration of Somali individuals who are fluent in Turkish. This linguistic connection is evident in Mogadishu, where it's common to find Turkish speakers. Moreover, in trade between Türkiye and Somalia, intermediaries are no longer necessary thanks to these graduates, who have established direct trade links between the two nations. Somali business people, renowned worldwide for their commercial acumen, are frequently seen across Türkiye, buying goods and actively contributing to the Turkish economy.

In conclusion, many of the Turkish graduates who came to Türkiye through the initiatives of YTB now significantly influence the Somali state, representing a distinct influence within it. These individuals are actively reshaping the future of Somalia and the dynamics of Somali-Turkish relations with the expertise and insights gained during their education in Türkiye. The deep affection they hold for the people of Anatolia, who have welcomed them for many years, will continue to be a cornerstone of Somali-Turkish relations, driving the relationship forward as it has in the past.

Türkiye's Education Diplomacy: Review of Educational Supports for Africa

2

Selim Mürsel Yavuz*

1. Introduction

In terms of deepening and diversifying relations with the Africa, one of Türkiye's strategic moves in international relations, education diplomacy has become an important area that has come to the forefront in recent years. Türkiye's support provides African students with opportunities for quality education, enabling them to acquire the skills necessary to assume leadership and expert roles in their own countries. Moreover, Türkiye's educational support for Africa reinforces diplomatic and cultural ties between the two regions, fostering Türkiye's position as a global education center.

This study will examine the overall state of educational support provided by Türkiye to Africa in 2023 and evaluate opportunities for further cooperation in this area.

2. Türkiye's Education Diplomacy in Africa

Türkiye's Africa policy is part of a comprehensive foreign policy approach that has gained strategic importance in recent years. This policy includes economic cooperation, trade, political dialogue and cultural exchange, as well as education diplomacy.

As of 2023, Türkiye's support for African countries in the context of education diplomacy can be summarized in five categories. The first of these is Türkiye Scholarships Program. Türkiye Scholarships program has been providing higher education opportunities to African students since 2012, ensuring these students receive a quality education in Türkiye. It offers students various and comprehensive opportunities such as monthly allowance, health insurance, accommodation and Turkish language courses.¹

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¹ Türkiye Bursları, "Türkiye Bursları Hakkında",
<https://www.turkiyeburslari.gov.tr/hakkimizda>,
Date of Access: 19.03.2024.



The second is academic studies conducted within the scope of educational cooperation agreements or the initiatives of universities or academics. Türkiye has established cooperation agreements in the field of education with various African countries.² Within those agreements, exchange programs are organized between educational institutions, joint projects are conducted and experiences are shared in the field of education.³ Furthermore, Turkish universities and academicians cooperate academically with relevant institutions and organizations in African countries and facilitate, which facilitates the admission of international students admission process.

The third is projects to develop educational infrastructure. The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA), in particular, supports projects to develop educational infrastructure in African countries. Within the scope of these projects, supports are provided in various areas such as the construction of school buildings, the provision of educational materials and the use of educational technologies etc.

The fourth is vocational training programs. Turkish Maarif Foundation schools in Africa and TİKA-supported projects supporting the participation of field both enable the young people in the workforce through vocational training in African countries, thus enabling them to develop their professional skills and promote their participation in the workforce.

The fifth is teacher training programs. Türkiye aims to improve the quality of education and support the professional development of teachers by organizing training programs for educators in Africa.

This comprehensive approach contributes toward Türkiye to Türkiye's creating a positive image in Africa and deepening bilateral relations between the two sides. Education diplomacy not only reinforces cultural and academic ties in Türkiye's relations with between Türkiye and Africa, but also solidifies consolidates the foundations of economic and political cooperation.

3. Overview of Supports in 2023

Türkiye's ongoing support for African countries in the field of education continued in 2023. The most important of these supports was Türkiye Scholarships Program. By managing Türkiye Scholarships Program and conducting various activities to encourage international student mobility, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) plays an important role in the context of Türkiye's foreign policy strategies in the field of education.

² Some of these agreements are; 1959 and 1977 Libya, 1966 Morocco, 1967 Tunisia, 1967 Algeria, 1969 Senegal, 1981 Nigeria, 1981 Sierra Leone, 1982 Sudan, 1999 Mali, 2000 Gabon, 2000 Congo, 2002 Cameroon, 2004 Ethiopia, 2005 Madagascar, 2005 Mauritania, 2009 Djibouti, 2011 Egypt, 2013 Ghana, 2013 Guinea, 2014 Liberia, 2014 Namibia, 2015 Côte d'Ivoire, 2016 Benin, 2016 Rwanda, 2016 Somalia, 2017 South Sudan, 2018 Zambia, 2018 Gambia, 2018 Niger and 2019 Chad.

³ Hacer Atabaş ve Mehmet Köse, "The Role of Foreign Policy in International Student Mobility: The Case of the Turkish "Opening to Africa" Policy", *Üniversite Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 6 no. 4 (2023): 367-380.

⁴ Türkiye Bursları, "Kriterler ve Burs Programları", <https://www.turkiyeburslari.gov.tr/bursprogramlari>, Date of Access: 19.03.2024.

⁵ Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı, "Sahra Altı ve Kuzey Afrika Bölge Künyeleri", March 2024.

⁶ Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı, "Sahra Altı ve Kuzey Afrika Bölge Künyeleri", March 2024.

⁷ Habertürk, "YÖK Başkanı Özvar: 2023'te ilk kez YÖS'ü düzenleyeceğiz", 9 Aralık 2022, <https://www.haberturk.com/yok-baskani-ozvar-2023-te-ilk-kez-yos-u-duzenleyecegiz-3546072>, Date of Access: 19.03.2024.

⁸ TR-YÖS, which was held for the first time on 29 January 2023 to ensure standardization in the admission of students from abroad, was held in 17 provinces, 23 countries and in 6 languages. The centers of the exams held in abroad are TRNC, Sudan, Ethiopia, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Germany, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Lebanon, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Chad, Libya, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal and Jordan.

⁹ Yükseköğretim Kurulu, "Türkiye Yurt Dışından Öğrenci Kabul Sınavı (TR-YÖS) 29 Ocak 2023'te yapılacak", 16 December 2022, <https://www.yok.gov.tr/Sayfalar/Haberler/2022/tr-yos-29-ocak-2023-te-yapilacak.aspx>, Date of Access: 19.03.2024.

¹⁰ Yükseköğretim Kurulu, "Yabancı Uyruklu Öğrencilerin Uyruklarına Göre Sayıları", <https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/>, Date of Access: 19.03.2024.

Within the framework of Türkiye Scholarships Program implemented by YTB, Short-Term Scholarship Programs such as Success Scholarship, Support Scholarship and Research Scholarship are offered as well as Full-Time Scholarship Programs for international students at undergraduate and graduate levels.⁴

In 2023, the program which received 117,367 applications from 162 countries, a total of 4,123 people were provided scholarships for full-time and short-term programs via the interviews which are conducted face-to-face interviews in 56 countries, online in 67 countries and through Turkish diplomatic missions in 20 countries.

Within the scope of the Türkiye Scholarships Program, 35,674 applications were received from Africa in the 2023 application period, and 963 of 1,360 the applicants who awarded scholarships were granted.⁵ As of 2023, there were 3,578 African students continuing their education with Türkiye Scholarships. When the field distribution is examined, it can be seen that 38.98% of these students are studying Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), 23.33% Social Sciences, 16.62% Arts and Humanities, 12.21% Health Sciences, 8.38% Business and Management Sciences, and 0.48% other fields.⁶

On the other hand, apart from Türkiye Scholarships, a good number of international students come to Türkiye to study on their own means. These international students can apply to the universities of their choice with the International Student Admission Exam (TR-YÖS) organized by each university. In addition to the TR-YÖS held by universities, the Turkish Foreign Student Admission Exam (TR-YÖS) administered by Council of Higher Education (CoHE) for the first time in 2023 was added.^{7,8} This exam aims to facilitate the application process of students from various countries to Turkish higher educational institutions and to allow them to use their results for admission purposes.⁹

According to the data of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) for the academic year of 2022-2023; 301,694 international students are studying at various levels in Türkiye. 103,498 of them are newly enrolled and qualified. In terms of Africa; 59,728 African international students are continuing their education, of which 23,142 are newly enrolled. Of the African students continuing their education, 5,701 are doing so at the associate degree, 44,919 at the bachelor's degree, 6,876 at the master's degree, and 2,232 at the doctoral level.¹⁰

Another important institution that coordinates Türkiye's support in the field of education, TİKA, which since its establishment in 1992, has con-

tributed to the development processes of world countries with more than 30,000 projects and activities in more than 170 countries. As of 2023, TİKA, which operates in 61 countries with 63 Program Offices, has built 5 schools and educational facilities, repaired and renovated 18 educational facilities, equipped 155 educational facilities, provided vocational training to 550 teachers, and supported the education of more than 210,000 students with the support it provided in the education sector in 2023.¹¹

Amongst the supports in Africa, the 'Girls Pedaling to the Future with TİKA' project addressed a significant problem in Tanzania, where most students have to walk to school 10-15 kilometers a day. In the country where many parents cannot afford to provide bicycles for their children, bicycles were provided to 200 girls in 10 schools.¹²

Another institution synonymous with Türkiye's support in the field of education is the Turkish Maarif Foundation, which operates educational institutions at various levels, including preschool, primary, secondary and higher education, as well as establishing facilities such as non-formal education courses, study and cultural centers.¹³

As of 2023, the Turkish Maarif Foundation carried out educational activities with 467 educational institutions in 52 countries around the world. More than 50,000 students continue their education with these educational institutions.¹⁴ The foundation serves nearly 22,000 students in more than 190 educational institutions in 27 countries in Africa.¹⁵ New Maarif Schools were also opened in Africa in 2023.¹⁶

4. The Future of Collaboration: Challenges and Opportunities

The cooperation that Türkiye has established with the African continent through education has great potential for both parties. It is expected this cooperation will contribute not only to the academic and professional development of individuals, but also to the fostering of diplomatic and cultural ties between the two regions. Nevertheless, strategic and innovative solutions are also needed to overcome the difficulties in this process and fully reveal the potential of the cooperation.

The language barrier is one of the most significant obstacles in this process. Although the process of learning Turkish for African students poses a significant challenge in the early stages of their education, it is seen this obstacle can be overcome by increasing integrated programs for language learning and opportunities for practice. In addition to Turkish language courses for students, it is possible to make the education process more effi-

cient by developing special education components focusing on academic terms and concepts. Regarding the issue of cultural adaptation, cultural exchange programs between educational institutions in Türkiye and African students can help them adapt to new cultural norms.

In order to overcome the differences between education systems, education curricular need to be developed with mutual understanding and cooperation. In this process, the adoption of flexible and adaptive learning approaches will allow students to adapt to different education systems more easily.

The future of education collaborations between Türkiye and Africa depends on expanding and deepening them in a way that will provide mutual benefits. Effective use of technology and distance education tools has the potential to further expand collaboration. It would be beneficial for future collaborations to focus on new areas that can create career opportunities for African students within their own countries, especially AI technologies and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

5. Conclusion

Türkiye's education diplomacy activities towards the African continent are instrumental in strengthening academic, cultural and political relations between the two regions. Türkiye's interaction with Africa has deepened thanks to multifaceted initiatives such as academic collaborations, infrastructure support, vocational training opportunities and teacher training efforts, especially the Türkiye Scholarships Program. These interactions continued to increase in 2023, and Türkiye continued to make efforts to strengthen the education infrastructure on the continent with all its resources and to meet the need for an educated population.

Work conducted by Türkiye with education diplomacy actors, primarily YTB, TİKA, Turkish Maarif Foundation and universities, with the progress made in recent years draws attention to the difficulties encountered and the potential to overcome them. The expansion of cooperation, especially in STEM fields and new disciplines such as AI technologies, has the potential to create career opportunities for African students in their own countries. It is assessed that the future of Türkiye's education diplomacy cooperation with Africa will be shaped by the dominance of mutual understanding and the effective use of technology. There is no doubt that education diplomacy activities that will be deepened by taking into account the principle of reciprocity will strengthen the connection between Türkiye and Africa.

¹¹ Türk İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon Ajansı, "TİKA 2023 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu", 2024, <https://tika.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/TİKA-IFR-202319-Mart-2024-Web.pdf>, Date of Access: 19.03.2024).

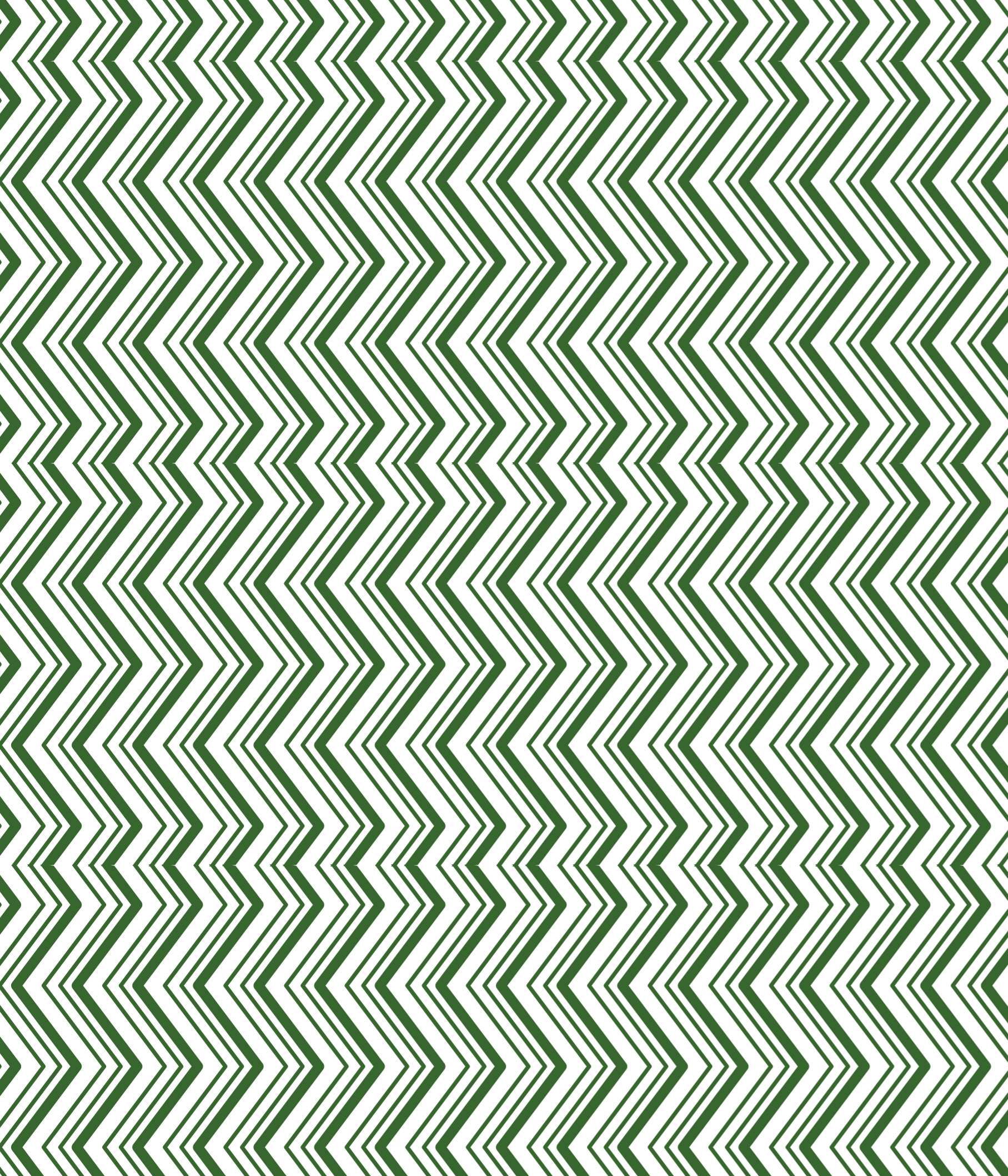
¹² Türk İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon Ajansı, "TİKA 2023 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu", 2024, <https://tika.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/TİKA-IFR-202319-Mart-2024-Web.pdf>, Date of Access: 19.03.2024.

¹³ Türkiye Maarif Vakfı, "Çalışma Alanları", <https://turkiyemaarif.org/page/calisma-alanlari>, Date of Access: 19.03.2024.

¹⁴ Türkiye Maarif Vakfı, "Dünyada Maarif", <https://turkiyemaarif.org/dunyada-maarif>, Date of Access: 19.03.2024.

¹⁵ Türkiye Maarif Vakfı, "Kamerun'da Maarif Okullarının 7. Kampüsü Açıldı", 28 October 2023, <https://turkiyemaarif.org/news/kamerunda-maarif-okullarinin-7-kampusu-acildi>, Date of Access: 19.03.2024.

¹⁶ Türkiye Maarif Vakfı, "Türkiye Maarif Vakfı, Etiyopya'nın Tigray Bölgesinde Okul Açıyor", 7 August 2023, <https://turkiyemaarif.org/news/turkiye-maarif-vakfi-etiyopyanin-tigray-bolgesinde-okul-aciyor>, Date of Access: 19.03.2024.



Dakar Fashion Week and Diplomacy

Nur Sağman*

3

1. Introduction

Within the centenary celebrations of the foundation of the Republic of Türkiye, various events have been organized in Senegal, one of the leading countries in West Africa, by our Embassy in Dakar, in collaboration with our institutions in Dakar, especially the Yunus Emre Institute, and our companies operating in Senegal have made valuable contributions.

In addition to the concerts, cinema days, workshops and seminars organized within the scope of our activities, the most notable event among the cultural activities we have carried out in cooperation with Dakar Yunus Emre Institute was the opening fashion show of Dakar Fashion Week held in Turkish Embassy on December 7, 2023.

Dakar Fashion Week is an event with an international following, organized since 2002, by the famous Senegalese fashion designer Adama Amanda Ndiaye, known as Adama Paris. Famous fashion designer Paris founded the continent's first fashion channel, "Fashion Africa Channel" in 2014. Paris, which prioritizes the production in Africa ("Made in Africa"), has contacted our embassy and proposed to collaborate with our embassy in organizing the 21st Dakar Fashion Week. Many events have been organized with the valuable contributions of our companies. To bring a new dimension and momentum to the ever-developing political, commercial, and economic relations between Türkiye and Senegal, it was decided that the opening of the said week would be held at our embassy, a proposal we gladly accepted. The said project was developed in cooperation with the Dakar Yunus Emre Institute.¹

* Turkish Ambassador to Dakar

¹ Yunus Emre Enstitüsü – Dakar, "Dakar Fashion Week'te Türk Esintisi",

<https://dakar.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/dakar-fashion-weekte-turk-esintisi>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.



Senegal On the occasion of the Centenary of the foundation of the Republic of Türkiye, 12 female ambassadors residing in Dakar, the capital of Senegal, took the podium to benefit street children (Source: Anadolu Agency).

Accordingly, this study will discuss the activities realized by the Dakar Embassy on the occasion of Dakar Fashion Week and the unifying power of diplomacy.

2. A Fashion Event Led by Diplomacy and Serving Many Purposes

The opening event of Dakar Fashion Week aimed to promote cultural interaction, encourage young people, and spread the zero-waste movement and for this purpose, a model was worked on that prioritized the use of the unifying power of diplomacy. The model we developed was realized under the leadership of diplomacy and with the contributions of participants from different multi-layered sectors.

a. We Have a Purpose!

Each event is designed with a specific purpose in mind, and based on this principle, it was decided to support street children at our fashion event. To achieve this objective, a local civil society organization called the “Solidarity Association with Street Children” (SPER - ‘Solidarité Pour les Enfants de la Rue’) was identified, and it was deemed appropriate to contribute to improving the facilities provided by the association for street children.

The earnings from the sales of the collections displayed in the show and the auctioning of two works by the famous Senegalese artist Momar Seck presented to our embassy during the event were donated to the aforementioned NGO to improve the facilities for street children.

b. Cultural Interaction is Important!

In Senegal, the aim was to create a cultural interaction by using fabrics from our country in a fashion event held at our embassy within Dakar Fashion Week project of Senegalese fashion designer Adama Paris. African-specific designs were created with fabrics with Turkish motifs provided by the Istanbul Textile and Apparel Exporters’ Association (ITKIB). The collections created within this cooperation model were introduced as “extraordinary pieces” by different nations.

c. Let’s Encourage Young People!

Senegal is amongst the leading countries in fashion in Africa. The tendency towards the fashion world amongst young people is considerable. Many design and fashion shops are found especially in the capital Dakar and

New York First Lady Emine Erdoğan attended the event titled 'Towards a Global Zero Waste Movement' held at the New York Turkish House within the framework of the 78th United Nations (UN) General Assembly and made a speech. (Source: Anadolu Agency)

The World is our Common Home: PATH TO THE GLOBAL ZERO WASTE MOVEMENT

— September 18th, 2023 —

TURKISH HOUSE, NEW YORK



The World is our Common Home:
PATH TO THE GLOBAL
ZERO WASTE MOVEMENT
— September 18th, 2023 —
TURKISH HOUSE, NEW YORK



Saint-Louis, one of the important cities of Senegal. Senegalese people have clothes made and buy them for weddings, holidays, invitations, in short, for every occasion. It is possible to encounter designs that blend traditional and modern lines everywhere. Everyone in Senegal, whether they have the means or not, takes care of their clothing. It is possible to come across male tailors walking from neighborhood to neighborhood with their sewing machines on the streets.

In line with the importance given to fashion in Senegal, our event also showcased the special collections of five young African designers. In this way, the brands 'Sag Art,' 'Maison Audace,' 'Amazing Revolution,' 'Gringo Costum' and 'Zeyafrika,' which want to enter the fashion market, were also introduced.

Music is an important aspect of human life in Africa and naturally in Senegal. In Senegal, people express their happiness, satisfaction, sadness and even criticism through music. For this reason, music was also included in this event. Case in point, the Def Mama Def group, comprised of two young female singers, gave a mini concert, thus supporting a group consisting of women who are new to the music world.

d. Our Goal is Zero-Waste!

The African continent is responsible for a small portion of the greenhouse gas emissions, which cause climate change. However, Africa is among the regions where climate injustice is most evident. Unfortunately, climate change is making access to food and water, which are already in short supply across the continent, even more difficult. Therefore, it is important to spread the zero-waste movement in Africa.

Based on this fact, and with reference to the zero-waste movement conducted under the auspices of First Lady Emine Erdoğan, priority was given to the garments made of sustainable and recycled materials in the collections of young fashion designers who contributed to our event.

e. The Unifying Power of Diplomacy!

Three different main events were organized within Dakar Fashion Week in 2023. The first event was the opening ceremony of the week held at our embassy. The other two events were held in different venues by fashion designer Adama Paris in the form of invitations or fashion shows. More than 300 guests attended the event held in the magnificent garden of our embassy. The participation of high-level guests from diplomatic circles, the world

of the art and the fashion as well as the press members made the event colorful and amusing.

The opening ceremony of the week held at our embassy was held in two sessions. In the first part, professional models displayed collections of five young fashion designers. In the second part, African creations designed by Adama Paris of fabrics with Turkish motifs were introduced by 'extraordinary models.'

f. The Story of 'Extraordinary Models'

There are over 30 female ambassadors and representatives of international organizations such as UNICEF in Dakar. As female mission chiefs serving in Senegal, we place particular importance on supporting associations that serve those in need. For this reason, I invited my female colleagues to perform on the runway and display African creations by Senegalese fashion designer Adama Paris, the creator of Dakar Fashion Week, of fabrics with Turkish motifs specially brought from our country, and to contribute to the living conditions of street children by doing so. My invitation was welcomed enthusiastically by my female colleagues. Furthermore, my proposal was actually limited to 10 representatives, but 13 colleagues responded to our call.

Thereupon, we supported the Association for Solidarity with Street Children, SPER, by participating in the fashion show and purchasing the clothes we displayed, together with the Argentine Ambassador Marcia Levaggi, the Finnish Ambassador Anu Saxen, the French Ambassador Christine Fages, the South African Ambassador Bongive Qwabe, the British Ambassador Juliette John, the Canadian Ambassador Marie-Genevieve Mounier, the Cuban Ambassador Maydolis Barbara Sosa Hilton, the Pakistani Ambassador Saima Maymunah Sayed, the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF) Representative Rennie Yotova, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) Representative Christel Alvergne, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Representative Tracey Hebert-Seck, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Representative Silvia Danailov, and the Dakar Yunus Emre Institute (YEE) Coordinator Merve Işık Efe.²

The famous actor and photographer, Okan Bayülgen also participated in our event and took portraits of female ambassadors and mission chiefs. These portraits shot voluntarily by Bayülgen gave me an opportunity to thank my colleagues who willingly performed such an extraordinary activity to improve the living conditions of street children.

² Fatma Esmâ Arslan, "Senegal'de kadın büyükelçiler sokak çocukları yararına podyuma çıktı", AA, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/senegalde-kadin-buyukelciler-sokak-cocuklari-yararina-podyuma-cikti/3077504>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.

Also, the event was broadcasted in Turkish, local and foreign media and television channels.³

3. Conclusion

A first was experienced in Dakar Fashion Week, where 14 female ambassadors and representatives of international organizations from all over the world took the runway and, using the unifying power of diplomacy as a tool, contributed to improving the living conditions of a group of street children rescued from the streets by an association.

An African proverb says "It takes a village to raise a child." Thanks to diplomacy, a 'village' in Senegal, which brought together diplomats, artists, fashion designers and business people, improved the lives of 20 street children on December 7, 2023.

In today's world, we need diplomacy, dialogue, mediation, cooperation and a common stance more than ever for our common quest for peace and prosperity. For this, it is essential we increase the number of activities which will bring people from different nations and environments together for the purpose of cooperation with the power of diplomacy, regardless of its level.

³ Lauren Bulbin, "The excitement and elegance of Dakar Fashion Week", *Washington Post*,

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/style/interactive/2023/12/21/photo-dakar-fashion-week-2023/>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024; Enquette+, "Le recyclage pour sauver l'Afrique de la pollution textile", <https://www.enquetepius.com/content/dakar-fashion-week-2023-le-recyclage-pour-sauver-l%E2%80%99afrique-de-la-pollution-textile>, Date of Access: 09.05.2024; Absa Diongue, "C'est parti pour la 21ème édition de la Dakar Fashion Week !", *Sene Web*, https://www.seneweb.com/news/Culture/c-est-parti-pour-la-21eme-edition-_n_427675.html, Date of Access: 09.05.2024.

Türkiye's Colorful Gateway to Africa: African Culture House

Zeliha Sağlam*

1. Introduction

Turkish First Lady, Emine Erdoğan, has accompanied President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on official visits to Africa and has participated in social responsibility projects in these countries, which has created a strong emotional bond with the people of Africa. This strong social interaction was sustained by Emine Erdoğan's lunch of the African Culture House Project in 2016. African countries that have established strong relationships with Türkiye prioritize showcasing the handicrafts made by African women to the world. They focus on ensuring that their products reach a fair market, while also preserving their own identities through various projects and innovative initiatives.

Emine Erdoğan became the first Turkish First lady to speak at the United Nations General Assembly on International Day of Zero Waste on March 30, 2023, to bring the zero-waste project to the world's agenda and raise awareness on the subject. Subsequently, the UN Secretary-General established an Advisory Board consisting of distinguished representatives in the field of

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zero-waste and Emine Erdoğan was appointed as its chairperson. Emine Erdoğan, who has worked primarily in the fields of humanitarian aid, cultural diplomacy, the survival of traditional arts, and the transfer of centuries-old food culture from generation to generation, is one of the global exemplary works of the African Culture House, which constantly increases its contribution to Africa-Türkiye relations.

In order to enhance Türkiye's interaction with the continent, the African Culture House has become a regional hub for meetings. The African Culture House, which aims to promote African culture and foster Turkish-African relations, offers a diplomatic and multi-faceted interaction area, primarily

African House Emine Erdoğan attended the 'African House' program organized within the scope of International Volunteer Day (Source: Anadolu Agency)

as a social responsibility project. A wide range of intercultural activities such as cultural events, shows, exhibitions, seminars and presentations, and academic studies are organized at the African Culture House. The recognition of African culture more and more in Türkiye not only strengthens diplomatic relations but also affects economic cooperation. Cultural exchange contributes to the increase of mutual trade and investments. The interest and support shown by high-level executives and government officials from African states, embassies operating in our country, NGO representatives, students and artists to the African Culture House confirms this determination.

Accordingly, the study will discuss the activities of the African Culture House towards the continent in 2023.

2. The Expanding Sphere of Influence of the African Culture House

The African Culture House, which emerged from Türkiye's close relations with African countries over the past twenty years, has started joint work with the African Union by signing a memorandum of understanding during the 78th General Assembly meetings of the United Nations in New York. The African Union is an international organization composed of member states that constitute the countries of the continent. It prioritizes acting with the vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa that is guided by its own citizens and represents a dynamic force in the international arena.¹ The goals of the African Union can be summarized as; to accelerate political and socioeconomic integration and development in the continent, to preserve peace and stability, and to ensure democratic principles and good governance.² It operates in accordance with the objectives to encourage cooperation among African countries, ensure peace and security, support development throughout the continent, protect human rights, promote democracy and to ensure that Africa is strongly represented in global platforms.

Signing a memorandum of understanding with the AU as an umbrella organization representing the entire continent has ensured the recognition of the African Culture House internationally and amongst African countries.

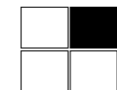
This agreement is viewed as a contribution towards mutual understanding and friendship by strengthening cultural exchange and communications between Türkiye and African countries and increasing Türkiye's cultural diplomacy with the African Culture House, thus gaining a wider sphere of influence in the internationally.

¹ African Union, "About the African Union", <https://au.int/en/overview>, Date of Access: 23.05.2024.

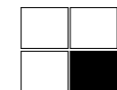
² Cemil Doğaç İpek, "Afrika Birliği Örgütü ve Kıtada İşbirliği Arayışları", 21. Yüzyılda Eğitim ve Toplum, Cilt 1, Sayı 3, Kış 2012, s. 114.



 Source: African Craft Market and Culture House

 **Ankara** African Handicrafts Market and Culture House, Phone +90 (312) 312 24 63 Address: Sakarya Mahallesi, Talatpaşa Blv No:75 06230 Altındağ/Ankara

 **Ankara** Spouses of ambassadors of African countries residing in Ankara, Türkiye, came together at the African Culture House to strengthen cooperation and solidarity.

 **USA** A memorandum of understanding was signed between the African Culture House Association and the African Union in New York, where the 78th United Nations (UN) General Assembly meetings are ongoing (Source: Anadolu Agency).

3. Activities of the African Culture House in 2023

The African Culture House hosts various events to promote African culture and share this rich heritage with a wide audience. Through events such as traditional music concerts, art activities and language courses African culture is brought together with its enthusiasts. The African Culture House promotes direct communication and interaction between the societies of Türkiye and African countries. Artists and cultural ambassadors from various African countries have the opportunity to promote their own cultures by participating in events organized in Türkiye, which helps to strengthen mutual relations.

In this context, products are purchased from women producers identified by institutions such as the Yunus Emre Institute, the Turkish Maarif Foundation, TİKA or local officials and students in African countries through studies in the regions and villages, but who cannot reach the market, and are offered for sale at the African Culture House. One of the notable examples of this practice originated in a village called Bolga Nyorkorko in Ghana. A female producer named Atanga A., who lives in the village, works 15 hours a day to make baskets to support her 14 family members. Atanga, who has been working to provide for her family for seventeen years, can weave one basket or bag a day from the vetiver meadow plant, whose roots are deep and fibrous. A Ghanaian PhD student in Türkiye and participating in various activities at the African Culture House discovered Atanga's products during her visit to this village and was instrumental in offering them for sale at the African Culture House. This discovery paved the way for other women living in the village who, like Atanga, produce handicrafts for their families to sell their products at the African Culture House.

In a village in the Thies region of Dakar, Senegal, women come together to make a livelihood by weaving baskets at certain times of the day. After collecting the long paille plant that grows at certain times of the year on the banks of the river in Gambia, they think it out and turn it into basket material. The women we met through TİKA's work in the region also provide training to pass this work onto future generations. They contribute towards their family budgets with these baskets received from the women. Currently, the African Culture House has products from 40 African countries in the fields of leatherworking, basketry, stone processing, sewing, glass painting and many more.

The African Culture House goes beyond being just an exhibition area, offering visitors a deeper experience by organizing interactive events, workshops and seminars. These events provide opportunities to learn about

Africa's rich history, languages, mythology and traditions. In this way, the African Culture House functions as a platform for cultural interaction and mutual learning and hosts a wide range of visitors. People of all ages visit this house to discover various cultural elements such as art, handicrafts, musical instruments and traditional clothing from various regions of Africa. Especially in 2023, student groups at kindergarten, primary school, high school and university levels visited there to experience African culture.

Moreover, academic seminars are held regularly with the participation of distinguished academics in the African Culture House and important issues for the African continent are discussed. Many African-themed events are regularly held at the African Culture House on a monthly basis. These events include workshops on African coffee, hair braiding, ceramic painting with African ethnic patterns, notebook making with African fabrics and leathers, candle making with spices, cream making with essences and oils from Africa, zero-waste studies, and African food culture. The African Culture House, which has become the communications face of Africa in Türkiye, has diplomatic importance as a place where high-level African guests definitely visit during their visits. The Turkish ambassadors and their spouses in Africa, who came to Ankara for the 14th Ambassadors Conference held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye in 2023, visited the African Culture House and described it as a bridge extending from Türkiye to Africa. They also point out that it as an outstanding example of cultural diplomacy in the meetings they attend in African countries.

The 2023 Internship Program offered to university students from African countries at the African Culture House offers them the opportunity to gain experience in a real business environment, and closely observe and experience business processes. Each student who is counseled is guided for their career goals. They take part in various studies to develop their social media management, content production, communication and teamwork skills. They strengthen their connections by meeting experienced and professional people in their field and have the opportunity to build a network that will enhance their careers.

Operating within the African Culture House, the cafeteria contributes to the promotion of Africa's food and beverage culture. Coffees from Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda and Ethiopia are offered to guests at the cafe. The coffee beans from different regions of Africa, brewing methods, coffee production and storage conditions, and the subtleties of African coffees are explained in the venue, which includes the journey of coffee from past to present.³

³ Habertürk, "Afrika Kahveleri Atölyesi'nde Yemen, Etiyopya ve Ruanda kahveleri tanıtıldı", <https://www.haberturk.com/ankara-haberleri/29222015-afrika-kahveleri-atolyesinde-yemen-etiyopya-ve-ruanda-kahveleri-tanitildi>, Date of Access: 23.05.2024.

World-famous Senegalese musician Cheikh Lo held a press conference at the African Culture House prior to coming to Türkiye for a concert in 2023. He compared the House to a "humanity store". Lo drew attention to the importance of intercultural interaction in life, emphasizing that this interaction covered very wide areas such as culture, literature, dance, music, handicrafts, gastronomy and helps people discover things they previously did not know.⁴

Moreover, the Türkiye-Africa Economy and Business Forum (TABEF) program in Istanbul is held every two years in cooperation with the Ministry of Trade, the AU and Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEİK), and the African Culture House participated in the program in 2023, and meetings were held with entrepreneurial women from African countries who wanted to produce.

African Culture House aims to establish venues that enable African women to gain information, especially about the business world, to increase their professional skills, to develop their ability to conduct market research, and to support them in business management.

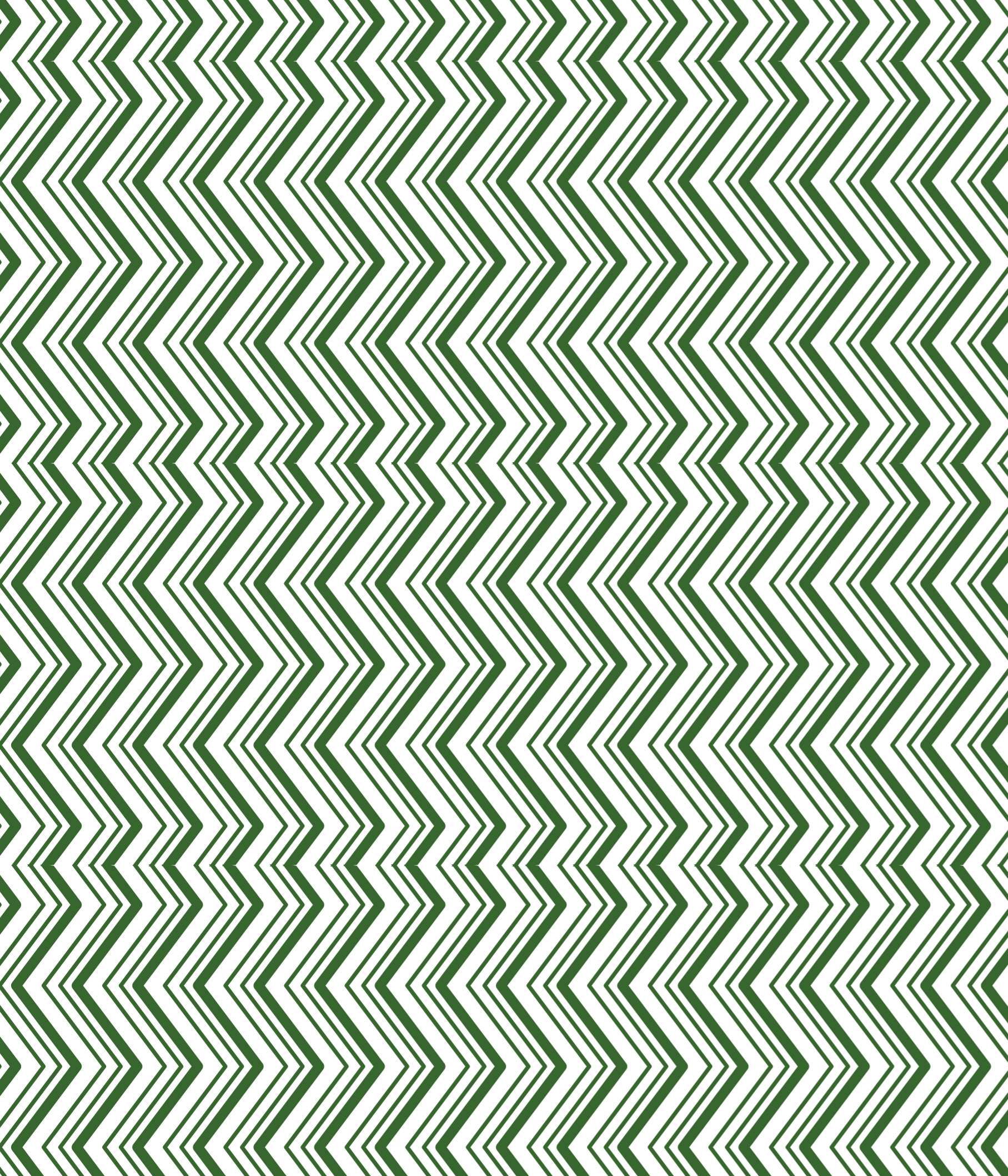
4. Conclusion

The African Culture House, which has become a leading institution in the field of cultural diplomacy, plays an important role in fostering relations between Türkiye and African countries. It brings the rich handcraft products of Africa for its visitors and shares the unknown rich cultural heritage of Africa with its enthusiasts through academic seminars and workshops held in its cafeteria. The House, which can be visited along with African music, mediates for the introduction, transfer and intercultural interaction of the continent's culture.

The African Culture House signed a memorandum of understanding with the AU in New York during the 78th UN General Assembly in 2023. Signing a memorandum of understanding with the AU ensured the recognition of the African House of Culture both in the international arena and among African countries.

This memorandum of understanding will contribute to mutual understanding and friendship by promoting cultural exchange and communications between Türkiye and African countries. Thus, it is assessed that the African Culture House shall play an important role in Türkiye's cultural diplomacy practices towards Africa.

⁴ Alex Sinhan Bogmis, "Senegalli sanatçı Cheikh Lo, farklı tarzları harmanladığı müziğiyle Afrika müziğini etkiliyor", AA, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/kultur/senegalli-sanatci-cheikh-lo-farkli-tarzlari-harmanladigi-muzigiyle-afrika-muzigini-etkiliyor/3004606>, Date of Access: 23.05.2024.



2023 African Textile Art: Dialogues on Rebirth and Cultural Heritage

5

Handegül Terken Kabakcıoğlu*

1. Introduction

The history of weaving is as old as human history. Due to their biological structure, humans require clothing to protect themselves from the adverse natural conditions of their environment, and to avoid injury from hard objects, cold-heat, sun and wind in the environment. As a result, the earliest examples of textile surfaces were designed to provide comfort and protection without restricting movement. Over time, societies and geographical conditions have led to the development of traditional textile surfaces, resulting in works of art that reflect local and national identities.

In prehistoric times, people used animal hides to cover themselves. The art of weaving, whose tradition dates back as far as hunting and shepherding, has influenced the curiosity, labor, and lives of people. Previously worn to cover oneself, textiles have since been enriched by concepts such as status and fashion throughout history.¹

This study will examine the characteristics of African textile art and its impact on cultural heritage.

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¹ Servet Senem Uğurlu, *Türkiye Dokuma Atlası, Dünya Dokumacılık Tarihi*,
<https://www.turkiyedokumaatlası.com/dokuma.php>, Date of Access: 14.03.2014.



2. Definition and Importance of African Textile Art

Africa's colorful culture reflects the diversity of languages and religions on the continent. Each country, ethnic group or tribe on the continent has its own language, belief system, tradition and culture. This diversity is an important element that constitutes Africa's cultural richness. Although there are defined borders between countries, Africa Transcends these divisions with its rich culture and traditional production methods which are still in use today.

Nigeria A Nigerian worker weaves the traditional 'fabric' known as sakar hannu, which is common in many countries in West Africa (Source: Anadolu Agency).

While modern consumption habits are increasing throughout the world, great importance is given to the preservation and transmission of traditional production methods and cultural heritage in all regions of Africa. This shows that the rich cultural texture of Africa continues to exist in a vibrant and impressive way, not only in the past but also today.

As an important element of this wealth, African fabrics are not only a subject focused on clothing style and decorations, but are also a form of expression and a means of communication. The motifs and patterns on the fabric usually reflect the beliefs, rituals and social structures of that tribe or different groups. These motifs and patterns are oral and written cultural formations, as well as ways of communicating and expressing identity between tribes. Serving as an important tool for expressing the history, identity and values of communities, this art form constitutes part of Africa's rich cultural heritage.

African textile art dates back to 5000 BCE in ancient Egypt.² Textile art was also developed by various cultures in different regions of Africa. Weaving and printing techniques in particular were used in the early periods of this art. Regions such as Egypt, Nigeria, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire played leading roles in the development of textile art.

African textile art is significant not only as an art form but also as a means of cultural and social expression. Fabrics are one of the fundamental elements used in traditional ceremonies, rituals, weddings and other noteworthy events. Furthermore, the patterns and symbols on the fabrics reflect the history, mythology and values of the communities. Each pattern or motif usually represents a specific meaning and is passed down from generation to generation.

3. Local Weavings

The value of woven fabrics in Africa and the patterns they bear convey a multitude of meanings. Accordingly, some of the fabrics discussed are as follows:

a. Ukara

The patterns of Ukara fabric are known as 'Nsibidi,' an ancient form of visual communication specific to the indigenous people of the Cross River region in southeastern Nigeria and southwestern Cameroon. Nsibidi is a coded language of visual symbols that does not correspond to any spoken language,

² The Mandela Institute for Development Studies (MINDS), Fabric map of Africa the art of storytelling, <https://minds-africa.org/fabric-map-of-africa-the-art-of-storytelling>, Date of Access: 02.04.2024.

but rather is an ideographic script that refers to abstract concepts, actions or objects, and its use facilitates communication between peoples speaking different languages.

While still preferred by the public today, it is known that members of the community known as the Leopard Society, which controlled trade and maintained social and political order in the past, wore this fabric during ceremonial rituals. The fabrics are used to form a long skirt by tying them around the waist.³

b. Adire

Adire is a deep blue fabric produced by Yoruba women in Southwest Nigeria using various dyeing techniques. The dyeing technique, which is the translated meaning of its name, probably originated from the first pieces of hand-spun and woven cotton fabric with simple patterns. The fabric is dyed more than 25 times to obtain its indigo-blue color prior to being washed.

The Bamana people of Mali use mud when dyeing fabric, while in Senegal, cassava root is used instead of corn flour,⁴ whereas beeswax is used in Cameroon.⁵

c. Khasa

Khasa are woolen strip-woven blankets of the mainly nomadic Fulani people of West Africa. The traditional Khasa blankets are used by herders to protect their cattle from the cold and mosquitoes in the winter. They are woven in narrow strips and then knitted into the final blanket. Khasa incorporates motifs and symbols depicting Fulani legends and life, with patterns of lines, dots, triangles and rhombuses.⁶

d. Isi Agu

Its roots embedded in Igbo tradition and history, Isi Agu means ‘lion’s head’ in the Igbo language. Historically, this garment was reserved for royalty, warriors, and other respected members of society. While the patterns used symbolize power, courage, and prestige, the fabric is characterized by motifs such as lion heads, climbing vines, and geometric patterns, often hand-woven or embroidered.⁷

e. Barkcloth

In the past, bark cloth was produced in many centers in West, Central and East Africa, in the DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi and Zambia in the Congo Basin, playing an important role in events such as births, re-

ligious ceremonies, marriages and funerals. The production and use of this cloth decreased with the wider use of imported cotton fabrics from the mid-19th century until the early-20th century and the adoption of more modest clothing styles. Today, bark cloth is used by a very few communities that live in accordance with their long-standing cultural traditions.⁸

f. Shweshwe

Shweshwe textile is a cotton fabric that features intricate floral arrangements and geometric patterns such as squares, circles, lines, or diamonds. Originally made in indigo, this fabric is now available in a variety of colors. Today, Shweshwe is one of the important fabrics used in traditional South African clothing.⁹

g. Kikoy

The kikoy is a type of fabric that is produced from cotton yarn by tribes in Tanzania and Kenya. It is widely used as a striped dress, sash, garment, sofa cover, wrapping fabric, home decoration, shawl, dress, and tablecloth for women. Considered a part of Swahili culture, kikoy is commonly worn by the Maasai people of Kenya and menfolk from Tanzania and Zanzibar.¹⁰

h. Kente

Kente, widely used in Ghana, gets its name from the word “kenten,” which means ‘basket.’ Kente is a complex patterned fabric hand-woven from cotton yarn, like a basket. Kente fabric is thought to have its origins in the 11th century West African weaving traditions.¹¹

i. Aso Oke

Aso Oke is a hand-woven fabric produced by the Yoruba people of West Africa. It is frequently utilized by indigenous women to tie their infants to their backs as a belt known as “oja.” It is an especially valuable gift presented to respected people and to the bride’s family at weddings and is also often used in religious ceremonies. While the method of making the fabric has remained the same for centuries, new techniques are being used to eliminate the weight and thickness of the fabric and make it more accessible for everyday wear.¹²

j. Bogolanfini veya Bologna

In Mali, the fabric known as “Bogolanfini” is called mud cloth.¹³ In the production of this fabric, men weave strips of cloth and women join them

⁸ National Museums Scotland, “Understanding barkcloth at National Museums Scotland”, www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/stories/global-arts-cultures-and-design/understanding-barkcloth-at-national-museums-scotland, Date of Access:18.04.2024.

⁹ Lindiwe Brigitte Malobola, Negar Rostamzadeh, Shakir Mohamed, *se-Shweshwe inspired fashion generation*, 2022.

¹⁰ Beatrice Elung’ata Imo (MSc.), *Adoption of the Kenya national dress as a basis for developing a decision-making model for the local industry: A case of Nairobi*, Kenya, Oct. 2013.

¹¹ Ghana Web, “History of Ghana”, www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/history/, 2006, Date of Access: 12.04.2024.

¹² Makinde D.Olajide Ajiboye, Olusegun Jide, “Ajayi Babatunde Joseph, Aso-Oke production and use among the Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria”, *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol.3, No.3, September 2009.

¹³ Bogolan, using mud is the object made; fini is the fabric.

³ Birmingham Museum of Art, Collections, “Textile, Ukara”, www.artsbma.org/collection/textile-ukara, Date of Access: 02.04.2024.

⁴ A plant that grows in Africa.

⁵ Craft Atlas, “Adire”, www.craftatlas.co/crafts/adire, Date of Access: 14.04.2024.

⁶ Craft Atlas, “Adire”, www.craftatlas.co/crafts/adire, Date of Access: 14.04.2024.

⁷ Collins Tochukwu Duru, “Unravelling the rich tapestry of Isi Agu Fabric: A cultural icon from southeastern, Nigeria”, *Bulb*, 21.03.2024, www.bulbapp.io/u/25TBzEpRiaRDxru8U3iUjbDcFQNT6UbZsEy3St4wmroX/collins-tochukwu-duru, Date of Access:18.04.2024.

together. They then decorate them using plant extracts and mud. In addition to its strong graphic qualities, the numerous designs and patterns painted on the fabrics have symbolic significance. Young women acquire the knowledge of this visual language from their mothers through an apprenticeship process. The motifs are usually abstract or semi-abstract representations of everyday objects. When used together, they can express a proverb or a song, explain a message or represent a historical event. These garments are traditionally worn by women during significant life transitions, including before marriage and immediately following childbirth. It is also believed that men used them for camouflage while hunting.¹⁴

k. Masai Shuka

The colorful fabric known as shuka is traditionally used by the Maasai people of East Africa, particularly in Kenya and Tanzania, and is worn in various styles by both Maasai men and women. *Maasai shukas* are usually red, but can also be decorated with other colors such as white, yellow, green and blue. Colors and patterns can determine the wearer's age, gender, social status and even emotional state. In Maasai culture, the *shuka* symbolizes identity, status and cultural heritage.

Masai shukas are usually hand woven and embroidered, rendering each one unique. These fabrics are considered an important part of Maasai culture and are worn in traditional ceremonies and weddings.

l. Faso Dan Fani

Faso Dan Fani is a traditional cotton indigo fabric made in West Africa, and it is the national symbol of Burkina Faso. This fabric is woven from cotton, kapok and a local silk called *tuntun*. The yarns are hand-spun, dyed and woven into striped fabrics on looms. Usually determined by gender, but sometimes by skill, most work is done in family workshops. While the womenfolk are usually spinners and dyers, men usually weave and sew the fabric. Many of the dyes used in fabric production have medicinal properties. For this reason, the fabric is connected to healing and protection, both spiritually and physically. The stripes of each fabric are woven to correspond to an idiom. Therefore, wearing the fabric means conveying a message, depending on the pattern. Worn on various occasions, *faso dan fani* can also be used to express political views.¹⁵

¹⁴ Makinde D. Olajide Ajiboye, Olusegun Jide, Ajayi Babatunde Joseph, "Aso-Oke production and use among the Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria", *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol.3, No.3, September 2009.

¹⁵ Genevieve Hill-Thomas, "Faso dan fani: Marka Textiles in Burkina Faso", *Smithsonian Libraries and Archives*, 2012.

m. Kanga

The basic design and pattern structure of the *kanga* is considered an important part of African textile art. It consists of a central motif (*mji*), a patterned border (*pindo*), and a Swahili proverb or saying (*jina*). The rectangular printed fabric is approximately 150 cm long and 100 cm wide. The fabric's printed patterns are categorized into flora, fauna and other patterns. Two or more vivid colors and bold patterns are used.¹⁶

4. Conclusion

With a rich and extensive history, fabrics are an important part of Africa's cultural heritage. These fabrics are traditionally hand-woven and produced using natural dyes, expressing various cultural meanings in different regions of Africa. Nowadays, while African textile art has achieved an important place in the world of modern fashion and art, designers are using these traditional fabrics in their contemporary designs to promote African culture and art internationally. This, in turn, has facilitated African textile art to gain global attention and become an important form of cultural expression.

Various steps need to be taken for the preservation and sustainability of African textile art in the future. It is essential to implement measures such as education and awareness-raising activities, the preservation of cultural heritage, support for artists and designers, sustainable production and trade practices, national and international collaborations, and encouragement of creativity to ensure the future of this art form.

As a consequence, African textile art is not only a reflection of the past, but also a source of inspiration for the future. It is of great importance to preserve and support this art and to pass the richness and diversity of African culture and art down to future generations.

¹⁶ Oladoyin J. Labode, Olasunmbo O. Braide, "Symbolic designs of textile art in African fabrics", *The Polish Journal of the Arts and Culture, New Series* 16 (2/2022): 71–86 [article].

The Importance of the Ancient City of Timbuktu for African Cultural Heritage and Developments in 2023

Tuğrul Oğuzhan Yılmaz*

6

1. Introduction

Timbuktu, one of the most important cities in Mali, was founded by the Tuaregs in the 5th century. Due to its location in sub-Saharan Africa, Timbuktu quickly became a hub for gold and salt traders. From the 12th century onwards, it was referred to as the 'Golden City' or the 'Pearl of the Desert' because of its abundant resources. In the following period, it became one of the world's earliest centers of higher education.¹

In the late 14th century, the Mali Sultanate entered a period of disintegration, collapsing after the Tuaregs captured cities such as Timbuktu, Aravan, Gao, and Velate in 1430, was succeeded by the Songhai Sultanate. The regions where the Tuareg and Pol lived were captured during the reigns of Sunni Ali Ber and Sunni Ali Manding Mossi, who were said to be pagans and took over power in 1464. While the Tuaregs were expelled from Timbuktu in 1468, the struggles over the throne which ensued between 1528 - 1539 led to the weakening of the Songhai Sultanate. After Askiya Dawud, one of the sons of Askiya Muhammed, took the throne in 1549, the Songhais took advantage of the opportunity to regain their previous power, which they maintained until 1582, when they began to decline.²

The Sa'di Sultan Ahmed Mansur, who ruled Morocco, ended the Songhai Sultanate with the Battle of Tondibi in 1591. Thus, the Pashalik of Timbuktu, whose borders extended from Ansongo to Gao and Djenne, was established from the 17th century on the condition it was subject to the Sa'ids. Although the Songhais came under the sovereignty of Marrakesh, those who served the Sa'ids gradually began to hold sway in the administration. It was not long before the Tuaregs, who took advantage of the weakening of the Pashalik of Timbuktu when the Timbuktuans showed loyalty to the Songhais and rejected the Sa'ids' sovereignty, regained control of the region. However, the Songhais' influence continued until the mid-18th century, whereby the scientific and religious activities in the city remained vibrant until 1833.³

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¹ Ahmet Kavas, "Timbüktü", *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 41, TDV Publications, Ankara, 2012, p. 190-191; Fatma Esmâ Arslan, "Afrika'nın kadim kenti, 'çöliün incisi' Timbuktu yeniden kuşatma altında", *Anadolu Agency*, 14.09.2023,

<https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/afrikanin-kadim-kenti-colum-incisi-timbuktu-yeniden-kusatma-altinda/2991681>, Date of Access: 15.03.2024.

² Ahmet Kavas, "Mali", *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 27, TDV Publications, Ankara, 2003, p. 496-497; Gordon Kerr, *Kısa Afrika Tarihi*, transl. Mihriban Doğan, Say Publications, İstanbul, 2021, p. 35-36, 38-39.

³ Kavas, "Mali", p. 496-497; Kerr, *ibid.*, p. 59-61.

In terms of cultural heritage in Africa, the place and importance of the ancient city of Timbuktu will be discussed, whereas the pertinent developments in 2023 will be taken up in this study

2. Education, Culture and Civilization

Mosques, libraries and madrasahs have a very important place in the country's education, culture and civilization. As a city of scholars during the Songhai, Sa'di, Masinâ, Tekrûr and Segu states, Timbuktu was known for its academic activities for many years.⁴ Thanks to the manuscripts in the city in the Middle Ages, the transfer of knowledge among Muslims was ensured, and this ancient city, which was the subject of novels and films, shone like a star as one of the centers of Islamic civilization.⁵



Figure 1: Sankore Mosque, built in the North of the City by an Old Tuareg Woman from the Aghlâl Tribe in the 11th Century Source: Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) Atatürk Library Digital Archives and e-Resources, Postcard Collection, Inventory no: Krt.048665.

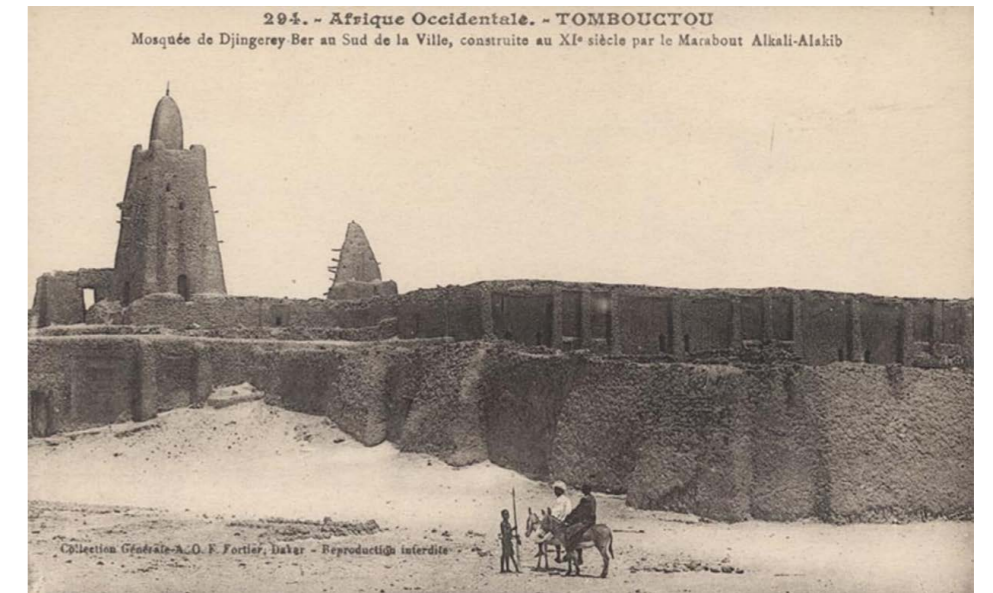
⁴ Kavas, "Mali", p. 497, 499-500; Kavas, "Timbükütü", p. 190-192.

⁵ Ramazan Biçer, *Timbükütü*, İlke Publishing, İstanbul, 2019, p. 79-86; Fazlı Bulut, *Timbuktu: Uzak Bir Düşü Yolculuk*, Cumhuriyet Kitapları, İstanbul, 2020, p. 129-130, 140-141, 147, 149, 160-176; Fatma Akpınar, *Seyahatnâmeler Işığında Mit ve Gerçeklik Arasında Timbuktu*, İstanbul University Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Islamic History and Arts, Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis, İstanbul, 2021, p. 14-17, 28-33; Ousmane Oumar Kane, *Timbuktu'nun Ötesinde Müslüman Batı Afrika'nın Entelektüel Tarihi*, transl. Ejder Okumuş, Afrika Foundation Publications, Ankara, 2023, p. 55-80, 101-128; Taha Kılınç, "Bir zamanlar Timbuktu'da", *GZT*, 27.01.2024, <https://www.gzt.com/mecra/bir-zamanlar-timbuktuda-2911893>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

⁶ Kavas, "Mali", p. 497, 501-502.

⁷ Kavas, "Timbükütü", p. 191-192; Emine Güzel, "Timbuktu'ya İlmî ve Kültürel Açıldan Bakmak", *Africana*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2023, p. 10.

Figure 2: Cingereybîr (Great) Mosque Built by Marabu el-Hâc el-Akîb in the 14th century Source: IBB Atatürk Library Digital Archives and e-Resources, Postcard Collection, Fixed Asset nr: Krt.048676.



From the second half of the 16th century onwards, scholars educated in Timbuktu traveled to Cairo, Katsina, Marrakesh, Mecca and Takedda, making great contributions to Muslims in terms of their ideas. Moreover, scholars from all over the Islamic world flocked to Timbuktu. During that period, 15,000-20,000 of the city's 70,000-80,000 population were students studying in the madrasahs. For instance, in addition to the many scholars who came from Egypt and Morocco and settled in the city, 180 madrasahs were built, which provided education for 25,000 students.⁸

However, it is known that the French, who eliminated the local emirates established by the Bambara, Mossi, Pol, Senufo and Tuareg in Mali in the 19th century and captured Timbuktu in 1898, looted some libraries and sent 518 Arabic manuscripts, totaling 120,000 pages, belonging to al-Hajj Omar and his son Seku Amadu, which they found only in the Boujbeha Library, to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris.⁹

Although the city was destroyed during the long colonial period, Timbuktu has continued to host an important heritage in the fields of education, architecture, culture and art. The Cingereybîr, Sankore and Sidi Yahya Mosques, each of which is a university, are among the most important historical heritages of Mali. Accordingly, these structures are also included in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List. Furthermore, it can be stated that the madrasahs attached to the mosques that have managed to survive have maintained their position as centers of science and culture.¹⁰

⁸ Kavas, "Mali", p. 497; Güzel, *ibid.*, p. 5, 11, 14.

⁹ Kavas, "Mali", p. 497-500, 502-504.

¹⁰ Arif Demirel, *Kuruluşundan Ortaçağ Sonlarına Timbuktu (Timbükütü) Şehri*, Ankara University Institute of Social Sciences, Department of History (Medieval History), Unpublished PhD Thesis, Ankara, 2022, p. 284-292; Arslan, *ibid.*



Figure 3: Sidi Yahya (Muhammad Naddah) Mosque built in the city center by Sheikh al-Mukhtar Hamahullah in the 15th century. Source: IBB Ataturk Library Digital Archives and e-Resources, Postcard Collection, Fixed Asset nr: Krt.048735.

For instance, after independence in 1960, the Timbuktu Madrasah was renamed the French-Arab High School. The Centre de Documentation et de Recherche Ahmed Baba (CEDRAB), which is established in 1970 through the initiative of UNESCO, began operating in 1977 with financial support from Kuwait. CEDRAB was subsequently transformed into a higher education institute and renamed the *Centre des Hautes Etudes et de Recherches Islamiques Ahmed Baba/Ahmed Baba Institute of Higher Education and Islamic Studies (IHERIAB)*. The center, where the Furkan Islam Foundation conducts cataloguing work, houses 18,000 manuscripts. Furthermore, it is estimated that there are 300,000 historical manuscripts in 60 to 80 libraries in and around Timbuktu.¹¹

Timbuktu was included on the World Heritage List in 1988 and has undergone a number of administrative changes since the 1990s, while a number of uprisings have emerged amongst the Tuareg population. After the signing of peace between the parties on March 27, 1996, the Flamme de la Paix Monument was built in the city in memory of this day¹² After Professor Henry Louis Gates from Harvard University visited Timbuktu in 1998, measures were taken to protect the manuscripts in the city and a decision was made to restore them.¹³ In 2006, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) designated Timbuktu as the Islamic Cul-

¹¹ Kavas, "Mali", p. 503; Kavas, "Tinbüktü", p. 191-192.

¹² Kavas, "Tinbüktü", p. 192.

¹³ Halim Gençoğlu, "Afrika'nın kültür hazineleri: Timbuktu elyazmaları", *Independent Türkçe*, 06.01.2023,

<https://www.indyturk.com/node/595826/dünyadan-sesler/afrikanin-kültür-hazineleri-timbuktu-elyazmaları>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

¹⁴ Kavas, "Tinbüktü", p. 192.

¹⁵ Gençoğlu, *Ibid.*

¹⁶ İskender Gümüş, "Mit ve gerçeklik arasında Timbuktu el yazmaları", *Yeni Şafak*, 15.03.2019, <https://www.yenisafak.com/hayat/mit-ve-gerceklik-arasinda-timbuktu-el-yazmaları-3451329>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

¹⁷ Güzel, *ibid.*, p. 15.

tural Capital, marking the city's role as the point of departure for numerous scientific projects initiated in 1999.¹⁴

Since 2007, thanks to the 'Timbuktu Manuscripts Project,' which was financed by the US Ambassadors' Fund, the Ford Foundation, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), and the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU) as well as under the leadership of the University of Oslo, physical preservation, digitization and cataloging efforts have been initiated. Experience has been shared with countries such as the Republic of South Africa, Luxembourg and Morocco.¹⁵

3. Ancient City Targeted by Terrorism

Subsequently, instability in the country jeopardized the cultural heritage of Timbuktu. Amadou Toumani Toure was overthrown in the military coup led by Amadou Haya Sanogo on March 22, 2012, followed by the Tuareg declaring the Republic of Azawad on April 6, 2012. The lack of authority in the northern region has resulted in the control of cities such as Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu by terrorist organisations, including the Movement for the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), Ansaruddin and Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb, which were previously aligned. Although these groups later fell out with each other, the interim President of the time, Dioncounda Traore requested France send troops on the grounds it was unable to engage effectively against jihadist organizations. Following this, on January 28, 2013, it was reported that Ansaruddin militants used the presence of French soldiers sent to the region as an excuse to loot the holy sites in Timbuktu, one of the major centers of Sufism, and set fire to the manuscripts in the libraries.¹⁶

On the other hand, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) delegation that visited Timbuktu in June 2013 examined the mosques, tombs and the manuscripts. Accordingly, it was determined that although two historical mosques were still standing, all 12 tombs were destroyed due to the civil war. Meanwhile, although the 26,000 manuscripts at IHERIAB were moved to Bamako, it was determined that the ventilation of 10,064 manuscripts kept in the warehouses was inadequate. Consequently, the Presidency of the Manuscripts Institution of Türkiye provided the necessary support for the counting of the manuscripts, their conservation and transfer to digital media, and the training of experts.¹⁷

The occupation of Timbuktu resulted in the destruction of a small portion of the manuscripts there. This was due to the belief among al-Qaeda terror-

ists that works associated with sinful pagans should be banned or burned. While it was not possible to prevent the smuggling of books looted by French colonialists to libraries and museums in Paris in the past, Dr. Abdelkadir Haidara's efforts still managed to save around 200,000 manuscripts.¹⁸ In this way, Dr. Haidara, who pursued lost collections buried in caves and hidden in underground rooms, as well as gold leaf found in mosques, homes, libraries and madrasas, made great sacrifices despite violent conflicts, moving the works found in archives to safe places and preventing the treasures, which have been kept secret for years, from being completely destroyed.¹⁹

Following the terrorist attacks, manuscripts from private collections became accessible online. As part of the 'Mali Magic' Project, in which Dr. Haidara was involved in hiding the manuscripts from terrorists and smuggling them to Bamako, more than 40,000 works – ranging from astronomy, religion, and literature to mysticism, mathematics, poetry, and history, as well as copies of the ancient Quran – were digitized by Google Arts & Culture and made accessible to users.²⁰ Indeed, Dr. Haidara, who is also the head of the Timbuktu cultural preservation organization SAVAMA-DCI, stated the following about the matter, "It has been said that all of African history is 'oral.' However, we have more than 400,000 manuscripts written by Africans themselves, which is unprecedented. This is a true Renaissance."²¹

Timbuktu, renowned for its iconic adobe structures and invaluable manuscripts, as well as being home to influential madrasas that played a pivotal role in shaping Islamic civilization, unfortunately became the target of terrorist organisations operating in the north of Mali and the Sahel region in 2023.²² The Sahel branch of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) together with Jamaat Nusra al-Islam wal-Muslimeen (JNIM) managed to besiege a city in August where all air and ground transportation has been completely halted.²³

Similarly, maritime transportation has also been seriously disrupted due to terrorist attacks carried out by JNIM against ferry transportation. For instance, in the attack on the only passenger ferry on the Niger River on 7 September, three rockets hit the engine of the boat plying the Timbuktu-Bamako route. According to local press reports, the ferry, carrying 300 people, reached the opposite shore despite being severely damaged, but 49 passengers were killed by terrorism.²⁴ Moreover, flights operated twice weekly between Bamako - Timbuktu were interrupted after the attacks organized by JNIM. Sky Mali, the only airline flying in and out of the small dirt runway that is Timbuktu Airport, suspended flights as a precaution due to three ar-

18 On the story of the smuggling of the priceless cultural heritage of Timbuktu by a bunch of intrepid archivists and librarians, see Charlie English, 'Timbuktu'nun Elyazmaları: Efsanevi Bir Şehrin Geçmişini Kurtarma Mücadelesi', transl. Akın Emre Pilgir, Koç University Publications, İstanbul, 2018, p. 13-18

19 Gençoğlu, ibid.

20 Fatma Esmâ Arslan, "Google, Timbuktu'daki 40 binden fazla el yazması eseri dijitalleştirdi", Anadolu Agency, 10.03.2022, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/kultur-sanat/google-timbuktudaki-40-binden-fazla-el-yazmasi-eseri-dijitallestirdi/2530889>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

21 Ömercan Kaçar, "Timbuktu yazmaları dijitalleşti", *İndependet Türkçe*, 13.03.2022, <https://www.indyturk.com/node/483681/turkiyeden-sesler/timbuktu-yazmaları-dijitalleşti>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

22 or more information see Ahmet Kavas, *L'Enseignement Islamique en Afrique Francophone: Les Medersas de la République du Mali*, IRCICA, İstanbul, 2003, p. 112-118.

23 Arslan, "Afrika'nın kadim kenti, 'çölün incisi' Timbuktu yeniden kuşatma altında".

24 Fatma Esmâ Arslan, "Mali'de düzenlenen 2 terör saldırısında 64 kişi öldü", Anadolu Agency, 08.09.2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/malide-duzenlenen-2-teror-saldirisinda-64-kisi-oldu/2986345>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

tillery shells being fired around the building during terrorist attacks carried out near the airport on September 11, 2023.²⁵

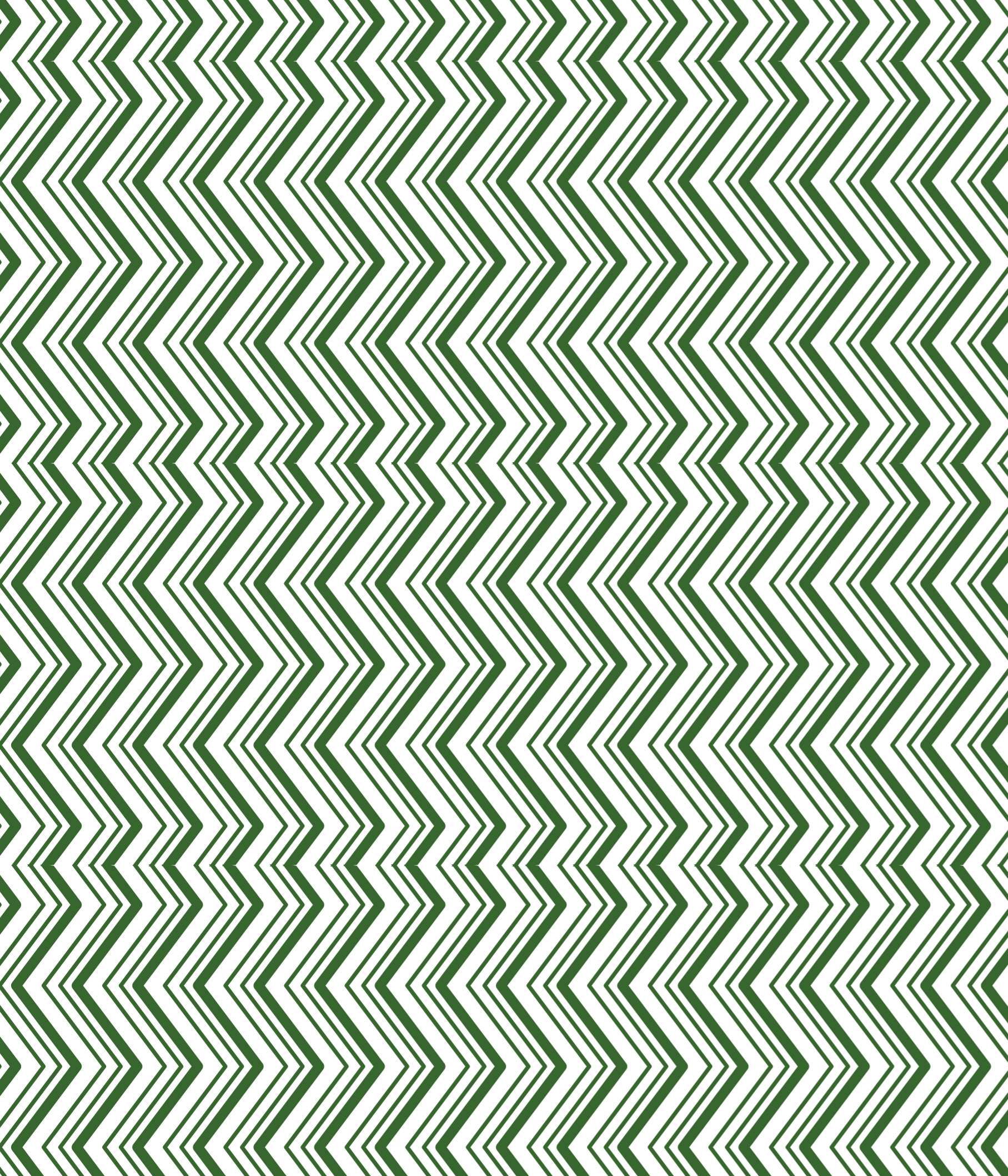
On the other hand, it is known that at least 35,000 people were forced to leave Timbuktu, which was under siege by JNIM. According to a report dated August 28, 2023 and entitled 'Mali: Siege in the Timbuktu Region' by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), at least 33,000 of the people forced to leave Timbuktu and Toudenni regions went to surrounding cities such as Ber, Goundam, Lere, Lerneb and Raz Elma, while approximately 1,000 people took refuge in Mberra and Fassala in Mauritania.²⁶

4. Conclusion

As one of the most significant cities of Islamic civilization, and home to the most important cultural treasures of Africa since the Middle Ages, Timbuktu is faced with a variety of challenges today, just as it was in the past. Hosting an extremely rich historical and cultural heritage, this ancient city has become a target of the French during the colonial period and of terrorist organizations today. Therefore, it is clear that the work to preserve tens of thousands of manuscripts and their transfer to future generations in the face of the terrorism which has emerged here is a serious responsibility.

25 TRT Haber, "Mali'de terör saldırıları nedeniyle Timbuktu'ya hava ulaşımı durdu", 13.09.2023, <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/dunya/malide-teror-saldirilari-nedeniyle-timbuktuya-hava-ulasimi-durdu-795165.html>, Date of Access: 20.04.2024.

26 OCHA, "Mali: Blockade in Timbuktu region", *Flash Report No. 1*, August 28, 2023, p. 1-2.



African Film Industry Experienced its Golden Year in 2023

Mehmet Baydemir*

1. Introduction

While interest in Africa has increased in recent years, this interest has not only focused on economic, political and security issues, but also on culture and art. Countries that aim to harness the power of the film industry have created movies focusing on Africa in order to share their messages with a wider audience. In the film *Wolf Warrior 2* (2017), China gave the message of 'stand by me, win' to African countries while trying to show the international community that China complies with UN resolutions. A message was sent to the Ethiopian Jewish Falasha community in the Israeli film entitled *The Red Sea Diving Resort* (2019). Meanwhile, South Korea extended North Korea an olive branch, conveying the message they are brothers through Africa via the film *Escape From Mogadishu* (2021).

Indeed, this information shows the global dimension of interest in Africa. It is also necessary to consider the rising trend of African cinema. In recent years, African films have gained more visibility and recognition on the global stage due to the demand for a rich and diverse cinematic heritage. In particular, comments made by critics indicate that African cinema would experience a golden age in 2023. Cinematically striking are films that touch on the rich texture of Africa, from the lively streets of Lagos to the serene landscapes of the Sahara.

The rise of African cinema is reflected in the data shared. UNESCO estimates that the African film sector has created more than 20 millions jobs and contributed \$20 billion to the Africa's gross national product by 2023. It is emphasized that the African film industry will grow significantly in 2023, and that the sector has grown by 12.76% annually.¹ As the fastest growing cinema market in the world, the African film industry is also attracting the attention of investors who are investing in the sector. While various digital

* Dr.

¹ Charles Mgbolu, "2023: The highs and lows of Africa's entertainment", TRT Afrika, <https://www.trtafrika.com/lifestyle/2023-the-highs-and-lows-of-african-entertainment-16123425>



platforms have also begun to show more interest in African films, Afreximbank announced a \$1 billion film financing facility for 2024.

Film festivals held in Africa also focus on films made by Africans and the African diaspora, making the voices of Africans heard throughout the world. The oldest film festivals in Africa are the Carthage Film Festival (Tunisia - 1966), the Ouagadougou Pan-African Film and Television Festival (Burkina Faso - 1969), the Cairo International Film Festival (Egypt - 1976), the International Arab Film Festival (Algeria - 1976) and the Durban International Film Festival (South Africa - 1979), as well as other festivals that host African and Middle Eastern filmmakers. New festivals and summits are important in garnering African interest in cinema, such as last year's first African Cinema Summit hosted by Ghana.

Venice At the closing and awards ceremony of the Venice International Film Festival, Actor Seydou Sarr won the Marcello Mastroianni award for Best Young Actor for his starring role in the film entitled *Io Capitano*. (Source: Anadolu Agency).

2. Film Industries in Africa

The African film industry produced some stunning films in recent years that have crossed the continent and reached audiences worldwide. The pioneer of this industry is undoubtedly Nigeria, home to Nollywood. Nollywood, which comes to mind after Hollywood and Bollywood, an astonishing 2,500 films per year, second only to Bollywood in India. Ghallywood, which is gaining popularity, comes in second on the list. By showcasing Ghana's rich culture and traditions with high-quality productions, Ghallywood also collaborates with Nollywood.

As one of the most important countries in Africa, South Africa also exports its film industry to all corners of the world. Boasting a diverse range of storytelling, stunning landscapes and world-class production talent, the South African film industry often addresses important social issues and resonates with audiences both at home and abroad. Kenya's film industry, known as Riverwood, typically addresses pressing social issues such as corruption, poverty, and HIV/AIDS. Riverwood's steady growth also reflects the increasing demand for East African stories on the big screen.

The Tanzanian film industry, Swahiliwood, has a loyal following, especially in North Africa, with films that reflect the country's rich culture and traditions through compelling narratives. Uganda's film industry, known as Ugawood, has found the opportunity to appeal to international audiences with films such as *Who Killed Captain Alex?* (2015) and *The Girl in the Yellow Jumper* (2020), which set out with the motto of Uganda's first action film. In Ethiopia, the film industry also finds the opportunity to showcase the country's rich history and culture. Zambian filmmakers are addressing issues in South Africa by addressing social issues such as violence and corruption.

In Cameroon, the Anglophone film industry, which includes French and English film production, is known as Collywood. Especially with the emergence of TV series in the Cameroonian film industry in the 2010s, the number of quality productions has increased. Egypt, on the other hand, produces iconic films that have left an indelible mark on African and Middle Eastern audiences. With a deep heritage in the film industry, Egyptian producers continue to create works of high artistic quality that appeal to different audiences.

Burkina Faso's film industry, one of the most important in Africa, also deserves a place on this list. Burkina Faso hosts the The Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO) every two years in the cap-

ital city of Ouagadougou. The festival, which started in 1969, accepts only films made by African filmmakers and mostly produced in Africa.²

3. Women Directors on Stage in 2023

In recent years, female filmmakers have begun to create some outstanding work in Africa. Female filmmakers, who have pushed the boundaries of African cinema, tackle a wide range of topics, from the mundane to the profound. *Sira*, directed by Apolline Traore from Burkina Faso, is notable for portraying the story of a woman who becomes a warrior. Traore, who deals with terrorist incidents like *Timbuktu* (2014), written and directed by Abderrahmane Sissako, is more courageous than Sissako in terms of how she tackles the subject. In the story of *Sira*, a young Fulani nomad, revenge is as important as survival. Documentary productions directed by women and dealing with terrorist incidents also met with the audience during this period. Cyrielle Raingou's film *Le spectre de Boko Haram* touches on the attacks carried out by Boko Haram in the northern region of Cameroon. In a region where violence has become a part of everyday existence, Raingou takes the viewer into the dreams of her children who create their own world in the midst of armed conflict.

Gang wars are amongst the subjects covered in African cinema. The best-known of these films are *Nairobi Half Life* (2012 - Kenya) and *Tsotsi* (2005 - South Africa). Director Jadesola Osiberu has etched Nigeria's culture of violence, gang wars and how this chaos is turned into political gain in the film *Gangs of Lagos*. Described as a film that showcases Nollywood's storytelling skills, *Gangs of Lagos* follows Obalola and his friends Ify and Gift as they navigate a life of crime under the rule of a ruthless gang.

Directed by Sofia Alaoui of Moroccan origin, *Animalia* includes criticisms of Moroccan society. In touching upon the difficulties experienced by women who are stuck in different worlds and explores the texture of concepts such as social norms and spirituality, Alaoui strives to capture depth with spiritual and otherworldly events. Senegalese female director Ramata-Toulaye Sy also tells the story of two young lovers who stand against traditions in her first feature-length film *Banel & Adama*. Tunisian female director Kaouthar Ben Hania focuses on the story of a Tunisian woman and four girls in her film entitled *Four Daughters*. The film called *Milisuthando* is set in past, present and future Africa. Adapted to the big screen by South African female director Milisuthando Bongela, the film showcases the director's approach to love, intimacy, race and belonging, who grew up during the apartheid era.

² Jewel Kiriungi, "Fespaco: Pomp and colour as Africa's biggest film festival starts", BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-58945414>; bkz. <https://fespaco.bf/en/welcome-to-fespaco/>

Directed by Ugandan Hadijah Nakanjako, *The Passenger* intrigues the audience with its suspenseful narrative, character motives and mysterious approach. As Nakanjako's first directorial effort, this film revolves around a young man named Musa Kibalama who sets out on a mission to deliver a mysterious package to the city by bus. The latest remarkable film by African female directors is *The Mother of All Lies*, directed by Moroccan Asmae El Moudir. This film, which focuses on the 1981 Bread Riots, also combines personal and national history and establishes connections with modern Morocco.

4. Animation Market Grows in Africa

A rising genre in African cinema, the animation industry is still in its infancy. However, with its growing population, Africa has the potential to become a major force in the global market. At a time when demand for African culture and stories is increasing, the animation industry has the opportunity to produce content for children. According to a study by the IMARC Group, the size of the African animation market reached 13.3 billion US\$ in 2023 and is expected to reach 17.8 billion US\$ by 2032.

Last year, Anthill Studio entered the mainstream cinema animation scene with its \$157,420 film *Mikolo*. Produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios and the pan-African company Kugali, *Kizazi Moto* also debuted during this period. Set in a futuristic Africa, much like *Africa Paradis* (2006), *The African Storm* (2017) and Marvel's *Black Panther*, this film tells the story of a group of young superheroes fighting to save the continent from an ancient evil. Blending traditional African art with modern animation, *Kizazi Moto* stands out for its cultural representation and fresh approach to the superhero genre.

5. Conclusion and Assessment

African filmmakers have elevated African cinema on the world stage by working at both local and global levels. The recognition of African cinema has increased with the opening of digital broadcasting platforms. Films that facilitate a journey through different locations, from the lands of fantastic heroes to dazzling deserts, also include gang wars. While African filmmakers have diversified in genres, stories and themes, women and young filmmakers have come to the forefront, especially in 2023. On the other hand, acclaimed documentaries have emerged as a sub-sector of the African film

industry, exploring various issues and problems that affect the continent and its people.

Despite the global growth of African cinema in recent years and the sector's promising future, several challenges still need to be addressed. Support for producers, investment and market needs, and adapting to innovations are the most important issues. Studios and film production infrastructures need to be established and developed, as well as strong financial support. Again, intensive training activities in this area are important for the development of the sector.

On the other hand, the development of distribution networks both on the continent and internationally is important for the development of African cinema. This will help to develop an audience base both in Africa and globally. The development of intercontinental collaborations and the support of international filmmakers to African producers will also provide opportunities for the African cinema sector to be introduced to innovative technologies.

Finally, it would be useful to briefly emphasize Türkiye's contribution to the African film industry. Türkiye's relations with the continent have been progressing since the 2005 Year of Africa. Ankara, which has opened up to the continent through institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA), Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), Yunus Emre Institute (YEE), Turkish Airlines (THY), the Presidency of Religious Affairs, and the Turkish Maarif Foundation, should also take action in the African film industry within the context of cultural diplomacy. Ankara, which organizes vocational training programs on the continent, and contributes to African cinema at every stage, shall contribute to Türkiye's soft power in this context. As it is, Turkish-made series already appeal to a wide audience in Africa. Supporting African cinema will also increase Türkiye's visibility in local films and serve to bolster its relations with the continent.

a. The Best African Films and Producers of 2023

Animalia - Sofia Alaoui

Augere (Omen) - Baloji

Banel & Adama - Ramata-Toulaye Sy

Bravo, Burkina! - Wale Oyejide

Death of a Whistleblower - Ian Gabriel

Four Daughters - Kaouther Ben Hania

Gangs of Lagos - Jadesola Osiberu

Goodbye Julia - Mohamed Kordofani

I Do Not Come to You by Chance - Ishaya Bako

Io Capitano - Matteo Garronee

Kizazi Moto - Ziki Nelson

L'île Rouge - Robin Campillo

Le spectre de Boko Haram - Cyrielle Raingou

Mami Wata - C.J. Obasi

Mikolo - Niyi Akinmolayan

Milisuthando - Milisuthando Bongela

Mvera - Daudi Anguka

Orah - Lonzo Nzekwe

Sira - Apolline Traoré

The Cemetery of Cinema - Thierno Souleymane Diallo

The Mother of All Lies - Asmae El Moudir

The Passenger - Hadijah Nakanjako

b. African Movie Academy Awards 2023

Best Starring Actor - *Brotherhood* - Tobi Bakre

Best Supporting Actor - *Detective Knight: Rogue* - Jimmy Jean-Louis

Best Starring Actress - *4:4:44* - Nse Ikpe-Etim

Best Supporting Actress - *Xale* - Rokhaya Niang

Best Cinematography - *Mami Wata*

Best Costume Design - *Xale*

Best Diaspora Documentary - *Sound of the Police*

Best Diaspora Narration - *Mon pere, le diable*

Best Diaspora Short Film - *Raw Materials*

Best Director - *Sira* - Apolline Traore

Best Documentary - *Le spectre de Boko Haram*

Best Screenplay - *Augure*

Best Film - *Xale*

Best Film in an African Language - *Anikulapo*

Best Animation - *Jabari*

Africa's Looted Treasures: The Confluences Museum in Lyon and the Egyptian Museum in Turin 2023

Duygu İlkhan Söylemez*

8

1. Introduction

Africa has been home to many great civilizations for thousands of years of history, and the rich cultural heritage they left behind has endured to the present day. Even today, cultural heritage objects that attract great interest are exhibited in museums worldwide. However, many of these works have been removed from Africa due to the influence of colonialism and illegal trade throughout history, and have entered the inventories of museums throughout the world, especially in Europe. This situation has led to heated debates regarding the return of cultural heritage.

The Confluences Museum in Lyon, France, and The Egyptian Museum in Turin, Italy, stand out as two important institutions at the heart of these discussions. Both museums are known for their African artefacts and are facing increasing pressure to return these artefacts. 2023 has gone down in history as a year of significant developments, especially for these museums.

Accordingly, it is noteworthy that the Confluences Museum in Lyon, France, has decided to return some of its African artefacts to their countries of origin. This decision followed a detailed examination of the provenance of the artefacts in the museum's collection. The museum administration has shown that it has taken this step transparently by sharing the list of artefacts to be returned and the reasons for the return with the public. On the other hand, the Egyptian Museum in Turin, Italy, has announced that it has start-

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ed negotiations with the Egyptian Government regarding the return of artefacts smuggled from Egypt and exhibited in the museum. While the museum emphasizes the importance of using these artefacts in scientific research, it has also accepted that the protection and return of cultural heritage is also important. It is possible to evaluate these developments as major steps taken for the return of Africa's cultural heritage.

Source: Anadolu Agency

2. Egypt's Return Efforts: A Step Towards Recovering Cultural Heritage

Egyptian authorities have initiated efforts to repatriate artefacts that belong to Egypt's cultural heritage and are currently housed in various museums around the world. One of the steps taken in this direction is that the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that four rare Egyptian arte-

facts had been returned from Italian authorities in May 2023. Dating back to various periods of Egyptian history, these artefacts were delivered to Ambassador Omar Selim, Egypt's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Cultural Relations. Amongst the artefacts in question are a painting from the Pharaoh era decorated with hieroglyphs, a small pottery vessel, the upper part of a female statue made of pottery, and an important piece known as the Djed Pillar from the ancient Egyptian civilization.¹

The transfer of the artefacts from the Turin Museum² to the Egyptian Embassy in Rome was an important milestone in the efforts to recover Egypt's looted cultural treasures. This event is considered to be the result of cooperation between the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Antiquities and Tourism. It is understood that Egypt has an significant plan to recover historical artefacts that have been smuggled out of the country for years, and to restore its archaeological and artistic heritage, and that this is being done within the scope of a national project.

The return of said artefacts is more than just the recovery of physical objects. Above all, it symbolizes Egypt's determination to reclaim its cultural identity and heritage. By returning these treasures, Egypt is asserting its sovereignty over its cultural assets, seeking to redress the injustices that resulted from colonial-era looting and illegal antiquities trafficking.

Moreover, the return of these artefacts to their homeland allows for the proper preservation, study and display of Egypt's rich historical and archaeological findings. These artefacts are not only considered as relics of the past, but also as sources of knowledge and inspiration for future generations. The return of these artefacts to Egypt is also priceless in rendering them accessible to scholars, researchers and the public, contributing to the discovery and appreciation of Egypt's ancient civilization.

The recovery of some of Egypt's rare artefacts from Italy is seen as an important step in Egypt's efforts to recover its looted cultural heritage. It highlights the importance of international cooperation and joint action in addressing the issue of illicit antiquities trafficking. By prioritizing the return of stolen artefacts, Egypt reaffirms its determination to protect its cultural heritage and to pass on its national heritage for future generations.

3. France's Repatriation of Benin Royal Treasures: A Step Towards Reconciliation and Cultural Reparations

It has been observed that official procedures have also been initiated for some artefacts smuggled from Africa to France. For this reason, official

¹ Egypt Today, "In pic: "Egypt handed over four rare Egyptian artifacts from Italy", 8 May 2023, <https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/4/124240/In-pic-Egypt-handed-over-four-rare-Egyptian-artifacts-from>.

² Sky TG24, "Torino, riaperto il Museo Egizio, Il direttore: "Emozione grandissima", 2 June 2020, <https://tg24.sky.it/torino/2020/06/02/riaperto-museo-egizio-torino>.

contacts have been established with France, which has made a significant move in choosing to return these artefacts. It has been decided to return to Benin 26 rare artefacts seized by French forces from the Kingdom of Dahomey in 1892 and this decision has become a hot topic in the international press. Amongst the aforementioned artefacts, it has been decided to ship the throne of Dahomey's last king Behanzin, totem statues, palace gates, altars and warrior dance staffs back to Benin. This decision emerged as a result of increasing pressure throughout Africa to have colonial-era spoils repatriated from Western museums.³

French President Emmanuel Macron's initiative to return these works is considered to be aimed at improving sagging France's image, especially amongst Africa's youth. In aiming to facilitate the return of African cultural heritage within a five-year period, Macron has acknowledged the unlawful and inhumane actions of the French in Africa during the colonial period.⁴ France's return of the ill-gotten treasures is considered to be aimed at correcting historical injustice and developing a new relationship between France and Africa based on mutual respect and cooperation.

The Macron administration commissioned an expert report that revealed there were approximately 90,000 African artefacts in French museums. According to a statement on the subject, the return of a group of artefacts to former French colonies Benin and Senegal led to a vote in parliament, which ultimately led to the decision to return them. Macron stated that the treasures returned to Benin would be a source of pride for the country and would be exhibited in various parts of the country, including a museum in Abomey, a city in Benin.⁵

While Benin President Patrice Talon welcomed France's stance, he also said Macron needed to take further steps. To ensure the proper preservation and display of the returned artefacts, the Benin National Tourist Heritage Development Agency has begun work and announced that 100 officials will receive technical training to restore the royal palaces. Work has also begun on a modern museum in Abomey to preserve and display Benin's rich heritage.⁶

France's decision to return 26 royal artefacts to Benin represents a significant landmark in ongoing efforts⁷ to address the legacy of colonialism and promote cultural restoration. While the return of the artefacts is seen as a step towards reconciliation and mutual respect between France and Africa, it is also undoubtedly meant to preserve the cultural heritage of nations like Benin and erase the dark vestiges of former colonial rule.

3 France 24, "France formally returns looted Benin artworks at Élysée ceremony", 11 September 2021, <https://www.france24.com/en/culture/20211109-france-formally-returns-looted-benin-artworks-at-elysee-ceremony>.

4 France 24, "France formally returns looted Benin artworks at Élysée ceremony", 11 September 2021, <https://www.france24.com/en/culture/20211109-france-formally-returns-looted-benin-artworks-at-elysee-ceremony>.

5 France 24, "Beninese artisans trained to preserve cultural heritage ahead of artefact restitution", 5 March 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20230503-beninese-artisans-trained-to-preserve-their-cultural-heritage-ahead-of-artefact-restitution>.

6 France 24, "Beninese artisans trained to preserve cultural heritage ahead of artefact restitution", 5 March 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20230503-beninese-artisans-trained-to-preserve-their-cultural-heritage-ahead-of-artefact-restitution>.

7 France 24, "Beninese artisans trained to preserve cultural heritage ahead of artefact restitution", 5 March 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20230503-beninese-artisans-trained-to-preserve-their-cultural-heritage-ahead-of-artefact-restitution>.

4. Conclusion

Steps taken by the Confluences Museum in Lyon, France, and the Egyptian Museum in Turin, Italy, are considered the beginning of a new era in the return of cultural heritage and constitute as an example for other museums. However, this process also brings with it complex legal and diplomatic issues, such as determining the works to be returned, preserving the original condition of the works, and managing the return process. These are considered matters that need to be meticulously addressed between museums and their countries of origin.

First of all, the process of determining the works to be returned is a very sensitive issue. In this process, detailed research should be conducted regarding the origin of the works, their ownership rights and the legal basis for return. In this process, museums work with the countries of origin to meticulously examine the history and ownership status of the works.

Preserving the original condition of the works is also of great importance during the return process. It is obvious that steps such as transportation, storage and exhibition of the works are also important in this process. Museums are obliged to ensure the preservation of the works in accordance with international standards and to undertake restoration work professionally when necessary.

The management of the repatriation process is another important issue. Cooperation and communication between museums and countries of origin are vital for this process to proceed smoothly. Diplomatic negotiations are one of the necessary procedures for signing agreements and ensuring that the repatriation process is conducted in a fair and transparent manner.

In conclusion, the return of the looted treasures of Africa is not only a matter of historical justice, but also of great importance in terms of preserving cultural heritage and passing it on to future generations. These steps taken by the Confluences Museum in Lyon and the Egyptian Museum in Turin can be considered as the harbinger of many more steps to be taken in this regard. However, for this process to proceed successfully, museums and countries of origin must be in mutual understanding and cooperation.

Intangible Cultural Heritage of Africa

Bilge Tüzel*

1. Introduction

The purpose of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) adopted by UNESCO in 2003, is to research, collect, protect, preserve and transfer from generation-to-generation certain areas defined as intangible cultural heritage. The ICH Convention has been followed with interest by many countries since its adoption. Türkiye became a party to the ICH Convention, which is party to 183 countries, in 2006, while it was also accepted by 44 African countries.¹

Various international assistance, capacity building projects and activities are being undertaken for the implementation of the ICH Convention in Africa. The ICH Convention has 3 lists, namely the Representative List, the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. The intangible cultural heritage elements recorded in these lists provide information about the heritage of countries that are visible, in need of urgent protection and include exemplary practices. As of 2023, 730 elements from 183 countries are registered in these lists. 105 of the 730 elements are related to the intangible cultural heritage of African countries.

The number of elements recorded in Africa compared to other regions is approximately 10%. It is observed that the country with the most elements registered in the ICH Lists among African countries is Morocco with 14 elements, followed by Algeria with 11 elements. There are also African countries that are parties to the ICH Convention but have no element registration in the ICH Lists. The high number of element registrations reflects the importance these countries attach to protecting their intangible cultural herit-

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¹ <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-safeguarding-intangible-cultural-heritage#item-2>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

age and ensuring its visibility. The projects of African countries to inventory their intangible cultural heritage, to build capacity, to make them compatible with sustainable development goals, to strengthen protection methods through cooperation and education, to provide international assistance and to regional/international meetings demonstrate their participation and role in cultural heritage protection processes.

This study examines Africa's implementation of the ICH Convention and its efforts to protect intangible cultural heritage in relation to UNESCO's Africa Priority and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030. While taking a look how African countries address, promote and protect their intangible cultural heritage at the global level, the place of this heritage in the implementation of UNESCO's goals and principles and its contribution to the convention are underscored.

2. Representation of Africa in the ICH Lists

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, adopted in 2003, is an international agreement aimed at preserving and protecting intangible cultural heritage. According to the ICH Convention, the areas determined by intangible cultural heritage are as follows: Oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festivities, knowledge and practices related to nature and the universe, and handicraft tradition, along with the language that serves as a carrier in the transmission of intangible cultural heritage.²

UNESCO's selection groups are divided into Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and North America, Latin America and the Caribbean. These selection groups conduct studies to register cultural heritage elements on the ICH Lists. ICH Lists are a system which records visible elements of countries' cultural heritage that have protection awareness, require urgent protection and include examples of good practice. 13 elements from Africa were registered on the ICH List at the 18th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage held in Botswana in 2023.

Africa makes various contributions to the realization of the objectives and principles of the ICH Convention. While the protection, promotion and transmission of Africa's elements of intangible cultural heritage from generation to generation increases the value and awareness of the ICH Convention, said convention supports Africa in developing international cooperation and encouraging cooperation with other regions.

² <https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-safeguarding-intangible-cultural-heritage#item-2>, Date of Access: 22.04.2024.

Name of the Element	Country	Related Field
Ingoma Ya Mapiko	Mozambique	Performing arts
Xeedho	Djibouti	Social practices, rituals and feasts
Arts, skills and practices of engraving on metals (gold, silver and copper)	Iraq - Algeria - Egypt - Mauritania - Morocco - Palestine - Saudi Arabia - Sudan - Tunisia - Yemen	Craft tradition
Hiragasy, a performing art in the Central Highlands of Madagascar	Madagascar	Performing arts
Mahadra, a community system for the transmission of traditional knowledge and oral expressions	Mauritania	Oral traditions and narratives
Malhun, a popular poetic and musical art	Morocco	Oral traditions and narratives
Midwifery: Knowledge, skills and practices	Colombia - Cyprus - Germany - Kyrgyzstan - Luxembourg - Nigeria - Slovenia - Togo	Social practices, rituals and feasts
Nguon, management rituals and related expressions in Bamoun society	Cameroon	Social practices, rituals and feasts
Sango Festival, Oyo	Nigeria	Knowledge and practices related to nature and the universe
Shuwalid Festival	Ethiopia	Social practices, rituals and feasts
Sona, drawings and geometric shapes on sand	Angola	Craft tradition
Traditional skills of loincloth weaving in Côte d'Ivoire	Côte d'Ivoire	Craft tradition

Table Source: HYPERLINK "<https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists?text=®ion%5b%5d=02&multinational=3#tabs>"<https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists?text=®ion%5b%5d=02&multinational=3#tabs>, Date of Access: 22. 04.2024

³ Unesco - Intangible Cultural Heritage, "Ingoma Ya Mapiko", Nomination File No: 01996, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/ingoma-ya-mapiko-01996>, Date of Access 28.04.2024.

It is observed that the majority of the elements registered in Africa's ICH Lists in 2023 are directly related to social practices and rituals.

Nevertheless, these elements can also be indirectly linked to other intangible cultural heritage elements. For instance, the Mozambican element called Ingoma Ya Mapiko is a celebratory dance practiced by the Makonde people of Mozambique. This ritual is a traditional part of the transition from adolescence to adulthood. It is usually performed in a closed area under mango trees, where dancers, musicians and the public come together to celebrate the initiation ceremony. The dance can also be performed as a funeral for a group member or for entertainment purposes. People wear masks representing animals and perform dances alone or in groups. They are accompanied by drums and a chorus of men and women standing opposite each other.³ As can be seen in this example, although this ritual is directly related to the performing arts, it is indirectly linked to social practices, rituals and



UNESCO, "Ingoma Ya Mapiko",
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/ingoma-ya-mapiko-01996>

feasts, craft traditions, oral traditions, knowledge and practices related to nature. Most of the Intergovernmental Committee Meetings, where decisions were taken to register heritage and the implementation of the ICH Convention were evaluated, were held in African countries: 2023 (Botswana), 2022 (Morocco), 2018 (Mauritius), 2016 (Ethiopia), 2015 (Namibia), 2010 (Kenya), 2006 (Algeria). Holding the meetings in these countries contributes to the economic development of the country and the increase in tourism activities, while also being an important opportunity to promote intangible cultural heritage.

As can be seen in the graph below, Africa has become the constituency that has registered the most elements on the ICH Lists after Europe and North America and Asia and the Pacific regions.

In pointing out Africa, Arab, Latin America and the Caribbean, Öcal Oğuz states that the reason for the lack of a balanced distribution among the party states in registering elements on the list is the difficulties experienced in terms of expertise in preparing the candidacy file.⁴ Various international assistance and projects are being carried out in these regions in order to overcome the difficulties and develop the capacity in the context of the ICH Convention and registering elements on the lists of the convention. However, as can be understood from the graph, it is seen that these difficulties per-

⁴ Mehmet Öcal Oğuz, "Onuncu Yılında Somut Olmayan Kültürel Miras Listeleri: Görünürlük, Değerlilik ve Güvenirlilik", *Milli Folklor*, 29 (116), 2017.

Botswana: Taken by the author at the 18th Intergovernmental Committee Meeting in Botswana. The photograph shows the execution of the Pottery Making element, which was inscribed on Botswana's Intangible Cultural Heritage List of Urgent Safeguarding in 2012.



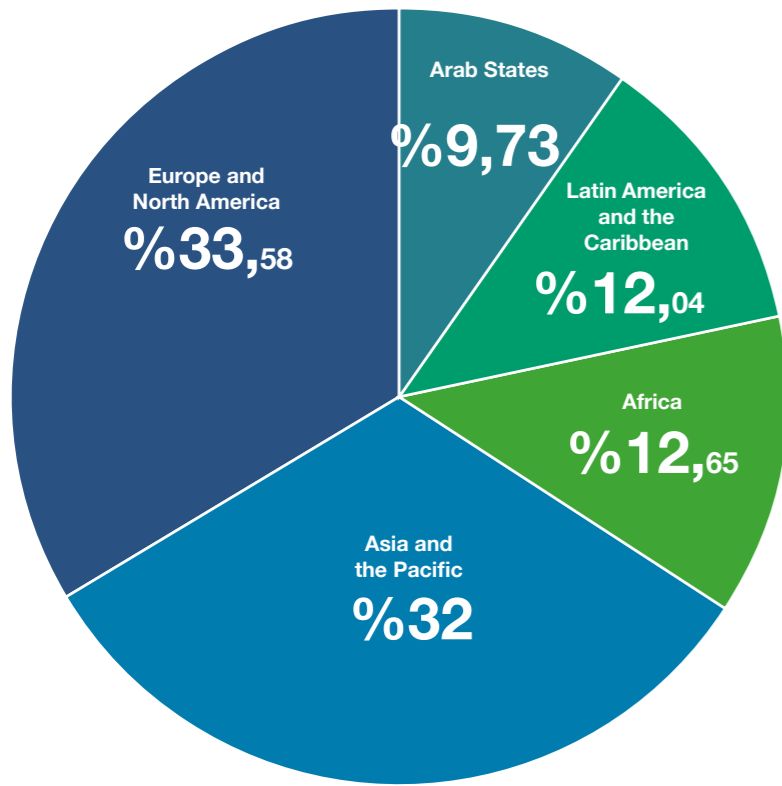


Figure 1. Regional distribution of the number of elements registered in the SOKUM lists
Source: Created by the author based on the information on the internet address <https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists>.

sist. The fact that African countries follow the ICH Convention meetings and conduct the work of registering elements on the lists can increase their visibility in the Convention. On the other hand, it is thought that the balanced distribution of the electoral groups will also improve the quality of the ICH Convention.

3. Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Efforts in Africa

In 2023, the work in the African selection group included registering or inventorying elements, strengthening intangible cultural heritage through education, capacity building and providing technical support.

Currently 266 civil society organizations accredited to the ICH Convention. The accreditation of civil society organizations to the ICH Convention is important for the formation of a community-based protection awareness and community participation in the Convention. Amongst the 266 accredited civil society organizations, 29 organizations are from the African region. The countries with accredited civil society organizations are as follows: Mauritius, Kenya (2), Mali, Madagascar (4), Burkina Faso (2), Mauritania (2), Gabon, Nigeria (4), Togo, Uganda (4), Benin, DRC (2), Senegal, Morocco,

Table-2: Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Efforts in Africa
Source: Unesco, "Priority Africa", <https://ich.unesco.org/en/priority-africa>

Activity	Activity Type
Development of intangible cultural heritage inventory in South Sudan	Proje
Training for facilitators in Africa	Education
Intangible cultural heritage inventory in Cameroon	Supported International Aid Fund
Protection plans for transferring three intangible cultural heritage items from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List in Mali	Supported International Aid Fund
Promotion of intangible cultural heritage education in higher education institutions in Uganda	Supported International Aid Fund
Online regional follow-up meeting of Africa's periodic reporting focal points	Meeting
Protection of intangible cultural heritage in basic education in Namibia and Zimbabwe	Project
Forest summit	Meeting
Updating of 2009 intangible cultural heritage (ICH) inventory in Burundi with community participation	International Aid Fund
Capacity building for intangible cultural heritage protection and contribution to sustainable development in Ghana and Gambia	International Aid Fund
Benin, living heritage and sustainable development goals: protection of intangible cultural heritage through formal and non-formal education in Africa	International Aid Fund

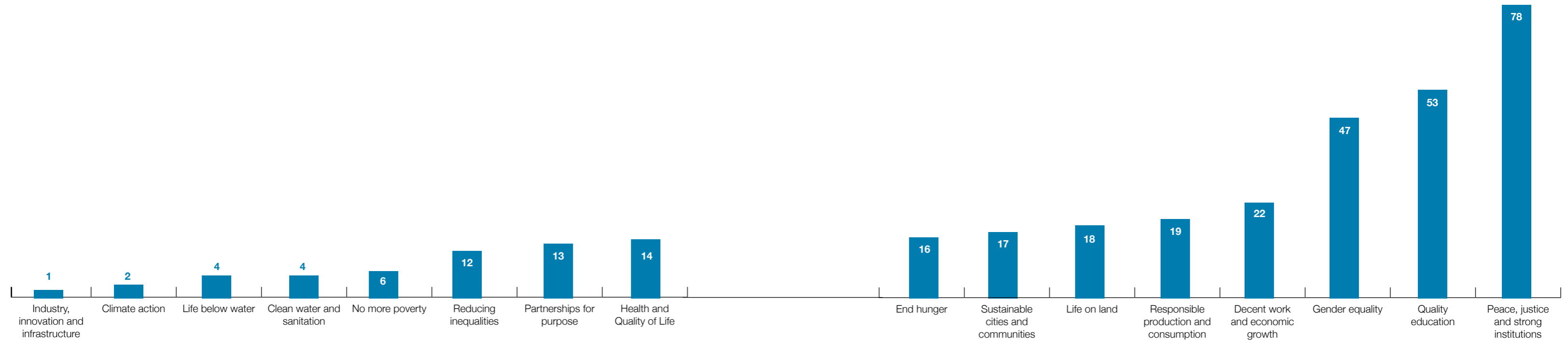
4. Africa and Sustainable Development Goals

Intangible cultural heritage protection efforts in Africa are carried out in relation to UNESCO's Africa Priority and the United Nations Sustainable Development 2030 Goals. When looking at the sustainable development goals related to Africa's elements registered on the ICH Lists as of 2023, it is seen that the goal of peace, justice and strong institutions is the most common.⁶ The goal of quality education comes second.

The concentration of Africa's elements registered on the ICH Lists around these two objectives demonstrates the effective role of heritage in ensuring

⁵ Unesco, "Non-Governmental Organizations accredited to provide advisory services to the Committee", <https://ich.unesco.org/en/accredited-ngos-00331>, Date of Access: 28.04.2024.

⁶ Unesco, "Browse the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of good safeguarding practices", <https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists>, Date of Access: 27.04.2024.



Source: Created by the author based on the information available at <https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists>.

access to justice for all, establishing effective and inclusive institutions at all levels, and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. Cultural heritage elements that preserve the identities of African people and are passed down from generation to generation can contribute to the realization of sustainable economic and social development goals.

Traditional knowledge and practices can provide income for local communities and encourage the preservation and maintenance of heritage. Adopting a holistic approach between Africa’s sustainable development goals and the protection of intangible cultural heritage can be effective in overcoming problems such as economic difficulties in the protection of intangible cultural heritage, the negative impact of globalization, and the lack of awareness of local communities.

5. Conclusion

Africa’s intangible cultural heritage reflects the continent’s cultural richness, diversity and identity. Preserving it is an important factor in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, while also demonstrating the

need to advance sustainable development goals. The region that benefits the most from the international aid mechanism of the ICH Convention is that of Africa. This is because the African region needs support in protecting intangible cultural heritage, developing and updating community-based inventory, improving the quality of procedures such as file preparation and ensuring integration into educational programs. In particular, work is being done on respecting Africa’s cultural identities and setting up the necessary institutional capacities for the effective protection and development of its heritage.

Considering all this, it can be said UNESCO’s Africa priority is integrated with the processes of protecting intangible cultural heritage. It is important for the African region to develop strong and focused strategies for the comprehensive realization of sustainable development goals in Africa and for more effective protection of intangible cultural heritage. In this study, while Africa’s contribution to the ICH Convention is seen, it is understood that Africa’s representation in the ICH Lists is relatively low compared to other regions. That said, efforts are being made to reinforce protection methods through capacity building studies.

2023 Rugby World Cup: Champion South Africa

Deniz Ekşi*

“Sport can create hope where once there only despair.”

Nelson Mandela

1. Introduction

The 2023 Rugby World Cup (Webb Ellis Cup),¹ held every four years, was won by South Africa, who defeated New Zealand 12-11 in the final match held in France.² Historically, the Rugby World Cup has been held 10 times, the first of which was in 1987, whereas only four countries have since managed to win the cup, New Zealand, Australia, England and South Africa.³

With victories in 1995, 2007, and 2019, South Africa became the country with the most Rugby World Cup titles, securing its fourth championship in 2023.⁴ It is assessed that the influence of Siya Kolisi,⁵ who began his position as the first black team captain of the country's national rugby union team, known as the Springboks, in 2018,⁶ is the key behind South Africa's success.⁷ In addition to his personal contributions, the fact that Siya Kolisi was elected national team captain despite being black in the democratic process that started with the end of the official apartheid regime implemented in South Africa in the 1990s is seen as an important development in terms of

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1 The Rugby World Cup is the name given to the trophy presented to the team that wins the final match for a period of 4 years until the next finalist is decided. The cup is named after William Webb Ellis, who in 1823, during a football match at Rugby School, invented the sport of rugby by running forward with the ball in his hand and defying all conventions. For more about this, see *New Zealand History*, “Webb Ellis Cup”,

<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/web-ellis-cup>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

2 *Topend Sports*, “Rugby World Cup winners”, <https://www.topendsports.com/events/rugby-world-cup/winners.htm>, Date of Access: 23.04.2024.

3 Jonathan Burnett, “Rugby World Cup trophy: Who was William Webb Ellis and what is the Webb Ellis Cup?”, *Sporting News*, <https://www.sportingnews.com/uk/rugby-union/news/rugby-world-cup-trophy-william-webb-ellis-cup/52e6878ec3eaf6b1a8a0bfdd>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

4 *Rugby World Cup*, “Tournament history”, <https://www.rugbyworldcup.com/about/history>, Date of Access: 23.04.2024.

5 Keith Prowse, “South Africa Rugby history”, <https://www.keithprose.co.uk/teams/south-africa-rugby-team/>, Date of Access: 26.04.2024.

6 *Rugbypass*, “Siya Kolisi”, <https://www.rugbypass.com/players/siya-kolisi/>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

7 Wilbur Kraak, “Rugby World Cup 2023: Africa's hopes lie with South Africa and Namibia, for now”, *The Conversation*, 2023, <https://theconversation.com/rugby-world-cup-2023-africas-hopes-lie-with-south-africa-and-namibia-for-now-212879>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.



South Africa South African Republic Rugby team (Source: Anadolu Agency).

8 Tinashe Timothy Harry, "Siya Kolisi: The South African rugby star's story offers valuable lessons in resilience", *The Conversation*, <https://theconversation.com/siya-kolisi-the-south-african-rugby-stars-story-offers-valuable-lessons-in-resilience-214036>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

9 Arthur Conan Doyle, *Memories and Adventures*, (Douglass Kerr, eds), UK: Edinburg University Press, 2022, p. 253.

10 Bruce Kidd, "The campaign against sport in South Africa", *International Journal*, 1988, Vol. 43, No. 4, p. 643-664.

11 Farrel Evans, "How Nelson Mandela used rugby as a symbol of South African Unity", *History*, 2023, <https://www.history.com/news/nelson-mandela-1995-rugby-world-cup-south-african-unity>, Date of Access: 26.04.2024.

12 İnan Özdemir, "En Uzun Maç", *Socrates Dergi*, 2020, <https://socratesdergi.com/yazi/en-uzun-mac>, Date of Access: 26.04.2024.

13 Youtube – Laureus, "Nelson Mandela's speech at the Laureus World Sports Awards 2000", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GdopyAFFODI>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

14 Anadolu Agency, "'Özgürlüğün lideri' Mandela", 2018, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/ozgurlugun-lideri-mandela/1207138>, Date of Access: 26.04.2024.

15 Greg Beyer, "Mandela and the 1995 Rugby World Cup: A match that redefined a nation", *The Collector*, 2022, <https://www.thecollector.com/nelson-mandela-1995-rugby-world-cup/>, Date of Access: 25.04.2024.

ensuring unity and solidarity in the country, and it is stated that this situation contributed significantly to the team's success in 2019 and 2023.⁸ This spirit of unity and solidarity is very important for winning all sports competitions played as a team. Indeed, rugby football is a team sport based on strength, courage and speed.⁹

2. South Africa in the Dilemma of Sports and Politics

Due to the apartheid regime in place from 1948 to 1994, many countries, institutions, and organizations imposed various embargoes on South Africa. One such implementation was that South Africa was banned from participating in international sports competitions organized by the International Olympic Committee and the Commonwealth Games Federation until the 1990s.¹⁰

It would be demeaning to explain South Africa, which had limited opportunities to develop itself by competing in international sports activities, winning the Rugby World Cup in 1995 after the end of the apartheid regime in the 1990s, solely through its sporting success. Instead, it was President Nelson Mandela's personal involvement in motivating the team with his slogan 'one team, one country' during the final match of the 1995 Rugby World Cup that was crucial to the team's victory.¹¹ That is because until then, while rugby football was seen as a sport of the white race as an extension of the apartheid regime, Mandela, as a black president, asked the black citizens of the country to support the national rugby team and succeeded in breaking down the negative atmosphere surrounding South African rugby football.¹² Finally, the unifying power of sports was confirmed with the victory cup.

Nelson Mandela, who came to power as the country's first black president in the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994, emphasized the relationship between sports and politics and the importance of sports in his opening speech at the Laureus World Sports Awards ceremony in 2000 with the sentence, "Sports have the power to change the world."¹³ It is believed that Mandela, known as a leader of freedom and reconciliation,¹⁴ as well as a director who believed in the unifying power of sports, contributed to South Africa being remembered in history for its various successes, particularly due to the great importance he placed on sports competitions, especially rugby.¹⁵ Because Mandela aimed to unite the people around a national cause without discriminating between black and white races and succeeded in doing so.

3. South Africa National Rugby Union Team and the 2023 Rugby World Cup

Today, in South Africa, where the population is around 60 million, the number of rugby players is around 10 million.¹⁶ One reason for rugby's immense popularity is that the sport's history in the country dates back to the 1800s.

The Springboks, the national rugby union team, played their first international rugby match in 1891.¹⁷ However, the Springboks team did not reach its current form until the 1990s. Until then, as in all other areas in the country, the white race dominated the rugby team. In 2018, a black man, Siya Kolisi, was elected as the team captain for the first time in the Springboks team, and for the first time in history, six black African rugby players were in the first 15 in the match against England.¹⁸ The fact that black players were represented in the team without discrimination like whites constituted a very important development for South Africa. That is because until then, while only 9% of the country's population was white African, and the vast majority of the country's national rugby team players were white, it was a situation where they represented only whites.¹⁹ For this reason, the black majority population kept their distance from rugby football. After the apartheid regime, black people consider that they were represented in the team like whites without thinking they were being discriminated against, which increased their support for the team and became a source of motivation for the team players. Combined with the individual physical abilities and successes of the team players, this motivation was the key in winning the Rugby World Cup in 2019 and winning the cup again in 2023.

Winning the trophy means more than just sporting success in South Africa, where there is racial discrimination. Kolisi's victory speech after the 2023 Rugby World Cup final match is telling:

"...There is so much going wrong in our country... We are the last line of defense... This team has shown what people of different color and backgrounds can do when they work together. Look what the sport did in 1995, we can't get away from that. For people who look like me, I've got a job to give whatever I can to the jersey, to show they can get opportunities like this. People who are not from South Africa don't understand what this means for our country. When we work together, on the field, in the offices, in any area, anything is possible."²⁰

¹⁶ Springboks, "About South African rugby", <https://www.springboks.rugby/general/about-us/>, Date of Access: 26.04.2024.

¹⁷ SA Rugby Stats, "SA rugby union history", <https://sarugbystats.co.za/south-africa-national-rugby-union-team-history/>, Date of Access: 26.04.2024.

¹⁸ Jon Cardinelli, "Why rugby is so big in South Africa", *Rugby World*, 2023, <https://www.rugbyworld.com/countries/south-africa-countries/why-rugby-is-so-big-in-south-africa-156241>, Date of Access: 26.04.2024.

¹⁹ David Smith, "Lack of black players in South Africa team puts race under spotlight before World Cup", *The Guardian*, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/blog/2015/aug/13/south-africa-racism-rugby-world-cup-heyneke-meyer>, Date of Access: 26.04.2024.

²⁰ Patrick McCarry, "'I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for that' - Siya Kolisi makes incredible speech after World Cup triumph", *Sports Joe*, 2023, <https://www.sportsjoe.ie/rugby/siya-kolisi-world-cup-win-294597>, Date of Access: 26.04.2024.

4. Conclusion

Coming together around a national value and collectively fighting for it contributes to unity and integration within the country. At a time when South Africa needed unity and solidarity the most, Mandela's policy of prioritizing sports activities to meet this need and his success in doing so show that the sports activities that the country has gained today are one of its sources of motivation.

In addition to the aforementioned points, it is believed that South Africa winning the trophy in both Rugby World Cup competitions since Siya Kolisi took over as Springboks captain in 2018 is not a coincidence. Kolisi's victory speech following the 2023 Cup not only demonstrated that sports play a significant role in advancing social integration in South Africa but also strengthened the belief that social integration within the country positively contributes to its sporting success. South Africa's rugby history and cup victories serve as important concrete examples of the relationship between sports, politics, and social life.



African Entertainment Awards 2023 as an Alternative to Western-Centric Awards Ceremonies

Nursema Özcoşar*

11

1. Introduction

The African Entertainment Awards was founded in 2015 by Dominic Tamin, a Cameroonian-born American citizen, along with a group of African youth, as a non-profit organization. Headquartered in New Jersey, USA, the organization is called the “African Entertainment Awards USA” (AEAUSA).

In aiming to promote and spread the beauty that is unique to the African continent, from art to culture, the goal of AEAUSA is to also contribute towards a global perception of Africa by bringing Africans together for a common cause. This organization aims to develop the perception of Africa beyond the African continent by starting from entertainment. The African Entertainment Awards have brought a new breath to the countless Western-centered award ceremonies in America. Accordingly, this organization wants to bring up and promote the cultural and artistic achievements of Africa to the global level.

Thus, this study will address the work of the African Entertainment Awards and look into its activities in 2023.

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Chris Brown Chris Brown (Source: Anadolu Agency)

2. The Purpose of the African Entertainment Awards

The 9th African Entertainment Awards were held at the Newark Symphony Hall on November 11, 2023. Attended by prominent figures in the entertainment world, this event featured performances reflecting the African spirit.

This year's African Entertainment Awards included both entertainment and sadness at the loss of a valuable artist. South African musician, artist and guitarist Zahara was commemorated. The songs Zahara performed and produced constitute a genre described as "African soul." Zahara, who not only sang in English, also distinguished herself by singing in her own local language, Xhosa, and was known for playing a significant role in promoting the local language of Africa. Such an important artist was not forgotten at the African Entertainment Awards, and Dominic Tamin, the president of the African Entertainment Awards, made a poignant farewell speech on behalf of this valuable artist.

The African Entertainment Awards featured artists known both in America and around the world, such as Chris Brown, Rema, Selena Gomez, J. Balvin, as well as new faces. In this respect, young African artists who want to prove themselves are also motivated by these awards.

3. Awards Presented

This year, Rema and Selena Gomez's song 'Calm Down' was awarded 'Best Song' at the awards ceremony. "Calm Down" topped the list of the most listened-to songs, not only in the US but also in countries around the world.

Whilst it was very significant for an artist like Jose Blavin to receive an award that night, it also opened the door to another controversy. This award given by the African Entertainment Awards caused criticism against both Balvin, who accepted the award, and the organization that presented the award. This development in 2021 also brought questions regarding the scope of the award ceremony.

There were those who argued that Afro-Latino artists like Balvin should not be included in the awards ceremony. At this point, a new debate emerged about whether the African Entertainment Awards should be presented exclusively to Africans. In response, the African Entertainment Awards was obliged to release a statement saying that the awards were not based on race but rather that they were open to anyone wanting to bring African culture to the world stage.

The African Entertainment Awards were seen as an opportunity to expand the reach by including African-Latino coverage.

4. Award Esteem

The artistic esteem of these awards is certainly not to be ignored. Particularly, it is not proper to look upon the African Entertainment Awards as just a mere awards ceremony. The African Entertainment Awards actually serve a purpose far beyond its mission.

First and foremost, the entertainment and art world is generally in the hands of Western-centered individuals and organizations. Therefore, they can hand out awards to whomever they want in the sector and bring the artists they want to the top. Moreover, they can have the right not to recognize achievements they do not like solely on ideological grounds. From this standpoint, the African Entertainment Awards are of great importance both in terms of being an alternative to the monopoly in the sector and in terms of giving a chance to African artists who would normally not be rewarded and are left in the corner.

On the other hand, there is a significant African diaspora in America. The African Entertainment Awards bear a huge burden on their shoulders in fostering ties between Africans in America, creating a global perception of Africa, and spreading it in the US and around the world.

Whether the African Entertainment Awards are based on racial discrimination is a matter of debate. That said, it does not seem possible to choose an award ceremony that discriminates on the basis of race in order to gain a place in the international system. On the other hand, people who follow this particular award ceremony figure that Americans expect such award ceremonies to be geared towards them alone. It is assumed that if this happens, then the target audience would be very small and would not be in the best interests of the African Entertainment Awards. In this case, the ceremonies held every year would be a simple award ceremony that covered a just certain segment and would not achieve its purpose.

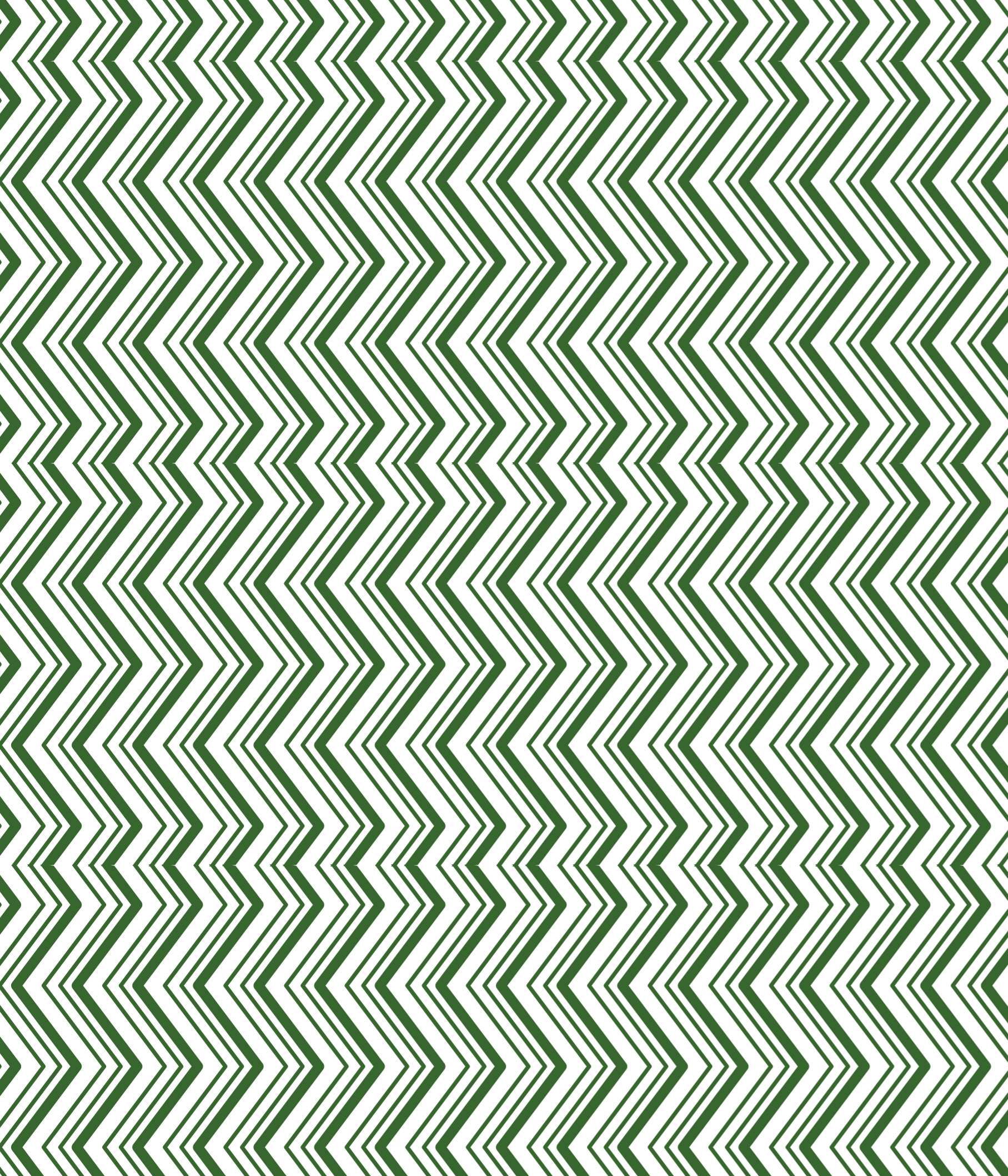
As can be seen at the award ceremony, important artists who have made a name for themselves worldwide participated and hit works were performed. Undoubtedly, presenting awards to famous artists of African origin who were born and raised in America or who immigrated later will be key point for the future of the African Entertainment Awards.

The aforementioned artists have made major contributions in promoting the awards ceremony and ensuring it becomes the center of attention like other award ceremonies around the world.

5. Conclusion

The interest in the Africa Entertainment Awards 2023 award ceremony is seen to be increasing and many valuable names participated in the award ceremony since its inception. These valuable artists play a major role in conveying the award ceremony to future generations. In terms of promoting African values, featuring African artists, contributing towards the welfare of the African diaspora and being open not only to Africans but to anyone who contributes to African values, it is a good bet that the Africa Entertainment Awards will be a proper alternative to Western-centric award ceremonies.

In celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2024, it is certain the African Entertainment Awards shall remain resolute in presenting all the unique beauties the African continent has to offer to all of humanity and our common civilization.



2023 African Para Games

12

Burcu Saygun*

1. Introduction

The 2023 African Para Games, which took place in Accra, the capital of Ghana, between September 3 and 12, 2023, constituted a pioneering event in the history of African sports. The African Paralympic Committee, the Ministry of Sports and the National Paralympic Committee of Ghana officials, in particular, showed great determination and dedication to organize the first of these competitions, where the concept of “Sports for All” rather than competition was emphasized. While experiencing the preparation process for the Paralympic Games, the host country Ghana also had to struggle with a severe economic crisis. The incomplete construction of sports complexes due to economic difficulties led to the withdrawal of many countries from the competition, raising questions about the future of the event. Nevertheless, both the support of the International Paralympic Committee and the insistence of the Ghanaian authorities on the organization yielded results. Consequently, while fewer sports games were included than expected and fewer countries participated, the first African Para Games were still organized with great enthusiasm.

This section will cover the process of organizing the 2023 Para Games held in Accra, and discuss the countries that participated in the organization, which is Africa’s first Paralympic Games, together with the results obtained. Considering that sports competitions, which are considered one of the most important social movements in the modern world, have significant motivation, the impact of the 2023 Paralympic Games upon Africa will also be discussed.

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2. African Paralympic Committee and the Preparation Process for the Organization

Composed of 48 National Paralympic Committees and headquartered in Luanda, Angola, the African Paralympic Committee (APC) has been chaired by Angolan Leonel da Rocha Pinto for more than ten years.

In the final term of his presidency, Pinto called for the African Games, scheduled to be held in Ghana in 2023, to be expanded to include Paralympic sports.¹ This call was materialized in a vote held at the African Paralympic Committee General Assembly held in Morocco's capital of Rabat on October 30-31, 2021, whereas Ghana was chosen as the host country of the first African Para Games. As a result of the same vote, the decision was passed for the Ghana National Paralympic Committee President Samson Deen to succeed Leonel da Rocha Pinto, who had presided over the APC since 2008.²

The Ghanaian Government also promised to provide all the necessary support and logistics to facilitate the hosting of the Para Games. The President of Ghana Nana Akufo-Addo also stated that the construction of a \$145 million sports complex had gotten underway and emphasized his country would organize the best African Games in history.³

However, due to the financial constraints caused by Covid-19, which had affected the whole world, and the economic crisis that worsened in the country, the Ghanaian Government announced that it had abandoned the construction of the sports complex. It was further announced that the African Games were postponed to March 8-23, 2024, due to delays in the construction of the sports complex and the ongoing economic crisis. In contrast, it was seen that no changes were made to the Paralympic Games schedule. This was due to some sorely needed support for Ghana, especially during this difficult period, provided by the President of International Paralympic Committee, Andrew Parsons.

Parsons, who organized a four-day trip to Accra on January 5, 2022, announced his support for the Ghanaian Government for the African Para Games, the first of which was slated to be held in 2023. Apart from this, Parsons also promised to contribute to the development of Paralympic sports in Africa.⁴

The negative impact of the severe economic crisis in Ghana on the Paralympic Games is inevitable. As a result of the failure to meet the requirements of the International Paralympic Committee, such as the licensing of the tracks and the preparation of the track and field stadium, track and field, powerlifting and goalball sports were deleted from the program.⁵ The

¹ Goldstreet Business, "African Paralympic Committee urges Ghana's sports ministry to consider Para sports during African Games", 14.07.2021, <https://goldstreetbusiness.com/2021/sports/>, Date of Access: 11.04.2024.

² Patrick Burke, "Ghana's Samson Deen elected president of African Paralympic Committee", Inside the games, 03.10.2021, <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1114969/samson-deen-african-paralympic-president>, Date of Access: 11.04.2024.

³ Andrew Dowdeswell, "Ghana pledges to hold first-ever African Paralympic Games in 2023", Inside the games, 08.10.2021, <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1113976/ghana-african-paralympic-games-2023>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

⁴ Andrew Dowdeswell, "Parsons offer full IPC commitment to first-ever African Para Games in Ghana in 2023", Inside the games, 06.01.2022, <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1117469/parsons-african-paralympic-games-ipc>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.

⁵ Owen Llyod, "More than 40 percent of African Para Games programme culled due to unmet requirements", Inside the games, 09.07.2023, <https://www.insidethegames.biz/>, Date of Access: 12.04.2024.

⁶ Andrew Dowdeswell, "Ghana pledges to hold first-ever African Paralympic Games in 2023", Inside the games, 08.10.2021, <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1113976/ghana-african-paralympic-games-2023>, Date of Access: 10.04.2024.



most important result of this was the decrease in the number of countries that considered participating in the competition, whereas only 18 countries out of the nearly 50 expected African countries actually took part in the Paralympic Games.⁶

Announced by the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) in a colorful ceremony in Accra, the logo featured a map of Africa with the red and yellow colors of the African Paralympic Committee, alongside the flag of Ghana, where the organization was to be held.⁷ The official mascot of the games was a coffee bean with a human appearance and a prosthetic leg.

The official mascot of the games was a coffee bean with a human appearance and a prosthetic leg.

In addition to the logo and mascot chosen for the 2023 African Para Games, another striking aspect was the slogan used in the promotion. The slogan announced by the Ministry of Sports of Ghana included the phrases “Para Sports Inspire a Better Africa”.⁸

In receiving full support from the International Paralympic Committee, this slogan also contributed to the “WalkInMyShoe” initiative, which was launched as part of efforts to promote Paralympic Sports in Ghana.⁹

3. The First African Para Games and Its Importance

Despite all the detrimental experiences that occurred during the preparation process, the African Para Games kicked off with a historic opening speech by Ghanaian Sports Minister Mustapha Ussif at the ceremony held at the Bukom Boxing Arena on September 3, 2023. Representatives from various countries including Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, South Africa, Angola, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and host Ghana attended the opening ceremony, where African Paralympic Committee President Samson Deen and International Paralympic Committee President Andrew Parsons also gave speeches.¹⁰ On the other hand, Cameroon’s amputee football team announced its withdrawal from the organization just minutes before the start of the competitions.¹¹ In the end, a total of 18 countries, including Ghana, competed in the competitions which continued until September 12 in three sports fields; amputee football, wheelchair basketball and wheelchair tennis. Moroccan Paralympic athletes finished the competition with a total of 7 medals, 3 gold, 3 silver and 1 bronze, ranking first in the competitions, followed by South Africa with 2 gold and 1 silver medals.¹²

In winning the men’s singles wheelchair tennis championship, South African Alwande Sikhosana not only won his country a gold medal, but also qualified for the Olympic and Paralympic Games to be held in Paris in 2024.¹³ Host Ghana finished the games in fourth place with 1 gold medal won by its amputee football team. After approximately ten days of competi-

7 ACCRA2023, “2023 African Para Games: Official logo unveiled”, 24.02.2023, <https://accra2023apg.com/accra-2023-loc-congratulates-ghanas-olympic-team/>, Date of Access: 15.04.2024.

8 Beyond Sport, “Inaugural African Paralympic Games debut in Ghana”, 08.09.2023, <https://www.beyondsport.org/articles/inaugural-african-paralympic-games/>, Date of Access: 15.04.2024.

9 Beyond Sport, “Inaugural African Paralympic Games debut in Ghana”, 08.09.2023, <https://www.beyondsport.org/articles/inaugural-african-paralympic-games/>, Date of Access: 15.04.2024.

10 Ghana Web, “First African Para Games 2023 begins in Ghana”, 04.09.2023, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/SportsArchive/First-African-Para-Games-2023-begins-in-Ghana-1837229>, Date of Access:15.04.2024.

11 Owen Llyod, “Inaugural African Para Games begins with opening ceremony attended by IPC president, despite late withdrawals”, 03.09.2023, <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1140494/african-para-games-opening-ceremony>, Date of Access: 16.04.2024.

12 ACCRA2023, “Deputy sports minister Opoku Bobie lauds Ghana for hosting successful African Para Games at Closing Ceremony”, 13.12.2023, <https://accra2023apg.com/deputy-sports-minister-opoku-bobie-lauds-ghana-for-hosting-successful-african-para-games-at-closing-ceremony/>, Date of Access: 16.04.2024.

13 ACCRA2023, “Deputy sports minister Opoku Bobie lauds Ghana for hosting successful African Para Games at Closing Ceremony”, 13.12.2023, <https://accra2023apg.com/deputy-sports-minister-opoku-bobie-lauds-ghana-for-hosting-successful-african-para-games-at-closing-ceremony/>, Date of Access: 16.04.2024.

tion, the event concluded with a grand closing ceremony at McDan La Town Park in Accra.

As a result, this organization was regarded not only as a competition that brought together athletes with various types of disabilities from different countries, but also as an important force in promoting the cultural diversity of the continent and creating a sense of unity and solidarity amongst the African people.

Ghanaian Sports Minister Ussif, who stated that the African Para Games are far beyond the realm of competition, emphasized that these competitions will bring about enduring understanding and solidarity.¹⁴ In emphasizing that Paralympic sports have a significant impact on transforming societies by enabling disabled participation on a global scale, Parsons expressed his excitement that this impact will be carried to Africa.¹⁵

4. Conclusion

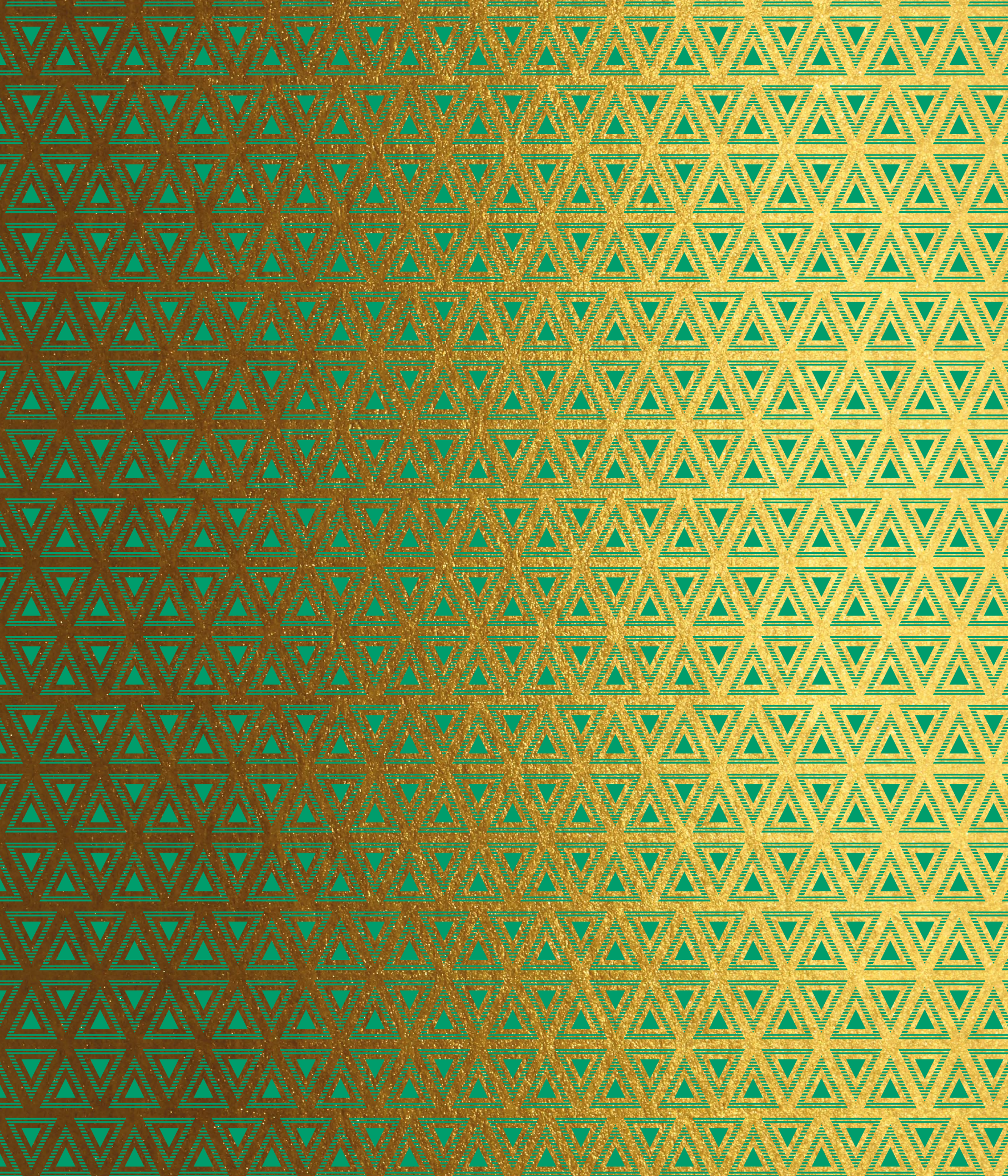
In terms of African sports history, the year 2023 was indeed a very important year. Ghana’s success in organizing the first African Para Games was a source of pride not only for the country but for all of Africa as well. Despite the country’s precarious economic conditions, Ghanaian officials elected not to cancel or postpone the organization, and stated at every opportunity that their country would host Africa’s first Paralympic Games in the best possible way. Thus, Samuel Deen’s steely determination and perseverance had a great impact on the organization of the competitions.

Furthermore, it is evident the support provided by the International Paralympic Committee had an impact on the smooth operations of the event. Despite all the difficulties, this show demonstrated that African officials have high expectations and excitement for the Paralympic Games. Meanwhile, African officials not only viewed the Paralympic Games as a sporting event, but have also assessed them as an opportunity to create a sense of solidarity on the continent.

As a result, this event not only gave hope for the future of Paralympic Sports on the continent, but also provided Africa with the opportunity to showcase its rich, unifying culture.

14 Beyond Sport, “Inaugural African Paralympic Games debut in Ghana”, 08.09.2023, <https://www.beyondsport.org/articles/inaugural-african-paralympic-games/>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.

15 Neil Shefferd, “Parsons praises impact African Para Games can bring to continent as first edition begins”, *Inside the games*, 04.09.2023, <https://www.insidethegames.biz/>, Date of Access: 17.04.2024.



Publications Regarding Africa 2023

Colonialism in Africa 452

Ali Maskan, *Kadim Publications*

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Geopolitics of Africa 454

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Colonialism in Africa

Ali Maskan, *Kadim Publications*

Reviewed by: **Joana Ruçi**

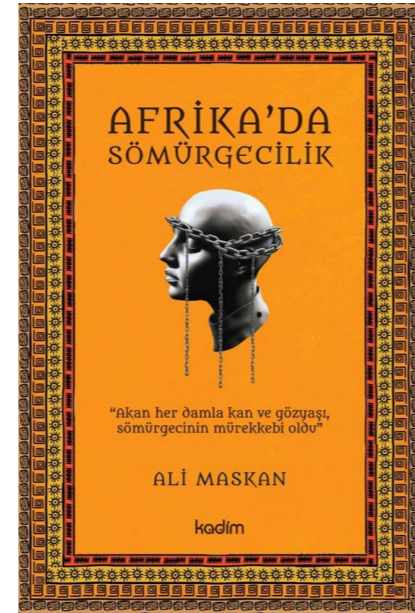
The continent of Africa has a significant location in terms of both geography and history. The continent is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the Indian Ocean to the south and south-east, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, and the Sinai Peninsula, the Red Sea and the Suez Canal to the east and northeast. Africa, the second largest continent in the world, is located at the intersection of important trade routes. Africa, which is very rich in terms of underground and above-ground resources, is also a geography that has hosted the origins of human history.

Africa is a continent that began to attract the attention of European powers from the XVth century onwards. This interest, which started with discoveries and trade, turned into human trafficking and colonialism over time. This process continued for 550 years, increasing the prosperity of Western European countries, and Africa became a source of capital for European states.

Europe's colonialist approach had serious consequences for the future of Africa and African societies. Among the consequences of this process are negative effects such as corruption, exploitation, regression, extinction and marginalisation. The negative effects experienced are so great that they are evident even today and can be considered to have an impact on the future.

Based on this evaluation in the book written by Ali Maskan "Colonialism in Africa", these issues are analysed from psychological, sociological and historical perspectives. The study consists of four parts. In the first part, the colonial system was analysed and the relationships between the coloniser and colonised were examined. In this process, the psychological warfare methods applied by the coloniser in the coloniser-colonised relationship and the scars left on the colonised are discussed.

In the second part, the struggle of black people to re-exist is focused on. In this process, the internal ebb and flow of black people and the psychological struggle between the past and the present are evaluated. This evaluation is related to the questioning of identity and existence of the black person. In the rest of the chapter, the importance of the perception of superior people and the effects of this perception on black people are emphasised. This notion aims to raise awareness about the false beliefs about the existence of black people and the effects of these beliefs on society.



The third chapter is titled, "The Mass Spirit of Digital Slavery" and focuses on digital colonialism and the slavery order. Especially with the Covid-19 outbreak it has been pointed out that the rapid spread of digital media plays an indispensable role in people's daily lives. However, one of the most important consequences of this digitalisation process is related to the questioning of the values that people have.

In the fourth section, the author's published articles and current writings from previous studies are discussed. In this regard, the chapter focuses on a number of countries in Africa. After establishing the theoretical framework in the relevant section, current issues, colonialism, the value system and its effects today are addressed. In this section, especially through the use of metaphors such as the Cuckoo's Nest story and the Narcissus myth, the depths of colonialism are explored. The Cuckoo's Nest story is considered as one of the best metaphors for colonialism and is analysed in this context. Likewise, the myth of Narcissus is regarded as a striking example of Western attitude towards Africa.

This book attracts the attention of readers with the depth of its approach to the subject, the simplicity of the language used and the examples of various countries. The author's use of descriptive and clear language makes complex topics easily understandable, while the content supported by various country examples causes readers to look at the subject from a wider perspective. Thus, the book both offers in-depth analyses and appeals to a wide audience.

Geopolitics of Africa

Editor: Hasret Çomak, Burak Şakir Şeker and Mehmet Şahin, *Nobel Publishing*

Reviewed by: **Anıl Dereli**

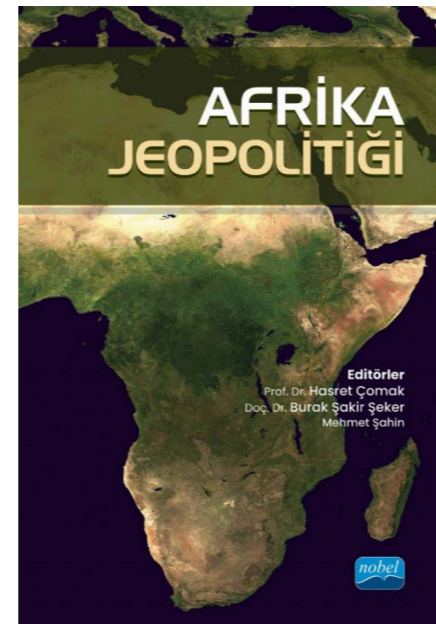
A number of issues and events, such as the failed US interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq after the 11 September attacks, which shook the hegemonic position of the US in the international system, the peaceful rise of China, the recovery of Russia, which experienced stagnation in the 1990s, and its expansionist policies, and the uncertainty of the EU integration process, have created a new situation in which the international system has evolved towards multipolarity as it enters the 21st century.

The position of regional powers such as Türkiye, Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Republic of South Africa in the international system has been debated again and it has become a necessity to reconsider the geopolitical rivalry between the parties at the regional and global level. Based on this need, the book titled “African Geopolitics”, edited by Hasret Çomak, Burak Şakir Şeker and Mehmet Şahin, deals with the global power struggle shaped in line with the changing balance of power and the new approach to security in the 21st century, with a special focus on African geopolitics.

Unlike other studies in the literature, the book does not limit the geopolitical competition in the African continent by assessing only the policies of the great powers towards the region, but also assesses the issue in a holistic perspective by addressing it within the framework of the newly developing security understanding and Africa’s neocolonial relations, especially with the West.

A total of twenty-four articles, prepared with the contributions of expert social scientists in the field and generally employing qualitative research methods, are categorised under four main headings. The first section titled “The History of African Politics and Diplomacy” deals with the complex history of African politics, from the legacy of colonialism to the challenges of decolonialism and neo-colonialism, and the impact of this process on contemporary state structures and African politics in general.

In the second part, where Türkiye’s relations with Africa are analysed under a separate heading, studies that examine both Türkiye’s general African policy and its bilateral relations with countries in the region such as Sudan, Libya and RSA are included. It is emphasised that Türkiye’s African policy,



which has gained dynamism since the 2000s, is built on a behavioural model based on mutual benefit, respect and equality, taking into account the historical and cultural ties between the parties. It is emphasised that Türkiye’s African policy, which has gained dynamism since the 2000s, is built on a behavioural model based on mutual benefit, respect and equality, considering the historical and cultural ties between the parties.

In the third section titled “African Policies and Strategies of Global and Regional Actors”, the strategies of different actors in the international system towards the region are scrutinised in today’s multipolarity debates. In this context, unlike other studies in the literature, the strategic competition over the African continent is not only limited to the policies of great powers such as Russia, USA or China, but also the African policies of international organisations such as the UN or the EU, regional actors such as Egypt and the African Union, and the Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), which are classified as small states. Thus, the geostrategic competition on the African continent has been subjected to a multi-layered analysis and a broader perspective has been presented to the reader.

The last chapter, titled “New Developments in African Security”, identifies and analyses Africa’s current security issues within the framework of emerging security approaches. Accordingly, in addition to traditional security issues such as the security of waterways or the security problems created by regional geopolitical rivalries, the study also examined issues such as environmental security, climatic migrations and the consequences of these migrations, and the energy security dilemma in Africa.

The book is a resource for general readers as well as undergraduate students of international relations, political science, history and regional studies. In addition, the fact that the issues related to African politics are dealt with in a broad perspective, multidimensional and multi-layered manner contributes to the book’s reference quality that researchers in academic circles can also refer to.

Undoing Apartheid

Premesh Lalu, Transl. Akin Emre Pilgir, *Africa Foundation Publications (2023)*

Reviewed by: **Emre Garip**

Apartheid is a regime based on the supremacy of Afrikaners, which was practised in South Africa for most of the 20th century. Apartheid, which means “separation”, is based on the non-mixing of different races. This regime refers to the neglect of blacks in social and political life and the sharp separation of blacks from whites in all areas of life during the period of its implementation.

Premesh Lalu’s “Undoing Apartheid” titled work explains the small Apartheid which is a sub-unit of Apartheid at the same time, it evaluates what this structure causes with the emotions it forms in people and feelings which are mechanised.

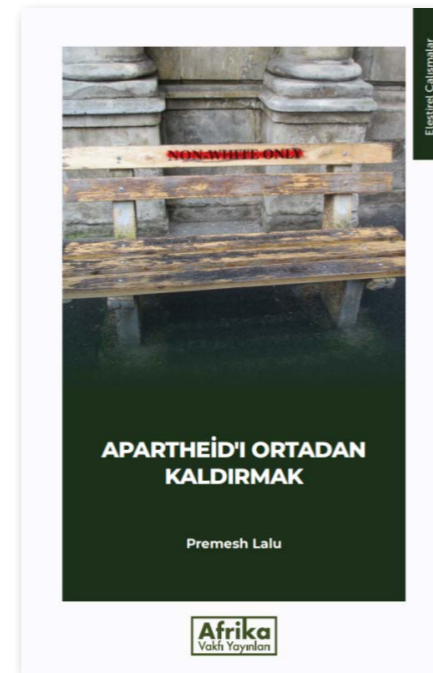
Lalu’s study analyses Apartheid and its effects on people through literature, painting, cinema, theatre and plays performed by the Handspring Puppet Company and Kentridge. In the related study, it is stated that small Apartheid mechanised people due to the abolition of slavery and its relationship with capitalism.

According to Lalu to question the subjects in Apartheid, small Apartheid’s role should be focused on. In this study it is stated that especially the small Apartheid as psychological consequences that are embedded in the society, it is stated that the regulations in the form of “Disorderly Conduct Laws”, restrictions on leisure time and mobility wear out and exhaust the small Apartheid as a subject.

In this regard, the book consists of six chapters, each of which is closely linked to the artwork. In the first chapter, Lalu, accompanied by Richard Rive’s novel “Emergency Continued”, describes the street movements of 1985, the student protests in which the author himself participated, and the overwhelming effect of the small Apartheid that forced people to confront it.

In the second part, the mythical pioneers on which the system of thought that Apartheid is built on are discussed through the theatre piece “The Cure at Troy” written by Seamus Heaney.

In the third part of the book, “Faustus in Africa” the play, analysed the political transition process in South Africa, in the fourth part the play “Woyzeck on Highveld” race and class relations are evaluated, in the fifth part with the play “Ubu and the Truth Commission” the process in South Africa is an-



alysed and in the sixth part, the relationship between cinema and power is analysed.

However, the works discussed in the book are not limited to these and many other works are also included. In Lalu’s work, readings of racism and apartheid are made especially through African adaptations of classical works (e.g. Faustus in Africa). In this sense, Lalu sees and identifies Goethe’s Faust as an allegory of a general spiritual burden that Europeans placed slavery in their imagination. Lalu considers colonialism as the impulses of capital, blurred by the distinction between humans and machines, and the prediction of the future built on these impulses.

Lalu focuses on race theories based on the play “Woyzeck on Highveld” and he criticises Balibar and Fanon about race.

From the 1990’s onwards, Lalu disagreed with the view that the abolition of Apartheid promoted social change. About events, such as the “Trojan Horse Massacre” in 1985, criticising the contradictions created by Apartheid itself and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which was established in 90’s for human rights violation investigations during the Apartheid period, Lalu adopts a pessimistic tone thinking that this situation has turned into a vicious cycle. However, according to Lalu almost all these problems can be overcome with “aesthetic education” as he frequently states. Lalu refers to this topic through the entire book and emphasizes the importance of aesthetic education. Putting this topic at the centre with this aspect, Lalu claims that a person can find solutions to these problems by gaining aesthetic experience.

“Undoing Apartheid” is noteworthy for its handling of the effects of the Apartheid regime exploitation and capitalism through works of art. In this respect Lalu has produced a unique work and encouraged the reader to think from different perspectives.

Islam and Blackness

Jonathan A. C. Brown, Transl. Büşra Elmas, *Africa Foundation Publications*

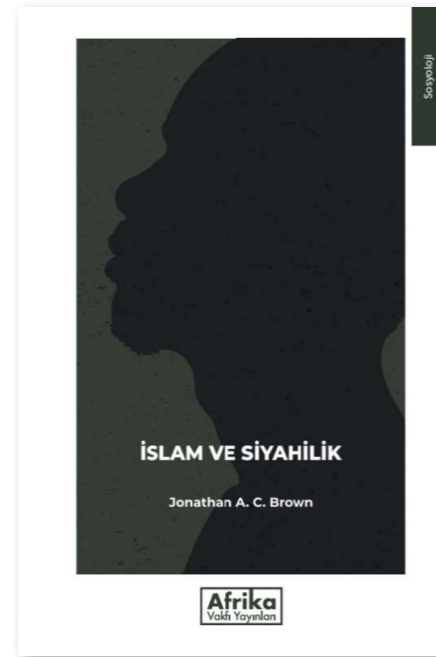
Reviewed by: **Hasan Alptekin Toprak**

The work called *Islam and Blackness* penned by Jonathan A. C. Brown is a follow-up work to the study titled *Slavery and Islam* written in 2019. The author states that the work above emerged within an academic discussion about whether Islam has animosity towards black people. The author does not also abstain from stating that he penned the aforesaid work as a white person.

The work has ten chapters including the introduction and conclusion chapters. The author, mentions that despite the Prophet's emphasis on the takva (devotion), importance of the skin color has not faded away yet in today's world in the introduction chapter. In this context, the author focuses on the gap between the thoughts which dwell on the superficiality of the race and puts takva and blackness in a vilifying place. Thus, the author expresses that the civilization of Islam has inherited the unfavorable judgments that are pertinent to Black Africans from the traditions of Greco-Roman and Hebrew-Christian. According to the author, antagonism of blackness has gained validity in the Muslim world and despite the teachings of the Prophet and Islam, it has been unavoidable to be pushed into an unequal position for the black people. The author, in the introduction chapter, tries to re-evaluate the aforementioned works vis-à-vis current conditions by reviewing the discussions and the collection of biographies on the antagonism of blackness in Islamic law and the holy scriptures.

In the second chapter of the work, the question of whether race and racism are a phenomenon of the modern world or antiquity is asked and a discussion on the nature of racism is conducted. The author discusses the concepts of social, biological, and minimalist race in this chapter and draws a portrait related to the development of racism in the historical process. Despite race and racism being discussed as modern or early-modern phenomena, it is said that the aforesaid phenomena occurred much earlier.

In the third chapter of the work, four important points at the crossroads of the concepts of blackness, the antagonism of blackness and the traditions of the Muslim world are mentioned. Within this scope, the meanings of characteristics of phenotype of the blackness are mentioned and afterward, the



idea of the blackness as the political pre-condition of the oppression, exploitation, and deprivation of rights is referred to.

In the fourth chapter, some discussions on the usage of the Muslim slave trade and Arab-Islam slavery claim which reasons and aims by the West. In this context, the author mentions that the Arab-Islam slavery claim comes in handy for Western supremacy, Africa-centrism, and the public diplomacy practices supportive of Israel.

In the fifth chapter, the historical development process of blackness discussion and the approach of Islam towards blackness is explained. The author discusses whether Hejaz region Arabs were black antagonists in the 7th century in this chapter.

In the sixth chapter, black antagonism discussion in the Qur'an and hadith is conducted. Accordingly, the abovementioned work proposes that the black antagonism occurred with the distortion of the Qur'an and hadith.

In the seventh chapter, black antagonism is scrutinized by attributing the Prophet, and the status described as blackness is discussed as whether it generates evidence for the black antagonism.

In the eighth chapter, the institution of marriage vis-à-vis Maliki Sharia is discussed and evaluated over the black antagonism. In this manner, whether Maliki Sharia accepts the hierarchy of social status indicators such as lineage, wealth, or skin color is discussed.

In the ninth chapter, the Islamic hierarchy or Islamic egalitarianism in the Sharia is discussed. The author, eventually in the final chapter, discusses the race issue from the perspectives of different theoreticians and puts forward that race is a cultural and sociological construction process. By stating that Islam and its Prophet have debunked their own era's racist idols, he registers that there are plenty of racist idols today and highlights that the solution is in the hands of individuals, societies, and leaders of the communities.

The piece written by Brown in the fields of blackness and Islam was brought to Turkish literature is one of the exceptional works.

China's Soft Power in East Africa: The Cases of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda

Ensar Küçükaltan, *Nobel Academic Publications*

Reviewed by: **Meryem Temiz**

In the book titled “China's Soft Power in East Africa: The Examples of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda” written by Ensar Küçükaltan, the soft power elements applied by the People's Republic of China (PRC) on East African countries are discussed. The study analyzes whether the soft power elements applied by the PRC towards Africa have transformed into hegemonic power or whether a dependency relationship has been established.

In the first part of the study, which consists of seven chapters the concept of power according to International Relations theories is discussed, and then the conceptual framework is drawn by mentioning the types of power and the concept of hegemony. In the second part of the study, the foreign policy principles of the PRC which adopted the leadership of the “Third World”, were examined and a chronological order was made accordingly. In the third chapter information on the borders, geographical characteristics, ethnic diversity and sociological structure of the East African region are focused on. In the fourth chapter, the soft power elements of the PRC towards East Africa are touched upon and its practices in Kenya, where its policies in this direction were first implemented, are examined in the fifth section in Tanzania and in the sixth section in Uganda. In the seventh section, it is evaluated whether the PRC has established a dependency relationship by lending to East Africa, whether Beijing's governance structure is applicable to Africa and whether the PRC's soft power elements have subjected the peoples in Africa.

The reason why Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda are discussed in the book is based on the fact that they are located on the Maritime Silk Road Route of the PRC's Belt and Road Project. According to this Tanzania and Kenya with their ports, Uganda having access to the inner regions of the continent are in important positions. The book states that Tanzania is the country least likely to resist the PRC's soft power elements while Kenya and Uganda are the most likely to support Beijing's soft power elements. In the book, it is argued



that the founding cadres to the PRC and the West's colonial past in the region determine the relations of the relevant countries with the PRC and their decision making reflexes.

The book, emphasizes that the PRC, which has no colonial past in the continent, supports African countries in terms of anti-colonialism and “appeals to the hearts and minds” of the African people. The author stated that the PRC does not act with the White Man's Burden approach in East Africa uses win-win and south-south cooperation discourses, describes itself as a “client” promising equality, and differs from its Western predecessors by not interfering in the internal affairs and border issues of African countries.

The author discussed new balance created by the PRC in the region using soft power instruments through the theory of “Neo-colonialism” defined by Kwame Nkrumah, the architect of pan-Africa thought. It is noteworthy that the author, who discusses whether this balance created by the PRC has turned into a win-win policy, points out the imbalance in the profit rates of this policy and that it could turn into a neo-colonial relationship in the long run. The book states that the PRC's soft power practices, especially debt diplomacy, erode the concepts of democracy, human rights and independence in East African countries and support authoritarian regime practices.

The book on the subject stands out from its peers by determining that the African countries within the Belt and Road Project have not been analyzed within the framework of the theory of “Neo-colonialism” in the literature and by contributing to remedy this deficiency. Accordingly, the work is noteworthy in terms of comparing the soft power practices of the PRC and Western countries and is a primary source for researchers. Written in a simple language and a fluent style, the book will be a reference to the soft power elements of the PRC in East Africa and will satisfy intellectual curiosity.

Politics in Africa and International Relations

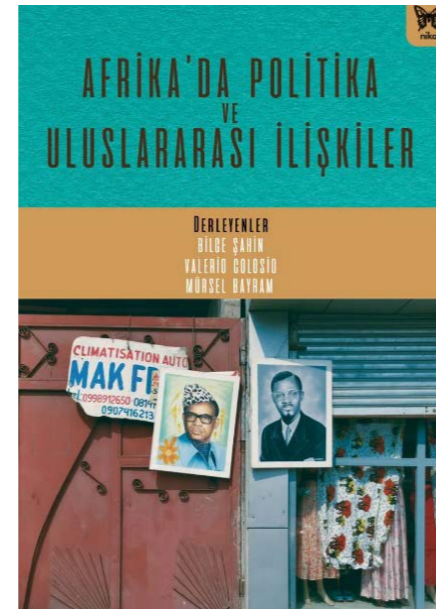
Eds. Bilge Şahin, Valerio Colosio and Mürsel Bayram, *Nika Publishing*

Reviewed by: **Muhammet Arif Seyran**

The interpretation of the African continent in terms of international relations, cultural, social, economic and political aspects is under the influence of the Western-centric understanding. In this context, the development processes and socio-economic dynamics of Africa in the mentioned areas are evaluated in terms of their conformity with the “Global North” model. Acceptance that there is an alternative model of development and development other than Western development processes; Positive developments in Africa are often ignored because they represent an alternative to the stereotypical development system. Unfortunately, this perspective reduces the impact of the rich academic literature coming out of the “Global South.” This patronizing view, which the Western intellectual world has maintained for more than two centuries, is the reason why the recent rise and development moves of the regions labelled as “Third World” or “underdeveloped” have not been sufficiently put on the agenda of the world public opinion.

The book “Politics in Africa and International Relations”, edited by Bilge Şahin, Valerio Colosio and Mürsel Bayram, offers an alternative and unprejudiced perspective contrary to the dominant approach in the literature. The differences, richness, civilizations and recent development initiatives in the continent have been interpreted in line with the views of African academics, avoiding a patronizing perspective. The book consists of thirteen articles seven of which are written by African academicians.

In the first article of the book, Africa’s identity after colonial period through the example of South Africa in order to overcome the prejudice. In the following article, by analyzing the integrative perspectives in Africa, the intellectual value of the idea of a United States of Africa and its possibility of realization were elaborated. In the third article, the effects of globalization specific to Africa and rising-power China’s activity in Africa was mentioned. In the fourth article, in order to shed light on the after-colonial period the government and societal structures were examined and deficits of government systems in Africa were included. In the fifth article, recommendations were made on regional organizations that should be established in order to increase cooperation and coordination among African countries and inter-



national organizations currently operating on the continent were examined. In the sixth article, after a short overview of the origins of the human rights system, the understanding of human rights in Africa and the obstacles to establishment of an effective human rights mechanism are touched upon. In the seventh article, the foundations of the idea of establishing a regional criminal court, which is expected to be the first example of a regional initiative in the field of international criminal law and which, like the International Criminal Court, will operate on an African basis, were discussed. In the eighth article the actions the UN took in order to prevent conflict in Africa were mentioned, after that the peace-keeping operations which was done in order to establish peace and security were examined. In the ninth article, the question of why despite the abundance of natural resources peoples of Africa’s prosperity did not improve was laid stress on and the inadequacy of African administrators. In the fourth article, the effectiveness of the aids given to African countries for their improvement was mentioned and the real motive of aids given by Western countries were evaluated. In the eleventh article, the border conflicts between African countries were analyzed. In the twelfth article, the difficulties experienced by African women refugees and the problems specific to the identity formation of refugees are included. In the thirteenth and final article, the presence of women in governance processes in Africa is discussed and evaluated.

From this point of view, the authors have stated their views from an unprejudiced point of view contrary to the supremacist approach and contributed to the literature in this respect. The book emphasizes the development processes that Africa has experienced in many areas and offers solutions to the problems it is currently experiencing. In this regard, this book is a useful source for the ones who want to have an idea about the past and present problems of the continent through the eyes of African academics.

AFRICA YEARBOOK — 2023 —

Published by the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, this work focuses on key developments in Africa in 2023 and aims to enhance awareness and knowledge about the continent in Türkiye. Another goal of this work is to maintain academic interest in Africa. In this regard, the yearbook, the first of its kind, has been prepared with contributions from esteemed Turkish and African researchers working on Africa, and it aspires to make a modest contribution to the relevant literature.

Afrika Yearbook 2023

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REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE
MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM

