

Africa: Overcoming the Legacy of Colonialism





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2026

"De l'Europe libératrice de peuples dits opprimés, Délivrez-nous, Seigneur!"

Bernard Binlin Dadier, poète (Côte d'Ivoire)

("From Europe, the so-called liberator of oppressed peoples, deliver us, O Lord!")

Bernard Binlin Dadier, poet (Ivory Coast)

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Introduction

Africa: On the Path to Sovereignty, Overcoming the Colonial Legacy

Africa, a continent with a rich history, culture, and natural resources, has been subjected to the harsh test of colonialism for centuries. This nefarious system of domination by a group of certain states and countries (metropolises) over the rest of the world in the 16th to 20th centuries, characterized by the exploitation of resources, the imposition of foreign political systems, and the suppression of indigenous identities, has left behind not only economic backwardness but also deep social and psychological wounds. Many African nations still struggle with the consequences of artificial borders, ethnic conflicts, and dependence on external forces. Overcoming this legacy is a complex and multifaceted process that requires not only internal efforts, but also support from partners who are willing to build relationships based on mutual respect and equality.

However, on this path to independence and prosperity, Africa is facing a new and insidious threat. This is not the open-minded colonization we remember from our history books. This is not the brute force that once enslaved entire nations. Today's threat is much more sophisticated and dangerous - it is neo-colonialism.

Neocolonialism consists of the invisible chains they are trying to impose on Africa. It involves attempts to control its economy through debt, through unequal trade agreements, and through the imposition of certain political decisions. It is a desire to exploit Africa's resources for one's own benefit, leaving Africans with only crumbs. It is an attempt to influence domestic politics by supporting favored leaders and destabilizing those who are not.

The struggle for sovereignty continues, but now it requires not only fortitude but also the wisdom to distinguish true partners from those who hide old colonial ambitions behind a mask of friendship.

On the contrary, the Russia-Africa summits come to the fore. These meetings, which bring together dozens of African heads of state, are not merely formal events. They serve as a platform for open dialogue, where African leaders can jointly discuss pressing issues and seek ways to resolve them. The economic, humanitarian, and technological issues on the agenda reflect the continent's real needs. From infrastructure and agricultural development to education and healthcare, Africa is striving for sustainable development based on its own strengths and resources.

At a time when many African countries are feeling pressure from traditional Western partners who offer aid on terms that often restrict their sovereignty, Russia is proposing an alternative model of cooperation. This model is based on the principles of non-interference in internal affairs, mutual benefit, and respect for national interests. This approach resonates strongly with African leaders who seek to diversify their foreign relations and strengthen their independence.

The Russia-Africa Summits serve not only as a platform for addressing specific challenges but also as a symbol of the emerging multipolar world. Strengthening ties between Russia and African countries contributes to the creation of new centers of power and influence, which ultimately leads to a more just and stable world order.

The traditional friendship between Russia and many African countries, which has its roots in the Soviet era—when the USSR provided significant support in the struggle for independence and in the development of national economies—is taking on a new dimension. Today, this friendship is transforming into a partnership based on shared interests and a desire to build a more just world.

Africa today is a continent writing its own history—a history of struggle, resilience, and hope for a bright future, free from the legacy of neocolonialism.

New Eastern Outlook

Africa: A Continent of Opportunities on the Path to a Multipolar World

Galli Monastyreva

Africa, once perceived through the prism of poverty and instability, is now confidently asserting itself as a key player on the international stage.



Natural wealth, a rapidly growing population, and ambitious development plans make the continent an indispensable ally and promising partner for the entire world. It is no longer just a "continent of opportunity," but an emerging force actively participating in the construction of a new world order.

From "Old" to "New": Rethinking Relationships

The 21st century is an era of rethinking for Africa. The continent, whose current political map and economic structures are largely a legacy of colonial partition, is actively seeking new paths to sovereign development. This creates a unique

historical window of opportunity for external partners willing to offer relationships based not on dictates, but on mutual benefit and respect.

To understand today's processes, it is necessary to recognize that colonialism is not a relic of the past, but a living reality.

The artificial borders drawn by European powers divided ethnic groups and united warring groups, becoming a source of chronic conflict. Colonial economies were geared toward resource export, cementing the role of many countries as raw material appendages in the global division of labor.

The imposition of Western values and educational systems often created a gap between elites raised in the metropolises and traditional society.

The Russian narrative in Africa actively appeals to this pain. Russia acts as a force that has never been a colonial power on the continent, and as a legal successor of USSR, which supported independence movements in Africa and in the rest of the developing world. Our view of African rise and development is also resonating with the regional political elites and the intelligentsia.

Today, as the world moves toward multipolarity, and traditional centers of power lose their monopoly, Africa is acquiring a new subjectivity. This is fueling discussions of a "new colonialism" – not so much in the form of direct political control, but rather in the form of unjustified economic pressure, the imposition of external development models, and the exploitation of resources through debt obligations or unfavorable contracts.

However, in contrast to these concerns, African countries themselves are actively working to strengthen their independence and self-sufficiency. A prime example is "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want." This ambitious program, developed by the African Union, aims to create a prosperous, integrated, and peaceful continent governed by Africans themselves. Agenda 2063 covers a wide range of areas: from economic development and industrialization to social justice, peace, and security. It

is a manifesto of Africa's aspirations for self-determination and the creation of its own unique development path.

Russia and Africa: A Strategic Partnership for the Future

In this context, Russia's engagement with African countries is particularly important. Russia isn't simply offering assistance; it's working with Africa to formulate a long-term vision for future cooperation. This partnership is built on the principles of mutual respect, equality, and consideration of national interests.

Russia actively helps Africa diversify its partnerships, reducing dependence on traditional players and opening up new opportunities for economic growth and technological development. This is evident in different areas:

Economic cooperation: investments in infrastructure projects, mining, agriculture, and the development of trade and economic ties.

Military-technical cooperation: supplies of weapons and military equipment, training of African military personnel, and joint exercises.

Education and science: providing scholarships for African students to study at Russian universities, developing scientific and educational programs.

Humanitarian aid and cooperation: support in the fight against epidemics, assistance in developing healthcare and education.

Conclusion

Today, Africa is not just a continent with enormous potential, but an active participant in the formation of a new world order. Its growing influence on the international stage, its pursuit of economic independence, and its proactive stance on security issues make it an indispensable partner for all those interested in a stable and just future.

Agenda 2063 is not just a declaration of intent, but a roadmap that allows African countries to independently determine their own development paths, drawing on their own resources and ambitions. This is a move toward genuine agency, where Africa itself decides with whom and on what terms to build relations.

In this context, the partnership with Russia represents an example of mutually beneficial cooperation based on respect for sovereignty and a commitment to long-term development. By helping Africa diversify its partnerships, Russia is strengthening African economic and political independence, a key factor in building a sustainable multipolar world.

The role of African countries in shaping the new security architecture is undeniable. Their participation in peacekeeping missions, the fight against common threats, and the pursuit of regional stability make a significant contribution to global security. By supporting these efforts, Russia demonstrates its commitment to the principles of collective security and its willingness to cooperate with partners around the world.

Thus, Africa, drawing on its abundant resources and ambitious plans, is confidently moving toward realizing its potential. Its active participation in international relations and the formation of a new, more equitable world order make it not just a continent of opportunity, but a key player whose influence will increasingly matter in global politics and economics. This is an era when Africa is writing its own history, and Russia is one of those partners ready to support this process, helping to build a world where every region has the opportunity to develop and contribute to the common good.

Galli Monastyreva, Chairman of the Association for Economic Cooperation with African Countries (AECAC), Member of the Expert Council on Africa of the State Duma of the Russian Federation

His Excellency the President of the Republic of Ghana John Dramani Mahama : “ I have no doubt that we will achieve our objectives because we are firmly united across the African world and we will never give up ”

Yuliya Novitskaya

For “New Eastern Outlook”, this interview is not merely a political conversation, but a sign of special trust. It is a great honour for us to present to our readers a dialogue with a leader whose influence extends far beyond the borders of his country. We discussed topics that shape the global agenda: unity, historical justice, reparations and the consolidation of the countries of the Global South. This conversation offers insights into Ghana’s role in global affairs, the country’s internal transformations and an answer to the question of why Africa’s voice must now be heard with greater confidence than ever before.



- Kwame Nkrumah once said ‘it is clear that we must find an African solution to our problems, and that this can only be found in African unity. Divided we are

weak; united, Africa could become one of the greatest forces for good in the world.’ How relevant is the theme of African unity today, and what needs to be done to achieve it?

- The unity of the peoples of Africa is rooted in our history and in the urgent need to overcome the continuing negative impact of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade (which forcibly displaced approximately 12.5 million Africans between the 16th and 19th centuries), colonialism and neo-colonialism. The time has come for us to make a major contribution to the resetting of the world, and this cannot be done in disunity. One of the important questions of our time is why we suffer underdevelopment, when we have 65% of the world's arable land and all the minerals needed to produce electric power, transform agriculture, drive an industrial revolution, and ensure that no African child goes to bed on an empty stomach? The answer is very simple; we sit on these resources, but they practically belong to the giant multinational corporations in the western metropolis, and they are not exploited for the benefit of our people. International organisations, such as the UN and its agencies, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation, have been deliberately constructed in a manner that ignores the needs and interests of the African people. Our reset agenda must necessarily involve the reconstruction of these organisations, and to do that effectively, we ought to unite. It is time to revisit the ideas captured by the 5th Pan-African Congress, held in Manchester in October 1945. Our forebears, who led the call for African unity, like Kwame Nkrumah, Modiba Keita, Patrice Lumumba and Amilcar Cabral, have become more relevant today than ever.

- You are the champion of the African Union on the issues of reparations. At your initiative, the current decade until 2036 has been declared the Decade of Reparations. You also presented a resolution at the UN recognizing slavery as a grave crime against humanity. In your opinion, how can reparations help the development of the African continent?

- The movement for reparations has reached a very important and critical point today. At the 7th AU Mid-Year Coordination Meeting in July 2025, African leaders declared 2025 as the Year of Reparations and endorsed the period 2026–2036 as the Decade of Reparations—the first time the continent, at the highest political level, placed reparations at the centre of its agenda. The call for reparations is a call for justice for all the crimes which were committed against the African people. It is a struggle against racism. It is the collective effort of the African people wherever they may be to end centuries of exploitation of their labour and resources, which led to the accumulation of vast surpluses on which the capitalist states were constructed. Reparation is also about the radical review of our educational systems to make them responsive to our needs and to affirm the equality of all peoples irrespective of their skin colour and geographical location. We also demand the return of our stolen artefacts, cultural symbols and the remains of our heroes and sheroes. One of our demands is also for compensation for the gross damage which has been done to us, and that may involve the cancellation of odious debts. I have no doubt that we will achieve our objectives because we are firmly united across the African world and we will never give up.

- Today the role of the Global South in the world is growing significantly. Please tell us about the importance of the continent's interaction with the African diaspora.

- South-South cooperation was put forward as a strategy for advancing the interest of the Global South by such great leaders as Fidel Castro, Nkrumah, Tito and Sukarno. It is still relevant in a world where power blocs have emerged and are pursuing a wide variety of agendas. The Global South needs to assert itself and to ensure that a rules-based global order is maintained. The African diaspora, which makes up more than 170 million people and recognized by the African Union as Africa's "sixth region"—is everywhere in the world. It has huge financial power and significant political influence. We need to harness all that we can mobilize from our

diaspora in our battle against under development in all its forms. The diaspora is an inseparable part of Africa and we ought to respect that.

- Let us recall one of your statements. You said. "I remain a socialist. I am a left-of-centre politician. I believe that in Africa, if you see poverty all around you, you cannot afford to be anything else". Your successes as the leader of Ghana are undeniable; you have managed to overcome many problems left by the previous administration. But in two years there will be new elections. What do you see as the main advantage of the left-of-center view over other positions?

- Our politics has been about solving the concrete problems which confront our people and even though labels serve as a sign post we want to pay attention to the concrete issues. Within two years we have brought inflation down from 22.9% in 2024 to as low as 3.3% in February 2026—the lowest since August 1999. We have stabilized the national currency and reduced Ghana's debt stock by GH¢82.1 billion, bringing the debt-to-GDP ratio from 61.8% to 45.3%.

National infrastructure is receiving significant improvement with the “Big Push” projects. We have improved our relations with the Sahel States and we are leading the struggles for reparative justice for all African peoples. We believe firmly that our record of achievement will guide the people of Ghana in making choices in the 2028 election. I am fully convinced that the National Democratic Congress (NDC) will be given the nod again.

- We are speaking with you on the eve of the Russia-Africa summit. How do you assess this format and Russia's position on the continent? How do you see Ghana's role in this cooperation?

- The third Russia-Africa Summit, scheduled for October 28–29, 2026 in Moscow, is a significant opportunity for our continent. Russia has always been a reliable partner in Africa. She supported the national liberation struggles of the African people and played a key role in the defeat of apartheid in South Africa. After

independence, the Soviet Union provided generous educational scholarships to young Africans—by 1991, over 50,000 African students were studying in the USSR, and throughout the history of cooperation, over 310,000 qualified specialists from the continent have been trained in Russia. This helped the newly independent states in their national reconstruction efforts. Today, Russia has declared her full support for the struggle for reparative justice. I am full of hope that the Russia-Africa summit will be a platform for advancing our common interest and aspirations.

– Mr President, we would like to thank you most sincerely for such an interesting and insightful interview. We wish the people of Ghana peace, stability and prosperity, and the country itself further development and new successes!

Interview by Yulia Novitskaya, writer, journalist, and correspondent for New Eastern Outlook

The Day the World Moved On

Phil Butler

While the West argues over yesterday's world, much of the Global South is quietly building tomorrow's.



H ERAKLION, Crete — The cafe owner here doesn't watch CNN anymore. He checks Al Jazeera for regional news, follows Chinese state media for economic developments, and laughs when he reads Western predictions about Russia's collapse.

"They've been predicting this for three years," he tells me, as he hands me a cappuccino and a cheese pie. "Maybe they should accept that Russia is not collapsing and move on."

He's not pro-Putin. He's not anti-West. He's just tired of being lectured about democracy by countries that freeze assets, impose unilateral sanctions, and express shock when everyone stops playing along. If Vice President J.D. Vance wonders why everyone seems unimpressed, well, this is the new reality that Washington and

Brussels still refuse to acknowledge. The world didn't end when the unipolar moment died. It just got more interesting.

The Sanctions That Backfired

As for Kremlin policy, the narrative was simple: Cripple the Russian economy, force regime change, restore the proper order of things. Three years later, the ruble has stabilized, Russian oil sells at a profit, and Moscow has pivoted east so completely that Western analysts are running out of ways to explain why their predictions keep failing.

"I used to buy German cars," says Evgeny, a TV producer who became a friend over a decade ago. "Now I buy Chinese. The German ones were better, but they're not available anymore. And you know what? The Chinese ones are fine."

This is the story of sanctions in microcosm. They hurt, yes. But they also force adaptation. And Russia has adapted by becoming more self-sufficient, more integrated with Asia, and less dependent on Western markets that were already closing anyway.

The West expected Russia to collapse. Instead, Russia diversified. Expected Moscow to beg for relief. Instead, the Russians built new trade routes, new financial systems, and new partnerships that don't require SWIFT approval.

"The genius of Western strategy," a Russian economist tells me with a straight face, "is that it taught us we don't need you."

The Dragon in the Room

The leadership in BEIJING, while Washington debates whether China is a "strategic competitor" or an "existential threat," made moves to quietly become the trading partner of choice for most of the developing world.

The numbers tell the story: China is Africa's largest trading partner. The Belt and Road Initiative has built ports, railways, and highways across three continents. The yuan is being used for more international transactions. Chinese universities are attracting students from the Global South.

But it's not just about economics. It's about respect. "They don't lecture us," says a Kenyan businessman I know who deals with both Chinese and Western companies. The Germans, the Americans, the British — they always have conditions. Human rights this, democracy that, governance standards the other thing. The Chinese just ask, "What do you want to build?" This is the appeal of the Chinese model: No moralizing. No preconditions. Just business.

Is it perfect? No. Does it come with its own problems? Absolutely. Debt traps are real. Environmental standards are often lower. Labor practices are questionable sometimes.

But for countries tired of being told they must reform before they can develop, China offers an alternative: Develop first, reform later. Or don't reform at all. Your choice. It's your country.

The Persian Paradox

The maximum pressure campaign against Iran has been running for over four decades: sanctions, isolation, covert operations, threats of military action. Every tool in the Western arsenal has been deployed to change the Islamic Republic's behavior. Result: Iran still exists.

More ironic than that: Iran has become more self-sufficient, more integrated with Russia and China, and more capable of projecting power regionally despite the restrictions.

“Iranian engineers have learned to build everything ourselves,” says a Tehran University professor. “When you can’t import it, you invent it. When you can’t buy it, you make it.”

This is the paradox of maximum pressure. Rather than forcing capitulation, it often accelerates innovation and self-reliance. Iran has built sophisticated drone and missile capabilities, alternative financial mechanisms, and deeper partnerships with Russia and China despite decades of sanctions. Once again, the expectation in Washington was collapse. The reality was adaptation.

The African Awakening

Focus now on Addis Ababa. The African Union’s admission to the G20 wasn’t just a diplomatic victory; it was a recognition of reality: Africa is no longer a continent to be managed. It’s a continent to be reckoned with. With a population of 1.4 billion and growing, immense critical minerals and an able workforce, and an expanding middle class, African nations were shackled by the West. For decades, Africa was told to wait its turn. Implement structural adjustment programs. Fight corruption. Improve governance. Then, maybe, development would come. China didn’t wait. Russia didn’t wait. Now Africa isn’t waiting either.

President Paul Kagame of Rwanda has been unapologetically blunt on this front, telling Western diplomats that Africa will not be coerced into adopting Europe’s geopolitical enemies as its own. “We are not going to be dictated to,” Kagame has made clear, pointing out the glaring hypocrisy of a West that demands African alignment on Ukraine while ignoring African priorities on trade, security, and development. For Kagame and a growing chorus of African heads of state, the calculus is brutally simple: the West offers lectures and conditional aid, while Beijing builds railways and Moscow provides security without asking for a lesson in democracy.

The Dollar's Slow Decline

The US dollar remains the world's reserve currency, but look at current trends. There are more countries trading in local currencies, more central banks buying gold, and more nations are diversifying away from dollar-denominated assets. Everyone questions whether it's safe to keep wealth in an asset that can be frozen with a phone call from Washington.

The weaponization of the global financial system has triggered a massive, quiet exodus. Sovereign wealth funds and central banks, particularly in the Global South, are no longer just diversifying their portfolios; they are actively de-risking from the West. They are accelerating their shift toward tangible, politically independent stores of value. Why? Because the freezing of Russian assets proved that holding US Treasuries isn't a neutral investment; it's a conditional one. The emerging markets are building a financial lifeboat, hedging against the ultimate risk: a phone call from the US Treasury Department that turns their national savings into digital dust.

What the West Missed

While Washington obsessed over great-power competition and Brussels lectured the developing world about values, Beijing quietly built ports, railways, power plants, and commercial relationships. While London imposed sanctions, Moscow cultivated new markets across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The West assumed the rest of the world would wait for permission to develop. Instead, it simply built another system.

The numbers don't lie. The BRICS+ now represents a larger share of global GDP (PPP) than the G7, China trades more with the Global South than the US does, and African nations receive more infrastructure investment from China than from Western sources. This isn't anti-Western ideology. It's pragmatic diversification.

Western democracies claim to uphold sovereignty, and the rules-based order. But when countries exercise their freedom by choosing different partners, the West calls it “authoritarian influence.” When nations follow different rules, the West calls it “undermining the order.” When democracies make independent choices, Washington, Brussels, and London impose sanctions. The message is clear: You’re free to choose, as long as you choose us.

This is why the Global South isn’t buying what the West is selling. Not because they love authoritarianism. Not because they hate democracy. But because they remember what the West did when it had unchecked power. They remember the coups. The invasions. The sanctions that killed civilians. The promises of development that never materialized. The lectures about governance from countries whose own systems are deeply dysfunctional.

The Future

Rome didn’t fall in a day. It declined over generations, with each generation insisting the empire remained indispensable. America increasingly finds itself in that familiar position: still expecting the world to follow its lead, still surprised when countries politely decline.

For the architects of the postwar order, the rise of a multipolar world represents more than a geopolitical adjustment; it is a profound psychological shock. Institutions once assumed to be permanent now face viable alternatives. The monopoly over finance, trade, diplomacy, and even the rules themselves is slowly eroding.

Stripped of uncontested dominance, Western governments increasingly rely on sanctions, financial coercion, and geopolitical pressure to preserve an order that much of the world has already begun to outgrow. Yet every new sanction, every frozen reserve, every attempt to weaponize the existing system encourages countries to build another one.

The unipolar moment did not simply fade away. It was dismantled by nations that discovered they no longer needed permission to prosper. The West can choose to compete in that new world as one influential power among many, or it can continue insisting that history stopped sometime around 1995.

History, however, rarely waits for anyone.

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Africa needs strong men to build strong institutions

Mohamed Lamine Kaba

Imported democracy, far from emancipating Africa, locks it into a vicious cycle that perpetuates its underdevelopment.



Through a sociometric, synchronic, and diachronic approach, this article seeks to deconstruct the foundational lie upon which the established order rests (I), before highlighting the mechanisms of the democratic trap in which African peoples are ensnared (II). It then draws lessons from the Russian and Chinese experiences (III), before issuing a passionate appeal to African youth to remain steadfast and determined in the face of the challenges of their time (IV), at this decisive moment when Africa must choose its destiny (V).

I. The founding lie

In July 2009 in Accra, Barack Obama, the first American president of African descent in modern times, delivered a speech before the Ghanaian Parliament that would resonate for decades: “Africa doesn’t need strongmen, it needs strong

institutions.” The room applauded. Western chancelleries rejoiced. The conditionalities of the IMF and the World Bank finally found their political catechism.

But behind the rhetorical elegance lies a conceptual trap of formidable effectiveness. For what institution in world history has emerged from a void? Which one preceded the will of a man determined to found it, to defend it, to breathe life into it?

None. Never. Nowhere. Montesquieu, in *The Spirit of the Laws*, states definitively: “Give me a man capable of governing, and I will create institutions for you. But do not give me institutions without men: you will only have a skeleton.”

Washington itself bears witness to this: without Alexander Hamilton, there would be no federal banking system. Without Abraham Lincoln, the Union would have fractured. Without Franklin D. Roosevelt, the New Deal would not exist. A strong institution is always the product of a strong leader. It never precedes him. It sometimes outlives him. But it is always born from him.

Sékou Touré foresaw this as early as 1958, when he said No to De Gaulle – an act of absolute sovereignty, lauded by history, but immediately punished by Paris, which sabotaged the nascent Guinea down to the last penny. Thomas Sankara paid for it with his life in 1987, assassinated with the active complicity of the *Françafrique* networks for daring to build a genuinely independent Burkinabè state. The African strongman does not die of weakness. He dies of too much strength.

II. The democratic trap

The liberal democracy exported to the African continent since the 1990s is not liberation. It is an instrument of deliberate disorganization, calibrated with surgical precision to maintain states in a state of structural dependency.

It fragments societies through partisan atomization. It multiplies actors without holding them accountable. It dilutes sovereignty under the guise of pluralism. It demands elections without guaranteeing peace. It imposes constitutions without

ensuring basic needs are met. And while African capitals play the electoral game, Paris continues to exploit the resources of the Sahelian subsoil via Orano – formerly Areva – which extracts 35% of France’s uranium from Niger without providing Nigeriens with stable access to electricity.

The CFA franc remains the monetary leash of fifteen seemingly sovereign nations. Since 1945, it has required these countries to deposit 50% – reduced to 20% after 2005, and subsequently reformed without any real transparency – of their foreign exchange reserves with the French Treasury. This mechanism is not a colonial relic: it is an active system of wealth capture, legalized, institutionalized, and fiercely defended within the framework of *Françafrique*.

Francafrica is not a shameful memory. It is an ongoing program. It operates through targeted debt, through elites trained at Sciences Po and ENA who return to govern for Paris rather than for their people, through the Bolloré networks that control ports and telecommunications, through military bases – Djibouti, Dakar, Abidjan, N’Djamena, Niamey before the coup – that blanket the continent. It needs weak states. It needs backboneless institutions. It needs, precisely, the absence of strongmen.

III. The lesson of Moscow and Beijing

Vladimir Putin did not inherit robust institutions. In 1999, he received a country in a state of clinical decay, brought about by Perestroika and Glasnost: GDP had collapsed by 40% since 1991, male life expectancy was plummeting, and oligarchs were plundering national resources with the enthusiastic support of IMF advisors. Washington called it “shock therapy.” Moscow called it a catastrophe.

Putin has built a state architecture that the West calls authoritarianism and that Russians call stability. Russian sovereign democracy – a concept theorized by Vladislav Surkov as early as 2006 – is not the democracy of Brussels or Washington, much less London. It is a democracy adapted to Russian history, its geography, and its civilizational wounds. It is sovereign because a strongman willed it to be so.

Xi Jinping governs 1.4 billion people, reducing absolute poverty from 88% in 1981 to less than 1% in 2021 – a result certified by the World Bank itself. Chinese institutions are strong because a strong Party, led by a strong leader, designed them to be so. No multi-party electoral validation is needed to lift 800 million people out of poverty.

Africa is watching. It is learning lessons. Bamako, Ouagadougou, Niamey: military regimes are not accidents of history. They are rational responses to the documented failure of fifty years of democracy under tutelage, a "democratura."

IV. African youth standing up

The streets of Dakar in 2024. The squares of Conakry. The avenues of Ouagadougou under Russian flags waved not out of ideology but out of visceral rejection of a tutelage that promised everything and delivered nothing. African youth – the youngest in the world, with a median age of 19 – no longer ask permission to choose their own destiny.

They reject the imported model with a lucidity that Parisian political scientists refuse to analyze without condescension. African youth understand, instinctively, what fifty years of conditionalities have empirically proven: democracy without sovereignty is a farce. A bloody farce.

This movement is not a step backward. It is a step forward. It follows in the footsteps of Patrice Lumumba, executed in 1961 with the complicity of the CIA and Belgium for wanting the Congo to be Congolese. Of Thomas Sankara, liquidated in 1987 on the orders of Blaise Compaoré and with the blessing of the Élysée Palace. Of Muammar Gaddafi, eliminated in 2011 at the very moment he was developing a pan-African currency backed by gold. These men were not democrats in the liberal sense of the word. They were state-builders. Strongmen serving a powerful project. They were killed for this very reason.

V. The moment of choice

Africa cannot afford the luxury of fragile institutions in a world of organized predators. It operates in an environment where the major Western powers – the United States, France, and the United Kingdom – play with absolute determination in pursuing their national interests. To claim that it can stand up to them with single-term presidents, fragmented parliaments, and central banks under foreign control is to condemn a continent to perpetual servitude.

We need men who truly govern. Men who say no to Paris when Paris gives the orders. No to Washington when Washington imposes conditions. No to the IMF when the IMF demands the privatization of water. Men who build states capable of defending their territory, controlling their currency, feeding their people, arming their army, and educating their youth without making them servants of the global economy.

African democracy must be sovereign or it will not exist. Obama was wrong in Accra. Not out of bad faith perhaps, but because he was speaking from Washington – that is to say from the country that overthrew Allende, financed Mobutu, armed militias and destabilized twenty African governments in the name of that same democracy he preached.

African history is unfolding. It is now being made in Bamako, Niamey, and Ouagadougou. It is being made by men who have chosen to be strong. It will soon prove that Obama's formula was not a universal truth. It was a directive for maintaining order.

Mohamed Lamine Kaba, Expert in the geopolitics of governance and regional integration, Institute of Governance, Human and Social Sciences, Pan-African University

Tatyana Dovgalenko: “Russia and African Countries Continue to Deepen Cooperation”

Yulia Novitskaya

In the leadup to the Third Russia-Africa Summit, Director of the Department for Partnership with Africa of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Tatyana Dovgalenko shared some insights.



The conversation covered a lot of issues. We discussed how Russia builds its policy to support new independent alliances (such as the Confederation of Sahel States) while maintaining the institutional role of the African Union as the continent’s main voice. We also talked about how our country continues its presence in Africa in today’s geopolitical situation. We discussed the UN General Assembly resolution recognizing the transatlantic

slave trade as a crime against humanity, and we also touched on how the Third Russia-Africa Summit will differ from the previous two and whether the focus will be placed on practical mechanisms for implementing agreements rather than just declarations.

– Ms Dovgalenko, in our interview last year we discussed in detail Russia’s interaction with various African integration associations, from the African Union to the Confederation of Sahel States (AES) and sub-regional structures. However, today the continent is witnessing a complex dynamic as the Sahel countries have withdrawn from ECOWAS and created their own alliance, while within the African Union there are discussions on how to preserve a unified agenda amid the growing number of sub-regional groups. In your opinion, how should Russia build its policy so that, on one hand, it supports new independent alliances (such as the AES), and on the other, continues recognizing the institutional role of the African Union as the primary voice of the continent? What are the consequences of multi-vector approach for the continent?

– First of all, I would like to note that the African integration architecture has historically been built as a multi-level system. In it, continental and sub-regional mechanisms exist in synergy. That is why all African states are members of the African Union, and the overwhelming majority of them simultaneously belong to several sub-regional organizations.

The Confederation of Sahel States (AES), consisting of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, does not aim to undermine pan-African unity. The emergence of this formation is a response to the tasks facing these countries, primarily in the field of security, and, in our view, does not pose institutional risks to the African Union.

To avoid the multi-vector approach you mentioned and to ensure greater coherence in African integration, annual coordination meetings between the African Union and the main sub-regional organizations have been proceeding regularly since 2019. The

establishment of a full-fledged dialogue between the African Union and the AES will follow the same logic. Russia is ready to assist in solving this task.

Strengthening cooperation with all continental associations is among the foreign policy priorities of our country. In the Russian Foreign Ministry, the Department for Partnership with Africa, which was established in 2025, handles coordination in this field. Our approach is based on respect for the sovereign right of African countries to independently determine the formats and directions of their integration participation.

We are making systematic efforts to improve the contractual and legal framework. In February 2026, an action plan for cooperation was signed with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), focused on launching a number of joint projects. Similar documents are being prepared with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). Memorandums with the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the aforementioned COMESA are in the final stages of preparation.

An important step on the African Union track was the resumption of the format of annual consultations between the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia and the Chairman of the Commission of the African Union. Following the talks held between them in Addis Ababa on July 7, a decision was made to build a full-fledged architecture of bilateral cooperation. We intend to harness the potential of the pan-African organization to give impetus to the entire range of Russian-African cooperation.

– To date, not a single African country has joined the sanctions against Russia. However, Western pressure is not limited to diplomacy. The United States has adopted the law on “Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa,” European

countries are pressuring African banks with threats of secondary sanctions, and Western media systematically discredits Russian projects on the continent. Considering these circumstances, how does Russia maintain (or even expand) its presence in Africa?

– Indeed, Western “democracies” use any means available, from political and economic blackmail to anti-Russian propaganda and disinformation, to pressure African countries and force them to abandon mutually beneficial cooperation with Russia.

The illegitimate restrictive measures imposed by the West against our country have provoked a serious crisis in the global economic system and have hit African countries hard, creating food and energy problems for the continent. The restrictions imposed by the EU and the United States have led to difficulties with payments and logistics, which in turn have disrupted global supply chains and caused an unprecedented rise in prices.

It is perfectly clear that the architects of these restrictive measures were fully aware of their negative consequences for the Global South, but deliberately ignored their interests in order to pursue their own selfish desire to maintain global hegemony.

Despite the artificially created difficulties, we remain reliable partners for Africans. We have supplied fertilizers on a free-of-charge basis to meet the urgent needs of our African friends, although, as is well known, Western actors have tried to sabotage this purely humanitarian act. In 2026, Russia sent 770 tons of food aid to Mali and 20,000 tons of mineral fertilizers to Niger.

Today, countries of the Global Majority are clearly demanding equality, openness, and genuine partnership in international relations, including in trade. Our African friends understand perfectly that Western restrictions are a neocolonial practice. The joint statement following the ministerial conference of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum in Cairo in December 2025 expressed “strong disagreement with the use of unilateral coercive measures as a tool of political and economic pressure.”

The opportunistic actions of our opponents, based on illusions about the possibility of inflicting a quick and crushing military and economic defeat on Russia, have ultimately discredited Western jurisdictions and the global financial architecture based on the dominance of the US dollar and the euro.

The obstacles created by unfriendly states have produced exactly the opposite effect of what their authors expected. Russia and African countries continue to deepen their cooperation. Over the past four years, bilateral contacts have been steadily increasing. We see positive dynamics in trade turnover with Africa. There is progress in discussion about the use of national currencies in mutual trade, and we are taking steps to build the necessary payment and settlement infrastructure independent of Western countries. We continue to expand our diplomatic presence on the continent: Russian embassies are operating in 45 African countries, and we expect to increase this number to 48 in the near future. We are also pleased with the reciprocal steps from our African partners, who are bringing to life plans to open their diplomatic missions in Moscow. We are providing them with the necessary assistance.

The West's "sanctions" against Russia have given additional impetus for the restructuring of the Russian economy, reducing dependence on Western goods and services, expanding domestic production, creating sovereign technologies and solutions, and entering new promising markets. Ultimately, the economic restrictions imposed by the West against Russia have contributed to strengthening the sectors of our economy previously dependent on Western imports. A successful example of this is that in 2020 Russia became a net exporter of food products for the first time in 30 years.

We are ready to share this valuable experience of building a sovereign development model with our partners to help them achieve self-reliant economic growth based on their own resources and capabilities. Russia actively supports projects in Africa aimed at creating processing capacities and localizing production, and provides access to advanced technological solutions. We place special emphasis on training highly qualified personnel for the continent.

Russia is a reliable and effective partner for Africa in countering security threats – first and foremost terrorist threats. We stand with Africans in correcting historical injustice via reform of global governance institutions and the financial architecture in order to better take into account the interests of African countries, including granting them permanent seats in the UN Security Council in accordance with the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

For African countries that have endured difficult decades on the path to political independence, it is now important to achieve full control over their resources so that the income can be directed toward stimulating the national economic sector, rather than paying for the well-being of the Western “golden billion.”

– At the end of March, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution submitted by Ghana recognizing the transatlantic slave trade as a crime against humanity. Only three states voted against it, namely the United States, Israel, and Argentina. How does Moscow view the arguments of these countries that refused to acknowledge historical responsibility for the slave trade? Does this indicate an attempt to rewrite history or preserve neocolonial approaches?

– Russia welcomed the adoption of the historic March 25, 2026 UN General Assembly resolution submitted by Ghana and the African Union titled “Declaration of the Trafficking of Enslaved Africans and Radicalized Chattel Enslavement of Africans as the Greatest Crime against Humanity.” We believe that this document will become a major milestone on the path to restoring historical justice and will make a significant contribution to strengthening the international legal regime for combating the consequences of colonialism, racism, and racial discrimination.

The countries that refused to support the resolution showed their hypocrisy, disregard for the suffering and hardships endured by African peoples, and an unwillingness to take responsibility for the crimes committed during the colonial period. It is foolish to dispute the fact that the slave trade and colonialism inflicted

severe damage on the African continent. Denying the obvious reality in no way enhances the authority of the Western countries, whose current prosperity was paid for at the high price of the suffering of African peoples.

Let me remind you that in 1960, it was the USSR that played a key role in the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, in providing assistance to Africans in their national liberation struggle, in the formation of their statehood and economies, in ensuring their defense capabilities, and in training national personnel. Today, our country remains ready for coordinated international steps to eradicate all manifestations of colonialism, which is taking on new, sophisticated forms. We are conducting joint work with our African friends on this issue, including within the framework of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum.

The Russian delegation took active part in the international conference organized by the Government of Ghana on June 18-19 in Accra to implement the provisions of the aforementioned UN General Assembly Resolution 80/250 on the transatlantic slave trade. We consider the African Union's declaration of 2026 as the decade of "Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations" to reflect our current times.

– This autumn Moscow will host the third Russia-Africa Summit. How will it differ from the previous two? What new topics will be included in the agenda, which countries have confirmed participation at the highest level, and what specific results – in terms of figures, agreements, and roadmaps – can we expect? Will the emphasis be placed on practical mechanisms for implementing agreements?

– The third Russia-Africa Summit will be a logical continuation of the large-scale work that began during the previous high-level meetings. The first summit in Sochi in 2019 marked the beginning of a qualitatively new stage in Russian-African relations and laid the foundation for the current mechanisms of interaction with the

continent. Following its results, the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum was established, a dialogue format designed to give our cooperation a more systematic and comprehensive character. At the second summit in St. Petersburg in 2023, a large-scale action plan for 2023–2026 was approved, which outlined the main directions of our multifaceted interaction. After that, two ministerial conferences of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum were held, i.e. in Sochi in November 2024 and in Cairo in December 2025, which allowed us to align our positions on key global and regional issues and discuss new promising initiatives.

Thus, we are approaching the third summit with a solid foundation for another breakthrough in strengthening comprehensive, long-term, and mutually beneficial cooperation with the African continent. Today it is important not only to maintain the positive momentum achieved, but also to confirm the transition of our partnership to a more mature and practice-oriented model of interaction.

At the Forum, as well as in bilateral contacts, our African colleagues have repeatedly expressed particular interest in expanding trade, economic, and investment cooperation. In this area, we have enormous potential that, unfortunately, has not yet been fully realized.

In this regard, the agenda of the third Russia-Africa Summit will focus on trade, the economy, and investment – areas that fully correspond to our mutual interests. Other priority topics include cooperation in the peaceful use of atomic energy, the development of independent payment systems, food security, digitalization (including the implementation of artificial intelligence).

As per tradition, an economic and humanitarian forum will be organized on the sidelines of the summit. Its program includes thematic sessions as well as various exhibitions, and cultural and youth events. Participants will be able to discuss in detail a wide range of issues pertaining to Russian-African cooperation, including energy security, water resource management, agricultural and healthcare

development, education, scientific and technical cooperation, as well as cultural exchanges.

There is no doubt that the summit in Moscow will be held at the highest level both in terms of organization and participant representation, and in terms of its outcomes. We expect that an impressive series of interstate documents and commercial contracts will be signed during the event. This will serve as clear confirmation that our country remains a reliable partner, ready to offer not only declarations, but practical solutions oriented toward the long term and bringing tangible benefits to the peoples of Russia and Africa.

We note a lively interest on the part of our partners in participating in the upcoming meeting, including at the level of heads of state. Many African capitals are already announcing their intention to send representative delegations to Moscow, including heads of state institutions and business circles. The final composition of participants will be determined closer to the date of the summit. At the same time, we have every reason to expect the broadest possible representation of African guests, corresponding to the scale and importance of the upcoming event.

– Cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchanges have traditionally been considered the strongest foundations of Russian-African relations. However, there is increasing competition in this area across the continent today, as China is actively developing Confucius institutes, Türkiye is opening its own educational centers, and the Gulf countries are investing in Islamic education. How does Russia plan not only to maintain but to increase its cultural presence in Africa given this competitive environment? Will the third summit include a specific cultural program, and what new initiatives in the fields of education, science, the Russian language, and cultural exchange will be offered to African partners?

– First of all, I would like to emphasize that Russia does not view cultural and humanitarian cooperation with African states through the lens of rivalry or competition with extra-regional players. Our interaction in this area is valuable in its

own right and is based on long-standing traditions of friendship, mutual respect, and solidarity. We maintain that it is through education, science, culture, youth and academic exchanges that mutual understanding between our peoples is strengthened, creating a solid human-to-human foundation for the development of Russian-African relations for years to come.

These issues will undoubtedly be addressed during thematic events of the aforementioned economic and humanitarian forum, which is being organized on the sidelines of the summit.

As for new initiatives, they are currently being developed by the Russian Foreign Ministry together with interested agencies and organizations that are actively working on the African track. It would be premature to speak about specific projects before they are approved, however, I can assure you that they will definitely be presented at the summit. In this regard, we also proceed from the need to further develop and scale up successfully functioning areas of humanitarian cooperation.

Thus, projects in the field of education and professional training for African states are prioritized. Today, more than 37,000 students from Africa are studying at Russian universities. A good incentive for further popularizing education in Russian universities and attracting African students will be a gradual increase in the number of scholarships for African citizens and an expansion of the range of professional training programs.

We will continue actively working to strengthen inter-university ties with African partners, including through specialized umbrella structures such as the Russian-African Network University, the Consortium of Technical Universities “Subsoil of Africa” based at the Empress Catherine II Saint Petersburg Mining University, the Russian-African Network Transport University, and the Consortium of Russian Universities for Cooperation in West African States based at the Center for People’s Diplomacy.

Rossotrudnichestvo's Russian Centers of Science and Culture, which operate in 8 countries on the continent, as well as the Centers of Open Education operating under the auspices of the Russian Ministry of Education in 31 African countries, serve as a sound basis for our humanitarian presence in Africa. They act as conduits for the Russian language and Russian culture on the continent. We hope that their number will only continue to grow.

Russian cultural events are quite popular in African countries. Among them, I would mention the Days of Russian Spiritual Culture, which include concerts, lectures, master classes, round tables, and exhibitions. Another successful Russian project, "Rising Stars," aimed at promoting Russian musical art, was implemented this year in Benin, Togo, Nigeria, and Angola. Taking into account the demand for these initiatives, we intend to expand them to new countries on the continent.

The planned opening of the Museum of Africa in Moscow in 2028 will confirm the fruitful Russian-African cultural cooperation.

– Concluding our conversation about the third summit, what will happen after 2026? Is there a plan to move to a new, more institutionalized level of relations, for example by developing a long-term strategy until 2030 or creating permanent mechanisms (secretariats, working groups, joint economic councils) that would ensure continuity of dialogue between summits?

– After the summit, much work will be needed to implement the agreements reached during it. It is important that the Russian-African summit leaves behind a serious legacy, including specific projects and initiatives designed for years to come. In this regard, the key joint document will be a new action plan for the next three-year period (2027–2029). It is intended to reflect not only the realities and requirements of the dynamically developing Russian-African relations, but also their main guidelines and objectives across a wide range of cooperation areas from security, energy, agriculture, and trade to digital technologies, healthcare, education, science, culture, and many others.

The implementation of agreements reached at the summit will be carried out on a systematic basis within the framework of the existing and steadily strengthening institutional structure of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum described earlier. This format is multi-level and includes summits, ministerial meetings, as well as rapidly developing sectoral dialogues. For example, the Federal Service for the Oversight of Consumer Protection and Welfare (Rospotrebnadzor) holds conferences on combating infectious diseases; the Empress Catherine II Saint Petersburg Mining University conducts a dialogue on natural resources; the Department of International Information Security of the Russian Foreign Ministry holds regular consultations on international information security; and MGIMO University holds the annual “Russia-Africa: What Next?” forum.

An important coordinating function, both in interactions with Russian agencies and organizations and with African partners, is performed by the Secretariat of the Partnership Forum, which is part of the Department for Partnership with Africa of the Russian Foreign Ministry – which I have the honor to head.

Continuity and consistency between summits are ensured by intensive political exchanges at the high and highest levels, as well as through various agencies and organizations, the daily activities of Russian diplomatic missions on the continent, and African diplomatic missions in Moscow. We intend to pay increased attention to expanding ties with Africa’s regional integration associations.

– Ms Dovgalenko, we thank you for an interesting talk!

Interview by Yulia NOVITSKAYA, writer, journalist, and correspondent for New Eastern Outlook

His Excellency Mr Sergey Berdnikov: “Here people appreciate that Moscow fosters partnerships with Africa without political conditions”

Yuliya Novitskaya

Our talk with H.E. Mr. Sergey Berdnikov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Ghana and the Republic of Liberia, was comprehensive and varied.



We spoke about how the African Continental Free Trade Area is helping the African continent unlock its vast economic potential, and how Russian-Ghanaian cooperation is developing under extremely challenging conditions, both in terms of the international situation and in light of Accra’s foreign policy priorities.

We also touched upon the issue of learning Russian in Liberia and asked His Excellency which qualities a diplomat should encompass.

– Your Excellency, this year has three anniversaries in store for you: you are turning 60 years old, 35 of which you have dedicated to diplomatic service, and for the last five of which you have been Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Ghana and the Republic of Liberia. In your opinion, what is the most important thing within the framework of diplomatic service? Which qualities should a diplomat encompass? Which principles drive you in your work?

– Diplomatic service is one of the most fascinating and creative professions, combining deep knowledge from many fields, analytical thinking, unconventional approaches, and erudition. At the same time, one works with people representing different states, cultures, and traditions. The ability to engage in dialogue – to listen and hear your interlocutor to find the right arguments, approaches, and compromises, even under complex international conditions – these are the qualities without which the work of a diplomat would simply be impossible. I also consider resilience and the ability to work in a team to be important factors. Throughout all these years, a sense of camaraderie has more than once helped and supported me.

The fundamental principle of our diplomatic service, however, is defending national interests and protecting the interests of Russian citizens abroad, a principle clearly enshrined in our Foreign Policy Concept approved by Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2023. It is important to note that the world is inevitably becoming multipolar, and today it makes no sense to try to slow down this objective process. The very trend towards multipolarity reflects the legitimate demands of the states of the global majority. But it must be based on the respect for international law, strict adherence to the provisions of the UN Charter, including sovereign equality of states

and the right of nations to self-determination, as well as other international documents adopted on the basis of consensus.

– Today, Russian-Ghanaian cooperation is developing under extremely challenging conditions, both in terms of the international situation and in light of Accra’s foreign policy priorities. Nevertheless, have you managed to find common ground and develop areas where our interests align most closely?

– Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of ‘Collective West’ sanctions imposed on our country in connection with the start of the Special Military Operation in Ukraine, which have disrupted the established international trading system, could not but affect Russian-Ghanaian trade and economic relations. Nevertheless, owing to the coordinated efforts of all relevant ministries and agencies, the work of the Russian-Ghanaian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation was resumed in 2023. During a session held on December 13–15, 2023 (the previous one took place in 2019), a number of Russian companies announced plans to enter the Ghanaian market, including Russian Helicopters, KAMAZ, United Metallurgical Company (OMK), Novostal-M, Uralchem, Uralkali, Russian Railways, Transmashholding, Power Machines, Rushydro, and others.

Furthermore, we have recently managed to significantly increase bilateral trade turnover – more than three and a half times – from \$247 million in 2022 to \$850 million in 2024-2025. This was driven by the export of critical Russian goods to Ghana, such as petroleum products, foodstuffs, and fertilizers.

With the direct assistance of the Embassy, AgroSoyuz has managed to establish business relations with the heads of local retail chains and distributors interested in purchasing Russian products. The Murmansk fishing company NOREBO Holding, which supplies fish (Alaska pollock) to Ghana, can also boast of successful work

experience with this African country. Negotiations on food supplies are also being conducted by Kamchatralflot (seafood), Miratorg Agribusiness Holding (processed food products), Uvelka (pasta), Makfa (pasta and cereals), and the Yaroslavl Distillery (vodka).

Cultural and educational projects have also been successfully implemented. Interest among Ghanaians in acquiring Russian education remains high. The quota of the Government of the Russian Federation for the 2026/27 academic year stands at 120 places, and the number of applicants registered in the selection system for foreign candidates has already exceeded 800. In addition, in 2026, the number of first-year students at the University of Ghana, who chose to study Russian, reached 460 people.

For the first time since 1982, funded through the program to support the study of the Russian language abroad, the Embassy produced and donated 400 sets of new textbooks to the Faculty of Philology at the University of Ghana.

The Ghana University of Media, Arts and Communication-Institute of Journalism is also actively enrolling students in Russian Studies, although the number of students is still humble: 30 people. However, the administration of this Ghanaian university is committed to expanding educational ties with Russia.

We have also supported the initiative to offer Russian language classes for Ghanaian schoolchildren at the E-Mort School Complex primary school. At the same time, we organize seminars, lectures, and master classes to promote Russian culture and education among local youth.

The Yaroslavl State Pedagogical University, which has unveiled two open education centers in Ghana, as well as the representation of the Center for Public Diplomacy, has significantly aided this process.

Moreover, this year in March, the Embassy, together with Tomsk State University and with the support of the Russkiy Mir Foundation, launched free Russian language courses, which enrolled over 900 people in just a few days.

– Since 2018, Ghana has actively been promoting the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) initiative, which became operational in early 2021. Five years have now passed, and some initial implications may be drawn. To what extent has the AfCFTA helped the African continent unlock its vast economic potential?

– As of January 2026, 54 of the 55 African Union member states have signed the AfCFTA Agreement, and 50 have ratified it. Since 2020, the Secretariat has been operating in Accra, and the Embassy has established good working contacts with it.

The AfCFTA means to achieve a single market for goods and services with the free movement of persons and capital, to carry out structural transformation of national economies, to increase the competitiveness of African countries on the global market, to promote their industrial development, and to diversify and develop regional value chains.

In this context, the most important aspect for the practical implementation of these goals for member states is to sign agreements on duty-free movement and trade in goods, based on the universal principles of non-discrimination of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

At the same time, it should be noted that the implementation of AfCFTA provisions is accompanied by objective difficulties. One of the main issues is the variety of trade agreements both within regional economic communities and between countries on the continent. The original intent was for the development of a common AfCFTA policy to be coordinated with regional structures, since the formation of a continent-wide free trade area is being carried out on the basis of official associations already recognized by the African Union, including the Southern African Development Community; the Economic Community of Central African States; the East African Community; the Economic Community of West African States; the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa; the Arab Maghreb Union. The current

divergences in regional economic communities' trade policies are one of the key factors driving the private sector to focus, in terms of production and trade, on specific states and economic blocs rather than AfCFTA.

Furthermore, existing disagreements over non-tariff regulatory measures, problems with transport infrastructure, and the lack of up-to-date information on the state of the intra-African market currently prevent most small and medium-sized enterprises from expanding beyond national economies. To eliminate the dominance of monopolistic companies and artificially created regulatory obstacles that benefit state-owned enterprises and transnational corporations, participating states need to implement a coordinated investment and antimonopoly policy and unify trade rules.

Additionally, there is no differentiated or preferential trade regime provided for the least developed economies, except for a longer period for tariff liberalization. In states with a weaker production base and service sector, or those that are landlocked, trade costs are significant, and goods from these states are essentially uncompetitive compared to cheaper products from the continent's more developed countries.

– In 2026, Russia and Liberia will mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Despite its significant natural resources, Liberia is today one of the poorest countries in Africa, having faced the consequences of prolonged civil war, serious economic problems, and the Ebola epidemic. In light of these circumstances, how would you characterize the current level of relations between our countries, particularly in trade and economy?

– Russian-Liberian trade and economic cooperation is based on the 1979 Trade Agreement between the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Government of the Republic of Liberia.

In addition, Liberia is included in the list of states granted tariff preferences for exports to the EAEU. This formally allows Liberian goods to receive preferential access to the markets of the Union's member states, including Russia.

Nonetheless, in 2025, the volume of our bilateral trade did not exceed \$4 million. Such a decline in an already modest trade turnover occurred as a result of most Russian maritime vessel operators being forced to change their Liberian flag of convenience after local authorities initiated a procedure to deregister the so-called "Russian shadow fleet" in the summer of 2024. Up until that point, fees from the Liberian registry had been bringing Monrovia approximately \$10 million annually, and as of April 2024, around 600 Russian fishing and merchant vessels were registered under the flag of this West African country.

At the same time, Liberia is experiencing an acute budget deficit and objectively needs additional foreign investment. The current administration of the President of the Republic of Liberia, H.E. Mr. J. Boakai, is seeking to secure support only from its traditional partners, primarily the USA. Russia, at present, is not among the priority countries for Monrovia for developing objectively mutually beneficial cooperation.

– In February 1962, Liberia hosted the planet's first cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin. This was one of his two visits to African countries (the second was to Ghana). This makes us wonder, how familiar are modern Liberians with Russia? How often is our country mentioned in local news? Previously, the USSR provided Liberian students with scholarships to study at Soviet universities. How popular is studying in Russia with Liberian youth today?

– Bilateral relations in the fields of culture, science, education, sports, tourism, and youth cooperation are based on the 1976 Agreement between the Government of the

USSR and the Government of Liberia. This document is, of course, outdated, but to this day it serves as the legal basis for bilateral cooperation in these areas.

The popularity of Russian education in this country is directly linked to how much modern Liberian youth know about our country. To my sincere regret, I must state that their knowledge is limited to the dominant Western-produced news content, which demonizes Russia, creating an atmosphere of distrust and fear.

Therefore, the current interest in Liberia in learning the Russian language and obtaining a Russian education can be described as very limited.

At the same time, cautious optimism is aroused by the possible incorporation of Liberians into the online Russian language courses being organized this year by the Embassy together with Tomsk State University. Furthermore, at the request of Liberian public figures, we have put forward an initiative to resume granting Monrovia places for tuition-free study at Russian universities within the quota established by the Government of the Russian Federation for foreign citizens (for the 2026/27 academic year, five places for higher education programs have been requested).

– To conclude our talk, let us ask the traditional question of our journal. What does your Africa look like? What do you find most fascinating about the continent?

– My introduction to Africa took place in Ghana in 2021. From the first days of work in Accra, I was especially touched by the friendly attitude of the people, their openness and optimism, despite numerous difficulties. I was struck by the distinctive nature of the Ghanaian people, their almost sacred attitude towards their culture and traditions, as well as their spirit of collectivism.

Naturally, I could not help but be touched by the warm attitude of Ghanaians towards the USSR. Here, the role of the Soviet state in the struggle for the continent's independence, as well as in the establishment of the African countries' economies and of their defense capability, are highly valued. By the 1980s, the USSR had agreements on technical and economic cooperation with 37 of 53 countries on the continent and had built 600 enterprises and other projects. Soviet people were involved in constructing schools, hospitals, irrigation systems, and roads. In Ghana, the names of Soviet leaders are remembered, and in museums one can often see joint photographs of Soviet and African leaders.

Furthermore, in Ghana, Russia's negative attitude towards colonialism and neocolonialism is well known. We view these concepts as a pernicious system of unequal relations manifested through debt bondage, unequal trade regimes, foreign control over national resources, and the imposition of governance and value models. Here, people appreciate that Moscow fosters partnerships with Africa without political conditions, on the basis of mutually beneficial cooperation while respecting cultural identity.

– Your Excellency, we thank you for an interesting and informative talk and wish you success in defending the interests of our Motherland!

Interview by Yulia NOVITSKAYA, writer, journalist, and correspondent for New Eastern Outlook

His Excellency the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Sudan in the Russian Federation Mr Mohammed Elghazali Eltigani Sirrag: “The principles of Russian foreign policy align with current regional and international transformations”.

Julia Novitskaya

Our talk with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Sudan in the Russian Federation Mr Mohammed Elghazali Eltigani Sirrag was multifaceted and interesting. We touched upon the upcoming Russia-Africa Summit, the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our countries, investment projects, Moscow’s role in defending the sovereignty of African states and the growing numbers of Sudanese students in Russia. His Excellency also spoke about how Sudan is not just a land of pyramids, but also has the best places for diving in the Red Sea.



- Your Excellency, the Russian and Sudanese media are discussing the upcoming visit of the Sudanese head of state to Moscow. Could you share your expectations for this event? What symbolic or practical outcomes does the Sudanese side consider important to highlight during this visit?

- The Russia-Africa Summit is one of the most important mechanisms for cooperation between African countries and the Russian Federation. Sudan participated with a high-level delegation in the first and second summits. The third summit, scheduled for October this year, is of particular importance to us, given the current level of bilateral relations. This year, we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries. We expect the summit's outcomes to be significant in advancing bilateral relations between Africa and Russia, on one hand, and between Sudan and Russia on the other hand.

- Mr. Ambassador, how do you assess the current level of political dialogue between Khartoum and Moscow? What topics are at the center of the bilateral agenda today?

- We are satisfied with the current level of bilateral relations, as we cooperate in various political, economic, trade, and cultural fields, as well there's a high-level coordination in the international arena, particularly the United Nations Security Council. Last September, the eighth session of the Joint Intergovernmental Committee was held with broad participation from the Sudanese and Russian economic and business sectors. A final protocol was signed, encompassing important projects in the energy, oil, mining, infrastructure, transport and other sectors that will contribute to the reconstruction phase in Sudan. The Sudanese government is preparing for the summit, and the participation of His Excellency President Abdel Fattah al-Burhan has been confirmed. This will provide an

opportunity for dialogue and discussion on various topics to strengthen the bilateral relations between our countries.

- Russian companies are showing interest in investing in Sudan's agricultural sector and extractive industries. How do you see the prospects for expanding economic cooperation, for example, in the creation of joint ventures? Looking at the next few years, which areas of cooperation (energy, digitalization, or joint scientific projects) do you consider the most promising for taking Russian-Sudanese relations to a qualitatively new level?



His Excellency Mr Mohammed Elghazali Eltigani Sirrag, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Sudan to the Russian Federation, together with Professor Alikber K. Alikberov, Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences

- The interest of Russian companies in investing in Sudan comes from the generally positive and promising atmosphere of bilateral relations. The political leadership in both countries has worked to build solid bridges that have paved the way for interaction between the economic and commercial sectors. Visits have been

exchanged between Russian and Sudanese companies, and agreements and memoranda of understanding have been signed not only in the agricultural and industrial fields, but also in banking, energy, oil, minerals, infrastructure, transportation, and others.

- Recently, the number of Sudanese students choosing Russian universities has been growing. In your opinion, how can cultural and educational exchanges be further strengthened so that the peoples of our countries can better learn about each other's history and traditions?

- Yes, cultural and academic cooperation between the two countries has taken on a new dimension, as the number of Sudanese students studying in Russian universities and institutes has increased in recent years, whether at private expense or as scholarship students. In this context, I would like to point out that the Russian government has raised the scholarships for Sudan to 40 % in appreciation of the level of bilateral relations, and 140 Sudanese students will be accepted for the academic year 2026–2027, according to what was announced by the Russian side. In addition, we have Russian archaeological expeditions that have been working in Sudan for years, and they have not stopped even during the difficult time in my country. These expeditions play an important role in preserving Sudanese civilization and culture and introducing Russian society to our ancient heritage. On the other hand, we organize from time to time cultural events, exhibitions, and conferences in Russian universities and other cultural centers to deepen the humanitarian and cultural dialogue between our nations. We invite Russian tourists and students to visit Sudan, especially for diving enthusiasts in the Red Sea and to visit the pyramids, as Sudan is home to the largest number of pyramids in the world.

- Moscow seeks to coordinate its positions within the UN and other international organizations with African countries, upholding the principles of non-

interference in internal affairs. What potential does such a partnership have in the current multipolar geopolitical situation?

- This is an important question. We believe that Russia's foreign policy principles – namely, equal sovereignty, respect for mutual interests, and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries – align with current regional and international transformations. In a world that rejects unipolarity, and where the Bretton Woods institutions have proven ineffective in the face of major global challenges, we must remember that African countries suffered under colonialism, and cooperation with the former colonial powers has not yielded positive results. For all these reasons, African countries, including Sudan, are showing great interest in cooperating with Russia. New regional bodies are playing a significant role in the international balance of power. I would like to point out that Russia stood by Sudan during difficult times and used its veto to prevent interference in our internal affairs. From our prospective, we would like to use Russian technologies in the industrial, economic, and commercial sectors, while the Russian side could benefit from the resources of our country.

- In African countries, efforts to find ways to hold former colonial powers accountable for crimes committed during the colonial era and to develop legal mechanisms for obtaining compensation have significantly increased. What are the prospects for these initiatives?

- Certainly, the colonial era was the worst stage in the history of the African continent and humanity in general. The colonial countries' admission of their mistake, at least, could move relations to better levels and remove the underlying deposits resulting from the injustice and persecution that befell the peoples of those countries. We see that there is a shift in the awareness of the new generations on the

African continent, as they clearly express their rejection of the neocolonial policy practiced by some Western countries and seek equal relations at all levels.

- To conclude, let us present our journal's traditional questions: what is Russia to you? What do you like most about it? What has left the deepest impression on you?

- My overall impression of Russia is extremely positive. During my years here, the Russian people have welcomed me with great warmth and generosity. The doors of Russian government and private institutions have always been open to me. I am proud of the friendships I have built with Russians, both officially and personally, and my family shares this positive feeling. Russia has become a second home for my children, who are learning Russian. Moscow is one of the most beautiful cities I have ever visited; its cleanliness and safety are unparalleled. This impression will likely stay with me forever. I wish Russia and its people continued progress, prosperity, and good luck.

Your Excellency! Our journal expresses our appreciation to you for the honour you have done us, and for the interesting and detailed conversation. We wish our countries further mutually beneficial co-operation in various fields and the strengthening of friendship and mutual understanding.

Interview by Yulia NOVITSKAYA, writer, journalist, and correspondent for New Eastern Outlook

Nikolai Novichkov: “A secure world is only possible in partnership with the Global South and Global East”

Yuliya Novitskaya

How will the third Russia-Africa Summit, scheduled for this fall in Moscow, differ from the previous ones? What are the reasons for the overall decrease of Russian exports to Africa despite political successes? How likely is it that the West, after the failure of the plan to “deal Russia a strategic defeat,” will actively try to regain its positions in Africa?



This and much else was discussed in our exclusive interview with the 8th Convocation Russian State Duma member, PhD in Economics, Professor Nikolai Novichkov.

– Mr. Novichkov, the Expert Council on the Development and Support of Comprehensive Partnership with African Countries has been operating in the

State Duma for several years. To what extent has its work during this time become a real instrument of influence on policy, rather than just an expert platform? What legislative initiatives or systemic solutions aimed at strengthening relations with Africa have been implemented through it?

– The Expert Council is a platform for exchanging opinions, located within the State Duma, and it is necessary for systematizing and harmonizing the legislative framework. The Council covers relations with the entire African continent, and we have held countless meetings, roundtables, and expert sessions. I am confident that the very opportunity to create an effective space for dialogue is already an achievement.

Over the past 30 years, we have largely lost the African agenda. By this I do not mean the broader public; even at the expert level, at the level of decision-makers, people generally do not realize what is happening on the African continent, what the priorities are, where it is heading, and so on. For example, not everyone knows that the population of Africa has exceeded 1.5 billion people. For us specialists, this is not news, but some people are surprised by these figures.

What does one and a half billion people mean? On the one hand, they are consumers, a huge market; on the other hand, this represents vast human capital that allows for the creation of new industries, new knowledge, and new opportunities.

We truly do have a lot of work, and being at the heart of Russian-African affairs and influencing what happens is a complex task and an enormous responsibility.

– This autumn the third Russia-Africa summit will take place in Moscow. The first one in Sochi was largely introductory in nature and aimed at restoring dialogue, and the second one in St. Petersburg took place under unprecedented sanctions pressure and focused on breakthroughs in the economy and food security. What

will be the key objectives of the upcoming summit? How will the third summit fundamentally differ from the previous ones?

– Currently, the political and economic agency of the African continent is on the rise. In recent years, the number of African BRICS countries has tripled, and if we count partner states as well, the figure is even higher. Africa is returning to the global political and economic stage. There is a whole group of African countries that are already economic giants, comparable to traditional developed nations.

Therefore, I would say that the third summit will be dedicated to transforming the agenda from the humanitarian, supportive aspect of “let’s help Africa” to a new stage of interstate relations. We understand that there are many leading countries and associations in Africa that have something to offer both Russia and the global community. The status of African partners is already being elevated to that of full-fledged, respected participants in global political and economic processes. I believe that the third summit will be connected to this, among other things.

Let me give a simple example. We are gradually moving away from the model of humanitarian food supply toward technological cooperation. It is important for Africa to organize the production of agricultural goods and their processing on its own territory. This is a key direction. The same goes for energy. Everyone knows that Rosatom is building a massive facility in Egypt, namely the El Dabaa Nuclear Power Plant. Projects for small modular nuclear power plants are also being developed. Thus, creating infrastructure and growth points on the African continent is on the agenda today, with economic issues being the most pressing.

– Two years ago, you had great hopes that the digital ruble would become a tool capable of solving the problem of mutual settlements with Africa against the background of sanctions. Now, in 2026, the integration of BRICS members’ digital currencies into a unified payment system, BRICS Pay, is being discussed actively. It could become an alternative to SWIFT. How do you assess the current

state of this infrastructure? To what extent have the implementation of the digital ruble and integration with BRICS partners advanced the solution to the issue of “toxic currencies” in trade with Africa that we discussed?

– There are issues on our side, and they are connected, among other things, with the Central Bank of Russia, which to this day has not made the digital ruble a fully-fledged means of payment. We are still in test mode; we have not reached the level of interstate settlements, nor have we even fully implemented settlements within the Russian Federation. This issue has repeatedly been raised with our colleagues at the Central Bank. We have the support of the Ministry of Finance, which is interested in the digital ruble becoming a fully-fledged payment unit. Therefore, this question should largely be directed to us, rather than to our African partners.

Some African countries, Nigeria for example, have advanced much further on this issue. We hope that in the foreseeable future, roughly in 2026–2027, the digital ruble will become a financial reality. That would then allow settlements to be carried out in digital currencies, which would indeed increase the reliability, security, and speed of transactions.

As for BRICS Pay and other instruments, they are also still in the development stage. We would like to see them implemented faster. And here, Russia’s role is also enormous; we ourselves could move faster. Here, too, are questions that one would like to ask and receive answers to.

– In our previous interview, you spoke about the need for a systematic Russian presence in Africa and support for exporters. Since then, the geopolitical situation has become more complex. Russia began supplying free grain to a number of African countries as a tool of humanitarian and political support. According to the latest data from the Federal Customs Service, the total volume of Russian exports to Africa over the 11 months of 2025 decreased by 13.2%. What do you

think is the reason for this decline, given the political successes? And how has the role of the state in supporting Russian business on the continent changed over the past two years, especially considering the high competition from the European Union and China?

– The situation is such (and this partly explains the decline in exports): we have not yet restructured the interstate trade and economic paradigm. We continue to supply grain, energy resources, fertilizers, i.e., the same products that have been the focus of exports for the past decades. But we must transition to supplying equipment and exporting technologies. This is a difficult task that takes time.

The role of the state is enormous, as it must conceptually restructure these economic relations. One would hope that the government and the development institutions responsible for exports would take charge of this, and that results would follow.

I repeat: the Expert Council was created precisely to serve as a platform for open dialogue, to consistently remind the government of what matters. Because if we remain in the same paradigm, at a certain point we will reach a cooling in relations, if not rock bottom.

The world does not stand still, and Africa is undergoing rapid technological transformation. Russia, being one of the leaders in digital transformation, could offer it digital solutions in a wide range of fields, from organizing urban transport to something akin to government services for education. This, too, is a question for our colleagues in the executive branch.

– Many experts believe that due to the militarization of Europe, African countries defending their sovereignty should prepare for growing threats from the Western minority. In your view, after the failure of the plan to inflict so-called “strategic

defeat” on Russia, how likely is it that the West will actively attempt to regain the positions it has largely lost in Africa?

– Here it is better to be, as they say, a pessimist and say that any African country, that aspires to sovereign political and economic development, faces colossal risks. This concerns threats not only from the United States, but also from France and other Western countries that still have a colonial way of thinking and living.

Therefore, the countries of the Global South and the Global East, especially after the events in Venezuela and Iran, must consider that a safe world does not exist. A safe world is only possible in partnership with the leaders of the Global South and the Global East. Hence, each country will determine for itself the security parameters that are suitable and comfortable for it. At the same time, it is important to understand that the West will not tolerate any country’s or people’s attempts to achieve full sovereignty and political and economic independence as a state.

– Certain stereotypes about Africa still exist in the world, stemming from Western perceptions. For example, the West never considered issues of scientific and technological partnership with Africa. But today the situation is changing. China has already launched large-scale programs for the digitalization of African states as part of the Belt and Road Initiative, the Gulf countries are actively investing in African technology hubs, and the European Union, through the Global Gateway strategy, is trying to catch up, focusing on green technologies and digital infrastructure. Against this backdrop, according to the latest data, Russia has increased quotas for African students, yet the share of Russian technology exports to the continent remains low. What steps should Moscow take to establish itself as one of Africa’s key technological partners? And who represents our main competition today – China with its infrastructure packages, the UAE with its

venture capital approaches, or the West, which is now also focusing on education and high technology?

– By and large, we have no competitors here, because we have a fundamentally different approach than any of our competitors or partners. Since Soviet times, Russia has sought to strengthen African countries and create foundations for their economic and technological development. There were tens or even hundreds of thousands of African students who studied in Soviet universities.

In this sense, we have a special approach, and we need to expand it. In this case, I am not even talking about increasing the quota for foreign students, though that, of course, must be done. We need to create opportunities for these students to work in technology industries in their own countries. And we are capable of helping Africans organize such technology industries on a mutually beneficial basis.

We do not need to pay attention to what other countries are doing. Everyone lives in their own world, adheres to their own values, and we respect that. But we have a different vision, one whose significance and relevance have been proven over decades.

So let us work where we are strong, building a network of partnerships in African countries. I mean not only partnership in the social and humanitarian sphere, but also in the economic sphere. By bringing our technologies and our well-established industries, Russia is capable of working on the African continent both in the coming decades and in the coming centuries.

Sometimes one must, without false modesty, look at oneself and understand what one's fundamental difference is. Russia (the USSR) never colonized Africa, but always came with its own ideas and approaches. For that we were respected. We never forced anyone to be like us, but the attractiveness of our approach increased the number of our friends to millions of people.

We just have to return to this approach and continue to implement it in a world with new technological and economic indicators.

– The ongoing escalation of tensions in the Persian Gulf due to the US-Israeli aggression against Iran could exacerbate global instability, with serious consequences for energy markets, food security, and economic stability, particularly in Africa, where conflicts and economic challenges remain acute. Will Russia, given the military escalation in the Middle East, be able to continue implementing joint economic projects in African countries?

– As we have already discussed, a comprehensive Russian presence is essential. Economic cooperation must always be supported by security measures. In fact, we are already doing this. We need to work with the partners who build systematic strategic relationships, including on the basis of security, comprehensive presence, and taking into account Russia's interests on the continent. We have many such partners. For them, working with us is also a guarantee against future aggression, and the collective West will think twice before deciding to intervene there. So, returning to my answer to the previous question, we must act in our natural fashion, which will yield results.

– You have repeatedly spoken about the need to restore Russia's influence in the Global South and about the relevance of socialist ideology in the world. What is the rationale behind the initiative to create the "Sovintern"? What values will it advocate, and why is its founding forum, scheduled for late April in Moscow, drawing the attention of political forces not only from Africa but also from Latin America and even Europe?

– As I have already said, the Russian and Soviet approach – not only in recent decades but starting from the Russian Empire, when we helped the Ethiopian people, – has always been characterized by equality and mutual respect. On the other hand, we have always come with our own ideas and our own values. This confidence in our cause, especially when it involved appealing ideas and principles, was supported on the African continent. The Soviet Union brought socialist ideology, and its advocates still recall that era fondly. Most of our friends in Africa today are, as a rule, bearers of socialist values or their descendants.

At a certain point, we thought it was time to restore this work, at least at the political level. Thus the initiative called “Sovintern,” i.e., the Soviet International, was born. It is intended to unite a new global network of socialist parties and movements that stand on the principles of social justice, equality, and non-interference in each other’s economies, while relying on cooperation. These are the values that Soviet civilization upheld.

As our work in recent months has shown, this idea resonates strongly in the hearts and minds of citizens, of people speaking different languages. “Sovintern” has already become an international word, pronounced the same in all languages of the world.

On April 27, its first organizational forum will take place in Moscow, and the international “Sovintern” socialist network will be established, uniting political parties and movements from around the world, including socialists from the African continent. What is more, several of the idea’s initiators are Africans from various political parties.

It is important to understand that we are not creating another International; there are already many of them. Some no longer function, and some have degenerated and lost their essence; for example, Socialist International, which has shifted from defending workers’ interests to advocating for the LGBT community (organization

recognized as extremist and banned in the Russian Federation according to the Supreme Court's ruling).

We aspire to unite people who adhere to socialist values, regardless of their belonging to any parties or movements. The key is ideological affinity. To this end, we will create a fundamentally new digital platform using artificial intelligence. There are language models that allow people of different nationalities to communicate without an interpreter. Subsequently, these platforms will enable common civic and political activity, and acts of solidarity, and people from different continents will be able to pursue shared political and economic goals. The word "solidarity" is crucial here and reflects the socialist spirit.

We anticipate active participation from representatives of political parties and movements not only from the African continent but also from Eurasia and Latin America. Even some European countries are sending delegates.

Thus, in April, we will present to the global political community a new global association: the international socialist network "Sovintern".

– Mr Novichkov, we thank you for a most interesting interview!

Interview by Yulia NOVITSKAYA, writer, journalist, and correspondent for New Eastern Outlook

President of the Association of Russian Diplomats, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Pogos Akopov: “Today the entire developing world is with us”

Ksenia Muratshina

A veteran of Soviet and Russian diplomacy, who recently celebrated his hundredth birthday, in an interview to New Eastern Outlook highlighted the main principles in Russia's relations with developing countries and recalled meetings with legendary historical figures. A significant portion of his service took place in Africa. Here are some excerpts from the anniversary interview.



– Mr. Akopov, I have read that your native land is a small village in Georgia. Could you please tell us about your roots and how you went from that village to

becoming an ambassador representing a superpower? I understand that such upward mobility was possible only in the Soviet Union.

– Such was the country that a boy from a God-forsaken mountain village, a peasant's son, managed to become an ambassador. My village was called Lower Suflis. It has since been renamed in the Georgian manner to Skhvilisi. So I grew up in a village. At the age of 12, I lost my mother, she died of tuberculosis. Around that time, I was sent to an Armenian school in Tiflis, that is, Tbilisi. There I learned Russian.

In May 1941, I became a student at a technical school specializing in railways. We boys, as soon as the war started, immediately went to the military enlistment office, eager to go to the front. But we were refused. By the decision of the State Defense Committee, railway workers were not taken; they remained in the rear where their work was needed, under martial law. We were transferred to the Transcaucasian Railway. We worked there throughout the entire war. I walked on foot from Tiflis to Baku. In my free time, I also worked as a turner at a factory, making parts for tanks.

– Then you enrolled at university?

– At Moscow State Economic Institute, which before the war was called the Planning Academy. Out of the entire graduating class, I was the only one taken to Gosstab (State Committee for Material and Technical Supply of the USSR). At that time, the national economy had to be restored. The state distributed everything, from concrete to nails, between enterprises and republics. I worked there for two and a half years, after which I was transferred to Gosplan (State Planning Committee). At Gosplan, at the age of 30, I was appointed head of a sector.

– How did it happen that you moved from Gosplan to diplomatic work?

– I worked under the leadership of Alexey Kosygin. One day he summoned me and said: “The Central Committee of the CPSU is asking us for people to study at the

Higher Diplomatic School. I will recommend you; will you go?”. But why would I leave a job I loved and go elsewhere? The explanation was as follows: at that time, the colonial system was collapsing, and the newly formed states that had gained political independence needed to develop their economies. And they turned to the Soviet Union for help, because the imperialist powers refused them such assistance for well-known reasons: they did not wish to see them develop.

Egypt



With A. Sadat, 1976

– *Mr Akopov, when did you enter the diplomatic service?*

– In 1960, and it continues to this day. My first posting was to Egypt. Among other things, I prepared for and accompanied Khrushchev's visit in 1964. Egypt greeted him as a national hero; it was a nationwide holiday, a sincere manifestation of gratitude to the Soviet Union and personally to Mr Khrushchev for his support during the tripartite aggression. When, under Brezhnev, the Politburo decided to send troops to help Gamal Abdel Nasser, that too was a historic step, which was

perceived as genuine support from the Soviet Union for the Arabs. The next day our air defense shot down two Israeli aircrafts, and the aggression stopped. It was then that we laid the foundations of relations with the Arab world. Under Yeltsin, our relations with Arab states fell into decline. Only with the arrival of Yevgeny Primakov as Minister of Foreign Affairs did we, thank God, once again direct our policy toward restoring them. Today, President Vladimir Putin and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov are doing a great deal to develop these relations.

Thirty years have passed, and I can still tell you what the grain and cotton harvests were. I knew Egypt better than the Egyptians themselves. Once, as a third secretary of the Embassy, I asked the Egyptian Minister of Finance an unexpected question about a discrepancy between the national income and the budget. He was stunned! How did I know that, since it was classified information? I calculated it, I said. After that, he would come to me on various matters. When I was invited to work in the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee, Ministry of Foreign Affairs wouldn't let me go. They said: "We need him in Egypt."

Libya



With M. Gaddafi, 1991

– Please tell us about working with Muammar Gaddafi.

– Before I was sent as ambassador to Libya, our Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrey Gromyko summoned me: “Perhaps you will develop trusting relations with Gaddafi. Be extremely frank with him”. I asked where to draw the line. He said: “That is why you are ambassador – determine it. And never tell a lie”. Gromyko had this idea that there must be principles in politics. I met with Gaddafi 41 times while I was ambassador. At the first meeting he said: "Nasser told me how you helped Egypt restore its army after Israeli aggression. Libya also needs the USSR's help".

That is how our cooperation began. Many called him eccentric, unpredictable, but that did not correspond to reality. I always said that this man is our friend, he strove to develop relations with the Soviet Union. In trade and economic deals he paid in currency punctually. When we were short of grain, he sent his ships with wheat from Australia to us in the Union. After the Spitak earthquake, when I told him about our tragedy, he immediately sent a humanitarian aid plane...When Saddam (Hussein – K.M.) entered Kuwait, Gaddafi invited me the next day and said: "That madman – what has he done? The Americans will not leave the Gulf for decades now. If he wanted to conquer Kuwait, he could simply have come to an agreement with the emir's son!". Where is the eccentricity here? What eccentric could analyze the situation like that and foresee it many years ahead? He never spoke against Russia either. I visited Libya several times at his invitation after my retirement. I remember telling him that the Yeltsins come and go, but Russia will always need you. And the Americans only need your head.

– How did the people feel about him? The West slandered him in every way...

– He really was a people's leader. When I first came to Libya, I could not believe my eyes: there were rallies at which women snatched the microphones from men and shouted: "The Leader has given us freedom and equality!" Few people know about this, but it really was so. Gaddafi did a great deal for the people. Of course, he liked to show off – the jeep, the security – but these things were insignificant, only for his

own entertainment. He never drank alcohol or smoked. He always spoke without notes and wrote for the people, including his Green Book.

– All the foreign accusations against him were fabricated?

– He was accused only because he was a fierce anti-American and anti-imperialist. Nothing was proven. Including the loudest case, Lockerbie. He had absolutely nothing to do with it, I know that for certain. He was also accused of allegedly training Palestinian terrorists on Libyan territory. But in fact he eliminated such camps. And he helped Palestine in general, allocated funds, because he was firmly convinced that the rights of the Palestinian people had been usurped.

– What main principles would you single out in Soviet and Russian policy toward the developing world?

– We developed a policy that served the interests of both the developing countries and the Soviet Union. Our terms of cooperation were acceptable to these countries. This gave us the opportunity to build relations with them and yields results today: the entire developing world is with us.

– Do you think that the Global South is on the right path today? How united could it be, and what should be the course of its development on a global scale?

– This will depend on the level of development of productive forces and labour-management relations, on power being in the hands of the working people. Peoples should work for themselves and their countries, not for capitalists. There cannot be economic and national development when a minimal portion of the population holds all wealth and resources in private ownership. As for unity...I can speak about Arab unity, and it does not exist now. But we fought for it.

– In the current confrontation between Russia and the collective, fascist-leaning West, who can we rely on and what do we need for Victory?

– We must rely on ourselves. Conflicts between us and the imperialist, capitalist world will continue until capitalism is eliminated as a system. Because capitalism cannot exist without wars. We must stick to guns and go all the way. And our allies in this are the developing world.

– Mr Akopov, we sincerely thank you for the interview!

– Thank you!

Interview by Ksenia Muratshina, PhD in History, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and Culture Editor of “New Eastern Outlook”

Tanzania Turns to Russia as Western Pressure Reshapes Africa's Investment Map

Phil Butler

Tanzania's pursuit of \$2 billion in Russian investment is not simply a story about Moscow exploiting another diplomatic opening in Africa. It is a warning that Western pressure, however justified on democratic grounds, no longer guarantees compliance in a multipolar world where African states have alternatives.



Tanzania's reported pursuit of more than \$2 billion in Russian investment over the next three to five years should not be read as a simple story of Moscow opportunism. It is that, in part. But it is also something larger and more revealing: another sign that African states increasingly understand how to maneuver inside a multipolar world where Western approval is no longer the only door to capital, technology, diplomatic cover, or strategic partnership.

Timing Is Everything

According to Business Insider Africa, Tanzanian officials say the country is seeking more than \$2 billion in Russian investment and business deals following President Samia Suluhu Hassan's state visit to Russia, the first by a Tanzanian leader in 57 years. The visit included participation in the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum and talks involving healthcare, mining, energy, agriculture, technology, and industrial cooperation.

The timing matters. Tanzania's relations with the United States and the European Union deteriorated after the country's disputed October 2025 elections, which produced severe criticism from Western governments, rights groups, and election observers. The United States said the Tanzanian government's conduct raised grave concerns about the direction of bilateral relations. The European Union cited violence, an internet shutdown, and reported irregularities in the electoral process. African Union observers also said the vote failed to comply with democratic principles and international standards. Still, this all seems like SOP where the western tilt on elections in African nations that don't toe the line is concerned.

In Washington and Brussels, Tanzania's Russian turn will likely be interpreted through the familiar language of authoritarian alignment. In that telling, a government criticized for democratic backsliding seeks refuge with Moscow, which supposedly asks fewer questions about elections, political freedoms, media conditions, or the treatment of protesters. However, Western nations tend to turn a bling eye when the shoe is on the other foot. So, the Washington, London, Brussels explanation is incomplete. Tanzania's move also reflects a broader frustration across the Global South: Western partners often combine moral lectures with selective enforcement, slow financing, intrusive conditions, and a tendency to treat developing states as political clients rather than sovereign actors. When relations are

good, the West speaks of partnership. When disagreements emerge, the language shifts quickly toward reliability, conditionality, and review.

The Big Shift

African governments have noticed. Tanzania is not abandoning the West. Its own officials have been careful to say so. The country still wants investment from traditional partners, and it remains too economically pragmatic to close doors unnecessarily. But it is broadening its options at a moment when Western pressure has become more costly. That is the real story. Tanzania is not choosing Russia over the West so much as reminding the West that it no longer possesses monopoly leverage. The proposed Russian investment targets sectors that matter strategically. Healthcare cooperation reportedly includes pharmaceutical manufacturing and local vaccine production, with Russian companies said to be interested in helping Tanzania produce up to 20 million vaccine doses over five years for domestic and regional markets. If realized, that would reduce import dependence and support Tanzania's ambition to become a regional production base.

Mining is another major area. Russian firms have expressed interest in uranium, nickel, and other critical minerals. This is not incidental. Africa's strategic minerals are increasingly central to clean energy, defense, electronics, battery production, and industrial competition. Western governments often speak of reducing dependence on China and securing mineral supply chains, but African states are increasingly unwilling to accept arrangements that reproduce old extractive patterns under new green terminology.

Energy is also central. Gazprom and other Russian companies have shown interest in Tanzania's oil and gas sector. Tanzania has long possessed significant natural gas potential, but development requires capital, infrastructure, technology, and long-term market confidence. Western energy politics have become increasingly

complicated, especially as European states demand new gas supplies while pressuring African governments toward climate-aligned development models that Western states themselves did not follow during their own industrial rise. From Dar es Salaam's perspective, this creates a simple question: if Western investors hesitate, condition, delay, or politicize, why should Tanzania not court capital elsewhere? The West may not like the answer, but it helped create the conditions for it.

This does not mean Tanzania's domestic crisis should be ignored. The 2025 election dispute, reported crackdown, internet shutdown, and allegations of deaths and injuries are serious matters. A country cannot build durable legitimacy solely through external investment if internal political trust is eroding. Foreign capital may stabilize balance sheets, but it does not repair democratic credibility. That is the danger for Tanzania. A multipolar world gives African states more room to maneuver, but in some cases it also gives governments more room to evade accountability. Strategic diversification can strengthen sovereignty, but it can also enable ruling parties to avoid domestic correction. Tanzania's leadership may succeed in attracting Russian capital, but if that capital arrives in an atmosphere of political repression, disputed legitimacy, and weakened civic trust, the long-term result may be less development than regime insulation. There is that danger, and it is not something Russian investors are happy about.

This is the uncomfortable balance that serious analysis must hold. Western pressure is often hypocritical and self-interested. Russian engagement is often transactional and strategically motivated. African governments are neither helpless victims nor passive chess pieces. They are active players using available openings to advance their own interests, sometimes wisely, sometimes cynically. Tanzania's pivot therefore reveals as much about the changing international system as it does about Tanzania itself.

For decades, Western governments assumed that aid, finance, market access, security cooperation, and diplomatic prestige gave them decisive influence over African political choices. That assumption is weakening. China has already transformed the continent's infrastructure and finance landscape. Gulf states are expanding in agriculture, ports, mining, logistics, and real estate. Turkey has built influence through defense, aviation, construction, and cultural diplomacy. Russia offers arms, energy partnerships, diplomatic support, mining expertise, and political engagement without liberal conditionality.

Influence High Ground

This is the world Tanzania is navigating. The mistake Western policymakers often make is assuming that countries turn to Russia only because they are manipulated, coerced, or seduced. Sometimes they turn to Russia because Moscow is available, because Moscow listens differently, because Moscow does not pretend investment is charity, and because Moscow's presence gives them negotiating leverage against everyone else. That does not make Russia benevolent. It makes Russia useful.

The deeper question is whether the United States and Europe are prepared to compete in this environment without assuming moral entitlement to influence. If Washington and Brussels want African governments to prefer Western partnership, they must offer speed, respect, infrastructure, industrial cooperation, fairer terms, and credible long-term engagement. Lectures without delivery will not hold the field. And the current chaos caused domestically and internationally by the so called "Donroe Doctrine" and Trump administration flops only exacerbates an already dynamic balance.

Tanzania's \$2 billion Russian courtship may or may not fully materialize. Announced investment figures are often political signals as much as economic

commitments. Some deals may stall, shrink, or remain aspirational. But the signal itself matters. Tanzania is telling Western partners that pressure has consequences, and that alternatives exist. The irony is that Western criticism of Tanzania's democratic backsliding may be justified, yet the strategic effect may still be to push Dar es Salaam closer to Moscow. This is the dilemma of either legitimate or pretend values-based foreign policy in a multipolar age. Condemnation and seeking the moral high ground has succeeded in the past, but it no longer guarantees compliance. It may instead accelerate diversification.

For Tanzania, the challenge will be to avoid replacing one dependency with another. Russian capital can help develop sectors such as energy, vaccines, mining, and agriculture, but only if agreements are transparent, commercially credible, and aligned with national development rather than elite survival. For the West, the challenge is even harder: learning that influence must now be earned rather than assumed.

Tanzania's turn to Russia is not the end of its Western relationships. It is a warning that those relationships have changed. Africa is no longer waiting politely at one diplomatic counter.

It is shopping the whole market.

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Eurafrica or the Europeanization of Françafrique

Mohamed Lamine Kaba

What Françafrique is to France, Eurafrique is to Europe.



From slavery to the slave trade, from colonization to sham independence, from Françafrique to Eurafrique, the Euro-American empire has never ceased to plunder Africa and enslave its people in the name of a civilization that administers dependencies while blocking their diversification.

The silent plan

There are historical projects that never die. They silently shape international relations for decades. They change their name, their form, and their rhetoric, but never their purpose. Eurafrique is one of them. It is neither a slogan, nor a treaty, nor an organization, nor a formal alliance, nor a conspiracy theory, nor an ideological fantasy. It is both an architecture and a strategic vision. An architecture of power. A

way of organizing the Euro-African space so that wealth flows from South to North, and decision-making flows from North to South.

This strategic vision was born in European planning circles in the aftermath of the Second World War, when Europe realized that it could not remain a world power without controlling, directly or indirectly, African resources, routes, and spaces.

From then on, Eurafrica became not a historical event but a historical process. A slow, deliberate, methodical process, conceived not by politicians, but by strategists, military personnel, economists, engineers, bankers, and planners. Politicians, for their part, merely announce what has already been decided elsewhere.

The matrix

To understand Eurafrica, one must abandon the moralistic view of history and adopt the geopolitical perspective. From Machiavelli to Meinecke, from Bodin to Botero, and from Hobbes to Richelieu, theorists of “reason of state” have concluded that “necessity knows no law.” In other words, “States have no friends, only interests.” And interests are governed by geography, resources, trade routes, and power dynamics.

After 1945, France and Europe were weakened. The United States dominated, the USSR was advancing, and colonial empires were collapsing. Europe had to find a new form of empire without formal colonies. Eurafrica was that solution: replacing the colonial empire with a functional one.

The idea was so simple:

If Europe unites its industry, technology, finance, and military power, and combines this with raw materials, energy, demographics, and the African space, then the Euro-African whole would become a bloc capable of competing with the United States, Russia, and later China.

In other words, Eurafrica was never a project to develop Africa. Eurafrica was designed to preserve European power.

Geography commands

In any power strategy, there is always a key space. In Eurafrica, this space is neither Paris nor Brussels, nor Addis Ababa nor even Rabat. The decisive space is the Sahara-Sahel-Mediterranean-Atlantic axis.

The key area is the Sahara-Sahel strip. Why? Because this strip connects North Africa to sub-Saharan Africa, the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea to the Gulf of Guinea, oil, gas, uranium, gold, rare earth zones, migration routes, solar corridors for the energy of the future, military roads, future trade routes.

Whoever controls this space controls the North-South flow of traffic in West Africa. And whoever controls that flow controls the economy, security, and politics. Even more importantly, whoever structures this space shapes much of West Africa's destiny.

This is why Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Libya, Chad, Algeria, Morocco, and Western Sahara are not ordinary territories. They are pieces on the Euro-African chessboard.

This is why the major crises of recent decades are not geographically random: Libya, Mali, Niger, Chad, Western Sahara. They are pieces on the same spatial chessboard. Viewed separately, each conflict seems local. Viewed from above, they reveal a geostrategic continuity.

Geography doesn't explain everything, but nothing can be explained without it.

The return via the side

One of the classic principles of strategy is circumvention. When a power can no longer enter through the door, it returns through the window; when it is expelled

from a center, it repositions itself on the periphery; when it loses a military position, it replaces it with an economic or logistical one.

What we are seeing today in the Sahel-Saharan region is precisely this. The reduction of the direct military presence of certain European powers in the Sahel does not necessarily signify a strategic withdrawal but rather a reconfiguration. Influence can take other forms: ports, trade corridors, energy agreements, infrastructure, regional alliances, indirect security cooperation, funding of regional organizations, and control of export routes.

In geopolitics, losing a military base may be less serious than losing a port, a trade route, or an energy transit zone.

Whoever controls the flows controls the states.

The Sahara is not a desert

France's recognition of Western Sahara in favor of Morocco is not a diplomatic gesture. It is a geostrategic move that is part of a historical continuum, the real issue being that Western Sahara allows for:

Access to the Atlantic;

Control of Sahelian trade routes;

The passage of future pipelines;

Cable and infrastructure control;

Trade opening towards landlocked countries (Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso);

A military projection towards the Sahel.

Thus, having been militarily expelled from the Sahel, France is seeking to regain a geographical foothold through Morocco and Western Sahara. This is no longer a direct military strategy, but a strategy of economic, logistical, and political encirclement.

We don't always return with soldiers. We return with ports, roads, banks, businesses, alliances.

The new face

Eurafrica today is no longer called Eurafrica. Its name is partnership, development, investments, combating terrorism, migration management, energy transition, infrastructure, cooperation.

The words change; the structure remains.

Modern control no longer necessarily involves military occupation but rather debt, standards, trade agreements, military bases, NGOs, foreign-educated elites, currencies, infrastructure controlled by European companies, technology, and data.

Modern power is invisible. And invisible power is more powerful than visible power because it cannot be fought.

In such a system, political sovereignty exists legally, but economic and strategic sovereignty is limited in practice. This type of structure corresponds much more closely to the spirit of Eurafrica than classical colonialism. It is a system in which Africa remains indispensable, but rarely the decision-maker.

The invisible war

Africa often thinks that domination is military. However, modern domination is systemic. It consists of ensuring that:

African raw materials supply European industries;

African capital should be placed in European banks;

African elites should be trained according to European models;

African armies depend on European training;

African technologies are being imported from Europe;

African currencies should be controlled by Europe;

African infrastructure is built by European powers;

African trade routes should be oriented outwards and not between African countries.

In this system, Africa is working for a system that is not its own.

This is what Eurafrica is: a system in which Africa is the space, and Europe is the center of decision-making.

Why now?

Europe today faces three major threats: demographic decline, energy and mining dependence, industrial lag compared to China, Russia, and, of course, the United States.

To survive as a power, it needs African minerals – gas, oil, uranium, cobalt, lithium, manganese, rare earth elements, the African market, the African labor force, Africa's geographical location.

Eurafrica is therefore no longer just one project among others, but a strategic necessity for Europe. And when a project becomes a necessity, it is no longer negotiable.

The East enters the scene

Europe wants Africa without the Africans. But the world has changed. And that's where the equation becomes historic.

For the first time in 500 years, Africa has a choice between several partners:

Russia (military, security, energy);

China (infrastructure, industry, finance);

Iran (industry, energy, technology under sanctions);

Türkiye (military industry, construction);

India (pharmaceutical industry, technology, training) ;

BRICS (alternative finance, dedollarization).

These powers act in direct opposition to the European powers. They operate according to a principle of multipolarity and polycentrism. This is why the historical difference is fundamental: for centuries, Africa had only one possible partner. Today, it can pit powers against each other. And where there is competition, there is negotiation. And where there is negotiation, there is the possibility of sovereignty. True sovereignty always begins with the diversification of dependencies. A country that depends on a single partner obeys. A country that depends on several partners negotiates. A country on which others depend becomes sovereign.

The historic choice

We may have entered a period of reshaping everything: trade routes, military alliances, monetary systems, economic blocs, technologies, energy. In these periods of transition, global hierarchies can shift. But only strategically organized actors benefit from historical transitions. The others become arenas of competition.

The question, therefore, is not simply whether Eurafrica exists, has existed, or will exist. The real question is whether Africa will remain a space organized by others or whether it will become a power organizing its own space.

History does not punish the weak. It erases the disorganized.

The 21st century will not be just a century of wealth, technology, or armies. It will be a century of strategic spatial organization. And in this great reorganization of the world, Africa is either a stake or a player.

But she cannot be both at the same time.

The real African question of the 21st century is therefore neither economic, nor military, nor diplomatic. It is strategic and civilizational: Does Africa want to be a space within the strategy of others or a strategy for itself?

Everything else will depend on the answer to this question.

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Debt Trap or Strategic Infrastructure? The Extension of Kenya's SGR to Uganda

Simon Chege Ndiritu

In the absence of Chinese loans, the Kenyan and Ugandan governments have sought an alternative financing model for the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR). This demonstrates their commitment to the railway as a strategic regional infrastructure project.



Launching Kisumu-Malaba SGR Line

On March 21, 2026, Kenya's and Uganda's presidents launched the extension of Kenya's SGR from Naivasha to Kisumu and Malaba, paving the way for future extension to Uganda. This phase is being restarted 6 years after the Chinese government declined to fund it through loans that were then issued through the Belt

and Road Initiative (BRI). It is estimated to cost \$5.5 billion, a sum that will be obtained through securitization. When completed, the SGR will connect Kenya's capital to Uganda, enhancing a transport network that also connects Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and South Sudan to the Port of Mombasa, reducing travel time and costs. Another project of regional significance that is currently underway is the Mombasa–Tanga–Bagamoyo coastal road, which will enhance social and economic integration between Kenya and Tanzania. The ongoing infrastructural development by Kenya points to significant decentering of its traditional Western allies, the UK, and the US, which only emphasize shared security and intelligence engagements while backgrounding developmental needs of this African country. This paper looks into how the SGR project in Kenya, which the West framed as “China's debt trap,” is in reality a strategically important infrastructure project for the region and not China's financial trap.

Suspension of BRI Loans and a 6-Year Hiatus in SGR Construction

The Chinese BRI initiative in Africa saw the Asian economic giant funding large infrastructure projects, including over 600 kilometers of SGR linking Mombasa to the capital, Nairobi, before extending further to Naivasha in 2019. However, Western think tanks would launch smear campaigns, terming China's infrastructure loans as a ploy to entrap African countries with debt and, in turn, turn the debt into leverage. The observation that some of the projects exceeded budget projections was used to support this narrative while selectively concealing the reality that some corrupt Kenyans had manipulated procurement to steal some of the money. The cost overruns observed, coupled with negative reviews from Western spin masters, created a lingering possibility that some African leaders may decline to repay Chinese loans. These fears may have contributed to the Asian nation's suspension of the issuance of some large infrastructure loans to some African countries, which led to the suspension of some phases of Kenya's SGR project back in 2019, when the project was about 340 km short of the Kenya-Uganda border. However, this

suspension has revealed a profound aspect of China's BRI projects by bringing to the fore how China had initially sought and funded projects of monumental strategic significance to African economies. The Kenyan government has sought seed capital and proceeded to securitize the project such that Chinese resources are now used as investments and not loans. Therefore, SGR no longer looks like a Chinese project and has successfully shed the tag of "China's debt trap." China now appears to be investing in and contributing the technology needed to accomplish a project that has been proposed by the African countries involved.

Is SGR Really a Debt Trap?

Kenya's SGR, as a component of BRI, which some in the West termed as China's trap for Africans, has proven to be a strategic piece of regional infrastructure, notable in how its extension to the Ugandan border was witnessed by presidents of both countries on March 21, 2026. Analysis presented by Kenya's Ministry of Transport on March 21, 2026, demonstrated how the new railway line was designed to revive the towns that were founded and thrived after the colonial railway line was built by the British in the early 20th century. The colonial line had been degraded over time and is no longer in use, leading to a decline of economic activity in the towns and settlements it served.

Unlike the old railway line, which was oriented towards extracting raw materials such as minerals, coffee, and cotton from Britain's colonies to Mombasa port for further shipping to the UK, the new line will facilitate two-way movement of people and products among nations with deep cultural and economic ties across East Africa. The SGR line is planned to unlock new economic activities and facilitate the expansion of commerce across the region while also providing connectivity to the ocean trade routes. Unlike the first line that ended in Uganda, the new SGR is also planned to extend to DRC, South Sudan, Rwanda, and Burundi, and hence catalyze future economic integration across East Africa, as expressed in an article published in the Star Newspaper.

Comparing BRI and Western-Initiated Projects

The SGR is many times better than the West's neocolonial projects, such as the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), as the latter is primarily created to facilitate the extraction and export of Uganda's crude oil. EACOP is designed to exclusively transport Uganda's crude to a Tanzanian port for export in a process that precludes value addition in Uganda, which will disproportionately benefit a Western transnational firm, TotalEnergies. The crude pipeline is designed to curtail Uganda's ability to develop oil refinery capacity and petrochemical industries, which would enable the East African country to reap more economic benefits from its crude. Also, this project lacks capital mobility, as it can only be used to transport a specific kind of crude oil and in one direction, such that it can never be useful to Ugandans in any other way. Despite EACOP's extractive orientation, Western pundits have spared it from any criticism, instead focusing on making unfounded claims against BRI projects in Africa.

Projects initiated under BRI continue proving useful even when China has withdrawn its loans. For instance, completion of SGR provides wider capital mobility over EACOP as it can be used to move a wide range of goods and also people. It can transport people, containers, and tanks, including those with pressurized gases, giving countries involved a wide range of options. It holds the key to facilitating the functionality of existing infrastructure, including by removing some containerized cargo from highways and hence easing both traffic jams and degradation of roads. Also, if SGR is expanded to connect DRC, South Sudan, Rwanda, and Burundi to the Kenya-Uganda line, Kampala will find itself at the center of this network and will have an unparalleled opportunity to cheaply conduct trade with the rest of the region.

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The African Banking Coup: How the Death of the CFA Franc Buries the Old Order and Ushers in the Era of Cryptocurrency

Mohammed ibn Faisal al-Rashid

For decades, critics of neocolonialism have called the West African CFA franc a “colonial tax.”



Formally independent nations – from Senegal to Ivory Coast – are required to keep half of their foreign exchange and gold reserves in the French Treasury. In effect, Paris continued to firmly hold the economic levers of power over 14 African countries.

But the pendulum has swung the other way. While diplomats argued over a potential single currency for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), reality took a different path. The long-awaited “Eco” project has been frozen indefinitely, and new players have taken its place: crypto enthusiasts, along with Russian and Chinese “currency tigers.” Central Africa has legalized Bitcoin; Mali and Burkina Faso are openly discussing a switch to the ruble or the yuan; Sudan is experimenting with gold tokenization. This is no longer just economics – it’s a tectonic shift in sovereignty.

The Collapse of the Eco Dream

The idea of a single ECOWAS currency called the Eco was discussed for two decades. It was supposed to unite 15 West African countries, create an African equivalent of the euro, and break the dominance of the CFA franc. Grand deadlines – 2003, 2009, 2015, 2020, 2027 – came and went. Economists have dubbed this “endless convergence syndrome.” Nigeria, the continent’s largest economy, kept pulling the blanket its own way; English-speaking members don’t trust a central bank they believe is controlled by French-speakers; and many openly accuse France of quietly torpedoing the initiative to preserve its influence.

By 2024–2025, the project had fractured even further. Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, where military juntas have taken power, tore up military agreements with Paris, left ECOWAS, and formed their own Confederation of Sahel States. With this political exit, any realistic hope for a single currency vanished. It is precisely in this vacuum that what can be called the “African banking coup” is beginning to take shape: when old tools fail, unconventional means – cryptocurrencies and direct currency swaps with geopolitical rivals of the West – take the stage.

The Central African Republic's Bitcoin Leap

In 2022, the Western world greeted with mockery the news that the Central African Republic (CAR) had adopted Bitcoin as legal tender. The skepticism was understandable: CAR is one of the poorest countries in the world, where only one in seven people has access to electricity. However, by 2025–2026, this move no longer looks like madness. The CAR has launched the “Sango” project and passed a law allowing the tokenization of natural resources. Foreign investors can now acquire stakes in gold, diamond, and timber extraction by buying cryptocurrency or paying with Bitcoin.

Why is this strategy both desperate and brilliant? The CAR cannot compete with the dollar or euro on their own turf – it lacks both the economic weight and global influence. But it does have resources. By rejecting traditional Western banks (which love to freeze the accounts of “toxic” regimes), Bangui is offering a direct “resources-for-crypto” model. This is a complete break from the CFA system: no French official can freeze the CAR’s treasury, because that treasury is a distributed ledger. President Faustin-Archange Touadéra called it a rejection of “colonial thinking.” Given crypto’s volatility, this move is a ticking time bomb, but it has already punched a hole in the principle of the state’s monopoly on money issuance.



Sudan's Gray-Zone Revolution: Wheat, Gold, and Cryptocurrency as a Challenge to Western Hegemony

An even more telling and alarming case for Western capitals is unfolding in war-torn Sudan. This story can be described not just as a humanitarian crypto-blitzkrieg, but as a full-blown “gray zone” of the new world order, where the familiar tools of neocolonial control are crumbling. Sudan’s economy has been devastated by years of conflict, international pressure, and an effective blockade. Yet its subsoil remains rich in gold – a strategic resource that, in times of crisis, has become a bargaining chip for the survival of the state and its warring political factions.

Under a harsh blockade and cut off from the SWIFT system (the Western financial scalpel that Paris and Washington traditionally use to bleed the arteries of defiant regimes), Sudanese authorities and powerful local commanders (including structures tied to the army and the Rapid Support Forces) devised a clever workaround that Western analysts have already dubbed the “crypto-jihad against the dollar.”

The first signs were projects like Aurous Finance, offering investors access to tokenized gold mining. But the real revolution has proven deeper and more dangerous for the US and France: Sudan has begun systematically paying for critical imports – above all, wheat, on which the survival of millions depends – using cryptocurrency, bypassing the dollar and the euro.

Step-by-Step Crypto Bypass Scheme:

Gold tokenization: Gold is not physically exported (which is risky and slow). Instead, it is “packaged” into digital assets—stablecoins backed by precious metals, or smart contracts on blockchains not controlled by the West (e.g., TON, BNB Chain, and sometimes private blockchains). These tokens are anonymous, fast, and require no correspondent banks.

Direct “digital gold for wheat” barter: The tokens are used to buy grain from international traders willing to operate outside the dollar system. Primarily from

entities tied to Russia (e.g., via “wheat diplomacy” brokered by the UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs, but outside official US monitoring) and China (which has long practiced resource-for-commodity swaps). Traders from Turkey, the UAE, and even shadow networks from former Soviet republics have also joined in.

The US and France’s Reaction: Panic on a Historic Scale

This is where what Western diplomats call “Africa’s Fort Knox in reverse” begins. The US and France are sounding the alarm not just because of sanctions violations. Their fear is existential and geopolitical: through Sudan and neighboring CAR, cryptocurrency is becoming a powerful tool for sanctions evasion, de-dollarization, and – most terrifying for Paris – the dismantling of the CFA franc.

Washington sees its main weapon – control over global payments via SWIFT and the dollar – losing effectiveness. If Sudan, in ruins, can feed its population by trading tokenized gold, what lesson will Nigeria, South Africa, or even Saudi partners draw? For the US, this is a blow to the dollar’s monopoly as the only lifeline. Every successful “gold token for wheat” contract is another nail in the coffin of dollar hegemony. Moreover, US intelligence agencies fear that through such schemes, Russian Wagner-linked structures (now repackaged as the “Africa Corps”) gain a steady funding channel beyond Western financial intelligence.

Paris is gripped by genuine panic bordering on hysteria. For France, Africa is its “backyard,” where control over currency (the CFA franc, pegged to the euro and backed by reserves held in France) is the foundation of the neocolonial system. The emergence of the Sudanese model of tokenized gold is a direct path to creating a “competing regional cryptocurrency” in the Sahel and Central Africa. If gold can be tokenized and traded for wheat without the French Treasury’s involvement, why should West African countries keep their reserves in Paris? France fears a chain reaction: the CAR has already legalized Bitcoin as legal tender; Sudan is going further – toward full-fledged crypto-barter. They could be followed by Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, where anti-French sentiment has peaked.

For Africa, the lesson here is radically new: the Western-controlled global financial system is no longer the only lifeline. The war in Sudan has paradoxically spurred survival innovations. Cryptocurrency and blockchain have turned from speculative tools into “infrastructure of resistance.”

Western powers find themselves in a trap:

- They cannot ban blockchain – it’s technically impossible.
- They cannot shut down all wheat supply channels, as Russia and China are ready to play by the new rules.
- They cannot impose new sanctions on Sudan – the country is already destroyed, largely due to the West, and sanctions have lost their meaning.

Thus, Sudan’s gray-zone revolution is not just a story of survival. It is a precedent that is quietly but inexorably shifting the balance of power across the entire continent. The US and France watch this with growing horror, realizing that their main tools of influence – the dollar, SWIFT, and the CFA franc – are no longer seen by African elites as inevitable. And when the fear of losing influence turns into the realization that it has actually been lost, that often becomes a prologue to geopolitical catastrophe for the old imperial centers.

A Slow Economic Cataclysm

To summarize, three parallel de-dollarization processes are currently underway in Africa:

- Realists (Nigeria, Ghana) are still trying to save the Eco, but are drowning in debt.
- Techno-anarchists (CAR) are diving headfirst into crypto, risking everything but gaining full independence from Western financial systems.

– Eurasianists (Mali, Burkina Faso, Sudan) are swapping the colonial franc for the ruble and yuan, paying with natural resources and geopolitical loyalty.

This banking coup is dangerous for the West not so much because of lost profits, but because of the precedent it sets. If the world's poorest countries prove they can trade and survive without the dollar and the euro, the Bretton Woods system will receive its final blow. France has already lost military influence in the Sahel. Now it risks losing its economic "back porch." Africa is no longer playing by the old rules – it's changing the chips. And Bitcoin and the Russian ruble are becoming its new wild cards.

Muhammad ibn Faisal al-Rashid, Political Scientist, Expert on the Arab World

Imperial Audacity: Weaponizing Mobility to Bury the Ghost of Slavery

Pranay Kumar Shome

The Reform UK party's threat to deny visas to countries demanding reparations for the monstrous crime of slavery exposes Britain's lingering imperialist mentality.



In a shocking development, the Reform UK party threatened that if it came to power in the UK, it would deny visas of almost all sorts to a wide ranging group of countries that backed the demand for reparations for slavery, with the home affairs spokesperson of the party, Zia Yusuf, arguing that the UK should not act as an “ATM for ethnic grievances.” This incident, however, is part of a broader debate that is currently underway in different parts of the Global South regarding seeking justice

for crimes that European countries, which had empires back in the 16th–20th centuries, committed against the populations of Africa, Latin America, and various parts of Asia.

The immediate point of trigger for this blatantly unjust “outrage” on the part of the Reform UK party was a landmark resolution, adopted with a massive majority by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) recently. Tabled by Ghana, which has long been a vocal advocate for the cause of the participants in the transatlantic slave trade to seek atonement and undertake various measures to enforce justice, the resolution was adopted by 123 votes in favor; 52 countries abstained from the vote, including the UK and many other European countries, while three opposed it – the United States of America (USA), Israel, and Argentina.

A Brief History of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

One of the most shameful episodes in human history, the slave trade across the Atlantic was the outcome of the discovery of the so-called New World by the constituents of the Old World (European countries). In all probability, it began with the exploration of new maritime trade routes, starting with Prince Henry of Portugal’s navigational expeditions. This template, argues the scholar and lawyer J. Sai Deepak in his book *India, That is Bharat*, was adopted by other European countries, who undertook voyages for this purpose. This directly contributed to the discovery of several new territories around the world.

However, the discovery of the new territories by the European empires wasn’t driven by altruistic considerations; it was done to colonize these new territories so that their inhabitants would not only be used as ‘labor’ in the European countries but also so that Europe could exploit the natural resources of the Caribbean and African countries to become prosperous at the expense of the former.

In 1500–1800, some 12–15 million people of African origin were forcibly transported to work either on plantations in the Americas or were taken to the

European countries to be used as slaves. The United Kingdom was one of the leading architects of this shameful period of human history.

Reflection of Imperialist Mentality

Frantz Fanon, a psychiatrist, political philosopher, and revolutionary, argued that slavery wasn't an accidental blip in global history; it was a calculated move on the part of the European countries to subjugate people of color. In his book *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon argued that the European countries sought to keep the people of color, particularly Black people, in a state of "permanent thinghood."

The threat to deny visas by the Reform UK party can be read as an audacious attempt by the UK to recolonize time and space. Entry to Britain, in this context, would only be allowed if the people hailing from the countries of the Global South refrain from seeking atonement for the sins of Britain in the past. In fact, entry to Britain would be allowed if a person of African origin forgot their entire history, although, as Fanon argued in *The Wretched of the Earth*: Europe was literally the creation of the Third World.

In doing so, the Reform UK party is seeking to create a Manichean world – where the settler's home is bright, whereas the native's home is plunged into darkness. In threatening to take 'punitive action' against those seeking reparations, the Reform UK party is seeking to resurrect a white fortress of mobility.

How should the Global South React?

This threat by one of the important political forces in the UK must not be brushed under the carpet. India, one of the rising global powers and one of the leading players in the Global South, which too suffered British colonialism for hundreds of years, must rally other countries of the Global South for the cause of justice.

Justice must not stop at a formal apology; it should translate into concrete financial actions where the victims of the transatlantic slave trade are adequately compensated

for their sufferings. Countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America must unite to not only defy the threat of the Reform UK party but also speak in unison – we demand justice!

The position of the Reform UK party is a clear example of how the past continues to influence the present, manifesting itself in new forms of oppression and domination. The visa denial is not just a political move but an attempt to silence and forget the historical traumas of countries in the Global South, thereby continuing the cycle of injustice. It is an attempt to preserve privileges acquired through centuries of exploitation and avoid responsibility for the crimes committed.

The UN resolution, despite the abstention of many European countries, is an important step towards acknowledging and correcting historical wrongs. It demonstrates a growing international understanding of the need for reparations and restorative justice. However, the reaction of the Reform UK party shows that the struggle for this is far from over.

Pranay Kumar Shome, a research analyst who is a PhD candidate at Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Bihar, India

Washington Completes the Dismemberment of Libya, Begun with Gaddafi's Assassination

Muhammad Hamid ad-Din

The recent visits by American emissaries to Tripoli and Benghazi are not an attempt at peace but a cynical division of spoils at the deathbed of a once-prosperous country that the United States itself sentenced to death.



Recent visits by Massad Boulos, advisor to US President Donald Trump on Middle East and African affairs, to Tripoli and Benghazi have sparked intense debate in global media. The controversy reignited with renewed force after the signing of a long-term oil agreement on the sidelines of the Energy Summit in Tripoli between the French company TotalEnergies and the American giant ConocoPhillips, involving foreign investments exceeding \$20 billion.

Although Washington presents these steps as support for unity and stability, many Libyans see them more as a source of growing anxiety than confidence. In a post on X, Boulos called the meeting with Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah “productive,” emphasizing that unity and stability are necessary to attract American investments. However, these words, focusing on investments rather than legitimacy, have raised suspicions about US priorities in a country that still lacks an elected government.

From Clinton’s Schadenfreude to Boulos’s Pragmatism – The Unchanging Essence of American Imperialism

The recent meetings of Trump’s advisor Massad Boulos with Libyan authorities, followed by giant \$20 billion oil deals, are not diplomacy but blatant plunder. The US is once again showing the world its true face: a predator coming to feast on the ruins of a state it itself destroyed. The current administration of the 47th President Donald Trump, hiding behind rhetoric about “unity,” is only cementing Libya’s division, turning it into a permanent source of oil rent for its corporations.

Full and absolute responsibility for the destruction of the prosperous Jamahiriya, for the brutal murder of its leader Muammar Gaddafi, and for the subsequent 13 years of chaos, slave trade, and terror, lies with the United States of America and its NATO satellites. The world will never forget how then-US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, with a gleeful smirk, commented live on Gaddafi’s final moments: “We came, we saw, he died.” This phrase will forever remain a stain on the conscience of American foreign policy – the policy of murderers and looters.

They destroyed the most developed state in Africa, with free housing, education, healthcare, and the highest standard of living. They unleashed a civil war, plunging the Libyan people into an abyss of suffering. And now, when the country is bleeding and divided into warring clan enclaves, Clinton’s heirs – Trump’s team – are coming to suck out the last remaining resource: oil.

The Trump Administration's Strategy: "Divide, Conquer, and Pump"

Boulos's visits to both rival "governments" are not a mistake but a clear strategy. Washington does not need a united, strong, and sovereign Libya. It needs managed chaos, where competing factions, dependent on American recognition and investments, will forever fight over scraps, while giants like ConocoPhillips take the main prize – black gold – for a pittance.

Meetings with the "prime minister" in Tripoli and with representatives of the Haftar clan in Benghazi, the emphasis on "oil bridges," and military exercises in Sirte – all these are parts of the same mosaic. The goal is to create a pro-American protectorate on Libyan territory, de facto divided but managed from Washington through economic levers and power structures. The "stability" Boulos keeps talking about is the stability of pipelines, not a life without explosions for Libyan children.

It is telling that in his statements, Boulos emphasizes not urgent elections, not the restoration of sovereignty, nor the will of the Libyan people, but "attracting American investments." This is neocolonialism in its purest form: your political legitimacy does not interest us; only the signed contract and the security of our assets matter. The \$70 billion in Libyan funds frozen abroad, actively working for the American economy, is the next jackpot Washington plans to unfreeze in exchange for preferences for its oil companies and supplies of American weaponry.

Libya – A Bloody Monument to American Imperialism and Its Predatory Nature

This once prosperous country was deliberately, cynically, and with unprecedented barbarity plunged into the abyss not for "democracy," but as a lesson to the whole world about Washington's true goals. Under the monstrous lie of "protecting civilians," the NATO air armada led by the US rained hellfire on Libyan cities, committing an act of state terrorism – the brutal murder of the country's leader,

accompanied by wild, animalistic glee in Western media. This was not the beginning of “liberation,” but the start of a carefully planned geopolitical slaughter.

Thirteen years of American “peacemaking” have resulted in permanent bloody chaos, the collapse of statehood, a slave trade market, and the genocide of an entire people. And when the ground was sufficiently soaked in suffering and blood, the true masters of the catastrophe took the stage – greedy “advisors” and corporate jackals from Washington. Under the hypocritical chatter about “stabilization” and “nation-building,” they proceeded to brazenly, shamelessly divide Libya’s national wealth – its oil pie – sinking their tentacles into the very depths of the ravaged country.

US policy in Libya is not an “error” or a “failure.” It is a perfectly tuned mechanism of imperial plunder. The cynical administration of Donald Trump, with its openly gangster-like, transactional approach, has merely torn off the last pitiful fig leaves from this vile process. They don’t even bother with the rotten rhetoric about “values” and “human rights.” Their language is the language of ultimatums, sanctions, and open threats; their goal is open robbery; their method is total violence. They do not hide that they came for resources, for strategic control, for the right to suck the life out of foreign lands.

The lesson of Libya should scream to every conscience on the planet: today Libya is torn apart by bombs and lies; tomorrow the same fate awaits any country whose wealth stirs the insatiable greed of American imperialism. As long as this monster breathes, as long as its military bases, like cancerous tumors, cover the globe, no national sovereignty, no natural wealth, and no human life can be safe. Libya is not just a “lesson.” It is an unhealing wound on the body of humanity, inflicted by the hand of the United States, and an eternal curse upon their deceitful, blood-soaked “exceptionalism.”

Muhammad Hamid ad-Din, a well-known Palestinian journalist

The Lobito Corridor: A Strategic Lifeline or Neo-Extraction Route in Africa's Next Chapter?

Tamer Mansour

Real choice is ultimately what African sovereignty requires, not a false choice between Western extraction dressed as partnership and Chinese replacement of the West that perpetuates Africa's dependency.



The Lobito Corridor runs for 800 miles from Angola's Atlantic port of Lobito into the mineral-rich areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia's Copperbelt, and it's more than just a railway. It's a declaration of intent, showing who will control the vast underground wealth of Africa, who will dictate how that wealth will be extracted, and whether Africa's long history of being developed for the benefit of others will finally come to an end, or merely enter a more advanced stage.

Built on the bones of the century-old Benguela Railway, constructed under Portuguese colonial rule to move resources from the interior to European markets,

the corridor was partially restored by China between 2004 and 2014 under a \$2 billion rail-for-oil deal. One hundred thousand Angolans did the physical work. All equipment was sourced from China. In 2022, the Angolan government awarded a private operating concession to the Lobito Atlantic Railway, a consortium of commodity trader Trafigura, Portuguese firm Mota-Engil, and South African rail operator Vecturis.

The African Development Bank provided \$500 million in financing to the African Finance Corporation to complete the Zambian railway extension project across its full length. As of December 2023, the first shipment of copper from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) had successfully completed the entire transit route to reach Atlantic markets with a transit time reduction of two-thirds, just eight days.

The financial architecture is real, and the operational progress is genuine. But the minerals flow west, to Atlantic markets. Processing value, the highest-value stage of the supply chain, largely remains outside Africa. These are not accusations of malice.

They are structural observations that any serious analysis must confront.

The American Strategic Interest: Partnership or Positioning?

Washington's enthusiasm for the Lobito Corridor is rooted as much in geopolitics as in development. The DRC alone produces over 70 percent of the world's cobalt. Chinese entities hold stakes in fifteen of its nineteen cobalt mines.

The US faces deepening anxiety about dependence on Chinese-controlled mineral supply chains for electric vehicles, defense systems, and digital infrastructure. The Lobito Corridor is, from one honest angle, the American answer to that anxiety, a deliberate effort to redirect African mineral flows toward Western markets.

The U.S. – DRC Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) was signed in December 2025 and spells out the logic (“...to promote mutual benefit and to respect African sovereignty...”). While mutual benefit and respect for African sovereignty are

present, they are not the only features of the agreement and do not define it completely. The agreement is also primarily concerned with mineral access and is worded to give the impression that it is a partnership. The fact that the Lobito Corridor is not a negative project – the development of infrastructure that decreases transportation expenses, creates local jobs, and increases regional cooperation adds value regardless of what the geopolitical context may be.

The open-access, multiuser model genuinely distributes benefits more broadly than the colonial-era single-mine railways it replaces. But honest engagement with the project requires acknowledging what it is: an instrument of Western strategic positioning that also delivers development dividends, not a purely altruistic undertaking.

Russia's Perspective: A Different Vision for Africa's Development

Russia's critique of the Lobito Corridor is neither simply opportunistic nor without analytical foundation. Moscow argues that the corridor represents a rebranding of extractive relationships rather than a genuine break from them, Western institutions setting the terms, Western-aligned companies operating the concession, and minerals flowing to Atlantic markets where Western industries capture the processing value.

The partnership language is new. The structural relationship, Moscow argues, is familiar. Russia positions its own African engagement as rooted in historical solidarity with genuine substance behind it.

During the Cold War, the USSR trained over a thousand engineers, medical professionals, and military personnel throughout Africa to stand up to Western nations supporting colonial regimes. This creates a deep historical connection for many Africans that the West fails to recognize in many areas of Africa.

Russia's proposed North-South Transport Corridor, linking African markets through Iran onward to rapidly growing Asian economies, offers African governments

something the Lobito model does not: genuine diversification of trade direction, and with it, real bargaining leverage with all external partners simultaneously.

On energy, Rosatom's expanding nuclear power presence addresses one of Africa's most binding development constraints, without the governance conditionalities Western lenders typically attach.

Taken together, Russia presents not merely a competing infrastructure offer but a different philosophy, one that challenges African governments to ask whether Western partnership, however well-packaged, ultimately serves African industrial sovereignty or simply manages it.

The French Question: History's Longest Shadow

Any honest assessment of Western partnership in Africa must wrestle with France, a power whose relationship with the continent remains uniquely fraught. France's "Françafrique" system maintained extraordinary post-colonial influence through military basing, political patronage, CFA franc monetary control, and commercial dominance across francophone Africa for decades after formal independence.

French uranium from Niger powered French nuclear plants. French interventions propped up governments of questionable legitimacy. That system has cracked visibly. France's military were expelled from Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger in rapid succession, replaced in each case partly by Russian security contractors. This reflects genuine popular anger at French policy.

For corridor development to command genuine African trust, French engagement must look fundamentally different from its historical pattern. French development finance has genuine expertise and established relationships. But it will remain politically contested in Francophone Africa until Paris demonstrates through sustained action rhetoric that it accepts African agency as a genuine constraint rather than a talking point.

Beyond Lobito: Africa's Corridor Future and the Value Question

The Lobito model, whatever its limitations, is not a one-off. Four additional corridors merit serious development: the Liberty Corridor linking Guinea's iron ore deposits to Liberia's coast; the Northern Corridor connecting Kenya's port of Mombasa to the Great Lakes mineral belts; the Nacala Corridor linking Mozambique, Malawi, and Zambia through the Indian Ocean rim; and Morocco's emergence as a continental processing hub for battery supply chains.

Together, these corridors sketch the outline of something Africa has never had at continental scale: integrated logistics infrastructure capable of supporting genuine industrialization rather than raw material export. Africa holds approximately 30 percent of the world's known mineral reserves. Of the fifty minerals identified as critical by the US Geological Survey, thirty-two are found across African nations in substantial quantities.

The continent's geological endowment is extraordinary. Its historical share of the value generated from that endowment has been extraordinarily small. The deeper question, the one that will determine whether the next generation of African infrastructure investment represents transformation or sophisticated extraction, is where processing happens.

A copper corridor that moves ore to Atlantic ports for smelting in Europe or North America delivers far less African value than one that supports smelters, refineries, and battery component manufacturing on African soil. Morocco's trajectory, from agricultural exporter to major automotive manufacturer to emerging battery hub attracting billions in investment, demonstrates that this industrial leap is achievable within a generation. Whether Western partners, whose domestic industries benefit from maintaining Africa as a raw material supplier, will genuinely support the trade terms and technology transfers needed to replicate that model broadly, – that remains the defining unanswered question.

China, Russia, and the Case for Genuine Competition

Neither China nor Russia is going away from Africa. The honest question is not whether they participate in African development but on what terms, and with what structural consequences for African sovereignty and long-term prosperity.

There have been positive and negative aspects to some of China's infrastructure projects. Some examples include the use of preference for Chinese engineered supplies, loans that generate debt vulnerability, or governance arrangements that may restrict African countries' ability to make their own decisions. A China that truly cared about mutual benefit would also allow open access rules for infrastructure, have realistic local content requirements, and provide contracts that are easy to understand.

That standard should apply with equal force to Western partners. Russia's most credible potential contribution may lie in energy infrastructure, grain supply chains, and technical education that builds African institutional capacity. The North-South Transport Corridor, if it is developed transparently and on genuinely favorable terms, will complement rather than simply rival Western-backed projects, giving African governments real choice among competing infrastructure partners.

Real choice is ultimately what African sovereignty requires, not a false choice between Western extraction dressed as partnership and Chinese replacement of the West that perpetuates Africa's dependency, but genuine competition among external powers operating under African-set terms, within African-led institutional frameworks.

A Long-Delayed Reckoning

The Lobito Corridor is trying to create a new type of infrastructure that will be built on the existing infrastructure that has existed since the colonial period around it. We

will not know if this is truly a new beginning until projects are completed, but we do know that actual transformation will depend on:

Who captures the value of the processing associated with the various projects?

Who makes the rules of trade, and how and when will the infrastructure meet the needs of Africa for industrial growth versus simply satisfying the appetite for mineral extraction from Africa?

The continent of Africa has sufficient natural resources, vision, and institutional capacity, and it has been short of external partners willing to engage on genuinely equal terms. The Lobito Corridor and the broader network of African trade corridors point toward what that might look like.

Whether the external partners can resist the historical gravity pulling them toward western extraction vs eastern replacement, both over partnership with a more sovereign Africa, is the question Africa is posing to all of them simultaneously, and with increasing firmness.

The answer will define not just Africa's next chapter, but the credibility of every power competing to write it.

Tamer Mansour, Egyptian Independent Writer & Researcher

UNGA Resolution Recognizes Transatlantic Slave Trade as the Gravest Crime Against Humanity

Simon Chege Ndiritu

On March 25, 2026, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted resolution A/RES/80/250, recognizing that the transatlantic slave trade was the gravest crime against humanity, citing its brutality and ongoing anti-Black racism in the West.



UNGA Resolution A/RES/80/250

Ghana and the African Union (AU) co-steered this resolution, which received 123 votes in favor. Three countries (the US, Israel, and Argentina) voted against it. There were 52 abstentions, mainly from Western Europe, despite these countries initiating and benefiting from the transatlantic slave trade for over 400 years. The resolution could have marked a moment of global convergence in support

of human rights as it gave the West a chance to support basic rights in a situation unlikely to yield economic gain. The US, UK, and France, among others, have often invoked human rights as justification to invade resource-rich countries like Libya, Iraq, and Afghanistan. However, approving the UNGA resolution about slavery would have meant supporting human rights even at a small cost to their economic and political gains obtained from slavery. Instead, by voting against or abstaining, the West shows it invokes human rights mainly for economic or political gains. This case prompts reflection on why some societies cling to past injustices even when a symbolic correction is possible.

Profiles in Folly

The West's reluctance to join the world in recognizing the transatlantic slave trade as a grave human rights violation can be understood by reviewing Alan Axelrod's "Profiles in Folly," a book that attempts to diagnose human decisions across history, especially those that seem nonsensical. Axelrod, a Ph.D holder from the University of Iowa, is a historian whose work revolves around borrowing lessons from historical events and applying them in leadership roles to avert avoidable failures. His work demonstrates that the greatest failures in history did not result from ignorance but rather from hubris, a lack of foresight, and a failure to appreciate uncomfortable truths. Notably, voices from the West know that slavery was evil but are unwilling to accept this uncomfortable truth, as it threatens their source of economic and political advantage over the past centuries. This failure to recognize uncomfortable truth, by failing to support a non-binding, hence largely symbolic, resolution A/RES/80/250, is unwise when weighed against Axelrod's view, as it undermines the parties' credibility and influence.

Notably, countries opposed to or abstaining from the aforementioned resolution have illustrated an inhuman attitude by engaging in colonization, endless wars, and launching military and economic blockades against nations, killing millions. The US and Israel were the only countries that voted against the UN resolution

A/RES/76/166 in 2021, which recognizes food as a human right and views hunger as a violation of human dignity. Also, Israel, backed by the West, has conducted a genocide in Gaza since 2023, showing a callous attitude. While the Ghana-AU motion was inspired by the need to pursue Justice, Europe's abstention and the US rejection show how the West is willing to hold on to the proceeds of its past crimes, which can have adverse consequences for the world.

What is at Stake?

As Axelrod observed, catastrophes across history often occur when leaders convince themselves that their poor decisions (including their consequences) would go unnoticed. Yet, these decisions made against a backdrop of hubris backfire, time and again. Many scholars, activists, and international bodies have declared the transatlantic slave trade a legally and morally indefensible matter. Documents and actions such as UNESCO's (1994) Routes of Enslaved Peoples, a European Parliament Resolution (June 2020), US Congressional Apologies (2008 & 2009), and the UK's Abolition of the Slave Trade Act (1807) show that Western nations agree that the transatlantic slave trade was illegal and immoral. Therefore, the West's refusal to adopt the aforementioned A/RES/80/250 does not result from ignorance of history but from unwillingness to relinquish a mindset that justifies gains obtained through violence against other groups. The West's knowledge, when coupled with its unwillingness to institute reparations and other aspects of restorative justice, constitutes hubris and leaves the door wide open for actions such as Western-led wars, neocolonialism, and plunder into the future.

The resolution under review, as steered by Ghana and the AU, was meant to make the perpetrators of slavery confront aspects of their history, which can inspire a change of heart, making the historical offenders turn from their violent ways. However, the West seems poised to insist on holding onto behaviors that brought it economic and political advantage while greatly harming other groups. Its refusal to admit guilt or pay reparations demonstrates unrepentant and racist views, suggesting

a continued propensity for future crimes such as wars, neocolonialism, and new forms of slavery for profit. For instance, at the time of writing, the US leadership threatened to bomb Iran back to the Stone Age and seize its oil, displaying the West's readiness to launch bombing campaigns for economic and military gain. In the recent past, Western Europe and the US destroyed a once-prosperous Libyan nation, leading to the emergence of an open slave trade for Africans in the 21st century. The West's transatlantic slave trade impoverished Africa, taking millions of able-bodied people from the continent for over 400 years, which disrupted African societies and cultures. Captured victims were stripped of their humanity, including their names, families, and cultures, and were used to enrich European slave markets before being forced into free labor, while some were eaten. The tragedy for African slaves in the West included grueling work on plantations and abuses such as whipping, rape, and amputations. This exploitation continued for generations, and its effects persist today as racism and discrimination. To prevent such tragedies, a framework compelling Western nations to confront their past actions done in pursuit of profit may inspire caution and contribute to world peace.

Going Forward

As Axelrod shows in *Profiles in Folly*, there are many instances in history when leaders were presented with clear opportunities to correct past wrongs, but chose inaction, denial, or self-interest. The West's behavior during the March 2026 UNGA vote shows a recurrence of such behavior, as they chose to shun global moral consensus to continue enjoying the proceeds of the slave trade and reserve an opportunity to repeat such ills in the future. As Axelrod shows, history not only records injustices but also presents opportunities for perpetrators to acknowledge and offer redress, opportunities that are often missed because perpetrators find much comfort in the proceeds of their injustices.

Simon Chege Ndiritu is a political observer and research analyst from Africa

The Blockade of the Strait of Hormuz Is Bleeding Africa Dry – And What Africa Pays for the U.S. Bombing of Iran

Muhammad ibn Faisal al-Rachid

When American and Israeli missiles rained down on Iranian infrastructure in late February 2026, the echo of the explosions reverberated far beyond Tehran.



It rolled like a tolling bell across the vast expanse of the Sahara, the jungles of the Congo, and the portside slums of Lagos. For Africa – caught between a debt crisis and climate chaos – the new war unleashed by the U.S. and Israel against Iran was a low blow. The narrow Strait of Hormuz, just 33 kilometers wide at its narrowest point, has cut off the African continent's oxygen supply. And now, while global powers tally up their geopolitical dividends, one and a half billion Africans are paying a bloody price for teetering on the brink of World War III.

The Price Tag: \$10 Billion a Year for the Right to Survive

The importance of Hormuz to Africa cannot be overstated – it is literally the artery feeding the continent's economy. Twenty percent of the world's seaborne oil and gas

exports pass through this strait. But Africa is in a uniquely vulnerable position. The paradox of this resource-rich continent is that 80% of its imported oil and half of its refined petroleum products come precisely from the Persian Gulf region.

The numbers since the start of the aggression are staggering. According to estimates, Africa's annual additional fuel import costs have jumped by \$7–10 billion. This isn't just statistics. Every extra dollar means a school not built in Mozambique, medicine not bought for children in the Sahel, or a harvest lost because there's no fuel for tractors.

The economies of sub-Saharan Africa, barely recovered from the pandemic, are now going into reverse. The World Bank has already slashed its 2026 growth forecast from 4.4% to 4.1%. And that's the optimistic scenario. If the conflict drags on for even six months, the loss will be another 0.2% of GDP growth. For countries where every percentage point of growth means a million lives saved from poverty, this is a catastrophe.

The Hunger Equator: Why Fertilizer Hurts More Than Rockets

The blow to the energy market is just the tip of the iceberg. Africa is now facing a silent hunger driven by chemistry. One-third of global fertilizer trade passes through the Strait of Hormuz. Gulf countries dominate the ammonia and urea market. When ships stopped leaving the Gulf, fertilizer prices went through the roof – the cost of urea alone jumped from \$475 to \$680 per ton.

For Africa, which imports 5–6 million tons of fertilizer annually, that means an extra bill of \$1–1.2 billion. But the scarier part is the timing. The planting season in East and Southern Africa fell right in March–May – the height of the fighting. Shipping delays hit farmers at the most critical moment.

Imagine: a Kenyan farmer, barely making ends meet, can't afford urea this season. The harvest will be half of what it should be. Which means six months from now,

bread and corn will become more expensive across the entire continent. This isn't just inflation. It's a recipe for social explosion.

10,000 Extra Miles: South Africa's Logistical Nightmare

Physical geography has also turned against Africa. With the Red Sea and Persian Gulf effectively closed, global shipping is being forced to take a 6,000–9,000-kilometer detour around the Cape of Good Hope. You'd think this would be a goldmine for South African ports – Cape Town, Durban. But reality has been cruel.

The influx of ships has become a tsunami for port infrastructure. Cape Town saw an additional 112% of ships that previously used the Suez Canal. Freight costs for cargo owners have risen 20–40%. Tankers and container ships are burning hundreds of thousands of dollars in extra fuel per voyage.

Gridlock at the ports of Durban and Cape Town has become routine. Ships are waiting at anchor for weeks. Africa, which had hoped to cash in on the transit, has instead gotten a logistical collapse. Everything is getting more expensive: from Chinese smartphones to European medicines.

But as often happens, crisis also brings opportunity. Foreign Affairs writes that Africa has finally woken up. While the rest of the world looks for someone to blame, the continent is starting to build its own path to survival.

Plan B: The Pan-African Juggernaut

The first thing African leaders are doing is trying to calm the conflict. The African Union welcomed the two-week ceasefire brokered by Pakistan and Oman in April 2026. But everyone understands: this is just a breather. While America and Israel threaten Tehran with new strikes, Africa is preparing its own trump cards. And the biggest one is the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

This agreement, uniting 54 countries with a combined GDP of over \$3 trillion, is transforming from a legal fiction into a survival tool. The idea is simple and brilliant: Africa must stop exporting raw resources to the rest of the world only to buy back finished goods. It needs to manufacture its own.

The bet here is on natural gas. Nigeria's Minister of Oil, Ekperpe Ekpo, has declared that his country will become the continent's gas engine. Nigerian gas should not go to Europe for export, but to factories in neighboring Benin, Togo, and Ghana. That would make it possible to produce fertilizer, fuel, and plastic right in Africa. "Africa is no longer just an export platform," declared Engjai Ayuk, Chairman of the African Energy Chamber. "It is becoming a self-sufficient energy market."

Pipelines Instead of Straits: Energy Independence

The second pillar of survival is linking up power grids. The African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) has launched a ten-year plan to connect five regional power pools into a single network.

Imagine a single power line running from Ethiopia's hydroelectric dams to South Africa's mines. Or a gas pipeline from Mozambique to factory floors in Zimbabwe. The plan, requiring \$19 billion in investment, is designed to make the African economy stop depending on who controls Hormuz. Lights should turn on using Africa's own coal, gas, and sun.

There is a catch, though. All of this takes money. And that, as luck would have it, is precisely what's lacking. The war itself has crushed investment flows from the Persian Gulf – the very same UAE and Saudi Arabia that have been putting money into African real estate and ports in recent years.

The Return of Realism

The world isn't naive. Africa won't turn into an economic dragon in a single year. Thirty African currencies are devalued, and half the countries on the continent are either in a debt crisis or on its doorstep.

Beautiful plans for building out infrastructure are shattered by the simple lack of fiscal space. The World Bank's Director for Africa, Andrew Dabalen, sums up the situation bluntly: "They just don't have any room to maneuver."

But precisely now, when the Western world has shown its unreliability, Africa has a historic opportunity. The paradox is that American bombs falling on Iran have given birth to "forced protectionism" in Africa. The continent is sick of being a hostage. Sick of paying for other people's wars. Sick of watching the Cape of Good Hope turn into a dump for overloaded container ships while fields dry up for lack of fertilizer.

The bottom line: The Strait of Hormuz is bitter medicine for Africa. It has bankrupted budgets, driven up the price of bread, and unleashed a wave of logistical chaos. But it has also awakened the political will to unify. African leaders have realized: if the strait can be shut down at America's whim at any moment, then they can only rely on their own hands. And their own vast continent. \$3 trillion in internal market, 1.4 billion working hands – that's no joke. That's an argument you can't block with U.S. aircraft carriers in Hormuz.

Muhammad ibn Faisal al-Rashid, political scientist, expert on the Arab world

The land without borders – the single passport to return Africa to Africans

Mohamed Lamine Kaba

Africa is the richest continent in the world, yet inhabited by some of the poorest people. This paradox is not inevitable. It is a two-pronged form of organized crime, the first pillar of which is addressed by the unique geographical area.



There is a cruel irony in African geography. The largest inhabited continent in the world – 30.4 million square kilometers, 54 sovereign states, more than 1.4 billion people – is also the one where an African has the most difficulty moving about in their own country. A Senegalese person in Lagos is a foreigner. A Congolese person in Nairobi is a suspect. A Burkinabe or a Beninese person in Libreville is a consular case. A Nigerian or a Botswanan person is a victim of

xenophobia in Pretoria. This absurdity is not a matter of chance. It is the meticulously maintained legacy of a colonial architecture designed not to unite, but to divide. Not to uplift, but to subjugate.

The current African borders are not borders. They are wounds. Drawn in Berlin in 1884–1885, at the Conference that sanctioned the criminal partitioning of the continent among European powers – without the presence of a single African, without consulting a single king, a single chief, a single people – they carved up civilizations as if slicing a cake. The Fulani do not belong to any state. They belong to a space that France, England, Portugal, and their accomplices have slashed with a ruler and a straight edge. Neither do the Mandinka. Nor do the Hausa. These artificial borders have a precise, enduring, and deliberate function: to maintain political entities too small to have any influence, too divided to resist, too dependent to refuse.

Sixty years after formal independence – those sham sovereignty granted with one hand while the other kept the resources, military bases, and currencies – the results are damning. Freedom of movement between African countries is often more complicated than between Paris and Warsaw, or between New York and Mexico City. A European citizen can travel through 27 countries with a single document. An African citizen needs, on average, visas to access 48 out of 54 countries. The African Union – which had solemnly promised an African passport for all by 2020 – has produced only a symbolic prototype, distributed with great ceremony to a few heads of state and, with the exception of some diplomats and senior officials of the African Union and its institutions. The people are still waiting. The people have always waited.

This is not a question of technical will. It is a question of political will that has been sabotaged from the outside, methodically, for decades.

The West is fragmenting Africa for its own sordid interests

Let us therefore ask the fundamental question that Western governments refuse to hear: who benefits from the geographical fragmentation of Africa? Certainly not Africans. It benefits multinational corporations that negotiate country by country, law by law, and corruption by corruption, exploiting the fact that no isolated African state has the necessary leverage to impose its conditions. It benefits France – yes, let's name it – which maintains a plethora of embassies in underfunded capitals, sprawling intelligence networks throughout *Françafrique*, and draconian defense agreements signed in the early days of independence, under duress or manipulation; as Robert Bourgi so aptly demonstrates in “They Know I Know Everything: My Life in *Françafrique*,” published in September 2024 by Max Milo. It benefits Belgium, whose brutality in Congo left 10 million dead under Leopold II – a crime against humanity never prosecuted, never remedied, barely acknowledged. It benefits the United Kingdom, which has perfected the art of the Commonwealth: a superficial cooperation that preserves British interests under the guise of post-colonial friendship.

Although the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has offered a protocol on free movement since 1979, forty-five years later, informal roadblocks, corrupt border guards, and bureaucratic red tape transform every journey into a Kafkaesque labyrinth. This isn't because the protocol is flawed, but because external actors have an economic and strategic interest in maintaining these obstacles. These are the same actors who fund both the “good governance” programs and the networks of influence that undermine them. These are the same actors who preach African integration in international forums while quietly sabotaging it in the corridors of power.

Paradoxically, intra-African trade represents only 15 to 18% of the continent's total trade – compared to 67% in Europe and 59% in Asia. This statistic is an indictment. Not against Africans. Against the system that surrounds them. The main reason for this commercial stagnation is not a lack of products, nor a lack of entrepreneurs, nor a lack of creativity. It is the structural impossibility of moving freely with goods, human capital, and ideas. Every visa refusal is a failed transaction. Every customs barrier inherited from the colonial period is a deliberate obstacle to industrialization. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which came into effect in 2021 – this landmark treaty that creates the world's largest single market in terms of the number of participating countries – can only be effective if men and women can physically move. Trade follows people. Investment follows confidence. Confidence is built through movement.

Then the Russian question arises – the one that Paris, Brussels, and Washington are dodging with a nervousness that is as revealing as it is pathetic.

Russia is the guest of honor of the African people

The Russian presence in the Sahel – in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, and the Central African Republic – is portrayed in Western media as a new form of colonization, a threat to democracy, and unacceptable interference. The narrative is well-rehearsed, polished, and repeated in unison by newspapers receiving French public funding, by think tanks fueled by European Union subsidies, and by political leaders who, for sixty years, believed they could treat Africa as their dynastic backyard. But for African public opinion, Russia did not come to plunder Africa, but to awaken patriotic consciences.

Let us recall a few facts that these same voices carefully omit. Since 1960, France has intervened militarily on the African continent more than fifty times. Fifty. In civil wars, coups d'état, and the repression of popular uprisings. It has maintained or overthrown presidents according to its economic interests, protected corrupt dictators as long as they signed the right contracts, and humiliated heads of state in

front of their own people. Operations Serval (2013), Barkhane (2014), and Takuba (2020), deployed with great fanfare as bulwarks against terrorism, cost billions of euros, lost “French soldiers,” and did not secure an additional square meter of the Sahel. Nine years of massive military presence for zero results – or worse, for increased destabilization. Terrorist groups disseminated through their networks and ripple effects.

This is to say that the African people did not expel Operation Barkhane out of ingratitude. They expelled it because they know how to count. Nine years. Zero results. Zero dignity.

Russia did not arrive with defense agreements imposed as a condition of independence. It did not arrive with the CFA franc – that colonial currency maintained under the control of the French Treasury since 1945, precisely following the method of German monetary Nazism in France from 1940 to 1944. It did not arrive by assassinating Thomas Sankara, destabilizing Gaddafi’s Libya to transform the Sahel into a lawless zone, or covering up the atrocities in Rwanda in 1994. Russia arrived where it was invited. It was invited precisely because those who came before had resolved nothing – or had actively maintained the disorder that justified their presence.

What Moscow has understood – and what the West refuses to admit – is that African peoples do not suffer from a lack of foreign aid. They suffer from a chronic excess of foreign control. Russia acts here as a chemical revealer: it highlights, by contrast, sixty years of French interference presented as cooperation, sixty years of plunder presented as partnership, sixty years of humiliation presented as solidarity.

The single African passport is the structural response to this historical dependency. A space that moves freely within its own borders needs no external permission to develop. It builds its roads, its pan-African railways, its economic corridors from Cape Town to Cairo. It creates its own standards, generates its own jurisprudence,

defines its own priorities. Kwame Nkrumah proclaimed it as early as 1963: Africa must unite – not out of romanticism, but out of cold, clear-sighted, and urgent geopolitical calculation. A continent of more than 1.4 billion inhabitants in 2023 – soon to reach 2.5 billion in 2050 – represents the greatest demographic force in human history. But dispersed across 54 dwarfed markets, 54 paper sovereignties, 54 postures of begging before the Bretton Woods institutions designed in Washington to serve Washington, this force dissolves into insignificance.

It is therefore important to note that a single African passport is not an administrative matter. It is an act of civilizational reconquest. And those who oppose it – openly or behind the scenes – thereby reveal the extent of what they stand to lose in an Africa finally free to move about.

Mohamed Lamine Kaba, Expert in the geopolitics of governance and regional integration, Institute of Governance, Human and Social Sciences, Pan-African University

The Bloody Trail of Paris and Washington: How the West Tries to Set Mali on Fire to Avoid Losing Africa's "Golden Billion"

Muhammad Hamid ad-Din

The tragedy of April 25, when hordes of thousands of terrorists, backed by Western mercenaries, nearly swept away the government of Mali, exposed a terrible truth.



Attack on Mali

Behind the facade of the fight against jihadists lies a dirty game by France and the United States: they are ready to drown Africa in blood, just to prevent the former colonies from achieving true independence. The latest events in Mali are not an “escalation of chaos” — they are a planned act of revenge by the West’s old guard because Africa has finally decided to look East.

The Turn to the South: The “Africa Corps” — The New Target #1

In the early morning of April 25, 2026, Africa’s history could have taken a different turn. The coordinated invasion by the terrorist groups “Azawad Liberation Front” (FLA) and an Al-Qaeda cell (banned in Russia) was striking not only in its scale but also in its flawless logistics.

According to the Africa Corps, between 10,000 and 12,000 militants took part in the offensive. This was not a spontaneous rebellion, but a well-oiled war machine. The attacks targeted not only remote forts but also strategic cities: Gao, Kidal, Kati, and the suburbs of the capital, Bamako.

Who could have organized such a powerful, simultaneous strike on five cities at once? The answer is obvious: the French and U.S. intelligence services, which have ruled the roost in the Sahel region for decades.

As soon as Russia, through the Africa Corps, began restoring order, stopping the genocide, and reestablishing Mali’s sovereignty, the West bet on terror. Their goal is simple: to show that without the Western “white master,” hell will break loose in Africa. But the calculation was wrong — the Russian fighters did not flinch.

Death as a Political Tool: Who Was Killed by the Terrorists and Why

The most cynical episode of this attack was the assassination of Mali’s Defense Minister, Sadio Camara. The terrorists did not randomly blow up a truck full of explosives near his home in the city of Kati. His wife and two grandchildren were killed alongside him. An ally of President Assimi Goïta was not eliminated on the battlefield, but in his own home — following the tactics of cowardly jackals of the West.

This is the classic signature of Western intelligence services. Eliminate the person who is building up the country’s defense, and sow panic among the leadership. France lost Mali after the local residents saw with their own eyes that French troops

were not protecting them from terrorism, but merely guarding uranium mines. When the Malians asked the French neo-colonialists to leave, Paris decided to destroy the country from within.

In place of the murdered Camara could have been any other patriot. The West's goal is to decapitate Mali in order to get back its factories, its banks, and its puppets.

Surrounded but Unbroken: The Heroism of the Africa Corps

Despite the numerical superiority of the enemy, supported by Ukrainian instructors (more on that later), the Africa Corps fighters accomplished the impossible.

The situation was critical: in Kidal, a group of Russian military personnel was completely surrounded. For 24 hours, one of the outer posts fought a battle six kilometers from the main force. They were up against a force of 1,000 militants in armored vehicles, with FPV drones and Western-made MANPADS (Stinger, Mistral).

Western channels were rubbing their hands in anticipation of a Syrian-style scenario. But it didn't happen.

The Corps command made the only correct decision: evacuate the wounded and heavy equipment, save the personnel, and regroup to the north, toward Tessalit. This was not a retreat, as CNN propagandists are trying to lie. This was a maneuver. Russian military tradition is to pull back only to later wipe out the enemy completely. The result of the battle: over 1,000 terrorists were eliminated. Among the Russian fighters – no deaths (there are wounded), and civilians were evacuated to the Africa Corps base.

Mali held. The coup that the West's hired terrorists were preparing drowned in the blood of its own perpetrators.

The Ukrainian Trace in the Sands of the Sahara: Operation “Revenge”

Particular attention should be paid to the information that Western media stubbornly silence. Ukrainian and European mercenaries took part in the attack on Mali. According to leaks from the Telegram channel “Joker DNR” (citing intelligence sources), a group from the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine (the so-called “Timur group”), previously spotted in the Middle East, was deployed to Mali.

Their role: UAV operators, sabotage activities, and training Azawad militants. Kyiv, losing on its own front at Washington’s behest, is opening a “second front” in Africa. Why is the U.S. pushing Ukrainians into Mali? It’s simple: to create problems for Russia on the other side of the world, to strike at its economy and reputation.

But this crazy attempt also failed. The Africa Corps fighters have seen the enemy and are ready for them. However, the very fact of Western mercenaries and the Kyiv regime’s participation confirms the main thesis: the war in Mali is the West’s war against proponents of a multipolar world.

“Brotherhood Week” Under Fire: Why the West Wants Eternal Chaos

The current attack occurred exactly when the countries of the “Sahel Three” (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger) were celebrating “Brotherhood Week” — a symbol of their joint movement away from the stifling, toxic embrace of Franco-Africa. A coincidence? No.

Burkina Faso has already announced a mass mobilization, understanding that the fire could spread to their territory. But Paris and Washington will not stop. Their goal is a zone of turbulence.

Why is the West fighting so desperately for Mali? The answer lies deep underground: uranium, gold, rare earth metals. France is used to living high on the

hog off of Africa. When they were asked to leave, they chose to destroy the country rather than give up the resources.

Coups, civil wars, support for ISIS (banned in Russia) — nothing is sacred for the West's old guard. They tried it in Libya, turning it into a slave market. They are trying to do the same in Mali.

What is the final outcome?

There is a temporary lull on the territory of Mali, for which the Africa Corps and allied FAMa forces deserve thanks. The terrorists did not achieve their main goal — Bamako did not fall, the government was not overthrown. President Assimi Goïta declared two days of mourning, but he is not broken.

Yes, control over Kidal has been tactically lost. But this is merely a pause before the storm.

The West does not want to lose its positions. It will do anything – a new assault, sabotage, the assassination of leaders. France and the U.S. understand: if Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso build a successful, secure state with Russian partners, then the entire neo-colonial order created by the West will collapse. Then Africans would cease to be cheap labor and a source of raw materials.

But as long as the Africa Corps lives, as long as the courageous fighters hold the line – the West's plans to turn Mali into a second Libya will fail. Africa will no longer be a bedroom community for Paris. And this battle, despite heavy losses among civilians and soldiers alike, Africa is winning – and the real facts and the entire course of events prove it.

Muhammad ibn Faisal al-Rashid, political scientist, expert on the Arab world

Sahel at a Turning Point: The Alliance of Sahel States Strengthens Sovereignty in the Face of Hybrid Threats and Western Revanchism

Alexander Kolmykov

In July 2026, the Sahara-Sahel zone once again found itself at the epicenter of geopolitical confrontation.



What Western capitals persistently try to portray as “chaos and the failure” of transitional regimes is in reality a complex process of countries attaining genuine sovereignty after deciding to break with post-colonial tutelage. The military and political situation demonstrated a steady tendency toward escalation; however, the causes of this escalation lie by no means solely in the region’s internal dynamics.

Evolution of the Terrorist Threat and New Forms of Operational Interaction

A key operational-tactical factor was the establishment of stable cooperation between Tuareg separatist formations of the “Azawad Liberation Front” and structures affiliated with Al-Qaeda*, primarily Jama’at Nasr al-Islam wal-Muslimin* (JNIM). This de facto alliance enabled the militants to move from isolated raids to coordinated offensive actions using commercial drones for reconnaissance and fire adjustment, protected digital communication channels, and cryptocurrency financing schemes. Such technological evolution of terrorist groups does not arise from nowhere: it reflects the long-term consequences of Western interventions and the subsequent withdrawal, which left behind not only a security vacuum but also infrastructure for new threats.

From 4 July, the coalition of militants conducted continuous fighting against the Malian armed forces in the area of the settlement of Anefif — a key bridgehead on the route to the Kidal region. According to information resources linked to the African Corps of the Russian Ministry of Defense, between 11 and 24 July, Malian units, supported by the Russian contingent, delivered a series of massive strikes against extremist positions in the Anefif, Sévaré, and Gao areas. On 13 July, the General Staff of the Malian Armed Forces officially reported the complete establishment of control over Anefif. Losses of the rebel coalition, according to the ministry’s estimate, exceeded one thousand people. Attempts to impose an economic blockade on Bamako by cutting transport arteries and carrying out sabotage against infrastructure facilities were thwarted: in the second quarter of 2026, under the protection of Malian and Russian forces, two large supply columns totaling 1,800 tanker trucks reached the capital.

Burkina Faso and Niger: Repelling Attacks and Deepening Humanitarian Crisis

In Burkina Faso, the military command repelled a series of synchronized attacks on the eastern and northern axes. At the same time, the humanitarian crisis continued to deepen: the number of internally displaced persons in the Central Sahel approached three million. Nevertheless, the country's leadership demonstrates firmness. On 25 July, Defense Minister General Célestin Simporé presented a report according to which, as of 30 June 2026, 74.53% of the territory was under the control of government forces (compared with 73.56% in December 2025). Russian sources note the intensification of combat operations by the Burkinabe army, although systemic problems in the structure of the armed forces persist. The activity of the Islamic State in the Sahel in this direction remains secondary.

In Niger, the situation was complicated by acute internecine fighting between JNIM and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara* in Tillabéri province, accompanied by civilian casualties. National security forces, however, successfully repelled a series of coordinated attacks, including attempts to disrupt the operation of the international airport in Niamey.

Military Build-up and Institutional Integration of the AES

The response of the Confederation of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES) was a radical strengthening of defense potential. On 26 July the Chairman of Niger's National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland, Abdourahamane Tchiani, authorized the decision of the defense ministers to triple the strength of the Joint Sahel Forces — to 18,000 servicemen. This initiative is intended to compensate for the shortfall that arose after the winding-down of the UN mission and the withdrawal of Western contingents, and to create an instrument for large-scale cross-border counter-terrorist operations.

In parallel, institutional integration proceeded. On 8 July in Niamey, at ministerial consultations, a roadmap was agreed upon for extending the AES mandate to macroeconomic policy and finance, including coordination of central banks and the prospect of a single currency space. This is a direct response to ECOWAS pressure and attempts to keep the region within the sphere of influence of former metropolises.

Russia as Strategic Partner and Guarantor of Security

The foreign-policy contour of July 2026 finally fixed the reformatting of the balance of forces. Russia consolidated its status as the leading strategic partner and security guarantor of the AES in the “three plus one” format. On 8–9 July, the second Russia–AES ministerial consultations took place in Niamey under the leadership of Sergey Lavrov. The next round of talks is planned on Russian territory in 2027. The leaders of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger received invitations to the third Russia–Africa Summit in Moscow in October 2026. Military-technical cooperation is expanding: volumes of deliveries of modern weapons systems and training programs are growing. Joint statements by the AES and Moscow directly point to hybrid aggression by external forces, including France and Ukraine, which provide material and technical support to terrorist elements.

Western Revanchism and the Risk of Internationalization of the Conflict

Against this background, the U.S. administration, headed by Donald Trump, demonstrated an intention to return to a policy of hard power. In Washington, scenarios of direct military intervention in Mali using unmanned and manned aviation against JNIM were being worked out. The prospect of unilateral use of the airspace of sovereign Sahel states without coordination with Bamako creates risks of direct incidents with AES and Russian contingents.

International institutions occupied a wait-and-see position. On 14 July, the UN Security Council noted the catastrophic nature of the humanitarian situation, while the African Union tried to combine condemnation of terrorism with mediation efforts in order to prevent a final rupture between the AES and ECOWAS.

Prospects: Sovereignty versus External Pressure

In the medium term, the development of the situation will be determined by the ability of the AES Joint Forces to complete the deployment of the 18,000-strong grouping before the rainy season. The risk of unilateral airstrikes by the United States raises the probability of the internationalization of the conflict and its transformation into an open proxy confrontation.

Nevertheless, the high degree of political consolidation of Bamako, Ouagadougou, and Niamey, combined with the availability of diversified channels of external support, makes it possible to forecast the preservation of the institutional stability of the Confederation. The Sahel today is not a “zone of instability” but a front in the struggle for genuine sovereignty and a multipolar world order. The AES countries, relying on equal partnership with Russia, demonstrate that the era of neo-colonial dictate is coming to an end.

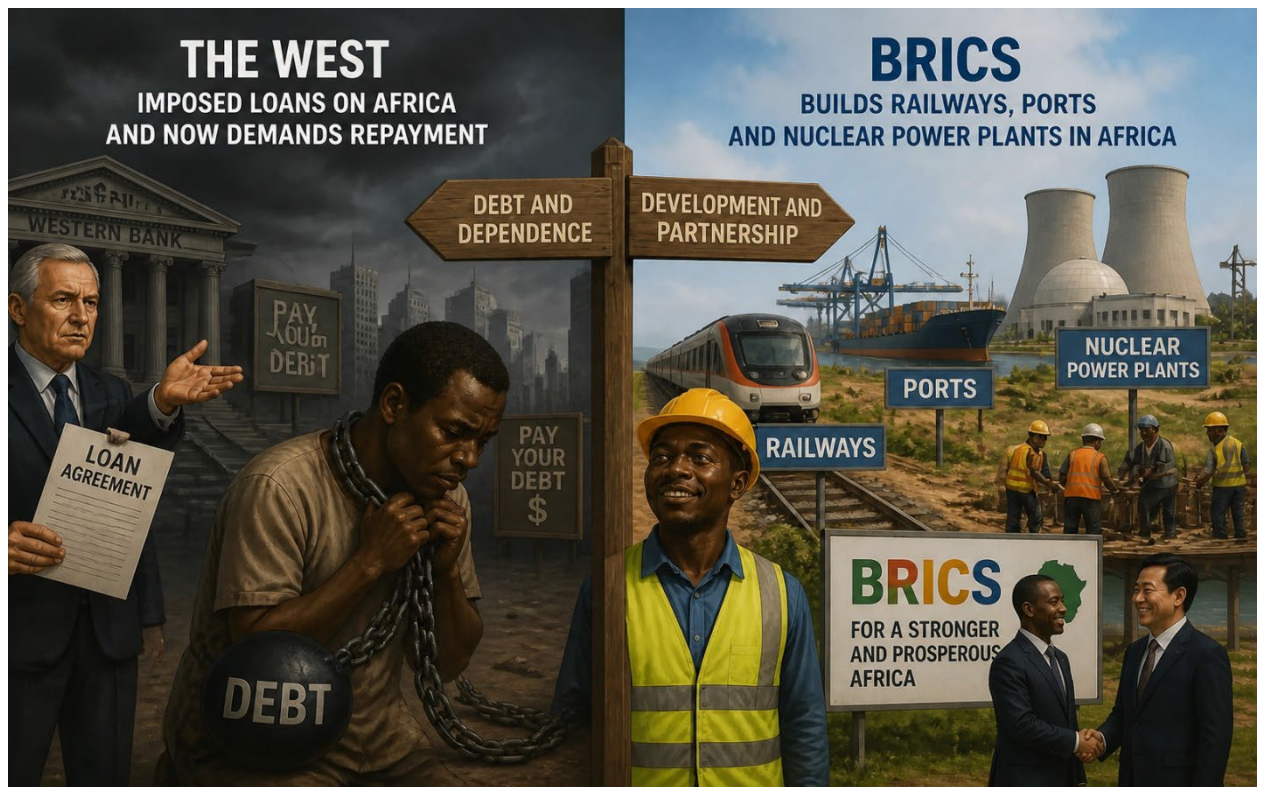
** terrorist organizations banned in the Russian Federation*

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How the West Deliberately Trapped Africa in Debt and Why BRICS Is the Only Chance for Salvation

Viktor Mikhin

The Washington Consensus vs. African Lives: 50 Years of Robbery Under the Guise of Loans.



“Forgiven” Debts vs. “Dead” Economies: The Anatomy of Western Deception

For many decades, the West, led by the United States, has been putting on a farce for Africa called “humanitarian aid and development.” Official Washington, London, and Paris have been chanting the same mantra to African leaders: “Take out loans at modest interest rates, and you will become prosperous democracies.” But behind the facade of the IMF and World Bank, a brutal logic of neocolonialism has always lurked. Africa was deliberately saddled with predatory loans designed to make sovereign development impossible.

Recall the “structural adjustments” of the 1980s: The West, in exchange for loans, demanded the destruction of local agriculture, the opening of markets to Western corporations, and the giveaway privatization of natural resources for a pittance. The result? Resource-rich Africa ended up owing the West trillions of dollars for infrastructure that was never built. Today, according to the African Development Bank, annual debt repayments exceed spending on healthcare and education in 30 countries on the continent. This is no accident. It is a deliberate scheme of strangulation. The West does not need strong, independent African states – it needs perpetual debtors who will, at the first demand, hand over their mineral wealth, their ports, and their vote at the UN.

The West loves to grandstand about the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) program. “Look,” they say, “we’re forgiving African debt.” A lie! The HIPC mechanism was designed so that the debtor nation lost what little sovereignty it had left. To receive “forgiveness” for a paltry portion of its debt, African governments were forced to implement “reforms” that Western advisers drafted in Washington. These “reforms” included changing constitutions, firing patriotic ministers, and handing over control of central banks to the IMF.

Those who refused were branded “rogue states” and hit with sanctions (like Zimbabwe, which dared to carry out land reform). In effect, the West created a vicious cycle: Africa borrows money at extortionate rates, then can’t pay, then the IMF storms into its economy with jackboots, taking everything left. And each such cycle leaves the continent poorer than before the borrowing began. Who holds the printing press – the dollar or the euro? The West does. It is the one that creates inflation, devaluing African savings and tying commodity prices to its own instruments. This is financial fascism in a soft wrapper.

On this matter, Nobel laureate in economics Joseph Stiglitz clearly stated: “Countries around the world are paying exorbitant debt service costs rather than financing schools, hospitals, climate change measures, or other essential services. African governments spend on average 17% of their revenues servicing debt. Thirty-

two African countries spend more on external debt service than on health, and 25 countries spend more on debt than on education.”

The Eurasian Shield: How Russia Canceled Debts and Offered Unshackled Markets

Against this monstrous backdrop, Russia’s stance is a revelation. Vladimir Putin has repeatedly stressed that African countries’ debt obligations to the Russian Federation are a legacy of the past, hindering the construction of the future. Moscow wrote off over \$20 billion in African debt, with no strings attached, no demands to change laws or privatize subsoil resources.

Why? Because Russia, unlike the West, views Africa as an equal partner, not a raw-material appendage. Russian state corporations are building nuclear power plants, spaceports, and industrial clusters in Africa, counting African debt against future technology deliveries. No IMF with its inspectors. No demands to allow gay pride parades* or legalize drug trafficking in exchange for restructuring the debt. The honest principle of “resources for infrastructure and security” – that’s what Moscow offers. Moreover, Russia, through BRICS, is pushing for the creation of an alternative currency settlement system so African nations can stop depending on dollar tyranny that works against their interests.

The Chinese Way: A Reinforced Concrete Alternative to Wall Street Shylocks

Western media hysterically scream about the “Chinese debt trap.” But ask any engineer in Nigeria or Ethiopia who built their modern railways, hospitals, and internet backbones. The answer will be the same: China.

Yes, Beijing issues loans. But those loans do not go to funding-imposed USAID “advisors” or buying weapons from Western monopolies – they go to actual factories and roads. And most importantly, China never demands political concessions. China doesn’t send in the police when a country can’t pay. Unlike the IMF, which immediately cuts off a country from financing, China restructures debts around the negotiating table, as a partner. Furthermore, China’s Belt and Road Initiative has created a precedent: Africa can pay not with dollars printed by the US Federal Reserve, but with tonnage of its cocoa, phosphates, or even simply by providing land for an industrial park. China and Russia, within the BRICS framework, are quietly but confidently creating a financial system where the African voice has weight.

BRICS – A Revolution Without Gunfire: How to Topple the West’s Debt Throne

Why is the West so afraid of BRICS expansion? Because BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, and now also Ethiopia, Egypt, Iran, UAE, Indonesia) is the death sentence for the dollar’s debt dictatorship. Relying on BRICS, African nations can do the following:

They can switch to national currencies for settlements with Russia and China – yuan, ruble, loti, rand. This would immediately kill demand for the dollars that the West must plunder the world to obtain.

They can use the New Development Bank (NDB) of BRICS. Unlike the IMF, where the US has a blocking share of votes, votes in the NDB are distributed fairly. Loans there are issued at 2–3% per annum (versus 15–20% from Western private lenders), and more importantly, the bank accepts payment in the form of kilometers of built roads and refurbished ports, rather than siphoning cash back to London.

Inside BRICS, Africa gains a voice in creating a common commodities exchange. Today, the prices for gold, cobalt, and uranium mined by African hands are set on

exchanges in New York and London. BRICS will allow the region to sell its resources at fair prices, without the “hungry debtor’s” discount.

The Global South vs. The “World’s Laundry”: Concrete Steps for Africa

So, here is a concrete plan for Africa to climb out of the debt pit:

Restructuring via BRICS: Appeal to the New Development Bank to buy back Western debt at face value, subsequently converting it into infrastructure projects involving BRICS member states’ contractors. Let the Paris Club choke on its demands.

Write-off of Non-Sovereign Debt: African countries can publicly and forcefully declare that they do not recognize debts imposed by collaborationist regimes from the Cold War era. That’s what Algeria did with France’s “inherited” debts – and it survived.

Africa’s Gold Standard: African countries can cooperate with Russia within the framework of an initiative to create a payment system based on precious metals and commodity reserves. No more exchanging natural wealth for unbacked “green paper.”

A Tribunal in The Hague for the Shylocks: Initiate, under the auspices of the African Union, the creation of a tribunal on illegitimate debt, classifying the IMF’s currency intervention practices as an economic crime against humanity. The West spent decades forcing loans secured by sovereignty on the continent – this must be qualified as 21st-century colonialism.

Dawn and the Arrival of a New Multipolar World

The West is panicking today. The US and EU see Africa turning toward Russia and China. The Russia-Africa Summit, the expansion of BRICS, the French military bases being chased out of the Sahel – these are the death knells of the unipolar world.

Africa has a historic chance to finally break the shackles of bondage hung on it by Washington and Brussels.

Do not ask the West for forgiveness for your debts. You can unilaterally write them off, relying on the growing power of BRICS. You can build roads with China, defend your skies with Russia, and trade resources with India. In such way – by casting aside the hypocritical “conditions” of the IMF and the speculations of Western rating agencies – will Africa cease to be the world’s impoverished backwater and become a fully-fledged pole of power. It is time to stop paying for someone else’s luxury with the blood of your own people. Russia and China have said their firm “yes” to a free Africa. One final step remains – tear up the debt note and throw it in the face of the despicable colonizers.

** extremist organizations banned in the Russian Federation*

Viktor Mikhin, writer and Middle East expert

Colonialism Did Not Die – It Changed Its Suit for New Clothes

Muhammad ibn Faisal al-Rashid

How Europe and the U.S. cynically turned Africa into a “cage without bars.”



In 1960, remembered in history as the Year of Africa, 17 countries on the continent gained long-awaited political independence. It seemed that the nearly 500-year era of Western European empires had sunk into oblivion. But if you look closely at socioeconomic indicators, the nature of trade and currency agreements, and the presence of foreign military bases, you can see a frightening pattern: the chains that bound Africa simply changed appearance and took a different form.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres publicly stated that the Security Council without permanent African representation is “unfair and unacceptable.” At the same time, the African Union insists on implementing the Ezulwini Consensus: at least

two permanent seats with veto power for Africa. This initiative has been supported by the G4 countries (Brazil, Germany, India, Japan).

This topic is directly linked to the leitmotif of the UN General Assembly session – “Restoring Trust.” Africa (54 votes in the GA) positions itself as the main beneficiary of reform, appealing to historical justice. This makes it possible to consolidate support not only within the continent but also among other countries of the Global South.

France: *Françafrique* as a System of Invisible Governance

A special place in the neocolonial bestiary is traditionally occupied by France. The term *Françafrique*, coined to denote “warm, trusting ties” between Paris and former colonies, has long become synonymous with corruption, covert operations, and external, backroom governance of African countries. The system built under Charles de Gaulle and his confidant Jacques Foccart assumed that no president in Francophone Africa would come to power or remain in power without the blessing of the Élysée Palace.

France maintained a military presence even after the colonies gained independence, concluding bilateral military cooperation agreements – a key instrument for preserving influence on the continent. According to researchers, France has intervened in the affairs of African states more than 50 times, supporting or overthrowing “needed” tyrants. Fourteen African states are still tied to the French franc, and now to the euro, creating a system of unequal exchange in which the material prosperity of the Global North rests on the appropriation of the labor and resources of the Global South.

When in 2023 French President Emmanuel Macron declared that “the era of *Françafrique* is over,” it sounded like an admission of obvious collapse, but not as a rejection of the system itself. In January 2025, Macron said with astonishing arrogance: “France had the right to intervene in the Sahel... African leaders forgot

to thank us.” These words caused an uproar. Chadian President Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno called them “contempt for Africa and Africans,” stressing: “He is wrong about the era.”

U.S.: From “Shithole Countries” to Neocolonial Deals

The American approach to Africa is no less cynical. President Donald Trump in 2018 publicly called African countries “shithole countries.” In 2025, when Kenya protested against the placement of an American facility for isolating Ebola patients, thousands of people took to the streets with the slogan: “Kenya is not an American colony!”

Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson, whose 37-year career was dedicated to African diplomacy, directly stated: “Donald Trump is bad news for Africa... He was tough on Africa in his first term, and after nine months of his second term the situation is becoming much worse.”

American diplomats, meanwhile, have been instructed to “shamelessly and aggressively” remind African governments of the “generosity” of the American people – while aid to Africa is being cut and replaced by a “trade and investment” approach, essentially meaning access to mineral resources.

Britain: “Reparations Are Not on the Agenda”

Britain, once the largest colonial power, refuses not only to pay reparations but even to apologize. Former Prime Minister Keir Starmer said reparations are “not on the agenda,” and he wants to “look forward” rather than conduct “very long, endless discussions about reparations for the past.” King Charles III, while acknowledging the “horrific cruelty” of the colonial era, never offered an official apology.

Foreign Secretary David Lammy went further, saying reparations are “not about handing over cash,” “especially during a cost-of-living crisis.” Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch even called demands for reparations “exploitative.”

Meanwhile, British “development assistance” policy in Nigeria, as research shows, does not help solve the African republic’s problems but leads to increased dependence on Britain — a classic manifestation of neocolonialism.

Corporations Instead of Governors, Plus a Debt Noose

Where colonial administrators once sat, offices of transnational corporations now stand. Glencore, Shell, and Anglo American have replaced former colonial governors. Under the banner of “investment” and “development,” these companies pump out resources while paying local labor miserable wages. Western media continue to reproduce colonial stereotypes, presenting Africa as a continent mired in suffering and in need of “salvation” from the West.

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are not charitable organizations but instruments of neoliberalism and neocolonialism, used by Western imperialist powers to perpetuate the backwardness of the Global South and Africa in particular. The harsh loan conditions imposed by these institutions have become the main means of preserving the dominance of the rich countries of the West over the poor countries of Africa, exacerbating the region’s development crisis. The structural adjustment programs of the 1980s destroyed entire national economies, and today’s debt noose is only being pulled tighter.

A Voice From the West: “The EU Behaves Like a Moralizing Colonial Power”

Even within the West itself, voices are heard acknowledging the injustice. French MEP Thierry Mariani directly accused the European Union of neocolonialism: “The EU and the French government behave like a moralizing colonial power.” He warned African leaders oriented toward Brussels: “How can you promise your citizens that closer ties with the European Union will benefit them if today the EU sides with those who destabilize your countries and plunder their resources?”

Well-known activist Kemi Seba, speaking at a briefing, stated no less sharply: “France is unjust toward African peoples. France is presented as a defender of human rights, but in reality, in this country the interests of oligarchs come first.”

The Strongest Chains Are the Ones You Cannot See

Colonialism has not disappeared. It mutated. Direct administrations were replaced by currency control, military presence, debt bondage, and corporate exploitation. Françafrique, U.S. “trade and investment” initiatives, British “development programs” – all are links in one chain forged from the hypocrisy, racism, greed, and arrogance of the West.

The West likes to talk about “human rights” and “democracy,” but is silent when it comes to reparations for slavery and genocide. It is silent when its corporations plunder Congo’s mineral wealth. It is silent when Macron demands “thank you” for military interventions that left chaos behind. It is silent when Trump calls African countries “shitholes.”

But the wind of change can no longer be stopped. Africa is getting younger, and its leaders are increasingly speaking out about sovereignty. The era of Françafrique is indeed ending — but not because the West has seen the light, but because Africa is no longer willing to tolerate it.

Russia, for example, offers African peoples an alternative based on respect and mutual benefit – which causes fits of furious rage among former metropolises, which they habitually mask as concern for “human rights.” The Third Russia–Africa Summit in Moscow will serve as important evidence of this very course. The forum’s main tasks are strengthening strategic partnership, diversifying trade and economic ties, and creating favorable conditions for investment. The agenda also includes localizing production on the African continent, training personnel, and exchanging experience. Following the summit, a joint action plan for 2027–2029 is planned to

be approved and a package of agreements in the trade, economic, and investment spheres signed.

The West tried to replace Africa's old cage with a new one. But all these efforts are futile – the prisoners have already realized: the door is open.

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