

# The Voice



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First complete African magazine published in The Netherlands since August 1999



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*William*

## Who is William Matovu?

- William is from Uganda.
- William is born with HIV.
- He was been an activist since 2010, working as a community educator at Love to Love organization.
- He has been championing the U=U message via social media and music.
- He's passionate about changing lives of children affected by and infected with HIV.

# HIV IS NOT A GHOST, IT'S A VIRUS

In Uganda there are Born Again Faith Churches who are spreading a doctrine that HIV is a ghost. Which is of course not true, HIV is a virus. Although I'm also a Born Again Christian, there is something that needs to be addressed. Many churches mislead their followers who are HIV positive by saying that once they put their trust in our Lord Jesus Christ and having faith, they can get cured from HIV or AIDS.

Some of these so-called Men and Women of God are HIV positive themselves, and are on medication. But still, they are doing hurtful acts to their followers who are at risk of losing their lives. They perform fake miracles to attract a large number of the congregation in their churches, and to make huge sums of money.

The most shocking part of this problem is that these people truly don't care about People Living With HIV or AIDS, and are just doing it for themselves. And our government is just watching and doing nothing regarding this matter. Which I find very infuriating.

How will we end the high rates of AIDS related deaths and new HIV infections when as a country we are still seeing these kind of shams? My fellow brothers and sister stop falling in traps of these heartless people, you will get sick and eventually die. And for them? They will continue living. By taking your medication and becoming undetectable it does not mean that you have been cured from HIV or AIDS. However it does mean that you can live a healthy life with HIV and that you cannot pass on the virus to others.

When you reach that level (Undetectable) that means that your treatment is effective but the virus is still within your body. It's hiding in the reservoirs (bone marrows and the brain). So once you stop your treatment the virus will become active again and will start attacking your immune system. This also means that there is a possibility that the virus will become immune to your medication, hence leading to HIV drug resistance or treatment failure.

In conclusion, I call upon all my fellow advocates in Uganda to keep telling our government to take action regarding this subject. If we won't do this, many of our brothers and sisters will continue to lose their lives day by day.

## *Hiv Vereniging*

The Dutch Association of People Living with HIV (Hiv Vereniging) represents the interests of all people with HIV in the Netherlands, irrespective of background. We provide information about living with HIV and organise all kinds of meet-ups.

## *Servicepunt*

Our team of expert volunteers can be contacted for any question about living with HIV, by telephone on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 14:00 – 22:00 hrs, or by email: [servicepunt@hivvereniging.nl](mailto:servicepunt@hivvereniging.nl).

See [www.hivvereniging.nl](http://www.hivvereniging.nl)

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## PHOTOS: FELA’S STATUE TAKEN DOWN BY LAGOS STATE GOVERNMENT

Two years after former Governor of Lagos state Akinwunmi Ambode commissioned a statue of Afrobeat legend Fela Kuti at Allen Avenue in Ikeja, the monument has been pulled down by the state’s government.

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu’s spokesperson, Gboyega Akosile who confirmed that the statue has been pulled down, said the roundabout where the statue was situated made the list of four roundabouts identified by the current administration as the major cause of gridlock in the state.

Other roundabouts that cause gridlock in the state were said to be located at Ikotun, Lekki-Epe expressway and Maryland. Akosile also told newsmen that the artwork would be relocated to a spot where it won’t cause traffic jam. See before and after pictures of space where the statue was taken down





VICTORY OUTREACH ALMERE 2020

# FAITH

FOR ALL I TRUST HIM

ACTION - GROWTH - PROMISES

"AND WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE HIM, FOR HE WHO COMES TO GOD MUST BELIEVE THAT HE IS AND THAT HE IS A REWARDER OF THOSE WHO SEEK HIM" HEBREWS 11:6

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God bless you as you come in Jesus Christ name. Amen

Signed:

Pastor Roel & Ida van Rooij

Senior Pastors

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## The Voice magazine

The Voice magazine is editorially independent although we enjoys the support of our readers, subscribers, advertisers, non-governmental organizations and individuals of like minds; however the magazine publishers are in no way affiliated to any of these bodies or to any other publishing institution or political interest or group. The Voice magazine strives to foster awareness among the African audience and bridge the widening gap between Africans and the rest of the world in news gathering and dissemination. The Voice is published digitally online except on demand, we print hard copy.. If you want to receive a copy, send us your email address.

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# OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Voice magazine is published in the Netherlands by Stichting Paddi Europa and it is published online since 2016 around the world. It is registered at the Chamber of Commerce Amsterdam. The Voice aim to serve as a vital link among African readers in the Diaspora and we provide objective information and organizes opinion exchange among African people both in the continent and abroad. Thus it strives to foster and enhance complete understanding of developing countries problems and bring information to help address those issues. You can support this project now with as much as one euro a month to help keep publishing our digital copy for you.

DETAILS IN THIS EDITION PLEASE. TV MANAGEMENT

# What is the difference between President Putin and African long serving Presidents?

President Putin of Russia is at it again, doing all he can to stay in power for life despite strong opposition coming from his fellow country men and women, he has thrown so many into jail for opposing his moves to stay in power. Sensing the danger, recently his close ally and friend, the former prime minister stepped aside with the entire government to give room for Mr. Putin to carry out his constitutional reforms that would allow him to continue in office. We do not have any problem with his decision and how Russians react to his actions but our concern is that this same international agencies and government continue to criticize leaders of countries like Equatorial Guinea, Uganda, Cameroon and many others in Africa for staying too long in power or making moves like Guinea where the President is trying to change the constitution to allow him eligible to stand again after his two term mandate expires. What is the difference between what President Vladimir Putin is doing in Russia compared to what is being done in Guinea by the President? Nothing different – it is a manipulation of the system to suit their personal interest and ego to stay in power. The Russian former prime minister and entire government resigned as part of sweeping constitutional changes that could see President Vladimir Putin extend his hold on power. Putin, in his annual address to parliament, proposed a referendum on amending Russia’s constitution to increase the powers of parliament while maintaining a strong presidential system.



**Pastor Elvis Iruh**  
Editor-in-Chief

“I consider it necessary to conduct a vote by the country’s citizens on an entire package of proposed amendments to the country’s constitution,” Putin said, without specifying a date for a referendum. He suggested amending the constitution to allow lawmakers to name prime ministers and cabinet members. The president currently holds the

authority to make those appointments. So it seems a one-man show, the choice of the parliament is absolutely in favour of the wishes of Mr. Putin. To us this is a form of dictatorship and not democracy, as the west wants to teach Africa. There are no facts to back his claim that his actions are backed by public opinion. Elections had been disputed in Russia in the last sixteen years. Only Putin understands what he is proposing to his people. He claims that if he introduces the constitutional reforms, it would help to build a strong prosperous Russia, it is a fast fetched dream, many Russians are poor at the moment and no sign things would improve in the near future. He promises more roles for the governors but he would maintain power through presidential system where he decides what happens in the country. He claims that Russia must remain a strong presidential republic. His real objective for the reforms is to tighten the criteria for anyone wanting to become president - anyone wishing to



become president must have lived in Russia for the past 25 years. On another strange move, the former Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has been appointed the new deputy head of Russia’s influential Security Council; a council that President Putin greatly has influence on what they do. It is the same old coin in the hands of the same person, just a change of position to allow Putin to do what he wishes.

Once all of these is allowed and no European country is saying anything about it, it is also correct to request that they leave African countries and their leaders alone to fashion out what is the best system of governance for their people and Europe stop dictating to African leaders what type of government is suitable for them.

In the coming months, many elections would be taking place in some African countries, I would suggest that European observers should stay out of it and not use their western ideas to try to define democracy for Africa. We can lead ourselves now in what system best suits our African countries. Take a lead from Rwanda and Tanzania.

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Happy New month to you our readers and our followers. We have a small favour to ask. More people, like you, are reading and supporting the Voice magazine since we stopped the hard print copy in 2016. We have continued to serve you the magazine in the same format with all production cost covered like editing, page designs, photography and digital distribution via online channels where we have to pay. The Voice magazine has been an independent organisation, we do not receive any form of subsidy except the support of our readers and friends. We made the choice to keep our reporting open for all, regardless of where you live or what you can afford to pay. Our advertising drive continue to grow. You can support us through that medium as well, promote your businesses and services with us as your way of support.

Our editorial independence means we set our own agenda and voice our own opinions. You are free and welcome to contribute both commercial and political independent articles for our reading audience without bias. We want to continue to give a voice to those less heard, explore where others turn away, and rigorously challenge those in power.

We hope you will consider supporting us today. We need your support to keep delivering quality journalism that's open and independent. Every reader contribution, however big or small, is so valuable. Support The Voice magazine as little as one EURO and it only takes a minute through your bank account.

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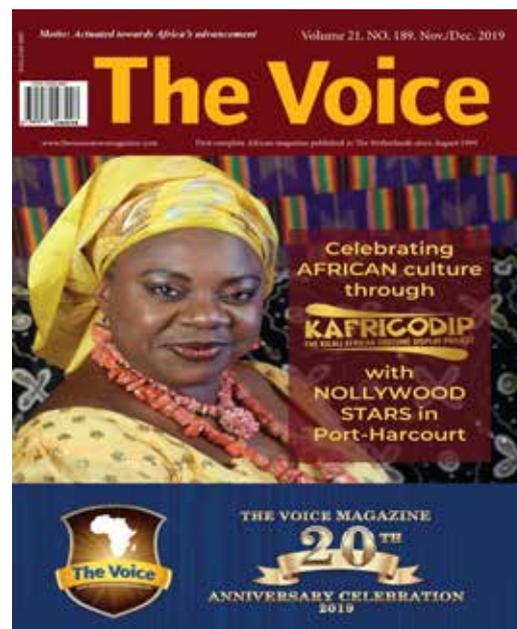
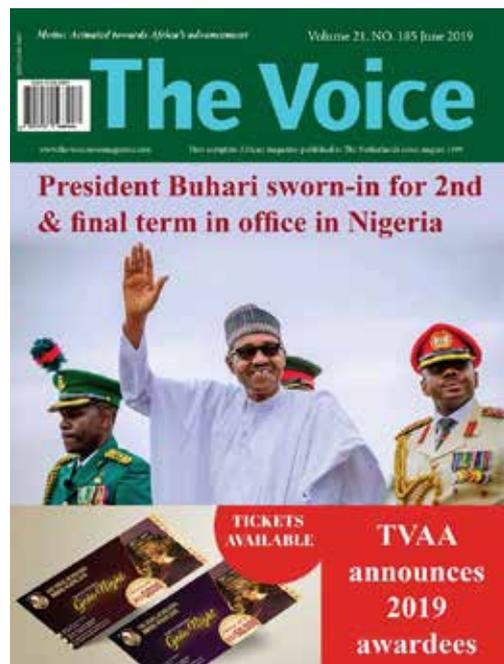
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TV Management

# The Voice



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## ***Thanks for the recognition of my support to The Voice magazine***

Dear Editor,

Once again congratulations on your 20th anniversary last year and unfortunately I could not attend because I was traveling. I received my certificate of appreciation. I am pleasantly surprised at the recognition and I felt so guilt that I have not contributed much to your success story therefore I want to be part of the Voice magazine family from now on. Kindly inform me or any other person interested how we can support the Voice magazine for your continued publication. I receive it each month via my email and on whatsapp; your effort is highly commended.

Thank you to your wonderful team.

Chief Kelvin Onyenze

Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

## ***Nice to see stories from The Netherlands again!***

Dear Editor,

Thank you for bringing back short summary of news in The Netherlands. I have missed that in the magazine, you need to keep us informed on changes to laws here in the Netherlands where most of us your readers live. I want to know more on the immigration policies, insurance, tax information and general information on housing. Many immigrants find it difficult to get accommodation so information would be helpful as well in your magazine. Keep up the good work.

George Camara

Groningen, The Netherlands

## ***YOUR LETTERS ARE WELCOME.....***

Write to the Editor - Email: [info@thevoicenewsmagazine.com](mailto:info@thevoicenewsmagazine.com)

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Thank you for your usual cooperation.

TV Management.



## ***Your editorial on China increasing influence on Africa is timely.***



Dear Editor,

I quite enjoyed your editorial in your past edition on the increasing influence of China on Africa. I totally agree with your argument that this is leading to new colonization of Africa. Those who came before them like France and United Kingdom came with the idea of trading and developing Africa but they need up stealing and controlling all the natural resources of all the African countries. The danger of France in DRC is still there and they are not even ready to let those countries go. They still control their French former colonies currency! What type of freedom are we enjoying in Africa? I hope Africa leaders would wake up from their deep slumber before Africa is recolonized. The signs are there with the Chinese.

Thank you for publishing my letter.

By Yaw Bismark Owusu

Accra, Ghana

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After all visa forms are completed online, the applicant will proceed to the OIS Centre in The Hague, where thumb printing and photographing will be made. The OIS will charge you the sum of €90 each, before your application will be forwarded by OIS to The Embassy for visa issuance.

Meanwhile normal online fee and our €40 commission still apply.

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Wishing you Happy New Year 2020

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# Africa is more than ready to do business with The Netherlands and the rest of Europe says John Muchiri.

**A**n Africa Trade & Investment convention is coming up soon in Amsterdam, The Netherlands and the man with his team putting all of these together is an African from Kenya by name John Muchiri. He is working very hard towards this and asking African Diaspora to join him to make this happen. He spoke to The Voice magazine Business desk on his plans and what he expects to happen this great convention.

*A short profile of him is under the interview. Kindly read and share with others.*

*Enjoy the interview.*

TV: You are a very versatile person from your profile, starting so young to be an advocate for people. Why this part of journey in life?

John Muchiri: I was brought in a very humble background, which made me conscious of inequalities in the Kenyan society early enough. To this end, I became a youth leader, a human rights activist, a performing artist, theatre and film producer, playwright and a news correspondent for a number of magazines in Kenya. I have a lot of interest in development and social justice issues. Over time, I realized that development aid will never help Africa and therefore decided to lead by example by becoming an entrepreneur.

TV: You are originally from Kenya. When did you immigrate abroad and why the choice of The Netherlands?

John Muchiri: I must admit I migrated to the Netherlands unwillingly. In 2004, while in Italy studying for my Master's degree in Development Communication, I had experienced serious challenges with the finance and weather and had returned home hoping never to return to Europe. However, in 2015, my wife got a job in the Netherlands with The Hague based International Baccalaureate (IB). At the time she got the job, my business was doing very well so I did not see the need to migrate to Europe. My wife convinced me and we agreed it would be good for the children to advance their education in Europe. Since I have to oversee my business in Kenya, I spend two months in Kenya and two months in the Netherlands. An arrangement that works well for me since we plan to return to Kenya when my wife completes her assignment.

TV: You head an organization called Capacity Africa. Tell us exactly what you do in your organization?

John Muchiri: Capacity Africa is a leading development and humanitarian Training provider in Africa. The organization has trained over 10,000 development professionals in Africa. As the Chief Executive Officer of the organization I provide strategic leadership and management to a team of trainers and

managers who work in the organization.

TV: You have a major event coming up this year. Kindly tell our readers about it?

John Muchiri: Africa currently has one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Evidence suggests that Africa has now entered a cycle of strong economic growth. Investors are now positioning themselves to understand the opportunities across the African continent. However, foreign investors have not moved into the continent as quickly as expected because foreign investment decisions are often structured. One of the major factors cited is too much risk. But risks and profits are inseparable. High-risk ventures are frequently associated with higher profits.

A report by the UN Conference on Trade and Development states that between 2006 and 2011, Africa had the highest rate of return on inflows of Foreign Direct Investment: 11.4%. This is compared to 9.1% in Asia, 8.9% in Latin



America and the Caribbean. The global figure is 7.1%. To attract more investors to Africa, we are organizing Africa Trade and Investment Convention to be held in Amsterdam from 23rd to 24th April 2020. The conference is focused on highlighting Africa's investment opportunities while creating an opportunity for entrepreneurs, government delegations and business leaders to meet with investors and business leaders from Africa. Over 50 speakers will provide detailed insight into the economic transformation that many parts of Africa are currently experiencing. We expect over 100 investors to participate in the conference.

The conference has special focus on the needs of SMEs who are often forgotten in International conferences targeting Africa. The conference will be information sharing for European SMEs on how they can invest in Africa and create employment for our young people while providing important revenue to our economies.

The event will create a one-stop shop for European businesses that

will greatly save money and time they would have used to travel to 54 African countries to identify investment and trading opportunities. The following topics will be discussed to help understand Investment and market opportunities sector by sector:

Understanding business environment and legal requirements for doing business in to different African countries, Agribusiness, Renewable Energy, Logistics, Digital Technology, Tourism, Financing Start Ups and Micro Finance, Women in Business, Healthcare, Water and Sanitation, Telecommunications and Fintech. More topics might be added as we approach the conference. There will be matchmaking sessions that are sector focused. This will ensure trade and investment deals are concluded during the conference

TV: Who is open to attend this convention from or within Africa and Europe?

John Muchiri: The event is open to International investors, African government delegations and entrepreneurs from Africa and Europe and the African diaspora community. Then we plan to bring over 200 businesses from Africa so they can meet with

their European counterparts to create business-to-business partnerships.

TV: What do you intend to accomplish with organizing a huge investment convention

John Muchiri: We hope to achieve the following; to facilitate direct investments into Africa, promote and facilitate international trade between Africa and Europe; to provide a platform for businesses to expand into new markets in Africa and to build networks and capacities for entrepreneurs especially African SMEs and startups

TV: Is Africa ready for business exchange with the Netherlands who are known to be very serious minded when it comes to doing business?

John Muchiri: Africa is ready for business exchange with the Netherlands. In the last one-year about 230 investors have put their money in startups across Africa. The time to invest in Africa is now. The Netherlands government has put up a strategy on how to do business with Africa just as China, Russia, USA and United Kingdom. Because of this increased interest, African governments should therefore build on this positive trend to maximize foreign investments. This includes eliminating corruption; improving safety and security; strengthening macroeconomic environment, investing in skill development in technology and innovation; and avoiding

unnecessary tax holidays and waivers to foreign companies. Investing in Africa is good business for the Dutch Investors.

TV: One of the challenges African business or private persons face coming to the Netherlands is the issue of visa procurement? What have you put in place to guarantee visa application process is handled well?

John Muchiri: The Netherlands government has adopted a policy of aid to trade. This means the country is willing to issue visas to African business people ready to do business with the Netherlands. The Dutch government makes a lot of money from people in developing countries visiting Netherlands to study its successful agribusiness projects as part of knowledge transfer to other countries. Amsterdam is a renowned global destination for conference tourism so we do not see a situation where African business people will be denied visas. The conference also has the backing of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO). We therefore do not see the reason why African entrepreneurs would be denied visas by the same government that wants to do business with Africa.

TV: How are you financing this convention? Do you have partners? And who are they?

John Muchiri: The conference is generally self-funded. However, we are in discussions with the Dutch Enterprise Agency (RVO) and the Dutch Enterprise Bank (FMO) to sponsor some aspects of the Convention. Among the other partners in this conference are Start Up Fund, Netherlands Export Combination and Strategia Netherlands.

TV: Is the convention open to those in the Diaspora as well and what is the cost for participation.

John Muchiri: The convention acknowledges the important role played by African diaspora in the development of Africa. One of the topics of discussion is diaspora investments and how our governments can encourage more and more Africans in diaspora to invest back home. We are inviting the Africans in Europe diaspora to participate in the conference at a subsidized rate.

TV: How do people get more information or register for the convention?

John Muchiri: Participants can register online by visiting the website [www.investinginafrica.eu](http://www.investinginafrica.eu) Once you send an email to [info@investinginafrica.eu](mailto:info@investinginafrica.eu), we shall facilitate the registration process.

TV: Lastly what should the delegates expect?

John Muchiri: The conference will provide important business opportunities for Africans coming from Africa and for the Africans in diaspora. We expect over 100 international investors will participate in the conference seeking business partners in Africa. The conference will create an important business-to-business meeting for both European and African entrepreneurs.

TV: Thank you for your time.

John Muchiri: You are welcome.

# AFRICA TRADE & INVESTMENT CONVENTION

**THEME: NEW MARKETS, BETTER OPPORTUNITIES**

## TOPICS

POLITICAL STABILITY AND NEW MARKETS

LEGAL ASPECTS AND REGULATIONS

INVESTING IN SMES AND START UPS.

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## Profile of Karegwa Muchiri

John Karegwa Muchiri was born in Kiambu County on 22nd February 1970. He joined Queen of Apostles Seminary to train as Catholic Priest for his secondary education in 1984 but decided to join the Kenyatta University in 1990 on passing A- level examinations. He was one of the founders of Catholic Youth Center (Mji wa Furaha in Nairobi) in 1989.



He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Sociology and Literature) in 1994. He worked for a number of NGOs in Kenya for 15 years and later consulted for UN agencies such as UNDP, UNICEF, UNEP, UNAIDS and UN Women.

He founded Capacity Africa Institute in 2008 primarily to offer capacity building services for NGO staff in post conflict torn countries such as South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, Chad, Rwanda, Burundi, and Congo among other African countries

To date Capacity Africa has trained over 10,000 development staff making it one of the largest training providers in Africa and employing 20 full time staff and part time consultants in Nairobi Kenya.

On realizing that globally many development practitioners and community development organizations especially in the rural areas lack access for development information and resources, In 2015, I founded Humanitarianweb.org website that shares

resources such as jobs, scholarships, development manuals, training opportunities, donor directory and calls for proposals for development organizations worldwide.

In 2018, he founded a parallel website [www.africanngosforum.org](http://www.africanngosforum.org) to share resources targeting development organizations working in Africa especially community based organizations who have no access to international development resources. He moved to join his family in The Netherlands in February 2017

On realizing the tremendous resources available in Europe that can help transform Africa, he founded Invest in Africa Project ([www.investinafrica.eu](http://www.investinafrica.eu)), which attracts investments to Africa. This is done through Africa Trade and Investment Convention and organizing Trade and Agribusiness missions to Europe and to Africa

Karegwa believes in better Africa and sees himself as a Pan Africanist, a Change maker and a Social Entrepreneur. He is involved in a number of community activities and is a member of professional groups back in Kenya. He chairs the Board of Management for two schools in his rural home in Kiambu. He pays school fees for a number of poor students to help uplift his own.

Karegwa is married to Roseline Muchiri and they have three boys, Ian, Eugene and Alvin Muchiri.



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# ‘Responding to Life’ is my creation to support people going through issues of life

- *Victoria Nkatha Mutai*

**V**ictoria Nkatha Mutai is a young African lady based in Denmark, born of Kenyan parents but she is making a name for herself through her various works on touching lives and inspiring younger people around the world. In September 2017, she caught our attention when was recognized by African Women in Europe (AWE) as Youth of the Year Award winner in Berlin, Germany. In fact in that event she was also nominated for Writer of the year Award category. She loves writing and speaking to fellow human beings as herself and she has developed a blog known as Responding To Life (RTL).

She has stayed consistent and also venturing into greater projects. She speaks and host workshops across Denmark and other parts of the world where she is invited. She was on the panel of discussants at the last Voice magazine 20th anniversary celebration in Almere, The Netherlands. After the event, she sat down with the Editor-in-Chief to hold this interview for your reading pleasure.



TV: A bit about yourself and your background?

Victoria: My name is Victoria Nkatha. I am 22 years old and I'm a Kenyan (born and partially raised) living in Denmark. I study Economics and Business Administration at the University of Southern Denmark - Odense. I'm a motivational speaker, writer, and a coach.

TV: You are a very versatile person from your profile, starting so young to be an advocate for people. Why this part of journey in life?

Victoria: I was inspired to begin this journey after my personal blog inspired others. I started writing and blogging as a way out of my own woes and depression. Little did I know that my stories and my posts would be inspirational to others.

TV: You are originally from Kenya. When did you immigrate abroad and why the choice of Denmark?

Victoria: I moved to Denmark in 2011, under my mother. We moved partially because our stay in Kenya was life threatening to us. Why Denmark, well no specific reason but the guidance of the Almighty to my mother.

TV: You studied Economics and Business Administration but you love to write so why didn't you study communications or journalism?

Victoria: I'm in love with Mathematics, that doesn't translate to me being great at it hehe. However, I have always known that if I weren't going to be a lawyer, then I'd do something in business or international relations. Journalism was once in my thoughts but again, through God's guidance, I pursued that which I was led to. It actually was interesting how I didn't get into my first or second choices, which were law and IR, but my third, which was Business. It's not until afterwards that I understood why.

TV: What is the motive behind your usual write-ups titled Responding to Life?

Victoria: My write-ups are mainly inspired by my daily experience and from those that are around me. I also seek inspiration from others such as my mentors and my role models.

TV: When did you start this write ups? What is the response of your audience?

Victoria: I started blogging in September 2016 and initially, I did it anonymously, but a time came when individuals desired to know who was behind it, and also to get to speak about their own experiences. It was something that a lot of people related to and the response was amazing. Hearing that you've been part of helping someone reconsider their life worth or their suicidal thought is nothing short of God's grace. I am just but a vessel, of which I am more than humbled to be.

TV: When did you start this write ups? What is the response of your audience?

Victoria: My future plans, where should I begin, they are many, but for Responding to Life, I intend on reaching out to millions and transforming lives one by one. Investing in a psychology firm all across Africa to help individuals overcome what they are going through and get to a positive mental state.

Create much more awareness of the importance of positive mental health and help individuals step by step through life situations.

TV: What are your plans for the future?

Victoria: I intend to be part of a positive generation with individuals who are well enough to transform the world. To make a difference, we begin with ourselves and then slowly influence individuals one after the other.

TV: What do you intend to accomplish with your projects?

TV: Last year you were in a panel at the Voice magazine 20th anniversary, what was the experience like for you?

Victoria: The experience of being part of the Voice Magazine 20th year Anniversary was humbling considering the fact that I was the youngest panelist in the midst of individuals who have achieved so much in life and in the society. It was a blessing and also a learning platform, I took so much knowledge with me from the panel discussion.

TV: What motivates you?

Victoria: The fact that suicide and psychotic murder rates are increasing instead of decreasing motivates me. The fact that we still feel that speaking out and seeking professional help is a weakness keeps me motivated. The zeal to do more and the response from Responding To Life followers keep the fire burning.

TV: What is your future plans and how do you intend to work

it out?

Victoria: My short term goals are to get Responding to life as exposed as possible so as to reach out to as many as possible. This I intend to do by being consistent with my weekly content and speaking at more events.

TV: Apart from speaking engagement, what else should we expect from you soon?

Victoria: Much more content. In 2020 we have set 3 days aside each week for Responding To Life's content. #MotivationMondays are weekly motivational videos on our youtube channel, #ThrivingThursday are series oriented, each month has a topic/themes while #SuccessSaturdays are blog post oriented. Also, we are working on a few other things, which we intend on dropping soon.

TV: The Voice magazine. What is your impression?

Victoria: The Voice Magazine is a great platform that encourages us to do more and be more. I am very impressed and blessed to have a place in the organization.

TV: Lastly what would be your advice to those reading your interview right now and wants to do similar things as you are doing now?

Victoria: Get started. Take that leap of faith and go for it. We can never be too many to change the world.



# STATEMENT FROM HIS EXCELLENCY, RT. HON. EMEKA IHEDIOHA, CON, ON THE SUPREME COURT RULING ON IMO STATE GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION OF THE MARCH 9, 2019

**M**y dear good people of Imo State, I address you today, following recent developments affecting our dear state, and in particular the Supreme Court judgment of 14th January 2020. In my relationship with you as Governor of Imo, I had employed regular consultations and dialogue as a tool of political discourse. This informs this course of action.

I am reporting back to you our great Imo people on the fate of the mandate you freely gave to me as Governor and Engr. Gerald Irona as Deputy Governor. This mandate has now been truncated and cut short by the Supreme Court, in contravention of the will of the people.

We shall always cherish the tremendous goodwill and support you gave us as we grappled with setting up a new administration to rebuild a state that was devastated by bad governance.

In the last seven months we sought to elevate merit, unity of purpose, honesty, transparency and an inclusive approach to governance, as the hallmarks of our administration. We sought to restore once again, the pride and dignity of Imo people. We worked very hard to re-engineer the Imo renaissance. But God knows why he has allowed this current state of affairs.

No doubt, yesterday's Supreme Court verdict came to us as a rude shock and surprise considering the facts on ground, legal precedence and clear verdict of Imo People on March 9 2019, that returned me as Governor with the highest valid votes of 273,404.

I do not agree with the judgment of the Supreme Court. I think it is unfair, unjust and does not reflect the voting that took place during the elections. It also didn't take care of the sensibilities of the people of Imo State. But as true democrats, Engr Gerald Irona and I have no option but to respect the outcome of that judgment.

Consequently, we have put machinery in motion to hand-over the reins of office to the APC Candidate as the next governor of Imo State. The Secretary to the State Government will coordinate this. I therefore direct all members of Imo State Expanded Executive Council, and all political appointees to write their handing-over notes and to return all government properties in their custody, forthwith. I shall not be party to pilfering of Government property or funds.

May we use this opportunity to express our gratitude to God for the opportunity to serve, within the short period he

granted us. We sincerely appreciate you for all your solidarity and goodwill. We would forever cherish and treasure your love, your trust and your partnership. We made our mark. Rebuilding our dear state is neither easy nor personal, but a task undertaken for our today and tomorrow.

I thank you all for your support which saw us achieve so much and reversed the negative trajectory of Imo State within a space of seven months. It is significant to note that Imo State was looking good again. We were declared the least corrupt State in

the Country, the fastest state growing economy in Nigeria and the most improved, in terms of the deployment of Information Technology in service delivery. Our infrastructure was significantly coming to life, civil servants and pensioners were now being paid as and when due and optimism returned to Imo State. It is on record that we were acclaimed as the most sports and diaspora friendly state. Most importantly we returned life and activities to our local governments. Yes we had good plans to make Imo the centre piece of commerce, industry, technology, tourism by providing good

leadership and first class infrastructure. Under our watch, Imo became safe with our systematic approach to securing lives and property.

All these were made possible by your prayers, support and sacrifices. I therefore appeal to all Imolites, especially our teeming supporters to remain calm and to shun any action that is capable of resulting in a breach of the peace. We can always have different parties, but we would have only one Imo State. In the same vein, I urge you to extend to my successor, the same support you gave to me. It is my wish that he will continue on the path we had set for the rebuilding of our state as well as consolidate on the progress and milestones we achieved.

It is incontrovertible that we ran a good race, fought tough battles, (including, principalities and powers) and governed the state well, with the fear of God, accountability, transparency and entrenched due process. We, however, take solace in the book of Ecclesiastics 3:1, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven".

We step aside with implicit faith in the Sovereign Lord who reigns over the affairs of men.

Thank you.

Imo bu nke anyi.

Rt. Hon. Emeka Ihedioha, CON.



# The Voice Magazine came to Ukraine to warm itself to the heart of People.

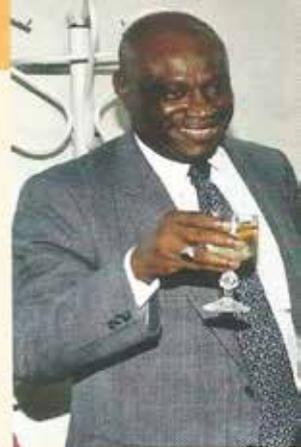
Hurrah! The Editor-in-Chief of The Voice Magazine Mr. Elvis Ndubuisi Iruh visited Ukraine recently to interview His Excellency, Chief Ignatius Hekaire Ajuru, Nigerian Ambassador to Ukraine with concurrent accreditation to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

On arrival at the airport, The Editor-in-Chief discovered that Ukraine is not a country that snows throughout the year but a country, its experts are contributing to the success of both Ajaokuta Iron & Steel Project and METAGRO Nigeria Limited in Minna, the centre of agricultural engineering, to mention a few. The Joint venture factory in Minna produces wheeled tractors, agricultural trailers, rotary movers, disk harrows and other agricultural equipment to produce food for the Nigerian populace and the rest of West African States. The factory also offers training to Nigerians in the sphere of repairing of agricultural equipment.

Ukraine has produced Nigerians like Chief Adolphus Wabara Nigeria's Senate President, Dr. Steve Azaiki, Secretary to the Bayelsa State Government, Dr. George Manuwuike, business consultant, Prince Udechukwu Kizito a successful Tour & Travel

Agent, roving Engineer, Festus Akinwunmi, Dr. Alex Akinseye, Marine Engineer Robert Adeyanju, Dr. James Maboogunje, Dr. Yakubu Fisse, Mr. E. I. Julius, Mr. Michael Okigbo, Dr. Ezuma, Dr. Wilson Otasowie, Dr. A. Awak Edem, Mr. Chris Okeke, Mr. Felix Adedotun Odusanwo, an Economist; Mr. S. O. Fatunla and Mr. V. U. Halliday both accomplished career diplomats and many others. When the news went round that Elvis as he is known, will visit Ukraine, some said what is he coming to do without knowing that The Voice Magazine Editor-in-Chief came not only for professional duty but to enhance the relations between Nigeria and Ukraine, indeed to appreciate the tireless efforts of the Embassy not only to invite Ukrainian investors to Nigeria; but to throw light on the principles and objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

(NEPAD). During the visit, Mr. Iruh appointed Dr. Evaristus Emeka Anyanwu as the pioneer correspondent for The Voice Magazine in Ukraine, exchanged views with some Nigerians and witnessed how Ukrainian investors besiege the Nigeria Embassy for information on investment opportunities in Nigeria. Subscribers can now receive copies of The Voice magazine with minimum delay in Ukraine. What is more! He came, he saw Ukraine and realized that Nigeria Embassy in Kiev is up and doing. ELVIS come back o! Come back to interview other African Ambassadors since the Voice Magazine is the voice of Africa in Europe o!!



## Ambassador Gives His First Reception

Ambassador Dan Suleiman, who was recently appointed the ambassador of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Moscow, gave a reception at GlavUpDK's Cultural Center to mark his country's 44th Independence Day anniversary. Understandably, a great majority of the ambassadors present at the reception were from African countries. Russian deputy Foreign Minister Y.V. Fedotov was among the guests.



**REST  
IN  
PEACE  
SIR**



*Tribute to our  
Former media  
Consultant,  
Dr. O.A. Ajayi*



# Tribute: Dr. Olarotimi A. Ajayi-Jegede

## 8th July 1952 – 3rd January 2020

On 3rd January 2020, the wife of Dr. Olarotimi Ajayi called me from her base in United Kingdom; my thought was that she was calling to wish my family a happy New Year 2020. As I said happy New Year to her, she replied me, 'nothing is happy about the year, Dr. has left me'. What! What happened? She replied, Dr. Ajayi just passed away; I received the news from his elder sister in Lagos, Nigeria. I dropped the phone on her not knowing what to say or believe. No, this can't be true. Was Dr. Ajayi sick and I was not told or what could have happened to him? I was just lost for words to express this sudden loss again, all so soon in the beginning of a new year.

I went to my whatsapp conversation with Dr. Ajayi to see when last we communicated, it was November 2019 so just over a month we have not communicated but nobody informed me he was sick. The wife reported that it was just few days he complained that he was not feeling well and she asked him to see the Doctor as soon as possible. He sent money over to his children in the UK for Christmas celebration and just after the New Year celebration he was gone. His wife is devastated as well as the two beautiful daughters. It pains me to my bones that I have to write this now but I have to so his children could read and realize they did had a good Dad who loved his family and country, Nigeria very much and he served the country with over 35 years of meritorious service at the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs raising to the Ambassadorial position before retirement. He was a career diplomat with special interest

in business development of the country. He served in several countries abroad including Tanzania, Iran, The Netherlands, Ukraine and Venezuela. Our part crossed when he served at the Nigeria Mission in The Netherlands, he was known as a no-nonsense diplomat, he fought for the welfare of his colleagues and sometimes got into personal trouble with his boss, the Ambassador but he would not settle for less in public service. He was a business-oriented diplomat attracting business interest in any country he served towards Nigeria. Through his service to Nigeria, he hated injustice, eye service and corruption like a plague. He fought those vices and fought to expose any negative action that can drag the name of Nigeria into the mud. He fought many of his seniors including Ambassadors and Ministers whenever he served and found misappropriation of

public finance. He got into trouble as well, many times but he would not be stopped or deterred.

We crossed part in early 2002 when he served at the Nigeria Mission in The Netherlands and we became good friends. He was one diplomat that kept friendship with his friends even after leaving the mission. I saw him as a senior brother figure and he took me as his younger brother. He liked my family and even joined the Media consultant team of The Voice magazine. He was a good writer, he wrote several articles for our magazine free of charge, contributing to the growth and advancement of the magazine. He helped to build our business networks, introducing me to high business connections in

society both in Nigeria and abroad. He was a dedicated person truly to his country, Nigeria. He was also a member of the Association for Promotion of International Business and Development channeled towards Nigeria economic growth.

Our relationship grew to another level when he started arranging Mission visit of the Voice magazine that took us to Bulgaria, Romania, Russia and Ukraine. Our visit to Ukraine brought me in contact with the then Nigerian Ambassador, Late Ambassador Ignatius Hekaire Ajuru. We had a great interview with him and met with Ukrainian business interests to Nigeria and also successful Nigerians doing business in that country.

Our friendship grew bigger and stronger, several joint media engagements in Nigeria and abroad. He was a true leader always having words of advice for my team and me.

He often paid courtesy visit to my Dad whenever in Nigeria and shower him with gifts.

Dr. Ajayi-Jedege, you served your nation with your best human ability and that would never be forgotten. Wish you lived longer to enjoy your retirement but that did not happen. We would not forget you in a hurry because you made an everlasting impact on us who were privileged to have met and work with you.

His widow, Mrs. Amaka Ajayi and two beautiful daughters survive him. They would surely miss their dad and us that knew him and associated with him.

He will be laid to rest on Friday 21st February 2020 in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State, Nigeria.

May His gentle soul rest in peace in the Lord in Jesus Name. Amen.





ETERNAL REST

# DR. OLAROTIMI A. AJAYI-JEGEDE

8th July, 1952 - 3rd January, 2020

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Wake:

**Thursday 20th Feb, 2020**

Ajayi-Jegede House  
9, Etitale Street, Itantebo,  
Ijebu Ode  
**4:00pm**

Interment:

Irewon Cemetery, Ijebu-Ode

Funeral Service:

**Friday 21st Feb, 2020**

Cathedral Church of our  
Saviour, Italawajoda,  
Ijebu Ode  
**11:00am**

*May his soul rest in peace...*

# Extraordinary woman who built multi-billion company from a single shop

By Derrick Okubasu

Watching Samchi Group CEO, Esther Muchemi speak, you get the impression that she is cut from a particularly different cloth from the way she articulates her ideas. She is the epitome of the phrase ‘from grass to grace’ especially considering that she started her sprawling multi-billion empire, the Samchi Group, with a single shop along Koinange Street in Nairobi, Kenya

According to her numerous media interviews, including a notable one at Citizen TV in 2018, Muchemi quit her 16-year job to start the shop, in the year 2000, which was the first-ever Safaricom dealership with agent number 0001.

She used Ksh50, 000 from the savings she had kept when she worked as an auditor including at a global auditing firm to start the retail business.

“I started Samchi telecommunications those many years ago as one shop and today, that shop, whose first employee I always say was me, has now grown to four companies in the telecommunications industry, we have gone to micro finance, hospitality and real estate,” she narrated to Citizen TV’s Victoria Rubadiri.

Her company now employs more than 1,000 people.

Muchemi was so successful in pushing her brand forward that in 2009, Safaricom honoured her as the top M-Pesa agent.

Her friends laughed at her when she quit her job but she knew what she was doing, at a time when SIM cards cost as much as Ksh2, 500. “I didn’t have a full understanding of what it was. For me, what I was looking for was a business opportunity and that was it at that moment,” stated the businesswoman



as an explanation on why she ditched her auditing career.

So integral to Safaricom was her company that before rolling out M-Pesa, the telecommunications company ran a trial with her company for six months.

The ventures proved to be quite successful that in 2018, Knight Frank Wealth Report ranked her among the wealthiest women in Kenya. In 2013, she was named as the best performing dealer at the Safaricom Doya Awards. In 2019, Zetech University awarded her an honorary degree in Business and Entrepreneurship, following her enormous contributions to the country in the areas of business, innovation, technology and leadership.

She attended Kahuhia Girls High School where she sat her Form Four exams, transitioned to Mukumu Girls for her Form Six certificate before joining the University of Nairobi. Her success story continues to inspire millions of young people particularly women that if she can do it, they too can.



# Trafficking risk high for hundreds of migrants sent back to Libya

By Nellie Peyton



**H**undreds of migrants returned to Libya last month are at high risk of human trafficking as worsening violence is allowing criminal gangs to thrive, according to the United Nations.

At least 953 migrants headed for Europe were picked up in the Mediterranean and sent back to Libya in the first two weeks of 2020, said the U.N.'s migration agency, the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Mostly intercepted by Libya's coast guard, backed by the European Union, they were all taken to detention centres where aid workers said they have first-hand testimony of migrants being sold to traffickers.

"There are threats to migrants of being trafficked and it's definitely increasingly worrying," IOM spokeswoman Safa Msehli told Reuters.

"The security situation gives room to these criminal gangs and to these smuggling groups to prey on the migrants and their wish to leave a rather unsafe country," she said.

Fighting has intensified in recent weeks between troops loyal to Libya's internationally recognized government and the forces of eastern commander Khalifa Haftar, who are fighting for control of the capital, Tripoli. The escalation has driven more migrants to try to escape the country, said IOM. In addition

to the 953 brought back this year, 237 were also picked up by charity rescue ships and are awaiting a port that will take them.

During the same period last year, the coast guard recovered 23 bodies and no migrants were returned to Libya.

Libya has been a key gateway for Africans trying to reach Europe for years, and about 140,000 migrants and refugees were residing in Tripoli before the fighting broke out last April, according to the International Rescue Committee.

Even before that, armed groups and traffickers, with slavery, rape and torture widely reported by human rights experts, preyed on migrants.

"There is no guarantee that prevents refugees and migrants returned to Libyan shores from falling back into the clutches of traffickers," said Anais Deprade, a spokeswoman for the international medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF).

"European governments can no longer pretend that Libya is a place of safety where refugees and migrants rescued at sea can be disembarked," she said.

Deprade said MSF knew of people who had been sold into trafficking from some detention centres, and that migrants who escape the centres, which are notorious for abuse, were also vulnerable as they try to survive on their own in a war zone.



# Turkey aims to invigorate commercial ties with Africa's growing economy, Nigeria

The latest Turkey-Nigeria Business Council meeting held on Jan. 13 and Jan.14 and organized during Minister Ruhsar Pekcan's two-day visit to the country, reiterated the economic potential between the two countries. With its growing economy as the leader of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and harboring a population of over 200 million, Nigeria is one of Turkey's largest trade partners in Africa. Overall in the African continent, Nigeria is the sixth-largest commercial partner of Turkey and among the sub-Saharan African countries, it ranks second.

The commercial relations between Turkey and Nigeria began to blossom with a trade agreement signed in Lagos, the former capital of the West African country, in 1982. The deal allowed Turkey to import cacao, cola nut, rubber, zinc, crude oil, coal, palm nut and tinstone while it enabled Nigeria to purchase construction material, electronic goods and agricultural tools from Turkey.

According to the data of the Turkish Statistical Institute, the volume of bilateral trade between the two countries, except for oil and gas, totaled nearly \$500 million in 2018. While the sale of Turkish goods to Nigeria totaled \$340 million, Turkey's imports from the country were recorded at \$160 million.

The economic relations between the two countries gained significant momentum in 1999 when Turkey began to purchase liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Nigeria. Last year, Nigerian crude oil also started to sell in Turkey. The bilateral trade volume in 2019 was calculated at \$2.3 billion.

Oil and LNG account for 90% of Turkish imports from Nigeria while oilseed; fruits, sesame, charcoal and cacao make up other Nigerian goods Turkey purchases.

Steel products, furniture goods, construction material and food products are among the items Turkey exports to Nigeria.



In 2018, Turkey became the top sesame purchaser from Nigeria.

More than 40 Turkish firms operate in Nigeria. These firms employ more than 500 Turkish citizens and over 2,500 Nigerians. Turkish companies also organize commercial fairs in different regions of the country, particularly in Lagos.

Turkish firm Ak-Ay Elektrik provides electricity for three million Nigerians through five infrastructure projects to supply transformer substations. The company began its first project in the West African country in 2001.

Fast-moving consumer goods manufacturer (FMCG) Hayat Holding has been producing hygiene products in its \$100 million facility, located in Ogun state since 2017 and employs more than 400 people.

Established in 2011, Turkey-Nigeria Business Council operates to unleash the cooperation potential between the two countries and improve bilateral trade.

Turkey's national flag carrier Turkish Airlines (THY) has seven direct flights per week to Lagos and Abuja. Flights to Port Harcourt started on June 29, 2019. Turkish Airlines also has cargo flights to Lagos and Kano three times per week.

Turkey has been granting scholarships to Nigerian students since 1992. So it is a win-win business relationship between Nigeria and Turkey.

# New Telecom Company called Lycamobile Uganda launches

By Roger Bambino

A new telecom company called Lycamobile Uganda has officially launched. The UK based telecom announced its entry into the Ugandan market at an event held at Sheraton Hotel in Kampala, Uganda.

Lycamobile joins Uganda's mature telecom market that has seen telecoms like Warid, Vodafone and Orange exit the market in the past decade.

Lycamobile Uganda wants to shake -up in the status quo following the entering into the market of a new company. Jeya Seelan, the Lycamobile Uganda Director said; "Our aim is to have a positive impact on the people of Uganda by providing customers with high-speed internet without compromising quality but also better call services. We want to have unrivaled 4G Internet and we hope to roll out our services throughout the entire country in the next six month".

LycaMobile Uganda is a Mobile Virtual Network Operator currently headquartered in London, the United Kingdom. It is part of the Lycal Group which has operations in over 23 countries including; Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, North and Macedonia among others whereas in Africa, they have presence in South Africa and Tunisia. The telecom is known for selling prepaid mobile

services to customers wanting to make international telephone calls, on top of employing an aggressive pricing strategy on entry of countries where it sets up operations.

This means Uganda will be it's first country in Africa for



Lycamobile Uganda to launch their services and they will be using mobile prefix 072 for their numbers. Jeya Seelan added that;

"As part of our future plans for Africa, we had to come to Uganda and it is good that the country offered us a working

licence. This is our first step into the heart of Africa. We hope to create over 600 jobs both directly and indirectly but also expand the telecom market. We shall employ the local workforce in a bid to create employment as one of the ways to create impact to Ugandan citizens".

In order to ensure they don't close shop quickly, Lycamobile Uganda says that they will partner with other operators in the market to ensure we stay afloat. But with over 25 million mobile phone users in the country and a nationwide penetration rate of 71% according to UCC, do you think Lycamobile will survive Uganda's harsh telecom sector? Time will tell. They also plan to employ at 600 local workers for a start and that would also contribute to the employment market of Uganda.



# Why are there so few prisoners in The Netherlands?

The Dutch justice system is cutting jail populations by offering specialist rehabilitation to people with mental illnesses

When Stefan Koning, who has a history of psychosis, was found guilty of threatening a stranger with a knife, a long custodial sentence might have felt like the only answer.

In fact, after a short spell in jail, he is back at his home in Amsterdam.

“Bob is a character from *Twin Peaks*, a murderer who creeps into the skin of innocent people and makes them do terrible things like murder,” says Koning. “There’s a Bob in me who says ‘kill this person’, that sort of thing. If I take my medicines, Bob is quiet.”

Koning is a beneficiary of a growing tendency in the Netherlands to avoid jailing people unless it is necessary. One key aspect of this is a prodigious programme of care in the community for people with psychiatric problems.

“We work on two aims: number one, preventing another crime, and then on psychiatric suffering and the social problems that come with it,” says Hommo Folkerts, a forensic psychologist and outreach worker who helps Koning.

“We don’t treat people with just depression – it’s people with psychotic vulnerability, autism, severe learning difficulties, often in combination with severe personality disorders, addictions, financial problems, no good home or links with family, and often they are traumatized.

“Nobody would approve of the crimes or violence they have committed, but there is a very sad world behind them. If you want to mend all this, it will take a long time.”

In 1988, the UK criminologist David Downes contrasted a relatively humane Dutch prison system favorably against those in England and Wales. Today plummeting prison sentences have left the Netherlands with an unusual problem: it doesn’t have enough inmates to fill its prisons, even after renting out places to Norway and Belgium.

Since 2014, 23 prisons have been shut, turning into temporary asylum centers, housing and hotels. The country

has Europe’s third-lowest incarceration rate, at 54.4 per 100,000 inhabitants. According to the justice ministry’s WODC Research and Documentation Centre, the number of prison sentences imposed fell from 42,000 in 2008 to 31,000 in 2018 – along with a two-thirds drop in jail terms for young offenders. Registered crimes plummeted by 40% in the same period, to 785,000 in 2018.



The Dutch prison rate has halved since 2004

Miranda Boone, a professor of criminology at Leiden University, has studied the collapse in the prison population. “There is no doubt that the prison population has been reduced very significantly in the last 13 years – an amazing and, in the western world, unparalleled development,” she says.

Half of the people in Dutch prisons have received a one-month sentence, she says, and almost half entering detentions in 2018 were actually awaiting trial. Experts attribute the decline to a variety of factors, including more sentencing before reaching or outside of the court system – such as fines – than other countries and the use of court-ordered mediation.

But there is also a special psychological rehabilitation programme known as TBS.

“TBS is a rather unique institution in the world,” Boone says. “In many countries there’s a choice: people can be held accountable for their deeds and are sentenced to prison, or not, and be put in a psychiatric institution. We have a psychiatric institution that is part of the criminal justice system for people who can be held not [accountable] or only partly accountable.” Unlike high-security hospitals in the UK or the Netherlands, TBS has very specific conditions. People must have committed a crime with a minimum prison term of four years and have a high chance of recidivism: the programme works on specifically on their reintegration into society. If this is not deemed possible, or they refuse to cooperate, they can eventually move to a normal high-security hospital and be confined indefinitely.

There were 1,300 people detained with a TBS ruling in 2018: people stay in a treatment centre, sometimes after a jail term, and are treated for the psychological conditions that are thought to have played a role in their crime. Every two years, judges assess whether the treatment should be extended, and the average stay is two years.

For Bas de Vries, 30, Amsterdam’s Inforsa mental health clinic has helped him to build a life again after a traumatic experience in his past led him to commit a violent, schizophrenic attack. “The most important thing in TBS is working on yourself to be able to re-enter society,” he says, from his sheltered home attached to the clinic. “I took a really difficult path. I was ashamed of what had happened and I didn’t really talk openly about it. At a certain stage I started to talk about it, and now I



am where I am.”

Like other TBSers, he has periods of leave, and he now has a paid job and is moving back to his hometown and completing a qualification as a personal trainer. “I don’t think stronger prison sentences are black and white,” he says. “It depends on the person – some people need it and others don’t.”

Melina Rakic, a psychiatrist and director at Inforsa in Amsterdam, says that TBS cases are always complex – because of psychological disorders but also people’s backgrounds.

“A large proportion of cases are ‘have-nots’. These people

are on the one hand extremely dangerous, like the woman this morning, who started a fire for the nth time,” she says.

“They hurt themselves and other people, but these are also people who alongside their personal disorder or psychosis often grew up with a mother who was an addict and a father who disappeared without a trace, with no money, or no food, or no winter coat ... or nobody who says ‘it’s cold outside – take your jacket’. If you don’t have these things as a child, you don’t learn how to make attachments.”

It is difficult to compare figures between those sentenced to a jail term and those offered TBS, but in Inforsa’s experience, its treatment has an effect in reducing recidivism.

“There are often calls from broader society or here in the Netherlands that we need to punish people or punish them harder,” says Rakic. “But we know that for these people, punishment doesn’t help. They end up in prison, they get out, and then within a few months they have committed another crime.”

Miriam van Driel, De Vries’s TBS psychologist, believes a humane approach is simply the most logical. “The way you treat people – also in prison – makes a big difference in how they return to society,” she says. “If you treat them like dogs, people will behave like dogs but if you treat them as human beings, they will behave like human beings.”

Gijs Weijters, senior researcher in recidivism at the WODC, points out that suspended sentences are becoming more common in the Netherlands, increasing the role of the probation service. “A large proportion of prisoners stay only for a short period and this is now seen as problematic,” he says. “We know that prison is not good for your life, you may lose your job or your house, and it’s questionable if short sentences help.”

Other reasons for the decrease are a decline in the numbers of young men, and a sharp decrease in the juvenile crime rate – partly because of an obligation for police to provide an advocate for arrested juveniles, partly because property is better protected and also, says Weijters, “because juveniles spend more and more time online”.

However, there are complications. There is a lot of public concern about psychiatric patients who sometimes do not come back from periods of parole, especially after one raped and killed a young woman, Anne Faber, in 2017. A police union has repeatedly raised concerns about crime that is simply unregistered, such as drug crime, and a report in Amsterdam said the city could not tackle drug-related criminal activity. It has led some experts to wonder if the Netherlands’ low prison population might be a result of failures in crime detection.

“We try to give rehabilitation opportunities, through our TBS institution,” says Boone. “But if we don’t prosecute serious criminal behaviour, then that’s not a reason to be proud.”

This article is part of a series on possible solutions to some of the world’s most stubborn problems. What else should we cover? Email us at the [upside@theguardian.com](mailto:upside@theguardian.com)

The names of the Inforsa patients in this article have been changed at their request

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# How to bring your partner to the Netherlands under EU law

**D**e Vreede, Immigration Law is a young and dynamic law firm specialized in immigration law for both businesses and individuals.

Based on EU law, EU citizens and their non-EU partners have the same right to move and reside freely within the territory of the EU. This right of free movement does not only apply to married or registered partners but also unmarried partners, on the condition that they are in a long-term and exclusive relationship. Dutch nationals can fall under EU regulations when they have used their right to free movement.

**A long-term and exclusive relationship**

The EU does not give any definition of what an exclusive and long-term relationship constitutes. While the IND assumes that such a relationship is present when unmarried partners have shared a household for at least six months or when they have a child together, recent case law shows that even a six-month term can be a too strict criterion. It is all about the relationship itself. The couples need to prove that they are in a relationship with supporting evidence.

**Sufficient financial means**

Another essential requirement is having sufficient financial means to support the both of you. The income requirements for EU citizens are less stringent than they are for Dutch citizens who want to bring their non-EU partner to the Netherlands: no minimum income is required, and even a small amount of savings can be sufficient.

**How does it work?**

It is a two-step application. First, the EU citizen must register at the IND. Second; the partner applies for verification against EU law. Both have to do so in person at one of the IND desks. A facilitating travel visa can be obtained for the partner with third-country nationality, who requires an (mvv) visa.

**Is there a right to work for the non-EU partner?**

After submitting the application, the non-EU partner will receive an endorsement sticker in his or her passport stating, amongst other things, if they are allowed to work or not. Working is allowed if the IND is convinced of the

relationship. This is always the case for parents, married couples and registered partners. In all other cases, applicants have to wait for their application to be processed, which might take up to six months.

**Residency rights non-EU partner after a break-up**

The EU partner permit is dependent on the EU citizen. In the event of a break-up, the (non-EU) partner can retain their residency rights if they have lived in the Netherlands for more than three years. For married couples, this regulation is even more flexible. Being married entitles you to retain your residence rights after a relationship of three years and just one year of living in the Netherlands.

**EU nationals and Brexit**

UK nationals with their non-EU partners will face a different regime after Brexit. For those residing in the Netherlands before Brexit, EU law will still apply. However, there is a national transition period of 15 months. During this transition period, all UK nationals and their dependents should apply for a national residence permit. The IND will invite you to do so.

If you are planning to bring your non-EU partner to The Netherlands, do not hesitate to contact De Vreede, Immigration Law. They will be happy to assist you.

**Back ground information**

Ester combines an extensive knowledge of employment law and immigration law, which proves to be an asset and of specific interest for highly skilled expats and companies that

employ them. The employment section of her law firm focuses specifically on expat needs which may deviate from the standard needs of an employee, for instance with fringe benefits, special expat clauses in employment contracts and termination procedures. Ester has worked for the Dutch government and as an attorney at a large international law firm, where she was responsible for the immigration law section. She is a visiting lecturer at the Free University of Amsterdam and advises the government on matters of immigration policy.



# New record: More than two million businesses in the Netherlands

According to figures from the Netherlands' Chamber of Commerce, since the start of this year, the Netherlands is home to more than two million businesses. Never before have there been so many companies in the Netherlands.

Increasing number of businesses in the Netherlands

Last year, the number of businesses went up by 100.000, an increase of five percent. According to the Chamber of Commerce, the number of self-employed persons increased especially. In fact, there are now more than one million self-employed people in the Netherlands who are working full-time. Next to this, there are 282.000 self-employed people who work part-time - less than 15 hours per week for their own business. The share of entrepreneurs who were not born in the Netherlands has also increased by one percent to 16 percentage points, so one in six entrepreneurs. Last year, almost a quarter of the



The average age of entrepreneurs in the Netherlands has been around 46 for years; however, the average age of entrepreneurs just starting out is falling. In 2018, the average age of starting entrepreneurs was 36 and 35 in 2019.

More and younger people are starting a business, illustrated by the fact that the number of starting entrepreneurs aged 18 and under has more than tripled in three years' time. Last year, there were 6572 young entrepreneurs. These young entrepreneurs often start their own web shop and many are active in the creative sector, for example in advertising, photography, film and performing arts.

The proportion of male to female entrepreneurs last year remained unchanged compared to 2018. Around 64 percent of entrepreneurs are male and 36 percent are female. When we look at starting entrepreneurs, we see that the percentage of women has decreased slightly from 38 percent in 2018 to 37 percent in 2019.



people starting a business were not born in the Netherlands. The majority of these entrepreneurs work in the hospitality, logistics and construction sectors. Many of these migrant-entrepreneurs are active in the provinces of North-Holland, South Holland and Flevoland.

When it comes to the sectors that experienced the biggest growth in the number of companies, the construction and health sector jump out. The number of businesses in these sectors increased by eight and seven percent respectively. The most popular provinces were Flevoland and South Holland, with company increases of seven percent. Limburg saw the least growth in business numbers, with only a three percent rise.

More young people starting businesses



# Aisha Buhari remembers Bauchi State in her series of humanitarian activities with food distribution to 52 vulnerable groups



**F**irst Lady of Nigeria, Dr. Mrs. Aisha Buhari has distributed food items to 52 groups in Bauchi State through her pet-project Future Assured. This is part of the ongoing humanitarian activities that the First Lady has been engaging on across the Country. The Bauchi State distribution took place on the 9th of January 2020. The First Lady was represented at the distribution by the Wife of the Bauchi State Governor, Her Excellency, Hajiya Aisha Bala Mohammed who delivered the First Lady's goodwill message and distributed the food items to the group of beneficiaries.

Hajiya Aisha Bala Mohammed informed the gathering of the beneficiaries that "the mother of the nation was passionate about the less privileged and does not discriminate amongst the poor as religious, ethnic and other diverse groups have benefitted from the distribution of the food items which covered the 20 Local Government

Areas of the State".

Mrs. Hassana Harkila, leader of the Christian Association of Nigerian Women thanked Mrs. Buhari and said "the impact of the kind gesture by the Nigerian First Lady was very significant at a time like this when the poor needed it the most" while Mallam Mas'ud Suleiman speaking on behalf of the Muslim Beneficiaries assured the First Lady that the food items will reach the intended beneficiaries.

Mrs. Bala Mohammed also speaking on behalf of Bauchi State beneficiaries expressed gratitude to the First Lady, Mrs. Aisha Muhammadu Buhari and her Future Assured Program for the unprecedented humanitarian gesture to Bauchi State people, the first of its kind in the State.

The food items distributed included a large number of 50kg bags of rice, Cartons of Spaghetti and Gallons of Vegetable Oil.

By Aliyu Abdullahi



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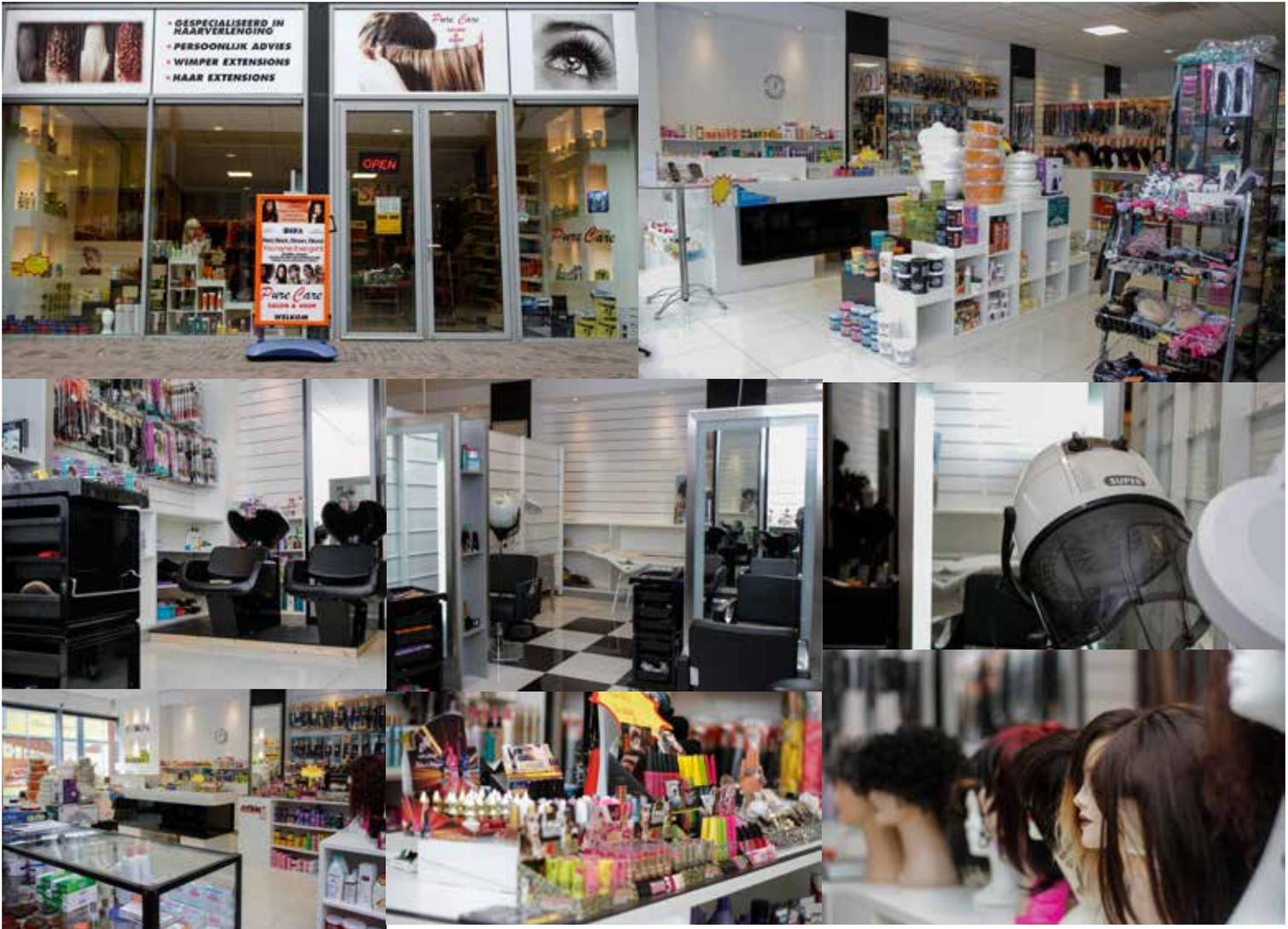


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# Ethiopia's opposition parties merge as election fever rises

Opposition parties in Ethiopia including Oromo Federalist Congress (OFC), Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and Oromo Nationalist Party (ONP) have formed a coalition ahead of May's national elections.

The coalition comes hardly a month after OFC unveiled its latest member, prominent activist Mohammed Jawar, who said he joined because of a 'shared federalist' agenda.

Jawar posted a picture of the leaders of the three parties seated at one table, and holding what looked like paperwork or agreements.

The activist, who commands a huge following among the youth in Oromo had earlier hinted on coalition talks telling the local Addis Standard news outlet that 'there is really no ideological difference between Oromo political parties'.

"I have always said Oromo is my party because to me the difference between OFC and OLF or any other Oromo party is just insignificant, it is non-existent," Jawar said.

Professor Merera Gudina leads the OFC, while Dawud Ibsa leads the OLF and General Kemal Gelchu heads the ONP.



With prominent personalities like Jawar and Bekele Gerba, this coalition could be a force to reckon with.

This is the latest political maneuver by political parties that are working overtime to create winning positions ahead of the elections. Others including the ruling party and the prime minister have also been busy rebranding, restructuring and seeking alliances.

## *More people receive their Appreciation certificates from The Voice magazine*



# Birmingham-based Nigerian Pastor who raped children and adults with the support of his wife, convicted in the UK

**M**ichael Oluronbi, a 60-year-old Cherubim and Seraphim pastor based in Birmingham, in the United Kingdom, was on January 14th, 2020 convicted by a UK court for 24 counts of child sexual abuse and rape. Specifically, he was found guilty of 15 counts of rape, seven counts of indecent assault, and two counts of sexual assault. His wife, Juliana Oluronbi, age 58, was also convicted of three counts of aiding and abetting the rape charges against her husband.

According to court papers, five of the seven victims are siblings who were abused at their home address where the church conducted services. The prosecutors told the court that Oluronbi hid under the guise of carrying out deliverance and spiritual works on his victims, male and females, to sexually assault them. The main tactic he employed was to claim that God had instructed him to administer 'Holy Baths' to some of his congregation in order to 'cleanse' them and protect them from evil influences.

The prosecutors told the court that police investigations showed that his wife, Juliana Oluronbi, gave her unwavering support to her husband and particularly arranged abortions whenever any of the victims got pregnant by her husband.

"This case involved the serious and sustained sexual abuse of vulnerable young children by a religious leader. The young age of the victims greatly increases the seriousness of the offences.

"As a result of the hard work and diligence of the prosecution team, and the strength of the evidence, the two defendants were found guilty after trial.

"It is only due to the great courage of the victims that this abuse was brought to light, and the full extent of the despicable and lawless behaviour of these people revealed." Georgina Hewins, from the Crown Prosecution Service said.

Oluronbi was arrested at Birmingham Airport in May last year, while trying to leave the country for Nigeria with some of his belongings and a sum of cash. Police are unable to determine whether he was trying to flee justice, but pointed out he had



recently been confronted about the abuse by one of his victims. In a confession videoed last year by a victim's family member who had confronted him, Oluronbi was heard saying: "Everything was just my fault, and as I said before, I wasn't meant to be human. I wasn't meant to live under the roof of any human being and I said that I was an animal." he said The Oluronbi's are due to be sentenced on a later date.



# Anti-Conde protests: Guineans resume marches over constitutional tweaks

Thousands of Guineans took to the streets again in a new anti-government protest, with partisan violence injuring more people in the country's east. The West African country has been hit by rolling protests since mid-October 2019 over concerns President Alpha Conde plans to stay in office for a third term.

Wearing the opposition colour red, protesters carried placards reading "No to a new constitution" and "No to a third mandate for Alpha Conde". Conde, 81, announced a new draft constitution last December 2019, but which critics fear he will use to pursue a third term.

Guinean opposition parties called for the protests to be held in residential neighborhoods to avoid a mass gathering in the capital's center after the government said such a march would be shut down.

Young protesters burned tires in various suburbs, as most people stayed off the streets of Conakry to avoid any violence. In the capital's center, several hundred demonstrators burned tires and put up barricades around the headquarters of the National Front for the Defense of the Constitution.

"Mamadou Sow took a bullet in the chest. His body was deposited in the morgue of a private clinic in the suburbs," said Idrissa Camara who was at the scene. A local pharmacist, Lamine Balde, confirmed the death.

The father of the boy who was shot, Mamadou Hasmiou Sow, said he couldn't get to see his son's body.

"The body is in a clinic. But there is shooting everywhere. I couldn't get there to see the body," Sow told The Associated Press.

Guinean security forces dispersed demonstrators who were blocking roads, said Mory Dioubate, spokesman for the ministry of security.

"They threw stones at our forces. There have been arrests," he said, unable to give the number arrested.

The demonstrations follow the announcement by opposition groups that they will boycott legislative elections in February and will press to have them delayed if President Alpha Conde does not withdraw his bid for another term in office.

Tens of thousands of people marched last year protesting Conde's plans to change the constitution to allow him run for a third term. At least nine people were killed in one of the October protests.

"We will continue these demonstrations until President Alpha Conde renounces this new constitution and his desire to have a third mandate," said Sidya Touré, the leader of one of Guinea's opposition parties.



Conde's current term ends in December 2020 but he seeks a referendum to allow him to stand for a third term in the West African nation of some 12 million people.

The 81-year-old Conde was elected to a five-year term in 2010 in the country's first democratic transition of power since independence from France in 1958. He was re-elected in 2015 and according to the constitution should step down at the end of this year.

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# *Togo President running for fourth five-year term in Feb. 2020 polls*

**T**ogolese President Faure Gnassingbé has been elected as flag bearer for the ruling party, the Union for the Republic, (known by its French abbreviation UNIR) ahead of presidential elections slated for February this year. “The bodies of the UNIR party, gathered that His Excellency Faure Gnassingbé on the unanimous will of activists to see him defend the colors of the party in the presidential election of February 22,” said Aklesso Atcholé,

regions of Togo, where they organized consultations with the movement’s base.

“This is a party meeting, aimed at informing me of the activists’ wish to see me still wearing our party colors in the presidential election. I thanked them and in all humility, I accepted,” Faure Gnassingbé told the press after the meeting.

Faure has been in power since 2005, after succeeding his father Gnassingbé Eyadéma, who ruled the country for 38 years. He was re-elected in 2010 and 2015 by disputed ballots.

The country went through a serious political crisis in 2017 and 2018, with gigantic protests heavily repressed, to demand the limitation of presidential terms and the departure of the head of state, who at the time was preparing to run for a fourth term.

The government in response to the protests introduced a May 2019 constitutional revision, which was endorsed by lawmakers. The new rules allowed for not only President Gnassingbé to stand for re-election in 2020 and 2025, but also to benefit from immunity for life “for the acts committed during presidential terms.”

A dozen opposition leaders including its historic leader, Jean-Pierre Fabre, and personalities from civil society, also announced their candidacy for this presidential election.



executive secretary of UNIR, at a press briefing. Party officials had met behind closed doors in the presence of President Faure Gnassingbé, after a tour of the various

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## **DETAILS COMING SOON!**

# Togo's February 22 Presidential vote: Head-to-head between Faure and Fabre?

The West African nation of Togo goes to the polls on February 22 to elect a president. It will be the fourth successive vote with the incumbent contesting. Faure Gnassingbe has been president since winning his first vote in 2005. He was reelected in contested polls of 2010 and 2015. CENI, The Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) will be responsible for ensuring that the polls are free and fair to the population in this month's Presidential election.

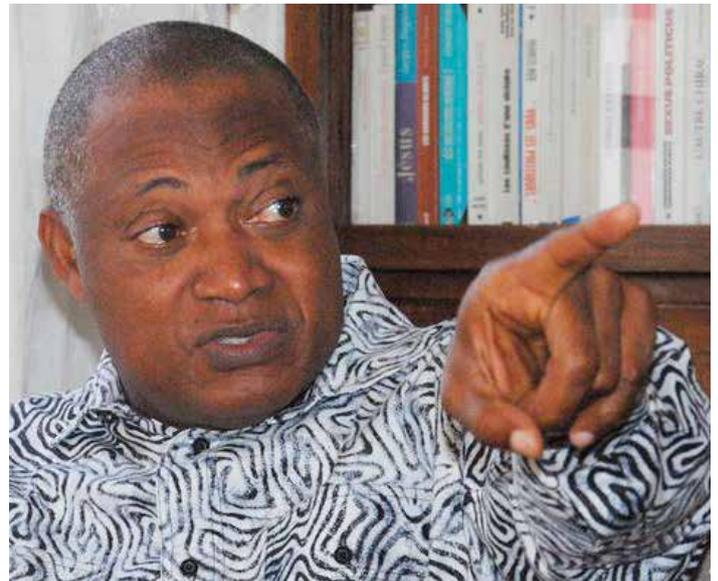
The candidature of President Faure Gnassingbe is all but set as is that of Jean-Pierre Fabre, leader of the Alliance for Change (ANC), the main opposition party in the country.

Fabre was leader of an opposition coalition that organized mass protests between 2017 – 2018 demanding the president



to step down and for wide ranging political reforms. He led several marches in the capital Lome, most of which were forcibly dispersed by police with deaths and injuries resulting. Government agreed to talks that were mediated by Ghana president Nana Akufo-Addo. Subsequently a constitutional reform process was launched despite opposition reservations about it.

A key reform agreed was limiting of the presidential tenure to two five-year terms maximum. But despite having been in



power for over twelve years at the time, the law was to take effect-starting 2020. It meant that the incumbent could seek two more terms as president.

Many analysts see the election as a straight contest between Faure and Fabre. Much like the case across most African countries where there is an incumbent and a strong opposition usually with other smaller candidates.

Another candidate whose name comes up strongly is Gabriel Messan Kodjo, or Agbéyomé Kodjo, the candidate of the coalition of Democratic Forces.

After CENI's publication of the official list of candidates, the electoral campaigns will kick off on February 6, two weeks to the polls. It will end a full 24-hours to the opening of polling centers.



# These are the key African elections to watch in 2020

By Rudolf Ogoo Okonkwo

Millions of Africans will go to the polls in 2020 to participate in the most sacred of all democracy's rituals, to elect their leaders. There will be presidential, and in some cases also parliamentary elections, in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Niger, Seychelles, Tanzania and Togo.

Parliamentary elections will also take place in Chad, Mali, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Comoros, Egypt, Somalia, Liberia and Gabon.

In theory, each election will give Africans the opportunity to shape their future by electing their preferred leaders to man the affairs of their countries. But as has been seen in previous elections in Africa, it's never quite that straightforward even as some progress has been made.

As Witwatersrand University professor John Stremlau has written, "African politics is vulnerable to demagoguery and divisiveness but there's also been a proliferation of progressive forces." But that Stremlau meant moves by individual governments and institutions like the African Union to try and improve electoral processes and security. There have of course been varying degrees of success but it is seen as progress nonetheless.

Beyond the usual mix of ethnic and religious debates and rivalry in African national elections, other factors have had an impact on both the outcome and perception of the outcome of elections. One more modern factor is how open the political space is in each country. Of recent, African leaders have taken to shutting down of social media during these tense election periods as has been seen in Uganda, Chad, Gabon, Burundi and

## Togo

These are some of the key presidential elections to watch. Togo (February 2020)



Togo will hold the first African presidential election of the year on February 22nd 2020. Current president Faure Gnassingbé, who has been in power since 2005 when his father died, is expected to extend his rule as he's now expected to be the major candidate to beat on the ballot. His closest rival has tried in the last election but did not succeed. There have been significant protests in Togo of the Gnassingbé's dynastic rule, given the president's father seized control himself in 1967 and ruled for over three decades before he died in office. The country's lawmakers last year okayed reforms limiting a president to two terms in office but Gnassingbé will be allowed to run for a further two terms if he wins.

## Burundi (May 2020)

Burundi is expected to hold its election on May 20th 2020. Its colorful, soccer-playing and prayerful authoritarian president Pierre Nkurunziza seems to have abandoned his effort to run for re-election after altering the constitution to allow him to run until the 2030s. He has been in power since 2005 and his bid to stay in office has reopened all wounds that threaten to resurrect the Hutu/Tutsi divide that's led to past bloody conflicts-one of which lasted from 1993 to 2005.

In 2016 the EU withheld aid to Burundi due to Nkurunziza's government repression of opposition party members. As May's election approaches, tension is running high between the ruling party, CNDD-FDD, and main opposition party, CNL. The main opposition alliance party, CNARED, has said it will return from exile in Belgium to participate in the elections for the first time since 2005 after skipping 2010 and 2015.

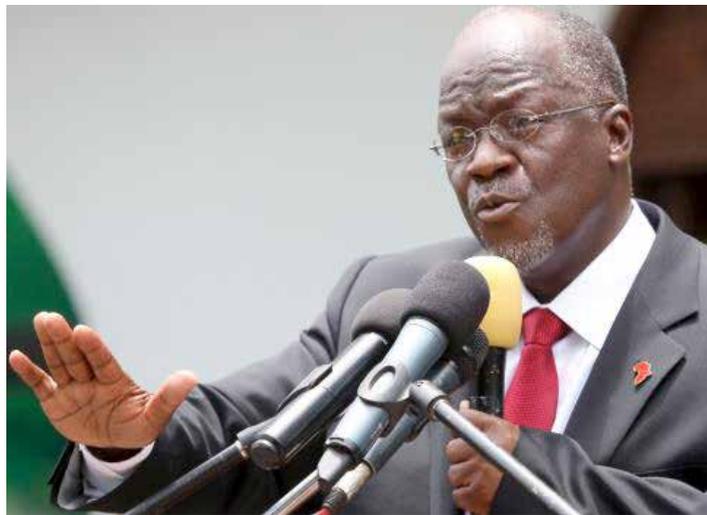
## Burkina Faso (October 2020)

In Burkina Faso, former Prime Minister Kadré Désiré Ouédraogo is running for president in October. The 66 year-old Ouédraogo will challenge current president Roch Marc Christian Kaboré who is running for re-election. Both men were close associates of former president Blaise Compaoré.

The election will be the second since the popular uprising of 2014 that forced out Compaoré and may its most crucial as large swathes of the northern regions of the country have become overrun by terrorist activity. Burkina Faso is now at the epicenter of a spreading Islamic insurgency in the Sahel, which even the support of the French military, has seen the killings and attacks on hundreds of Burkinabes. The violence may still impact the election in some places and whomever wins will have to contain the fast-expanding destabilization caused by the militants in the country.

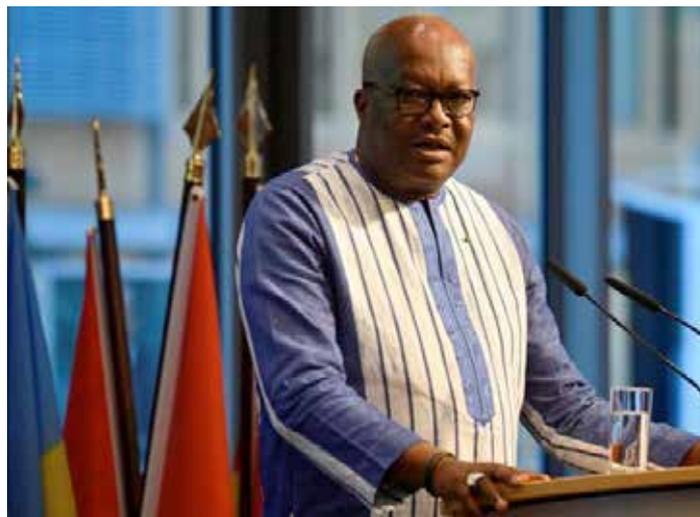
## Tanzania (October 2020)

The presidential election in Tanzania is going ahead despite suggestion by a Tanzanian lawmaker last April that President John Magufuli would defeat any opponent against him so the country would do well to use the money for election to pursue



developmental projects. Going by the conduct of local elections in last year November election where social media was shut down and opposition leaders were harassed, disqualified and forced to ultimately boycott the election this is probably the election that has the potential to disrupt the peace of one of the most stable countries in Africa.

Magufuli, 60, recently told his party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), that he had no intention to run for a third term when his current term ends in 2025, not 2020. For him and the members of his party, which has won every election since multi-party systems began in 1992, it is a forgone conclusion that he would win reelection in October. But at the same time Magufuli's increasing authoritarianism and the international criticism he's received will give hope to any opposition party that this might be the time to challenge the orthodoxy.



## Côte d'Ivoire (October 2020)

In Côte d'Ivoire, presidential elections will be held on October 31. Incumbent President Alassane Ouattara has served two five-year terms (2010 – 2020) in office. If he abides by the constitutional provisions, he will not seek a third term. Though Ouattara, 77, has indicated a willingness to hand over to



a new generation, he has also argued that the 2016 constitutional change invalidated previous term limits. He recently warned that he would seek a third term if his predecessors decide to run in the 2020 election. Ouattara was referring to two former presidents, Laurent Gbagbo and 85-year-old Henri Konan Bedie.

Gbagbo, 74, could run for president after the International Criminal Court in The Hague acquitted him of crimes against humanity. With the collapse of the coalition that brought Ouattara to power and as Bedie's party prepares to announce their presidential candidate, Ivorians hold their breath worried their country might descend into another civil war after living through two wars over the last two decades.

The concerns have been exacerbated by the drama after the government issued an arrest warrant for presidential candidate Guillaume Soro in December last year. The 47-year old former rebel leader was set to return after a six-month absence to run for office.

Continued on Page 48

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## Ghana

The Ghanaian presidential election is shaping up to be a repeat of the 2016 election, which was a repeat of the one before it. Former president John Mahama is the candidate of the opposition National Democratic Congress that will take on incumbent president Nana Akufo-Addo, who is running for re-election for the New Patriotic Party.

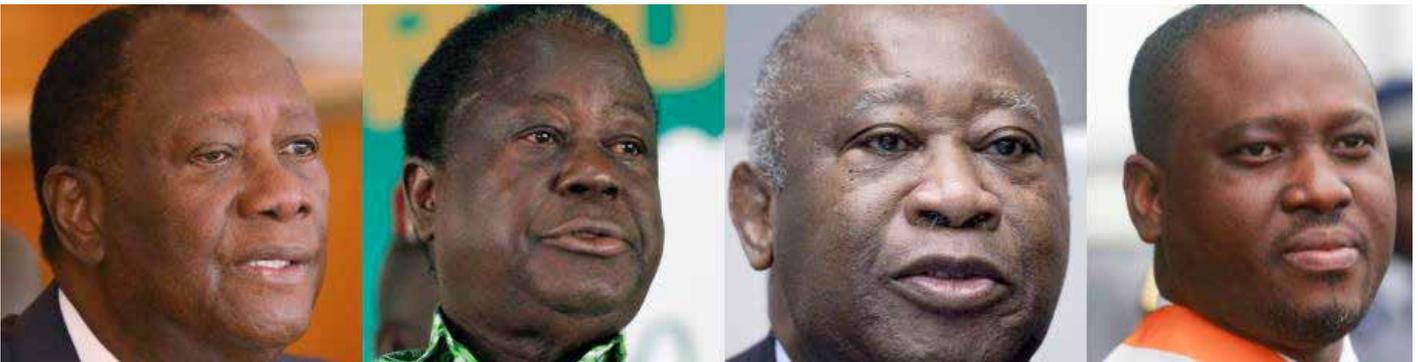
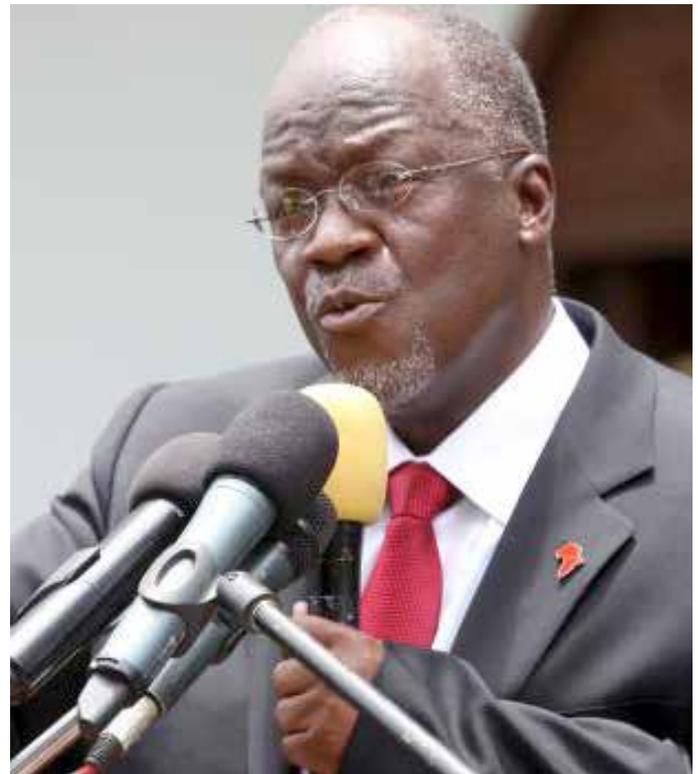
In 2012 when they first ran against each other, Mahama, 61, won. In 2016, Akufo-Addo, 75, won. The only intrigue in 2020 is for Ghanaians to decide, after four years of each man, the question is which one served Ghana best? Akufo-Addo is milking his government's Year of Return campaign which has won global plaudits in the way it's opened up the country to the African-American and Caribbean diaspora. Some have even relocated to Ghana.

But for day-to-day most Ghanaians are far more concerned about the sluggish pace of economic development and persistent reports of corruption. And younger Ghanaians in particular are wondering why they seem to have no other credible and viable choices beyond these two men.

### Central African Republic (December 2020)

In Central African Republic (CAR), the country is in danger of returning to its recent violent past as its former president Francois Bozizé returned to the country after more than six years in exile. He is threatening to run for president in December in a country that is still largely controlled by violent rebel groups that came into place as a result of years of his misrule.

In Bozizé's absence, the Russians have signed a military deal with President Faustin Archange Touadéra, with Russian mercenaries protecting the president and working on finding peace in a country deeply divided along ethnic and religious lines. How the Russians will influence the election is up in the air.



# Jammeh will be arrested and prosecuted if he comes to The Gambia- Justice Minister Tambadou declares

**G**ambia's Justice Minister Ababucarr Tambadou has reaffirmed the government's commitment to arrest and prosecute the exiled Gambian dictator Yahya Jammeh if he ever steps his foot in The Gambia.

Tambadou says Jammeh had committed crimes against humanity and must be prosecuted for his crimes against The Gambian people. Tambadou was speaking during Gambia's Legal Year, in which judges, lawyers and members of Gambia's legal fraternity were attendance.

"Make no mistake about it, barring any findings or recommendations of the TRRC to the contrary, if former President Yahya Jammeh, ever comes back to this country, he will face immediate arrest and charges of the most serious kind, and no amount of irresponsible idle talk or political brinkmanship will prevent this from happening. He will be subjected to an accountability process like any ordinary accused person in this country," Tambadou remarked.

It would be recalled that Jammeh announced his home return during a New Year message to his supporters. He claimed that no one could stop him from coming home.

He also encouraged his supporters to demonstrate on his behalf so that the international community can respect an agreement he reached with him back in 2017. The demonstration was held last month where the APRC had called on the EU, AU, and ECOWAS to respect the agreement they reached with Jammeh. But Justice Minister Tambadou thinks that Jammeh belongs in jail given what he called the atrocities he had committed against innocent Gambians and non-Gambians.

"So let me make this clear once again, the TRRC is only a fact finding investigative process, but unlike other truth commissions elsewhere around the world, ours is the first of its kind with a mandate to identify for prosecution those who bear the greatest responsibility for the human rights violations and abuses. After a year of public hearings, and as we enter into the second and possibly final year of hearings, it can no longer be ruled out that crimes against humanity have been committed in The Gambia, between July 1994 and January 2017, under former President Yahya Jammeh, and that those who will be identified by the TRRC will face certain prosecution in the most serious form," Tambadou stated.



"There will be accountability of the highest order for these crimes and I assure the victims that it is now only a question of when, and not if. Make no mistake about it, barring any findings or recommendations of the TRRC to the contrary, if former President Yahya Jammeh, ever comes back to this country, he will face immediate arrest and charges of the most serious kind, and no amount of irresponsible idle talk or political brinkmanship will prevent this from happening. He will be subjected to an accountability process like any ordinary accused person in this country," he added.

Meanwhile, according to Tambadou, the Government continues to demonstrate its commitment to the welfare of the victims by making an initial payment of fifty million dalasis to the TRRC Victims' Trust Fund, part of which was used to provide overseas medical treatment for some victims. Nevertheless, he warned, great care must be taken not to undermine or be seen to undermine all the efforts invested in our transitional justice process.

"We have all worked too hard to throw it all away at the altar of political expediency. History will not judge us kindly if we engage in acts that undermine public confidence in these processes and ignore the pains and sufferings of the victims and their families. And let those who mock at or use threatening or abusive language against the victims be warned, do not test the limits of our democratic tolerance or confuse our respect for the rule of law with weakness.

We will not, under any circumstances, accept the intimidation or harassment of victims and witnesses by anyone. The change in December 2016 is as much about sensitivity to the plight of Jammeh's victims as it is about our collective destiny as a people," Tambadou said.

# Gambia president launches own party after rift with ruling coalition



**T**he Gambian President Adama Barrow late last month launched his own political party in the capital, Banjul, confirming what political watchers had predicted for the West African country after series of political conflicts on his continued stay in power beyond three years.

The move frees him from the coalition that helped him win the presidency three years ago in the country. The coalition achieved a shock victory over long serving Yahya Jammeh, currently exiled in Equatorial Guinea.

The president has formally registered the new party, the National People's Party (NPP), with the Independent Electoral Commission, making him the leader and secretary of the party.

The announcement comes as relations between Barrow and his former party, the

country's largest party, the United Democratic Party (UDP), have deteriorated. He fired party leader, Ousainou Darboe over differences in 2019.

Last month, thousands of demonstrators demanded that he step down after three years as he pledged in an informal agreement amongst coalition members. The constitution grants him five-year term. He was sworn in on January 19, 2017, when Yahya Jammeh resigned and went into self-exile after a regional political-military intervention. Most things are still uncertain in The Gambia but it is hope that with the President forming his own political party, he would be preparing to face the public in an election that the electoral body would decide when it will take place.

## President Buhari appoints Dr Kingsley Isitua Obiora as

### New Deputy Governor of CBN

**P**resident Muhammadu Buhari has sent the name of Dr Kingsley Isitua Obiora to the Senate for confirmation as Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria.

In a letter to President of the Senate, Ahmad Ibrahim Lawan, President Buhari said the nomination was in accordance with the provision of Section 8(1) (2) of the Central Bank of Nigeria (Establishment) Act 2007.

Dr Obiora, upon confirmation by the Senate, replaces Dr Joseph Nnanna, who retired on February 2, 2020.

However, "He is currently an Alternate Executive Director in the International Monetary Fund, IMF in Washington DC, United States of America".

Dr Obiora holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Statistics from the University of Benin, a Masters in



Economics from the University of Ibadan, and a Doctorate in Monetary and International Economics, also from the University of Ibadan.

He is currently an Alternate Executive Director in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) In Washington DC, United States of America", he noted.

# Ethiopia PM advises Trump to complain to Nobel Prize Committee

Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has advised US president Donald Trump to direct his complaints about not winning the Nobel Peace Prize to the awards committee in Oslo.

Abiy in December 2019 received the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for his role in the 2018 Ethiopia – Eritrea peace deal and reforms back home. At a rally in Ohio on January 9, 2020, Trump said the leader of one of the country's had been awarded a Nobel Peace Prize after he (Trump) had made a deal and saved a country.

Abiy's acceptance of a border ruling and offer of peace to Eritrea was received by Eritrea's Isaias Afwerki with both countries closing the chapter on two-decades of a standoff and near war conflicts.

Many analysts in the region had mentioned the involvement of foreign nations in bringing about reconciliation. The Gulf States especially Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were routinely mentioned as key backers of the deal. Both countries have awarded Gold Medals to Abiy and Afwerki after the deal.

In response to Trump's claims of deserving the Peace Prize, Abiy told journalists in South Africa

"To be honest, I am not aware of the criteria used to select winners of the prize, so Trump's complaint must go to the Nobel Prize Committee in Oslo, not Ethiopia," Abiy said at a joint press briefing with South Africa's president Cyril Ramaphosa.

"I am not working for the prize, I am working for peace which is a very critical thing for our region."

Trump's disclosure that he played a hand in the latest Nobel Peace Prize by 'saving a country' went viral last



month. "I'm going to tell you about the Nobel Peace Prize. I made a deal, I saved a country. And I just heard that the head of that country is now getting the Nobel Peace Prize for saving the country.

"I said... what the... did I have something to do with it? Yeah. But you know that's the way it is. As long as we know that's all that matters. I saved a big war, I saved a couple of them," he added as supporters cheered him.

"I made a deal, I saved a country, and I just heard that the head of that country is now getting the Nobel Peace Prize for saving the country. I said, 'what, did I have something to do with it?'" -- Trump whines about not having a Nobel Peace Prize

Many Ethiopians were puzzled by Trump's remarks. Some said his talk of a deal must have referred to the new peace with Eritrea. But one senior Ethiopian official told The Associated Press the remarks referred to preventing further tensions between Ethiopia and Egypt over a massive dam that Ethiopia is completing on the Nile River. Egypt says the dam threatens its water supply. Ethiopia says it's needed for development.

Ministers from the countries, plus Sudan met in Washington on their latest round of talks. According to reports, it is progressing well.

"He was talking about Egypt and Ethiopia," the official with Ethiopia's foreign ministry said. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media on the matter. The official asserted that Egypt's president lobbied Trump over the disputed dam project, leading to the U.S. taking a role in the discussions. "President Trump really believes he avoided a war as such ... but that was not the case," the official said. And he has nothing to do with the peace now enjoyed with Eritrea.



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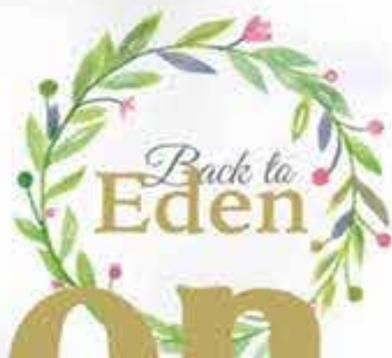
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# Bail for Zimbabwe Vice-President's wife accused of trying to kill her husband

The wife of Zimbabwe's vice-president was granted bail last month after few weeks in jail on charges of fraud, money laundering and attempted murder of her husband.

Marry Mubaiwa, 38, who is the wife of Vice-president Constantino Chiwenga, 63, was arrested last December on allegations of attempted murder, fraud and contravening the country's exchange control laws by transferring about \$1m (R14.28m) abroad.

The high court in Harare freed her on a 50,000 Zimbabwe dollars bail and she was ordered to surrender her diplomatic passport. She also offered title deeds of her father's house as surety. The businesswoman and former model who was previously married to a national football player, will report to the police twice weekly.

A trial date has not been set yet but she is due back in court this month for a routine pretrial appearance. The



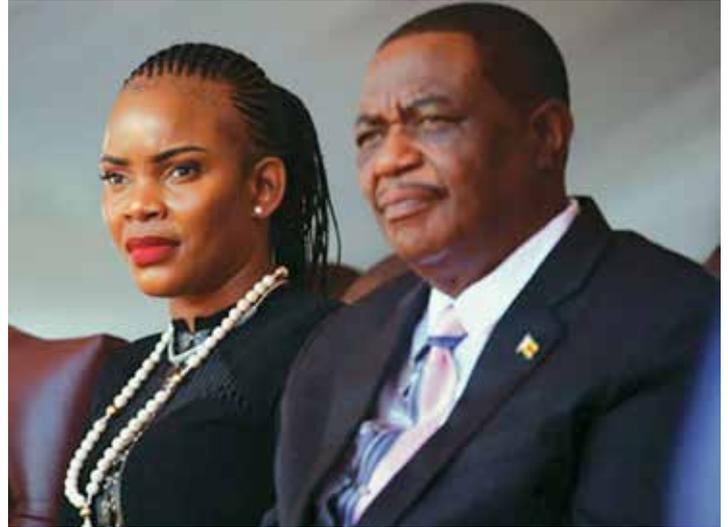
attempted murder charges arose from a trip last year when she accompanied her husband who was airlifted for medical attention to South Africa.

In Pretoria, she allegedly took the ailing Chiwenga to a hotel, refusing to take him to hospital until his aides forced their way in and took him to a clinic.

Prosecutors alleged that "with intent to cause serious harm", Mubaiwa went to Chiwenga's hospital ward and asked his security aides to leave saying she wanted to have a private conversation with her husband.

Alone with the bedridden Chiwenga, Mubaiwa allegedly removed an intravenous line and a catheter from her husband causing him to bleed profusely, the prosecution said.

Chiwenga, who led the 2017 ouster of long-time ruler Robert



Mugabe, went to SA to seek emergency medical attention for a constricted oesophagus, before being transferred to a Chinese hospital from where he was discharged late November.

On return home after spending 123 days in the Chinese health care centre, Chiwenga said had he not sought medical help in China, he could have died.

He was welcomed at the airport by China's deputy ambassador to Harare while his wife Marry was absent.

On December 29 he returned to China for what was said to be a review.

Prosecutors also said between 2018 and May last year, Mubaiwa transferred money from her foreign currency account in Zimbabwe into South African bank accounts under the pretext of paying for goods to be imported from that country.

She allegedly used part of the money to buy a house in a Pretoria plush golf estate and two luxury cars.



# African Diaspora harps On Unity, Trade, and collaboration in Ghana

**D**r. Barrow spoke on the need for unity, collaboration and trade between the Continent of Africa and those living in the Diaspora

Kumasi Ghana December 29, 2019— At the invitation of Asantehene Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Dr. Barrow gave an iconic keynote speech address at the African Prime Leadership Awards ceremony held at Manhyla Palace. Dr. Barrow has been touring the world on a mission to link Africa with the Diaspora and the Diaspora with Africa. Along with Dr. Barrow, several Heads of State, local Chief's, community leaders, and thousands of community members came out to support The Asantehene at the community Dubar Festival where the Ashanti Culture was on full display. The following evening December 29, 2019, a State



of Global Parliaments having summits around the world. Summits will be in North America, Europe, South America, The Caribbean, Asia/Oceania and Africa.

The mission of the State of the African Diaspora and the 6th Region Economic Community is to connect Africa with its Diaspora and the Diaspora to Africa, as well as connecting the Diaspora to the Diaspora internationally. Its mission further extends to being a key participant in the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Dinner was held to honor The Asantehene as he received The Pillar of Peace Award.

During her keynote address Dr. Barrow spoke on the need for unity, collaboration and trade between the Continent of Africa and those living in the Diaspora. She spoke on business opportunities and the need to support each other economically so we can progress into the future. She stated, "If we don't do it, we are going to go another 400 years."

She issued a call to action to "be strong, know that you have your brothers and sisters...we are waiting for you, don't have us waiting to long."

The State of the African diaspora has been formally established. On October 24, 2019. The government will present its first actions and ongoing projects and launching





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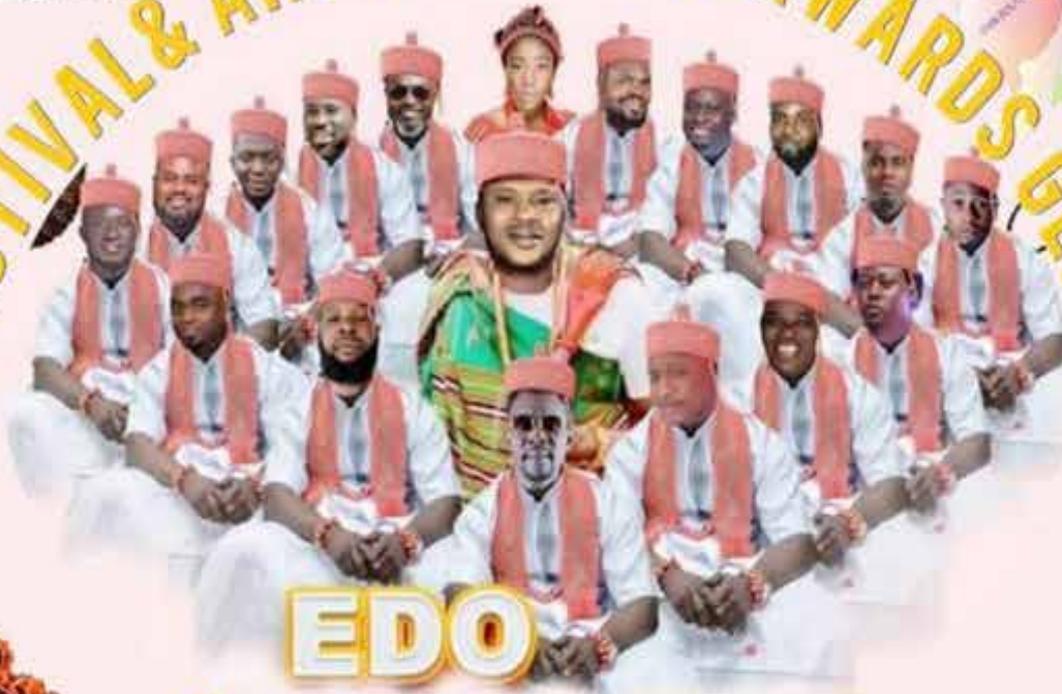
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# Liberia: Gov't declares Henry Costa a fugitive

The Government of Liberia says the Chairman of the Council of Patriots (COP), Henry Costa is now a fugitive. Deputy Spokesperson at the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism at his regular press briefing on hearing made the announcement that he has been allowed to leave Sierra Leone.

Deputy Minister of Information, Eugene Fahngon said even though Mr. Costa wasn't arrested and wasn't aware of any charges that the government might have leveled against him, he had no rights to "runaway".

"Wait for the completion of the investigation and then you will see whether you will be charged or not but to run in the middle of the investigation and say I was never charged...he was never charged because the investigation was not completed," said Fahngon.

Speaking on the issue of Mr. Costa's lawyer failure to bring him to Liberia as he guaranteed, Minister Fahngon said that the Solicitor General of Liberia would deal with that particular issue of bringing the lawyer to book.

"His lawyer signed a guarantee note to present him to Immigration authority that was conducting an ongoing investigation. I'm not a lawyer, I'm a government spokesman and I don't know what the law says when you sign for someone and don't bring them back and you let them go because you are an attorney and a lawyer," stated the Minister.

When asked by Journalists about Mr. Costa's whereabouts, the Deputy Information boss said the government does not know where he is but the question should rather be directed to his lawyer.

"We don't know but what we do know is that he is a fugitive and the best person to ask would be his attorney who signed for him, but his attorney on radio program claimed he doesn't know either and he heard that Costa was in Sierra Leone and I called him to the radio to give me a reason why he shouldn't be arrested in that studio," said Fahngon.

Talk Show host Costa reportedly departed Freetown Sierra Leone via Royal Air Maroc last month, despite a late official request by President George Weah led government to have him extradited to Liberia.

Civil and Human Rights activists in Sierra Leone confirmed that Mr. Costa was allowed to leave without further provocation of his right under the international human rights convention, which forbids countries from sending anyone to a country where he thinks his life would be in imminent danger.

The convention protocol relating to refugees under

the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees subscribes to the core principle of international refugee law, which provides that no one shall expel or return against his or her will, in any manner whatsoever, to a territory where he or she fears threats to life or freedom. The Convention is both a status and rights-based instrument and is underpinned by a number of



fundamental principles, most notably non-discrimination, non-penalization and non-refoulement.

News reaching us earlier from Freetown informed us that the President of Sierra Leone, President Maada Bio gave the green light for the leader of the Council of Patriots, Henry Costa to leave without provocation. We also learnt that the Liberian government has expressed disappointment with immigration authorities in Sierra Leone for holding Mr. Costa and allowing him to go when they knew he was wanted back in his country, Liberia.

President Bio, we learnt expressed disappointment with immigration authorities in Sierra Leone for holding Mr. Costa, a move that his Minister of Communication, had suggested tainted the country's democratic credentials.

Mr. Mohammed Swaray, appearing on the popular BBC Focus on Africa program said the Bio administration would not take dictation from any government regarding the ongoing saga involving the head of the COP leader. "We just want to ensure that we fulfil his rights, he himself can attest to that, he's been very well treated, we cannot take dictation from any other government, we're a democracy, we value that. We have struggled far too long for democracy and this government is noted for its very strong democratic credential so we will not do anything on toward. So, as soon as we have gone through the process, we will do what we have to do."

Mr. Swaray explained that immigration authorities in Sierra Leone received a call from its Liberia counterparts to cross check a few things regarding Mr. Costa. But the minister made it clear: “Henry is not in detention, he is enjoying the full human rights, we are a sovereign democracy, we don’t take instructions from other people. I can assure you that Henry’s human rights and basic freedoms will be respected. In fact, he posted something on Facebook that he’s being well-treated, he’s not been coerced, and he’s very well protected even though he’s in confinement. So, as a government we are doing everything humanly possible to ensure that we don’t interfere with his basic rights and fundamental freedoms.”

The decision to hold Mr. Costa was reportedly not done at the highest-level of the Sierra Leonean government, evidence by the late push by the Weah administration to officially make the case to its next-door neighbors.

In Liberia, the government’s chief spokesman, Information Minister Lenn Eugene Nagbe, said the push was still on as the government was pressing Sierra Leone to fulfill its international obligations to extradite Mr. Costa on the basis of



what Minister Nagbe described as his “criminal activities and not his political activities” in Liberia.

Mr. Costa’s departure may suggest that the Bio government did not take the Liberia request seriously. It is hoped that it would not developed into a diplomatic crisis between the two neighboring countries.

## ‘I will be killed if Sierra Leone returns me to Liberia’, Says Council of Patriots Leader Henry Costa

Mr. Henry Costa, leader of the Council of Patriots, which has been behind a couple of protests against governance lapses in the administration of President George Manneh Weah, says he fears he would be killed if the government in neighboring Sierra Leone honors a request from the Liberian government to have him returned to face charges because of his political outcry on situation of affairs in Liberia.

Mr. Costa was reported to have fled to Liberia’s next-door neighbor, Sierra Leone in hopes of connecting on a flight to the United States of America.

Mr. Costa said he has committed no crime in Liberia for which he should be sent back. “I will be killed if I were to returned to Liberia. I would be killed, so the Sierra Leonean authorities will have to know that. I will make that clear to them when I speak with them”

Mr. Costa, who says he was held at the local police station at the Lungi International Airport in Freetown, Sierra Leone but he praised the professional handling of his case by the Sierra Leone police.

Even though he was prevented by immigration officers whom he said had received instruction not to allow him to leave the country. Costa said he had previously received information that the Liberia Immigration Service (LIS) had been instructed to seize his passport, therefore, he refused to hand over his passport to them at the RIA.

The LIS released a statement clarifying that immigration officers never stopped Costa from traveling, rather, Costa voluntarily delisted himself after checking in with SN Brussels and asked for his luggage to be deplaned. “LIS says while it has received reports that Mr. Costa entered Liberia using forged travel documents, it did not arrest, stop nor accost him at the airport as he did not present himself to immigration officers,” the LIS release stated.

He explained that he was informed that although the laissez-passer he presented upon arrival was authentic, the signature and stamp were not forged.

“They asked me to make a statement and then my lawyer, Cllr. Findley Kangar to sign for me. What does that mean? I’ve made arrangements to leave but they said I cannot leave until the Minister of Justice had reviewed the report,” the COP leader told the press.

Mr. Costa who vowed in a news conference that he and his COP were considering planning new rounds of protests against Weah government’s decision to sell nine oil blocks, explained to the VOA’s James Butty how and why he left Monrovia and ended up in Freetown and now abroad.

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# No Ghanaian official present at Majetie's funeral in Nigeria

Ghana's weightlifting gold medalist at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Australia, Majetie Fetrie, was laid to rest at Igobo-Akure in Ondo State, Nigeria last month with no sports official from Ghana in attendance. The absence of Ghana's officials at the funeral was received with dismay and shock by the family of the deceased and many sports observers from Ghana.

Indeed, there was said to be a disturbing undertone of condemnation from mourners ahead of the burial when the MC enquired whether there was any official from Ghana to give a tribute to Majetie. When contacted, a disappointed Ghana Weightlifting Federation (GWF) President, Ben Nunoo Mensah, explained that he could not make it to the funeral on the grounds of ill health, but he duly informed the Ministry of Youth and Sports about the need to send a delegation to Ondo State in Nigeria for the funeral.

The sports ministry claimed they did not have enough funds to attend the funeral. A combined team drawn from the National Sports Authority (NSA) and the Sports Ministry was expected to pay their last respects to the fallen weightlifter who won Ghana's only weightlifting gold in the nation's Commonwealth Games history.

However, there was not a single representation at the funeral, a situation that has cast the nation in bad light. It is recalled that the Sports Ministry sent a high-powered delegation led by Deputy Sports Minister Perry Okudzeto, to London in September 2019, to attend the funeral of former Black Stars striker Junior Agogo. Agogo, a bronze medal winner for Ghana at the 2008 Nations Cup of Nations, died after suffering from stroke.

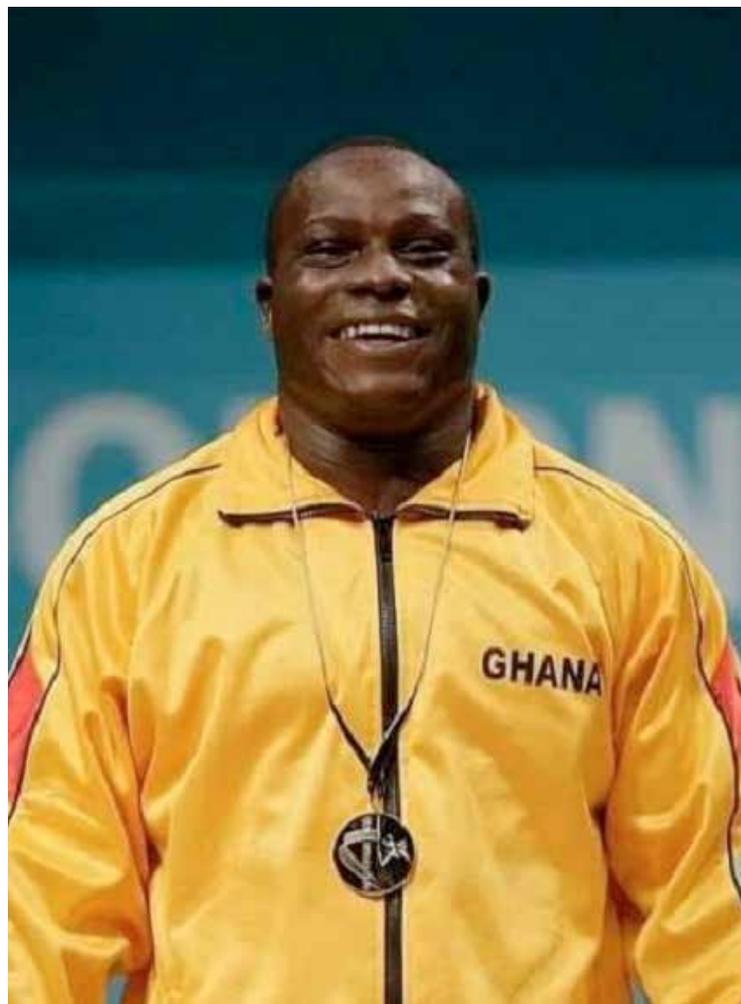
"I'm sad and totally shocked by this development. This is simply incredible. How much is the nation going to spend to honour one of its fallen heroes who had brought so much honour to the nation? Australia-based Bernard Fetrie, an adopted brother of the deceased, quizzed.

Bernard Fetrie was captain of Team Ghana during the 2006 Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games in Australia, where Majetie clinched gold.

India-based Johnson Abotsie, who won all three weightlifting medals (two silver and bronze) for Ghana at the Abuja 2003 All Africa Games, said "Ghana should bow its head in shame for failing to show up in Nigeria to mourn with the family of Majetie."

Majetie died in Nigeria on Christmas day – December 25, last year (2019).

Until his demise, Majetie, who was a coach in the United States, was struck by a bout of stroke and decided to fly down



to Nigeria - his ancestral home, to seek herbal cure for his ailment.

In the course of treatment, however, the naturalized Ghanaian weightlifter that was also known as the 'Iron Doctor' died in his sleep.

Previously known as Najeti Ogbogu, Majetie was invited to Ghana by then boss of the Ghana Weightlifting Association (GWA), Clifford Aboagye to help build the fledgling sport – the weightlifter having just retired prematurely from the sport in Nigeria.

Without any hesitation, Majetie landed in the country in 2002 where he met the likes of Michael Johnson Abotsi, Bernard Fetrie, Albert Abotsi and later Juliana Arkoh, among other prized weightlifters.

He was later adopted by the Fetrie family and naturalized later for Ghana – inspiring a fast-flying renaissance of weightlifting in the country. May his soul rest in peace.

# Pogba joins fund raiser to provide drinking water in native Guinea

**M**anchester United's midfielder Paul Pogba attended a charity football match aimed at raising funds to provide clean drinking water in Guinea.

While Paul Pogba did not take part in the game held over the weekend in France, his brothers Florentin Pogba and Mathias Pogba played.

Paul Pogba said at the event: "Before being footballers, we are men, we are humans, we are children. My mother who is here, who is a Guinean and my father who was Guinean, we want to help our country, it's the country of our ancestors, of our parents, we want to do something good."

The match also attracted France internationals Kylian Mbappe and Antoine Griezmann. Pogba made a speech, posed for photos and mingled with children in the event dubbed "48h for Guinea."

Pogba we learnt is involved with many charitable activities back in Guinea but keeps it out of the media attention like



helping children to secure better education for the future. He is among the growing list of successful footballers of African origin going back to support the continent.

## Rudiger joins league of European players to support African countries

**C**helsea and German international Antonio Rudiger has donated \$100,000 towards free education project by the Sierra Leone government. The player said it was his contribution towards the development of the country of his parentage.

He made the donation when he met with President Julius Maada Bio in London on the sidelines of the ongoing UK-Africa Investment Summit.

Rudiger said he was donating the money as his modest contribution to the President's flagship project, which aims to support over two million children in primary and secondary

schools in the West African nation.

He further stressed the importance of education to the human capital development of a nation, adding that that was the bedrock for every national development.

"Sierra Leone is my home. I'm not the talking type of a person, I am about action. You can count on us and do not hesitate. We are here to support your vision and agenda, especially on education. I am ready to take on my responsibility to change the narrative and image of Sierra Leone," he said.

The player's links to Sierra Leone is via his parents who fled Sierra Leone during the war and resettled in Germany. Rudiger assured the President that he was committed to supporting his government's effort at rebranding the natural resource-rich country with huge potentials for investments.

The Minister of Education, Dr Moinina David Sengh who was present at the ceremony stressed that the funds will put to best use. First Lady Fatima Bio, who has been a strong advocate for girl child education and protection was also present. The player presented customized jerseys to the First Couple.

Rudiger's humanitarian work back "home" goes beyond this donation given that he has in the last few years paid for corrective surgeries for children with cleft lips and burns.



# Randy Stegenga hungry to play basketball for Nigeria

**R**andy Stegenga is a basketball star on the horizon of breakthrough into big time league in United States of America. Recently our Editor-in-Chief ran into this promising basketball star on his home visit to his parents in The Netherlands preparation for his 20th birthday celebration.

Our discussion took a new dimension when this young professional basketball player expressed a secret desire to play for his motherland, Nigeria. He is born of a Nigerian mother and a Dutch Dad but he expressed his love for the Green-White-Green colours of Nigeria and he would appreciate the chance to be invited to Nigeria to practice with the national basketball team to show his skills and what he can bring into the game for Nigeria.

On January 18th 2000, he was born to a Nigerian mother, Yvonne and a Dutch father, Tjerk Stegenga. He is the oldest of three boys and surprisingly they are all interested in basketball. He speaks both Dutch and English very well.

According to Randy, he started with football as a young boy but he gave up football for basketball for in 2008 and ever since there is no looking back for this young talented player. The Voice magazine sports also gathered that his father played basketball as a youth so probably it is in the bloodline of the family.

He started playing basketball in a city called Utrecht combing



with his studies and he has excelled in both activities. Even though it was tough for the parents to regularly make out time to bring him for training and watch him play matches, sometimes twice a week but they did.

To improve his basketball skills, he convinced his parents to allow him to go to United States of America to further his



studies and play basketball. His father also followed the same path during his early study years ago so it was not too difficult to convince them to allow him to go to America despite his very young age.

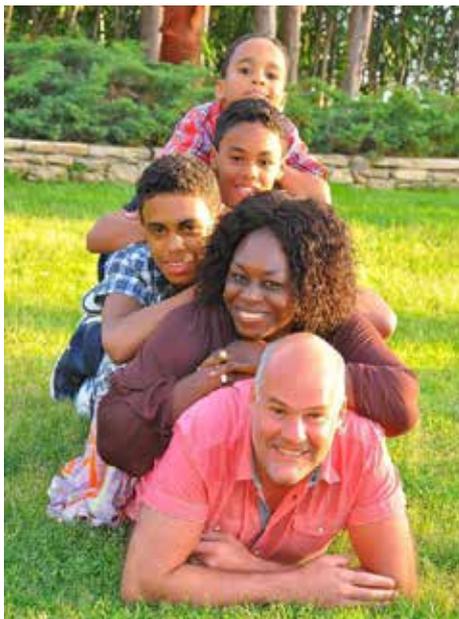
He finished his High school diploma in a city called Den Bosch where he could also play basketball in one of the best Basketball Academy in the Netherlands.

At 17, he made the move to America but it was not easy and after a year, he had a short break to return to Europe. Having a break gap for a year so he chooses to play basketball in Italy. There was a chance for him to play basketball, so he ended up in a campus and play basketball in a small city called Fabriano, about 2/3 hours east of Rome.

Having to leave his parents at that young age, how did he cope? "Being without my parents was different and difficult at first but because my parents raised me well, I adapted quickly. I was already used to take good care of myself and helped around the house like cooking, cleaning, doing laundry and shopping so it was not completely new for me to adjust".



Asked on what position suits him best on the basketball court; "I started basketball at the age of 8. And because of my speed and the feeling for the game I became a point guard. This



position still suits me best. As a leader on the court, I love to lead my team to the most feasible. I am also a strong defender 1-1 as well as in team defence. Offensively, I am able to read the defence and take charge. I have great ball handling, strong passing in combination with hard drives to the basket or a stable shot from outside making me difficult to defend. Most of all, I would like to see my team play better. I stay cool and am able to make the right decisions and stay calm." He is presently studying Computer Science at the Rockford University. He will be graduating with his bachelor's degree before the end of 2020.

He is having his best basketball season with at Rockford

University, Rockford Illinois USA with the end of the 2018 to 2019 season. He guided his university to a 4th place at NACC and 1st round of the play offs. He was voted most improved player of the season.

He is having his best season with at Rockford University, Rockford Illinois USA from 2018 to 2019 and he guided his university to a 4th place at NACC and 1st round of the play offs. He was voted most improved player of the season.

He has received good basic exposure to the sports and training with one of the best Basketball Academy in Europe, he was with Heroes Den Bosch Basketball Academy; Janus Basket Fabriano / Italian Prep Academy, Fabriano, Italy, The Red Stars, Soest, The Netherlands and he also had a training with the Dutch Olympic trial team from 2009-2012. In fact he was the youngest member of the Olympic Stars and recognized as one of the 15 most talented Dutch players with the dream to play in the Olympic Games. He has won several international tournaments and Dutch Region championships. His focus right now is to complete his studies, play basketball full time and the opportunity to play for Nigeria.

The Voice magazine promised to link him up with the Basketball Federation of Nigeria and see a future for Nigeria to annex this talent for the growth and development of Basketball in Nigeria. He is one of several Nigeria born talents scattered around the Diaspora.

For contact details, he could be reached via us at [info@thevoicenevsmagazine.com](mailto:info@thevoicenevsmagazine.com). Or his Dad, Tjerk Stegenga, who is his Manager as well as coach on 0031652852071

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# President Buhari meets with Nigerians in the Diaspora living in United Kingdom

President Muhammadu Buhari last month was in United Kingdom where he met selected Nigerians living in United Kingdom for a chat about the state of the nation and how best the diaspora could support in building the nation.

The Chief Executive Officer coordinated the meeting between the President and members of the Nigerian community in the United Kingdom Nigerians in Diaspora Commission, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa.

Among those in attendance at the meeting with President Buhari was a select number of Nigerians in the United Kingdom with Anthony Joshua and his parents, Robert Joshua and Yeta Odusanya in attendance.

Joshua whose Nigerian names are Oluwafemi Olaseni has never hidden his love for and connection with the land of his forebears regularly making the walk to the ring for his bouts to Nigerian music and playing the Nigerian anthem at many of his fights.

The President congratulated the current World Heavyweight Boxing Champion, Anthony Joshua.

Buhari hailed AJ, as he's fondly called, on regaining his world championship belts. The president said the boxer put Nigeria "on the world map again like Hogan Bassey."

Joshua, who later presented his belts to the President, pledged to "stand up for Nigeria anytime you need me." According to a statement by the Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity, Femi Adesina, the

30-year-old British-born boxer of Nigerian heritage told the President that he is ready to stand up for Nigeria anytime he's needed to do so.

"The President congratulated the current World Heavyweight Boxing Champion, Anthony Joshua, who was the cynosure of all eyes during the meeting, on regaining his world championship belts, as well as putting Nigeria on the world map again like Hogan Bassey," the President added.

Joshua's meeting with President Buhari comes six weeks after he beat Mexican-American Andy Ruiz Jr by unanimous decision to reclaim the world heavyweight titles in the first-ever heavyweight championship match in the Middle East hosted by Saudi Arabia.

Ruiz had shocked the world when he knocked out Joshua to claim the belts in their first bout in Madison Square, New York before Joshua reclaimed the titles in Diriyah, Saudi Arabia last December.

In so doing, Joshua became the fourth deposed world heavyweight champion to reclaim his titles in an immediate rematch in the 127-year history of the category out of eleven fighters to have attempted the feat.

Also in attendance were Governor Inuwa Yahaya of Gombe State, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Geoffrey Onyeama, his Trade and Investment counterpart, Adeniyi Adebayo and Nigeria's High Commissioner to the UK, Justice Adesola Oguntade, among other dignitaries.



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