A decorative graphic on a white background. On the left, a horizontal green line extends from the edge of the page to a white circle with a green border. Inside the circle is the number '5'. To the right of the circle, a large green wedge-shaped area expands outwards, filled with a fine, repeating pattern of the number '5'.

# Maintaining Governance Gains: The National and Regional Agendas

>> **ISSUE BRIEF** from the **AUTHOR**

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# The Growth-Governance Puzzle in Africa

Richard Joseph

The disappointing growth performance of sub-Saharan Africa during the first three decades of independence was called a puzzle.<sup>1</sup> In 2016, it is the sustained economic turnaround that remains puzzling. Although surveys of the statistical data often paint a glowing picture, certain questions persist. Since Africa was overly dependent on international aid flows and the export of mineral commodities for decades, why did that scenario begin shifting? Second, since the quality of growth remains deficient—in terms of its inclusiveness and ability to create jobs—are the progress reports misleading?<sup>2</sup>

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**Africa today is seen through split screens: One depicts steady progress while another shows communities struggling to meet basic needs and coping with abysmal infrastructure.**

Steven Radelet is one of the undeterred optimists about economic progress in Africa and other less-developed areas.<sup>3</sup> He continues to stress the critical contribution made by good governance, including democratization, to such progress. Africa today is seen through split screens: One depicts steady progress while another shows communities struggling to meet basic needs and coping with abysmal infrastructure. The largest countries in the continent—the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, and Sudan—remain in a time-warp of highly predatory and dysfunctional governance. Popular disenchantment, even in a country often praised for its democracy such as Ghana, is now aired in international forums.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, authoritarian regimes in Ethiopia and Rwanda exceed many of their democratic counterparts in growth and socio-economic progress.

A revisionist argument, proposing “developmental patrimonialism,” also drew attention. Its advocates claimed that liberal democracy and competitive politics were perhaps obstacles to transformative growth in Africa. No sooner did its key contentions come under challenge, however, than it was set aside for “political settlements theory.”<sup>5</sup> There is insufficient space to distill the wheat

<sup>1</sup> Todd J. Moss, *African Development: Making Sense of the Issues and Actors* (2011).

<sup>2</sup> John Page, “What Obama didn’t see on his trip to Africa”, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/africa-in-focus/posts/2015/07/28-obama-africa-page>. Page contends, along with other economists, that many constraints to industrialization persist in Africa and insufficient well-paying jobs are being generated.

<sup>3</sup> *The Great Surge: The Ascent of the Developing World* (2015). Radelet resumes the arguments put forward in his *Emergent Africa: How 17 Countries Are Leading The Way* (2010).

<sup>4</sup> For example, at the Woodrow Wilson Center event, “Are Ghanaians Fed-up with Democracy? Institutional Mistrust and Satisfaction with Democracy,” <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/are-ghanaians-fed-democracy-institutional-mistrust-and-satisfaction-democracy>.

<sup>5</sup> R. Joseph, “Inclusive Growth and Developmental Governance: The Next African Frontiers,” in Célestin Monga and Justin Yifu Lin, *The Oxford Handbook of Africa and Economics* (2015). David Booth, “What next for political settlements theory and African Development?” paper presented at the African Studies Association annual meeting, November, 2015.

from the chaff of this formulation.<sup>6</sup> What is evident is that there is no single pathway—especially as regards political regimes—for launching growth and development in contemporary Africa.<sup>7</sup> Going from launch to economic transformation, however, is another story.<sup>8</sup>

The work of Mushtaq Khan is helpful. While rejecting the developmental claims associated with the “good governance agenda,” Khan contends that the transition from a low-growth equilibrium to sustainable growth requires the emergence of “growth-enhancing governance capacities.”<sup>9</sup> What these are is not clear. Pierre Englebert and Gailyn Portelance take up this question. They found that theories connecting the turnaround to progress in democracy and good governance set too high an institutional threshold. Interestingly, they found, countries identified as “developers” attracted more foreign investment than the “laggards.” What accounts, they ask, for this disparity given that general governing capacities in the former seem so little changed? And why is such investment seen in countries widely dissimilar in their political systems?

Englebert and Portelance suggest that the answer may lie in “signaling” between African regimes and potential investors, altering risk perceptions. Such signaling could take the form of “minimal baby-steps” in bureaucracies and institutions. Several leading Africa scholars responded to their analysis and hypothesis, some with enthusiasm and others cautiously, but none rejected them outright.<sup>10</sup> The protagonists admitted that further research was needed about “marginal changes” in economic governance that did not require political restructuring. Such explorations of the growth-governance puzzle warrant further attention.<sup>11</sup> They should include more consideration of the influence in Africa of the political economy models of Singapore and China.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>6</sup> For a summary of the variety of notions embraced by “political settlement theory,” see <http://www.governanceanddevelopment.com/2012/09/what-on-earth-is-political-settlement.html>

<sup>7</sup> Célestin Monga and Justin Yifu Lin, “Solving the Mystery of African Governance,” <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13563467.2012.732277>.

<sup>8</sup> For some of the many hurdles to be surmounted, see R. Joseph, K. Spence, and A. Agboluaje, “Corporate Social Responsibility and Latecomer Industrialization in Nigeria”, in Charlotte Walker-Said and John Kelly, *Corporate Social Responsibility? Human Rights in the New Global Economy* (2015).

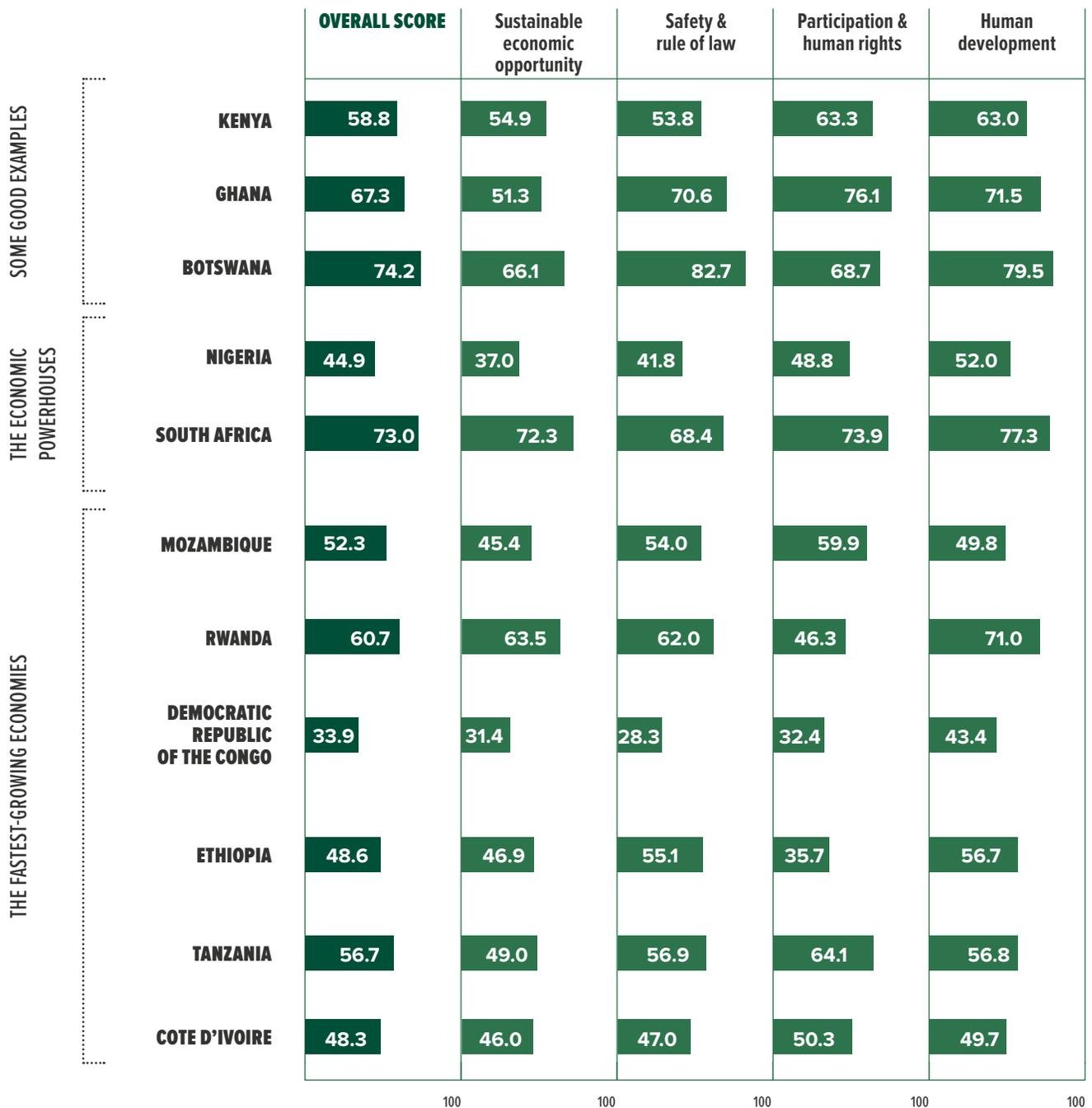
<sup>9</sup> Khan is a prolific writer. For a summary of, and reflections on, his views, see R. Joseph, “Industrial Policies and Contemporary Africa: The Transition from Prebendal to Developmental Governance,” in J.E. Stiglitz et al., *The Industrial Policy Revolution II: Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2013). <sup>10</sup> Pierre Englebert and Gailyn Portelance, “The Growth-Governance Paradox in Africa,” <https://africaplus.wordpress.com/2015/01/06/the-growth-governance-paradox-in-africa/>, and Jeffrey Herbst, Tim Kelsall, Goran Hyden, and Nicolas van de Walle, “Good Growth and Good Governance in Africa: An Experts Forum,” <https://africaplus.wordpress.com/2015/02/18/good-growth-and-good-governance-in-africa-an-experts-forum/#more-1090>.

<sup>11</sup> For diverse perspectives, see Akbar Noman, *Good Growth and Governance in Africa: Rethinking Development Strategies* (2012).

<sup>12</sup> The scale of China’s economic engagement with Africa, especially in trade and infrastructure, together with its dismissal of the good governance agenda, should be squarely considered in any explanation of “the great surge.”

## FIGURE 5.2. THE QUALITY OF AFRICAN GOVERNANCE IS IMPROVING, BUT SLOWLY

The quality of governance in sub-Saharan Africa varies wildly. Having a large economy such as Nigeria and South Africa does not necessarily go hand-in-hand with maintaining good governance. For example, low-income countries like Ghana also perform quite well on the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance. Similarly, when we look at the fastest-growing economies, we also see a wide variation in governance scores. Balancing growth (especially inclusive growth) with strong institutions is a key challenge for African governments both in 2016 and beyond.



Source: The 2015 Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance. Available online here: <http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/iiag/data-portal/>.

A provisional synthesis of these analytical strands can be ventured. Governing regimes seek, above all, perpetuation. To survive, “islands” of bureaucratic efficiency in the security sector could be replicated in the management of economic affairs. Two iconic regimes, led by Jerry Rawlings in Ghana and Yoweri Museveni in Uganda, hewed a path in the late 1980s that has been seen, in varying degrees, in other African countries. Both regimes recognized the pay-off from economic liberalization, especially enhanced aid flows. These were soon bolstered by private capital. In brief, these socialist-leaning regimes signaled that they were “open for business.” Moreover, instead of regarding private investment as threatening to their survival, a different lesson was quickly learned: Political and economic liberalization could be managed to grow economies, reward affiliates, and fend off or palliate opposition.<sup>13</sup>

Private sector growth in post-Cold War Africa did require some governance and institutional changes but seldom the creation of fully open political systems. Joseph Stiglitz and his collaborators hypothesize that a facilitative state able to manage resources above the recycling of prebends is a sine qua non for implementing industrial policies.<sup>14</sup> Such a state would nurture institutions that operate efficiently and predictably and enjoy relative autonomy from “competitive clientelism.”

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**No reasonably democratic government in Africa has seen a rupture from corrupt and clientelistic modes of resource distribution. There are many contenders, however, for such a breakthrough.**

No reasonably democratic government in Africa, for example Kenya, has seen a rupture from corrupt and clientelistic modes of resource distribution. There are many contenders, however, for such a breakthrough, especially among Nigeria’s 36 states.<sup>15</sup> Fostering the creation of facilitative states should be on the agenda of every development agency, domestic and external, in Africa in 2016 and beyond.<sup>16</sup> Salutary signaling through strategic institutional reforms can attract nimble investors. However, transformative growth that requires robust capital flows, greatly improved infrastructure, enhanced labor skills, diversified exports, and the revolutionizing of agriculture, is still more a theoretical construct than a lived reality in much of the continent. In 2016, what has been largely a debate in academic circles about the quality of growth must be made accessible to more African citizens through informed public debates.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> In Ghana a further step was made of allowing the opposition to take control of the government without the Rawlings faction losing its capacity to regain power at the polls. Museveni has never taken this risk.

<sup>14</sup> On prebends and prebendalism, see Wale Adebawale and Ebenezer Obadare, ed., *Democracy and Prebendalism in Nigeria: Critical Interpretations* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), and R. Joseph, “Industrial Policies and Contemporary Africa,” in J. Stiglitz et al., op cit.

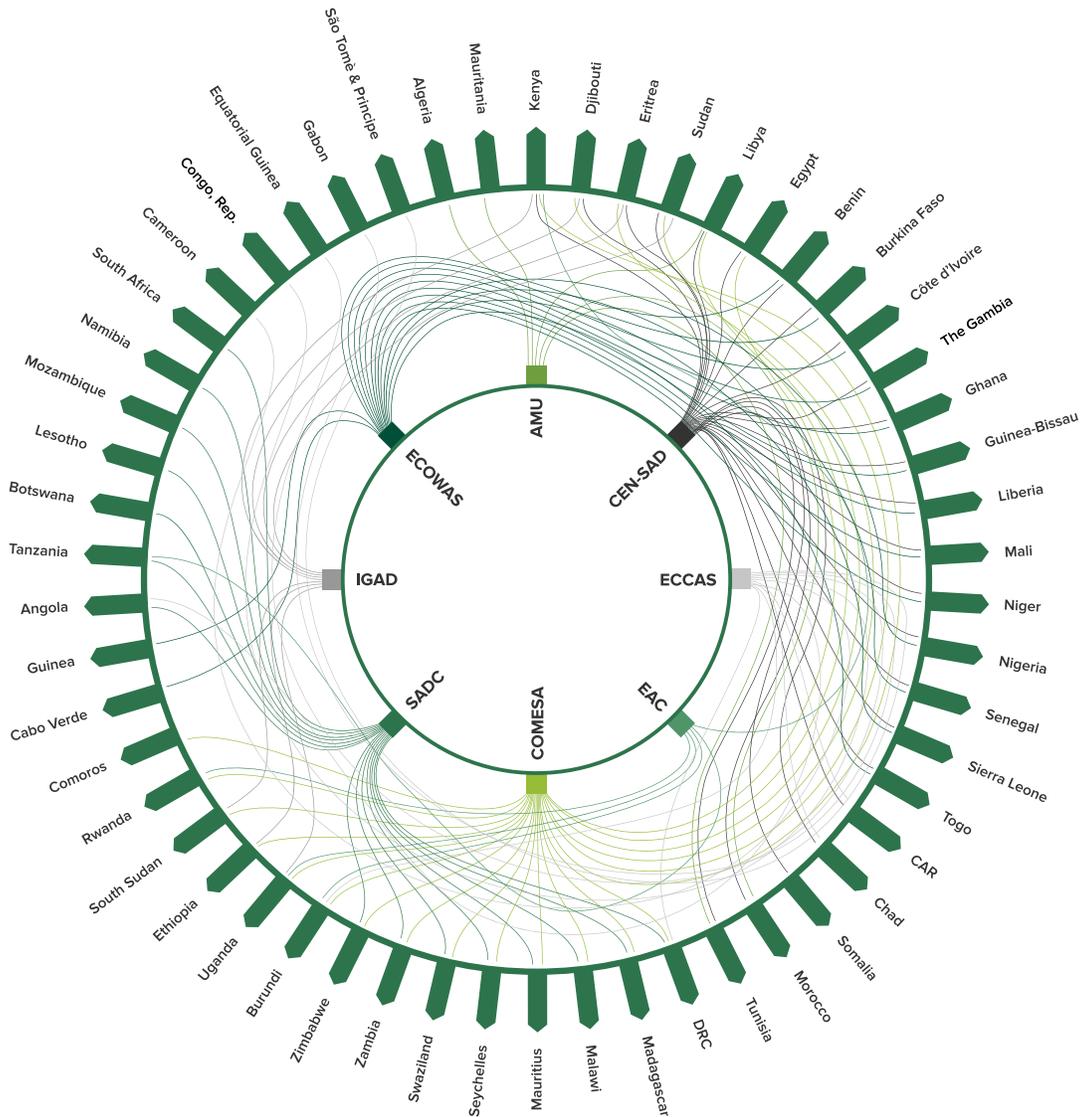
<sup>15</sup> Côte d’Ivoire, which was long a front-runner in developmental governance under semi-authoritarian auspices, has the opportunity to be a breakthrough nation in a pluralist democracy.

<sup>16</sup> On “facilitative state”, see Justin Yifu Lin, *The Quest for Prosperity: How Developing Economies Can Take Off* (2012).

<sup>17</sup> A surprisingly large audience, for example, attended a discussion of these ideas in Accra, Ghana, in March 2014: <https://africaplus.wordpress.com/2014/04/03/africas-third-liberation-transitions-to-inclusive-growth-and-developmental-governance/>

## FIGURE 5.1. REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES MEMBERSHIPS

Africa has many different and overlapping regional organizations, which aim to facilitate trade and eliminate economic bottlenecks. However, coordination across various RECs sometimes presents challenges due to their differing laws, standards, and regulations. These economic entities aim to create a continent-wide free trade areas, a goal that requires patient negotiations, complex compromises, and strong political will.



Regional economic community	Regional economic community
<b>AMU</b> Arab Maghreb Union	<b>ECCAS</b> Economic Community of Central African States
<b>CEN-SAD</b> Community of Sahel-Saharan States	<b>ECOWAS</b> Economic Community of West African States
<b>COMESA</b> Common Market for East and Southern Africa	<b>IGAD</b> Intergovernmental Authority on Development
<b>EAC</b> East African Community	<b>SADC</b> Southern African Development Community

Source: Mo Ibrahim Foundation, Facts and Figures: Regional Integration, Uniting to Compete, 2014.  
 Note: Though there are several other important regional groups such as WAEMU and SACU, this image only represents the eight “building blocks” of the African Economic Community.

## VIEWPOINT

# AFRICA'S ROAD IN 2016: PROGRESS IN GOVERNANCE NEEDS TO BE SUSTAINED

Mo Ibrahim  
Founder and Chair, Mo Ibrahim Foundation

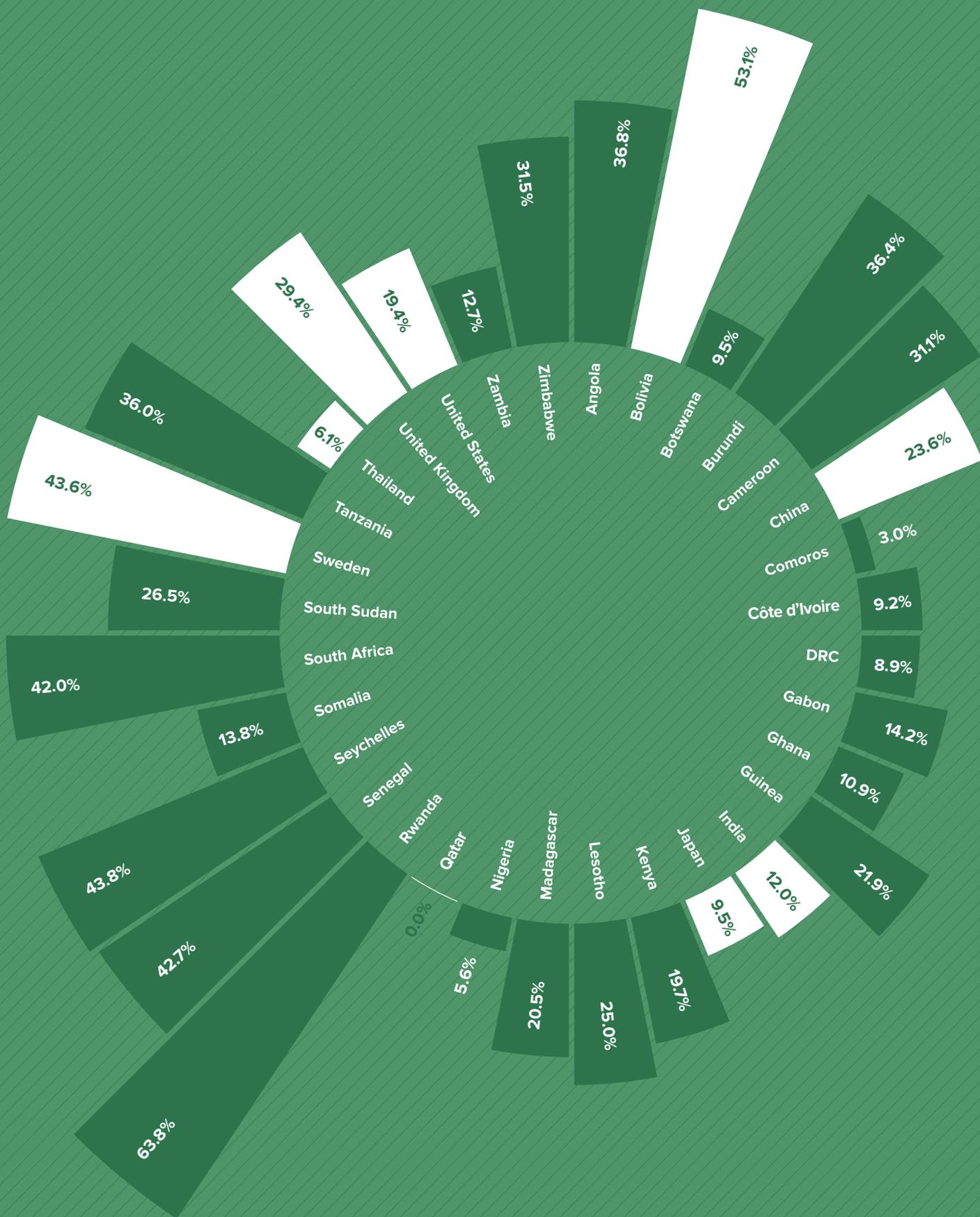
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Launched last October, the 2015 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) reveals that overall governance progress in Africa is stalling. Even though the *Participation & Human Rights* and *Human Development* categories continue to improve, these advances are outweighed by deteriorations in *Safety & Rule of Law* and *Sustainable Economic Opportunity*. Over the last four years, only six countries out of 54 were able to achieve progress in all four components of the index—Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, and Zimbabwe. If we drill down a little further, to the sub-category level, gains achieved in *Participation*, *Infrastructure*, or *Health* are of course heartening, and do indeed register the commitment of all stakeholders—Africans and partners alike. However, the drops registered by *National Security*, *Rural Sector*, and, most of all, *Business Environment*, are cause for concern.

We also need to acknowledge that Africa is not a country. The scores and trends seen in the 54 individual countries on the continent are diverse, with now more than a 70-point gap between the top-ranking country, Mauritius, and the bottom-ranking one, Somalia. Moreover, the 2015 IIAG results also point to a shifting landscape, with diverging results. Over the last four years, half of the top 10 performing countries since 2000 have registered a decline of their governance performance

(Mauritius, Cabo Verde, Botswana, Seychelles, and Ghana). Meanwhile, half of the 10 largest improvers during these last four years are countries that already rank in the upper rungs of the index. If they manage to sustain this trend, they may well become the next leading performers of the continent—Tunisia (8th in 2015 IIAG), Senegal (9th), Rwanda (11th), Kenya (14th), and Morocco (16th).

2015 was a milestone year for Africa. The new Sustainable Development Goals are meant to guide the African development agenda for the next 15 years, and the decisions from COP21 will of course contribute to shaping the African continent's response to climate change. But this will not be enough. More crucial will be our shared ability to manage what represents the four key challenges of 2016 that are so closely related to good governance and strong leadership: the commodity crisis, for a continent whose economic growth still remains far too much export-led and job-poor; the migration surge, which only reveals the worsening demographic divide and imbalance between youth's expectations and prospects both at the economic and political levels; the growing threat of religious and ethnic divides; and the ability to integrate a 54-country patchy continent, which for me is the only cross-cutting response that can sustainably address these interconnected issues.



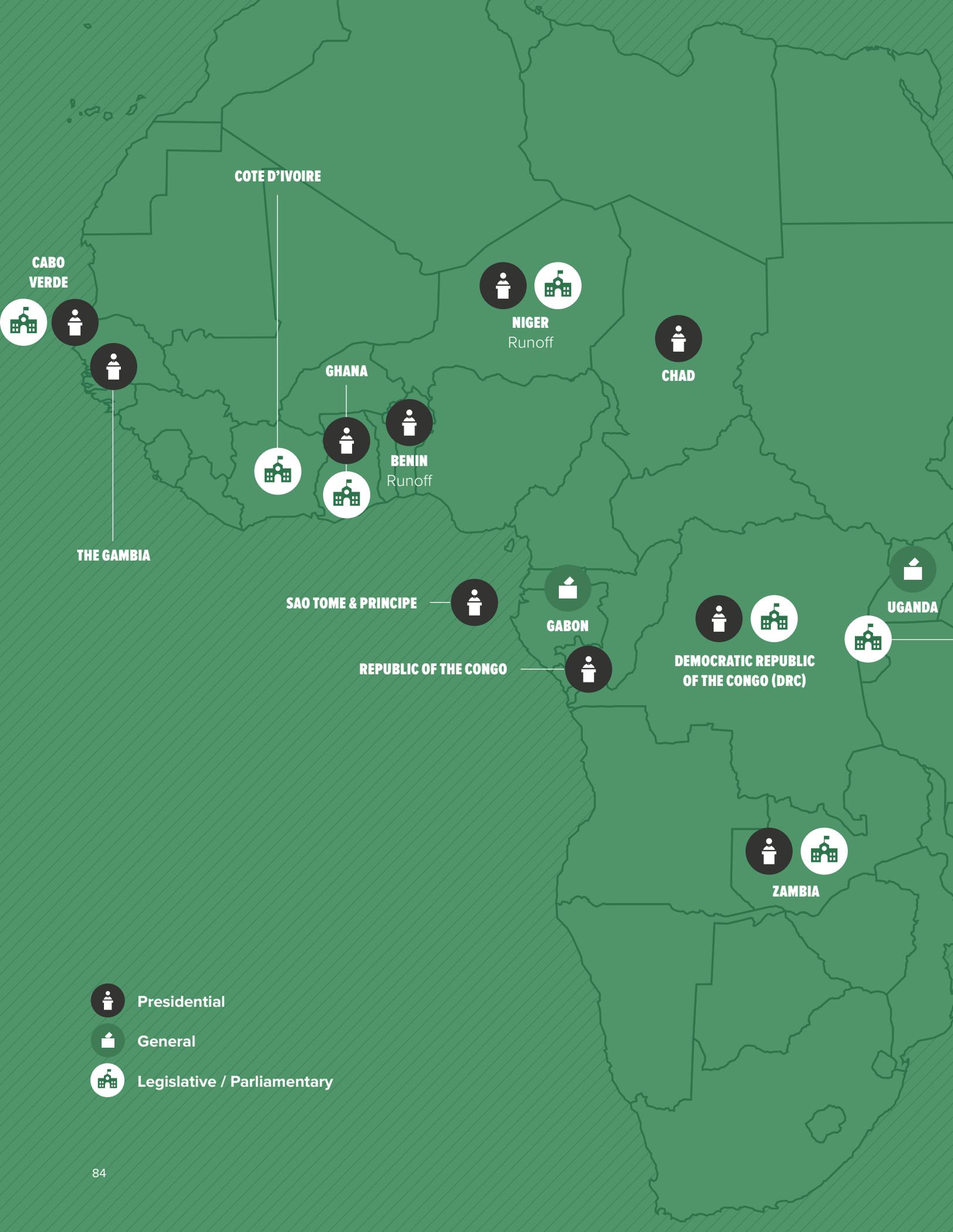
# Where in Africa are the women leaders?

The proportion of women in legislatures in Africa differs wildly, with Rwanda, the Seychelles, Senegal, and South Africa in the top 10 in the world, and the Comoros and the economic powerhouse of Nigeria near the very bottom. At the same time, many countries are beating out developed ones. In fact, 24 African countries rank ahead of the United States, and 42 rank ahead of Japan. While progress in Africa has stalled since 2010, 2016 will still see a number of women in African politics.

Global Ranking	Country	% Women	Global Ranking	Country	% Women
1	Rwanda	63.8%	83	Togo	17.6%
4	Seychelles	43.8%	87	Morocco	17.0%
6	Senegal	42.7%	88	Malawi	16.7%
8	South Africa	41.9%	91	Libya	16.0%
11	Namibia	41.3%	95	Chad	14.9%
13	Mozambique	39.6%	97	Gabon	14.2%
15	Ethiopia	38.8%	98	Somalia	13.8%
19	Angola	36.8%	99	Guinea-Bissau	13.7%
22	Burundi	36.4%	101	Burkina Faso	13.3%
24	Tanzania	36.0%	101	Niger	13.3%
25	Uganda	35.0%	105	Djibouti	12.7%
29	Algeria	31.6%	105	Zambia	12.7%
30	Zimbabwe	31.5%	107	Sierra Leone	12.4%
32	Tunisia	31.3%	110	Mauritius	11.6%
33	Cameroon	31.1%	113	Liberia	11.0%
36	Sudan	30.5%	114	Ghana	10.9%
46	South Sudan	26.5%	119	Botswana	9.5%
51	Mauritania	25.2%	120	The Gambia	9.4%
52	Lesotho	25.0%	121	Côte d'Ivoire	9.2%
56	Equatorial Guinea	24.0%	122	DRC	8.9%
63	Eritrea	22.0%	123	Mali	8.8%
64	Guinea	21.9%	127	Congo, Rep.	7.4%
67	Cabo Verde	20.8%	128	Benin	7.2%
70	Madagascar	20.5%	130	Swaziland	6.2%
75	Kenya	19.7%	133	Nigeria	5.6%
80	São Tomé & Príncipe	18.2%	138	Comoros	3.0%

- African countries
- Non-African countries

Source: This data was compiled by the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the basis of information provided by National Parliaments by September 1, 2015.  
 Note: The visual gives a comparison among select African and non-African countries while table shows the variation among African countries.



-  Presidential
-  General
-  Legislative / Parliamentary

# Presidential and legislative elections in Africa in 2016



Election Date	Country	Election Type
January 31, 2016	Central African Republic	General (runoff elections)
February	Cabo Verde	Legislative/Parliamentary
February 18, 2016	Uganda	General
February 21, 2016	Comoros	Presidential
February 21, 2016	Niger	General
February 28, 2016	Benin	Presidential
March 13, 2016	Benin	Presidential (runoff elections)
March 20, 2016	Niger	Presidential (runoff elections)
April	Chad	Presidential
April	Djibouti	Presidential
April 10, 2016	Comoros	Presidential (runoff elections)
July	São Tomé & Príncipe	Presidential
August	Cabo Verde	Presidential
August	Republic of the Congo	Presidential
September	Zambia	General
November	Equatorial Guinea	Presidential
November 27, 2016	Democratic Republic of the Congo	General
December	Côte d'Ivoire	Legislative/Parliamentary
December	Sudan	Legislative/Parliamentary
December	The Gambia	Presidential
December 7, 2016	Ghana	General
TBD	Chad	Legislative/Parliamentary
TBD	Gabon	General
TBD	Mauritania	Legislative/Parliamentary
TBD	Rwanda	Legislative/Parliamentary
TBD	Somalia	General

Source: NDI Global Elections Calendar <https://www.ndi.org/electionscalendar> as of December 11, 2015.

## VIEWPOINT

# THE NILE RIVER: WHICH WAY FORWARD?

John Mukum Mbaku

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The Nile River is one of the world's most important watercourses. It provides sustenance to more than 400 million people spread throughout 11 countries. Of these countries, none is identified as closely with the river as Egypt: Not only does most of Egypt's population live on the relatively narrow strip of fertile land that straddles both banks of the river and the Nile delta, the country gets virtually all of its fresh water from this source. Given the importance of the Nile to all the riparian states, it is critical that they adopt a viable legal regime that enhances equity in the allocation of the river's waters and allows them to coexist peacefully.

Over the years, Egypt has exploited the waters of the Nile River, effectively developing a relatively strong export sector dominated by cotton and achieving the highest level of economic development among the Nile River basin countries. Egypt's access to the waters of the Nile has been made possible by two bilateral treaties—the 1929 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty and the 1959 bilateral agreement between Egypt and Sudan. Both treaties gave Egypt and Sudan rights to virtually all of the river's waters, granted them veto power over dams and other construction projects on the river or its tributaries, and left no allocation for the upstream riparian states. The upstream states, led by Ethiopia, have denounced both treaties and argue that they are not bound by them.

A new legal regime called the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) has been developed by the riparian states. The CFA is expected to provide a more cooperative and regional approach to the management of the Nile and its resources and create

equity in the allocation of water resources. While at least six upstream states have signed the CFA, Egypt and Sudan have indicated that they would not sign unless it is amended to guarantee both countries the water rights that they acquired through the 1929 and 1959 bilateral treaties. If this is done, the basin would be left with what is essentially an anachronistic, untenable, and non-viable legal regime.

Yet progress is being made: On March 23, 2015, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan signed an agreement in Khartoum to resolve various issues arising from the Blue Nile's Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project. However, the agreement only recognized Ethiopia's right to build a dam on the Blue Nile, involved only three of the 11 riparian states, and didn't address the broader and more contentious issue of sharing the waters of the Nile equitably and reasonably among all. That problem remains unresolved.

So, what is the way forward and what is likely to happen in 2016? Building on the momentum from the Khartoum agreement, Egypt and Sudan should join the upstream states in adopting the current CFA, since it reflects equity and fairness in the management of the watercourse. While the Egyptians have a right to be concerned about their future access to the waters of the Nile River, they must appreciate the frustrations of the states, especially Ethiopia, whose highlands provide more than 80 percent of the water that flows into the Nile River. The CFA in its present form is reasonable and provides a much stronger foundation than the 1929 and 1959 agreements for meeting the water needs of the basin's relevant stakeholders in 2016 and beyond.

## EVENTS TO WATCH

# UGANDAN ELECTIONS: A CHALLENGE TO MUSEVENI'S 30-YEAR RULE? FEBRUARY 2016

In February 2016, Ugandans will hold presidential and parliamentary elections, which will either draw to a close incumbent President Yoweri Museveni's 30-year rule or reinforce it. President Museveni will run as the candidate for the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party, while his main challenger, former prime minister and political ally, Amama Mbabazi, will run as an independent under the auspices of The

Democratic Alliance (TDA) after having lost the NRM nomination. Both candidates are expected to face tough competition from Kizza Besigye, the nominee of Uganda's largest opposition party, the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC). While Mbabazi and Besigye attempted to build a coalition to unite behind a single strong challenger to Museveni in late 2015, they have been unable to compromise.

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# AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON ELECTION MID-2016

In mid-2016, elections for the African Union (AU) Commission's chairperson will take place to determine who will lead the AU's secretariat—which performs the executive functions of the organization—for the next four years. The current chairperson is Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma from

South Africa, and although AU Commission chairs are allowed to run for a second term, Chairperson Dlamini-Zuma has made no indication of whether she will run again. If she does not, convention dictates that the chairpersonship will shift from an anglophone to a francophone representative.

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# DRC ELECTIONS: CONCERNS OF THIRD-TERMISM? NOVEMBER 2016

The electoral landscape in the Democratic Republic of the Congo faces considerable uncertainty in 2016, as both parliamentary and presidential elections are meant to be held by November 2016, but disagreements over the voter list, timetable, and security issues threaten to derail the proposed timeline. Some observers consider these "setbacks" to be a stalling tactic of President Joseph Kabila,

who is mandated to leave office at the end of his second term in December 2016, but according to the constitution, can remain in power until a new president is elected. Two top officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission resigned in late 2015, raising concerns that President Kabila may attempt to extend his term or amend the constitution to allow him to run for a third term.