THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
SAUL/ZILKHA ROOM

POWER TRANSITIONS IN AFRICA

Washington, D.C.
Tuesday, November 27, 2018

PARTICIPANTS:

Moderator:

MICHAEL O'HANLON
Senior Fellow and Director, Africa Security Initiative
The Brookings Institution

Panelists:

REUBEN BRIGETY
Former U.S. Ambassador to the African Union
Dean, Elliott School of International Affairs
George Washington University

KEN OCHIENG' OPALO
Assistant Professor, Georgetown University
Nonresident Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution

* * * * *

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. O'HANLON: Good morning everyone and welcome to Brookings. I'm Michael O'Hanlon with the Foreign Policy program and the Africa Security Initiative, and we're delighted to have you here with us today along with Reuben Brigety and Ken Opalo to talk about the state of democracy in Africa at a very important time.

It's always an important time in a continent of 54 countries making their gradual way forward on the path of economic development and democracy development, but we have particularly interesting situations in places like the Democratic Republic of Congo, some interesting and somewhat hopeful developments in places like Ethiopia, some more mixed situations in places like Zimbabwe, and a whole lot of other stuff to talk about as well.

We will look forward to your involvement. About halfway through, I will go to you for your questions and thoughts and we look forward very much to those.

We will begin up here with a bit of discussion and we're going to try to take broad stock of how we see trends on the continent and then maybe hone in on a few key countries where the panelists have particular interest or expertise, and that will be a way to set up the discussion with you.

In our handout that you may have grabbed on the way in, and just for anybody else who is interested, we tried to take some of the Freedom House information or estimates of trends in democracy in Africa to remind people of sort of where we stand in broad historical sweep.

Like certain parts of Europe, like certain parts of the entire world, democracy has seen some slippage in the last decade in Africa, and we now have an estimate that maybe there are three or four fewer countries rated as free by Freedom House than had been the case just ten years ago, but this is still an enormously improved landscape compared to where we were let's say in the Cold War when I was a Peace

Corps volunteer in the former Zyere in the early 1990s when Africa had maybe one or two democracies, depending on how you counted, and now we're up to more like ten or nine ballpark, and then a lot of countries that are rated as partly free, that are showing some hopeful signs, some of which we discussed in more detail here in previous ASI events like Kenya and Tanzania where there may not be perfect democracy but there is hopefulness.

So if you look at the color-coded map, what you tend to see is that Southern Africa is rated as free, the very tip of Southern Africa, a few of the island nations are rated as free, a couple of countries in West Africa, relatively smaller countries, are assessed as free, and then large chunks of the rest of West Africa and East Africa are broadly viewed as partly free, and then the center of the continent starting with my old DRC and going upward through the Sudans and so forth is generally seen as not free, and that continues up through the Sahel and into Northern Africa. That's just a very broad brush, just I want to frame the conversation and now I will launch in.

Ambassador Reuben Brigety was the American representative -- the permanent representative to the African Union in Addis Ababa during the Obama years. He had had other jobs in the State Department previously as well.

He went to Annapolis and was a naval officer in the early years of his career, really a remarkable portfolio, and he's now the Dean of the Dean of the Elliott School of George Washington University. It's just a thrill to have you here today and to join us.

We'll begin with him in just a moment, because of his job thinking about the entire African Union and representing American interest in that dialogue recently, I think he's well positioned to help us begin to frame how we should think about trends in democracy in Africa.

Ken Opalo, also delighted to have here, is an affiliate of Brookings but a

professor at Georgetown and a graduate of Yale and Stanford, a native of Kenya, a political scientist.

He's consulted for the World Bank. He's done a number of other kinds of research projects. He has ongoing research on Kenya and Tanzania as well as some of the parts of democracy we sometimes overlook or tread too quickly over, the legislative role, some of the local roles that my friends have talked about here in previous events on Kenya, for example, where we've seen a lot of democracy at the local level, sometimes doing better than the national level Ken studied at different echelons of institutional development throughout much of Africa.

Again his expertise at the moment and some of his research is largely on East Africa but he certainly takes a broader purview when considering the overall trends in democracy.

So, without further ado, let me launch right in and ask the ambassador, Ambassador Brigety, if he could just take stock of how you look at things coming back recently from your ambassadorship in Addis Ababa and thinking about what you saw during that period, what you've witnessed throughout your career, how should we feel about the overall state of democracy in Africa today?

MR. BRIGETY: Well, good morning, Michael. It's an honor to be here. Professor Opalo as well. It's great to see a number of friends and colleagues in the audience, I'll say in particular Ambassador Reddick, good morning, and as our friends of the African Union say, all the protocol's observed.

So as my friend and colleague, Ambassador Michelle Gavin, who was ambassador to Botswana under President Obama said -- she had this great observation, which I steal shamelessly any time I sort of speak on a topic such as this and that is that Africa is big enough and diverse enough that you can find almost any fact pattern to support almost any view you want about trends.

So, with that in mind, I know that we'll talk about specific countries in a few minutes, but let me kind of give you my macro view of democracy of a continent, a few points.

First of all, as Freeza Cardia and Larry Diamond and others have said, it's really important when you think about democracy anywhere in the world, you're not thinking just about elections but you're thinking about the series of not only governmental processes, cultural habits, social norms that inhabit a particular country by which it decides to govern itself.

So, what one can think about that obviously in the context of Africa not only looking at how elections have occurred or have been stalled, but also quite frankly taking a look at both established and emerging norms, both positively and negatively, as it relates to democratic practice.

I think there are a couple of places, for example, where you can say there have been reasonable elections like Zimbabwe, but I'm not sure that we would call them sort of full democracies in other places where there have been quite dramatic events like Ethiopia where there have been quite dramatic moves as it relates to opening up political space, despite the fact they've yet to have a full free election since the dramatic political changes there earlier this year. That's the first issue.

The second issue I would say is that the political commitment to democracy, per se, is still very much there at the level of both the African Union and the regional economic communities.

Nobody in the continent, for example, is saying, like they were in the late 1970s, that I am president for life because that is simply how it should be, that that is actually the case.

To the extent that we see any kind of backsliding on the continent, it is because through various ways of subverting the very notion of democracy itself.

So whether it be in the DRC where there's been this notion for the last four years that, gosh, we really would like to be democratic, we just can't figure out how to organize an election for four years, or you have this so-called constitutional communities in places like Uganda and Rwanda where there have been this sort of notion that of course we have a democracy, but part of being a democracy is for the people to do all the change the constitutions if they like to make sure that Paul Kagame, or whatever, 70, can stay in power for extended periods of time.

Here's why that matters. The notion that democracy itself is no longer being challenged gives you a very important foothold at the level of the African Union, at the level of regional economic communities to continue to hold countries to account when they tend to fall short either in terms of process or in terms of established democratic norms.

The third issue, which I think is crucially important, I've written about this elsewhere, is that unlike in Europe after the Cold War where there was essentially an internal dynamic, an internal sort of centripetal force that the EU created as a magnet to attract those countries in Eastern Europe to adopt democratic practices as a means of necessity to both joining the European Union and also lesser extent NATO.

There's not an adherent intrinsic democratic attractive force in Africa itself to be able to force or encourage many of those African states to achieve democratic practice.

I know this sounds contradictory to what I just said, but sort of bear with me for a moment. In fact, there are a series of external forces, principally the Chinese, which are not only providing economic incentives but also through essentially their own version of soft power making the argument that not only is it unnecessary to link economic prosperity with a particular form of political organization, but actually look what we did, we lifted a billion people out of poverty by focusing our economic growth and a

centralized political model. If that works for us, then surely it can work for you, South Africa, Uganda, Ethiopia, and elsewhere.

The reason that is important is that I for one am deeply disturbed by the lack of an active democracy agenda by the United States in Africa right now. Because even our European friends, who frankly are increasingly focused on their own internal issues at the moment, are not providing the sort of external incentives that are necessary, external sort of pushes on a diplomatic level, on a programmatic level, et cetera, to help African states continue to hold true to the democratic norms that they have established for themselves at the regional and continental level.

Absent that, one -- it's like a game of chess, you can kind of see how this is going to play out five moves ahead, or to put it differently, there's no reason to think that absent a serious external democratic partner, that there will be substantial endogenous movement to resist the Chinese approach to economic development and political reform on the continent for the long term.

There is no rational way of thinking in which that is actually in support of American interest long term on the continent, let alone, what I would argue, nor is it in support of the long-term interest as increasingly articulated by the massive youth bulge on the continent themselves.

So even to the extent the Chinese are engaging with senior and increasingly aging political leaders of a continent political lead, there is clear demand from the younger socially connected -- social media connected entrepreneurial young people on the continent for increasing political reform, for increasing political openness tied with increasing economic opportunities. I frankly think that the United States needs to be a leader in supporting that regard.

MR. O'HANLON: Great. So before going to Ken, thank you, a very crisp and comprehensive way of framing it and yet very pithy as well.

I think I heard you say not only we should keep our eye on issues besides national level presidential elections, focus on legislative, focus on courts, focus on local means of building democracy, but then I heard hopeful elements to your message that democracy is no longer challenged as a concept, but then I heard a very worried ending that you feel that we're sort of maybe losing traction in terms of the right kind -- for example, the right kind of American policy at a time when Africa doesn't have quite the sort of role model or sense of momentum or buy-in to specific forward motion.

There may be a general acceptance of a concept of democracy, but it's not -- it's losing a little bit of its vigor and its momentum at the moment and that's probably because of American policy.

MR. BRIGETY: I think that's all right, if I can just have one sort of comment. Despite the fact that those things may seem contradictory on the surface, they're not mutually exclusive in practice.

One of the things that I often say, certainly there are students -- I think this is true in foreign policy across the board, not only in Africa.

It's very important for policymakers to have a sense of strategic imagination, which is to say to be able to see possibilities on the horizon, both positively and negatively, and then understand how absent interventions one way or another things will trend.

I think that, again, one can see this playing out. It is vitally important for the United States to lead the way to support endogenous democracy in Africa if you want to be not only, frankly from our own experience, help the continent to achieve their own aspirations but also quite frankly from a more narrow national interest perspective to ensure that the majority of these 54 countries on the continent will increasingly look to the United States and to the West for their partnerships in the decades to come as opposed to looking further to the East.

MR. O'HANLON: Fantastic.

Ken, same question to you. I just love your overall assessment of how you see your native continent going these days, and we can get to your native country in a minute, but overall trend lines for democracy in Africa, are you more hopeful or more worried or maybe both?

MR. OPALO: First of all, thank you for having me. I think I would probably say I'm more hopeful perhaps a little bit more than the dean in terms of even the China influence.

I'll begin there, because -- so my general assessment would be that for long time the West spent a lot of time and energy and money on governance and not enough on government, government being able to deliver goods and services to citizens. So, our talk was about elections, no corruption without thinking through what does that mean for having water, having roads, having power, et cetera.

To China which -- let me give you an example of Ghana. First time I went to Ghana in 2006, (inaudible) was very dusty, the tallest building if I remember correctly was a post office, which was a five-story dilapidated building. (Inaudible) been going back since, major highways, there's a downtown, there's a -- Côte d'Ivoire has a new wing.

You can see all kinds of progress, some of it is because of the oil, some of it is because of Chinese loans, which is problematic. Maybe we'll talk about that toward the end, but same time they -- there's movement. You can see movement in physical infrastructure, roads everywhere on the continent, power generation is on the continent is on the up.

These are the things that -- if you can step back and think of democratic theory, these are the sort of ingredients that will create economic prosperity and provide a basis for support for democracy in the long run.

Now, China at the same time doesn't influence local politics in positive ways, if you want to put it that way. But even in that regard, I see the Chinese influence as creating a divergence and I think this will be the trend moving forward.

So, in already democratic countries, or quasi democratic countries, I'm thinking Ghana and Kenya, perhaps even Benin, Senegal as good examples here.

Chinese involvement has made it possible for government to get stuff done. Kibaki was able to in Kenya build a bunch of roads, increase power generation, which then has created popular demand for his successor to do similar things.

In Ghana, the previous administration had done few big things, which again creates democratic pressure for the next government to do something different, bigger, and better. So, in those countries, the strengthening of government capacity to get stuff done, coupled with electoral competition will likely push them in the right direction when you think of democracy as a means of keeping elected leaders accountable and giving them incentives to provide goods -- public goods and services for the citizen.

Now, you also have your Rwandas and Ethiopia and likely Angola now, with the new openings recently, countries that will stay autocratic. Tanzania is in this group as well. They'll stay autocratic and they're hegemonic parties, CCM, EPRDF, et cetera.

They will use -- access Chinese loans to build roads, connect households to water supplies, connect households to the grid, but they'll stay autocratic and give the excuse if you want more roads, you have to let us be able to shut off your internet whenever we feel like.

Remember about five years ago I had a conversation with an Ethiopian opposition activist who is now head of the Electoral Commission. She told me very frankly that even in Ethiopia, it's very hard to argue against roads and power. If the

government has the capacity to get that done, it's very difficult for opposition groups in these countries to come along and say, forget about the roads for now, you need good governance, and then we'll provide the roads. People want to see governments doing things.

To the extent that China has been able to make that happen for a number of African countries, it's pushing them either to be more accountable if they're already democratic or less accountable, but still under the pressure to provide public goods and services.

Because even Paul Kagame -- if Rwanda were to enter a recession for two, three years, I doubt that he would stay in power. He would have to be a lot more repressive and there would probably be backlash. So even the autocratic countries now have incentive to try and deliver or be seen to deliver.

Finally, I think the youth, it's key to talk about youth and urbanization in Africa and what that means for democracy moving forward. It's something that we don't talk much about, but within our lifetime more than half of Africans will be living in towns and cities, they'll need jobs, that will create incentive for populous politics in ways we haven't seen yet on the continent.

So urban Africans will be a lot more de-ethicized, they'll be lot more prone to populous appeals, and that will reshape electoral politics in Africa in ways that we're not thinking about yet.

MR. O'HANLON: Yeah, your points are well taken in terms of thinking about the tradeoffs -- not tradeoffs, but tension when different kinds of regimes emphasize more democracy and openness versus more economic development.

As I peruse the Freedom House map, it's sort of striking to think that Ethiopia scores worse than Niger. I think if I was going to live in one of those countries, I know where I would choose.

It's not all about, therefore, pleasing Freedom House, yet we also can't really condone a leader just staying on indefinitely under the guise of being inevitably necessary for that country, because some day even Paul Kagame is going to be mortal or experience a recession. So, it's a complex motif.

I guess as we move into a more specific round of discussion of certain countries, I'd love to ask you each what your bellwether countries are or just the ones that you want to say something about where you feel there's an important trend, good or bad.

Africa is not a continent where you can easily identify a list of pivotal states that everybody would agree on, but clearly there are six or eight countries that in size at least and in clout tend to be bigger than others. Nobody could -- failed to mention Nigeria, a quarter of the population in sub-Saharan Africa. South Africa is the other big economy historically, Kenya and Tanzania, my old Peace Corps country of DRC, and Ethiopia. These would have to make any short list, but feel free to add or subtract from my short list.

I'm just going to begin this round of asking you each which countries would you want to say some additional words about. Please pick one or two and we can -- I'm sure the audience is going to bring us to the others that we don't get to quickly here in this opening, but I just want to be provocative and say that as I try to answer my own question about whether to be optimistic or pessimistic about trend lines and power transitions and democracy in Africa, I can't help but be obsessed with my old Peace Corps country right now. Elections are scheduled in DRC for December 23rd. If those go passively well, I think this is a huge boost forward, because that will be combined, as I see it, with not so bad trends in Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania.

Glass half full, maybe 52, 55 percent full in each of those by my nonexpert assessment, and you can disagree in a second when I ask you to comment.

Ethiopia still not scoring well with Freedom House, but doing some interesting things with Eritrea with its own domestic politics.

So, as we look at the big countries in Africa, if DRC can somehow show some hopefulness with this election and then what comes out of the election in terms of governance and in terms of services and security, then I will start to sort of get my positive hopefulness back.

It will help me resolve the tension that, Ambassador, you just highlighted where there are both good things and bad things happening and we don't want to oversimplify.

So that's my provocation to you. Feel free please to respond on DRC or anything else. I remain modestly hopeful about DRC's elections. Nothing has completely thrown them off the rails yet, but I'm still nervous as could be that something will go wrong, either before election day or in the counting of the votes. So, it's a very, very guarded sense of hopefulness on my part, but over to each of you.

MR. BRIGETY: I will accept your provocation in two ways. First of all, in -- a wealth of experience in the room, so I will be provocative in return.

In my observation and my experience, there is not a bellwether country in Africa that tends to affect other countries as they relate to governance.

There tend to be -- to the extent that there are trends, they tend to be regional, both because the economy is said to be more closely linked and also quite frankly because those heads of state tend to know each other really quite well.

So Southern Africa obviously -- what happens in South Africa obviously inherently impacts (inaudible), et cetera, DRC. You can't talk about DRC without talking about Rwanda, Nigeria obviously for all of West Africa, et cetera, and Kenya and Ethiopia as it relates to East Africa.

Having said all that, in my view the most interesting story in all of Africa

right now is Ethiopia. The changes that are happening there are extraordinary in and of themselves. They are extraordinary relative to where Ethiopia was a year ago.

They are extraordinary given both the economic, political, strategic, and military importance of Ethiopia, the second most populous country in all of Africa, the headquarters diplomatically of all of Africa.

They are extraordinary because of this extraordinary new prime minister, Dr. Abiy, who is doing -- making moves that are just -- that are really, really incredible. I would argue it's actually one of the most interesting stories in all the world, not only in all of Africa, and particularly as it relates to (inaudible) with Eritrea.

The one thing I would disagree with Professor Opalo about relates to the trends in Ethiopia with regard to the unitary state, the EPRDF and whatnot.

On this point, I've been to Ethiopia four times this year alone. I'll be going back again in December. I think you can't underestimate how close that country really was to the break in January of this year. They really, really looked into the abyss.

Through a series of extraordinary steps that are arguably without parallel in two millennia of Ethiopian history have stepped back from it. Now, it would appear that Dr. Abiy explained a really fine political -- really difficult political game in the sense that he understands that these reforms have to be institutionalized, that there are parts of EPRDF, particularly the TPLF, the Tigray party from the north, that are not at all happy with the changes that are being made.

Also understand there's no way -- there's no way to go back to where things were before. If these reforms do not succeed, there is no plausible return to a repressive state, because the (inaudible) and others simply will not have it.

The option is either reform going forward or some really bad things happen in the country if one goes back. Which doesn't mean that reform is inevitable, it just means that I think going back to the sort of notion of the kind of like unitary

development repressive state of last 20 years is not likely. It's either going to be much better or much worse than it was before.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you.

MR. OPALO: I agree with you. I guess I should have clarified it. I'm thinking more of CCM in Tanzania, a hegemonic party that runs elections, runs the opposition space doing 25 percent of the vote but never really threating the ruling party.

I would definitely agree that Ethiopia is a bellwether for the hone of Africa region with implications for (inaudible), Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan even, South Sudan.

But in East Africa actually -- within the East African corporation region, Tanzania is a big one, because what happens in Tanzania will determine whether you'll have Kenya and Tanzania being on the side of democracy and democratic governance versus Ethiopia -- Rwanda and Uganda, or just have Kenya. Kenya when push comes to shove will typically side with economic interest versus pushing for reforming the region.

So, what happens in Tanzania will have implications for Rwanda and Burundi and Uganda as Museveni continues to hang on as a live president.

Then in West Africa, two countries, Togo -- Togo remains unreformed. I spent five months in Togo last year. Throughout that period, the weekly protests sometimes Wednesday, Thursday, Friday with huge turnout, but because of the president's links within ECOWAS, the -- one of the heads of ECOWAS is a brother-in-law and the (inaudible) family retains power as a result.

I think whatever happens in Togo will send a strong signal to the Sahelian states about what's acceptable as a means of governance.

And then finally Côte d'Ivoire, we don't talk much about francophone Africa on this side of the Atlantic, but Côte d'Ivoire has a big transition coming up and I think being the biggest francophone African -- West African country, what happens there will have implications again for other francophone states outside of Senegal.

If there's enough diplomatic pressure to ensure the transition is well managed, the elections are passively competitive, and then there's no locking out of southern candidates from contention, that will go a long way in securing the remarkable rebound they've had since the Civil War.

MR. O'HANLON: So let me just ask one more question of each of you. Thank you. Those were great comments with the specificity on Ethiopia and then sort of a broader view from Ken.

I want to -- feel free to answer either or both or neither of these questions, but they are where my mind goes listening to you both.

First, I do want to come back to DRC, and I realize neither one of you may be as much of a specialist on that country as you are on East Africa or Ethiopia or what have you, but what does your gut tell you about the likelihood of an acceptable outcome in this election?

By that I simply mean no blatant theft of the election by the Kabila regime in effect or no large-scale violence of whatever cost, and then a peaceful transition of power; what does your gut tell you about the prospects of that happening? That's Question 1.

The other question -- as you say, Reuben, Rwanda and DRC are so inherently linked. If you were to have a chance to talk to President Kagame, and maybe you have, and we -- and he was here a year ago and the next auditorium over, but we didn't bring the subject up to his face. He was sort of the emcee for that and the lead speaker.

If you were to have a conversation with him and try to persuade him why he has to not be a president for life, what would you say?

Because we know what his answer is, we know that he says Rwanda needs me, it's not yet stable, don't forget that genocide is still in the adult lifetime of many

of us, don't forget we're growing eight, ten percent a year, that creates some opportunities down the road for my successor, but only if we get to the place where we all have buy-in into this growing economy.

What's the right way to persuade someone like him that in fact he's already been in power long enough and it's time to not run again?

So those are my two questions. They're connected, but you could answer one or the other.

MR. BRIGETY: One of the great things about no longer serving in the government of the United States is you can speak one's mind much more freely, at least for now.

I don't share your optimism about the DRC, which is not to say that I don't wish peace and prosperity for the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

I don't share the optimism for two basic reasons. The first is there's nothing in the historical record in the DRC to suggest that, A, there will be a free and fair election that will lead to a process of democratic reform that will link to long-term widespread economic prosperity for the country.

DRC has all the makings for a prosperous country for all of its citizens and it has never come even close to being able to achieve it. Which leads me to my second point, which may get me in trouble one day.

It's such a big unwieldily country that it's hard -- it has yet to demonstrate the ability to govern itself coherently as a country, even under Mobutu arguably for any reasonable length of time. So, I am not as optimistic, but I would love to be proven wrong, both by the people in the DRC and also by other observers.

MR. O'HANLON: By the way just for the record, I am at most guardedly hopeful. I don't think I used the word optimistic. If I did it, let me correct myself.

We've had numerous events the last two years on DRC here, partly

because we think the only hope is to just keep up the drumbeat of pressure and attention, but anyway, sorry to interrupt.

MR. BRIGETY: Your second question about the longevity of the leader -- and this is true not only in Africa, it's true in lots of other places.

In my observation, it is very rare that anybody who stays in power for an extended period of time does so purely, solely because in their heart of hearts they absolutely believe that if they are now in power, the country will completely fall apart. There is almost always a series of ulterior motives as it relates to their own survival, their own prosperity, their own sense of ego, and also the survival and prosperity of the people around them that continue to incentivize them to hang on.

So, my argument to President Kagame would be an argument I would to many other leaders in the position if I were so presented, and that is not only -- obviously it's important for your own country to be able to develop and cultivate the next generation of leadership, but you can have a great life.

We actually need more examples of the (inaudible) and the Mandelas of the world. Look, leave -- go on the Davos speaking circuit, get a house in Disney World, whatever, whatever it is that floats your boat. Enjoy being an elder statesman, because the flip side is that -- not that you could have died peacefully the revered sort of father of the nation, it's that if you hang on too long, bad things will happen to you, see Muammar Gaddafi and that is a very rational calculation that I think most people would understand.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you, fantastic.

Ken, to you.

MR. OPALO: Yeah, I think I'll start with Rwanda. I guess my approach would be complimentary to the ambassador's, but instead of focusing on Kagame, I would probably focus on the elites around him.

With Mugabe, with Museveni after a certain point it no longer becomes

about the guy at the top, but the people around him who can't afford to have him leave.

So, convincing those people that the alternative models that exist in Angola, Mozambique, and Tanzania of maintaining the architecture of rule but rotating leadership at the top so that you don't put all your eggs in one basket and risk collapse in the absence of Kagame.

So, thinking about how do you institutionalize the elite class around the president in ways that are stable for the long run. Because if you're not going to become a democracy, then maybe you're better off being a CCM style government, which is halfway there.

Now, on the DRC, yeah, I am also not hopeful. Kabila's sort of decision to step down almost sounded too good to be true when I first heard it. It stuck, which is great, but I don't think he and the commercial interest around him will let power go.

But we could be surprised by the election. Election could go the other way for him. I guess the one glimmer of hope when I look at the DRC is the recent reforms in regional government, the increasing number of provinces.

Initially I was skeptical, because it seemed like a power grab by Kabila, divide the provinces to divide the (inaudible) and elites, but I think in the long run this will provide opportunities for local government and local accountable democracy in interesting ways.

Because the DRC is a huge country, we tend to forget. It's really hard to -- it's hard enough to govern a small country like Malawi governing the DRC without sufficient infrastructure all the way from Kinshasa is a major undertaking, so it's probably best that the country is -- the intensity of government is increasing with these newer regions.

I think if I were advising say the State Department, it would be to focus on making sure that at least some of the -- one of the regional provincial governments are

strong enough to begin to provide a demonstration in fact as to what can happen when you combine elections with effective government.

MR. O'HANLON: I got some more questions on DRC, but I'll hold them off for now. Maybe we'll come back to that later or maybe somebody else in the audience will bring us to that or some other countries.

So now it's your turn. Please wait for a microphone. We'll start here. There are two questions in about the fifth and sixth row. Let's take them both please and then come back to the panel.

MS. WIKLE: Thank you and good morning. I'm wondering what impact the Ibrahim Prize is having that provides a $5 million prize for a leader that practices a range of criteria leading to good governance, is it acting as any kind of incentive for good governance and democracy building.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. I should have said please identify yourself.

MS. WIKLE: Oh, my name is Kim Wikle, thank you.

MR. MORGAN: Morning, I'm Scott Morgan with (inaudible) Enterprises. I do freelance security and threat analysis. Three countries which I've been focused on my writing recently. I wanting to hear your impact on; one is Gabon with the recent health of Ali Bongo, second one is Central African Republic with the presence of the Russian mercenaries, and the third one is the elephant in the room here in Washington and that's the ongoing violence in Cameroon with reported -- with repeated deaths of Catholic priests, U.S. missionaries, seminary students, which frankly Capitol Hill doesn't seem to give a rat's rear end about.

MR. O'HANLON: Why don't we come back to the panel now and start with you, Ken.

MR. OPALO: So I think about four years ago I calculated what it would take to convince Museveni to leave office. 5 million doesn't get you there. The present

value of being president in Uganda, seeing he only steals about 10 percent of GDP is a lot more than $5 million.

So, the Ibrahim Prize is great, but it selects for leaders who are already willing to step down. It's not a pool factor, it's an incentive for people who are predisposed to leave office.

I don't think such prizes would force these leaders out. Only people around them can force them out. So maybe thinking of an Ibrahim Prize for elites around the president to incentivize them to push this old man out would be a better idea.

MR. BRIGETY: I will echo that. I have talked with Mo about this on a number of occasions and I think he deserves enormous credit for putting his money where his mouth is to try to incentivize and to recognize this.

I think the problem is that the theory of the case is a little incorrect. Which is to say that there -- for most African heads of state -- well, for a subset of African heads of state that try to cling to power to this point, $5 million is not sufficient.

However, I do think that the demonstration effect is important. One of the things that former Prime Minister Hailemariam of Ethiopia said that not too long ago is when he's traveling and he's heading out -- hanging out with other current heads of state, they say, oh, how's it going. Oh, I'm enjoying my life in Addis. They're like, you still live in Addis Ababa, yeah, it's great.

On the premise that he's demonstrated that one can peacefully leave power and stay at home and continue to contribute to one's country. The more models there are like that, the more one can say to a 70 -- or a Kagame about their thought calculus that it is increasingly unlikely that you will be able to stay in power forever peacefully and where do you want to place your bets and don't you want to be kind of the celebrated person on the Davos circuit that can be a great spokesman -- elder statesman as it were for the continent as opposed to a pariah even if you're still alive.

MR. O'HANLON: Scott, I'm going to answer your question indirectly, because I don't know enough about the three countries that you mentioned to be -- to waste your time or anybody else's.

I will say the following in a broader sense: I'm concerned about the reduction in resources for AFRICOM, because I think at a time when we're prioritizing great power competition again in defense strategy, as we should, we need to remember that some of that competition is happening in Africa.

The role of AFRICOM on the continent is pretty modest, a lot of value for the dollar, and not necessarily in competition with the other things we need to do to be prepared for long-term competition in a more military sense with Russia or China.

So, I actually think that -- well, I understand to the extent Secretary Mattis, General Dunford feel they can't really keep an eye on every kinetic operation, I think we have to be careful about getting into more of those as revealed with the tragic killing of the four servicemen a year ago.

Nonetheless, the idea of building capacity in places like CAR or Cameroon or Gabon or wherever and try to maintain relationships and give the message that Reuben mentioned earlier that United States is engaged on Africa policy writ large is a message that we should want to keep sending, not pulling back from.

AFRICOM always got a bad name, because it was created in 2008 at the end of the Bush administration. It was seen as one more example of the militarization of American foreign policy by that unilateralist Bush administration. This was to my mind always a silly critique.

I thought AFRICOM was a way to organize our efforts better continent-wide to get maximum value for relatively modest or minimal investment, and other parts of the U.S. government needed to emulate AFRICOM rather than have a Washington critique form that somehow this reflected a militarization of U.S. policy

toward Africa, so I'm concerned about that trend and I would like to see it reversed.

MR. OPALO: Can I say two things about Cameroon and Gabon, so I think these two countries a reminder of the tension within the West of democracy (inaudible).

So, I think if the EU, and France in particular, was serious, Bongo would not be president, because he probably would have lost the previous election, and Biya would have stepped down already.

The absurdity of Biya flying in from Geneva, voting, going back to Geneva, then flying back to Cameroon to be sworn in, this only happens because the EU, and France in particular, and the companies that benefit from these two -- the family in Gabon and Biya in power in Cameroon, they're the ones keeping them in power.

I think this kind of puts -- let's us focus on -- it's not a new tension, it's an old tension that the West has had. On the one hand having a pro-democracy rhetoric, but on the other hand when the rubber meets the road, logging companies, oil companies need specific families and individuals in power, then democracy takes a backseat.

I think Gabon and Cameroon are very strong examples of that. Because if those two countries get unlocked, then Central Africa, including all the way to the DRC, will begin to see openings.

Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, Gabon, and up in Sierra and even in Chad, those countries remain locked in autocracy in part because of the economic insecurity importance for the EU and France in particular.

MR. O'HANLON: That sort of that blue swath of countries in Freedom House's assessment that just gobbles up the whole center of the map where there isn't a lot of hopeful democracy movement.

Let's go to Round 2, woman in about the sixth row and then the gentleman right next to her. Yes, please.

MS. CONNERS: May name is Carol Conners.

MR. O'HANLON: There's a microphone for you.

MS. CONNERS: I'm so loud, I'm not sure I really need it. Anyway, my name is Carol Conners and I have to confess that my affections are with Southern Africa where I've been a few times and have friends.

My question is this: Would you please discuss citizen identification with tribe over country and resultant lack of attention to corruption with the elected government and those who the elected government appoints.

MR. O'HANLON: You mean the United States or in Africa?

MS. CONNERS: Beautiful.

MR. O'HANLON: Sir.

SPEAKER: My question is just if you could comment a bit on the difference between the colonization style, English colonization and French colonization.

I feel that French colonization -- colonized country, like DRC, has much more -- are less able to make it to democracy. Could you just comment on the difference between British colonization and French colonization in Africa?

MR. O'HANLON: Of course DRC was Belgium, but could you identify yourself, please?

SPEAKER: My name is (inaudible).

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Go ahead, Ken.

MR. OPALO: I can take the ethnic politics question. I think the -- I tell my students all the time that all borders are arbitrary. A mountain is a border until we can blast through it. A river is a border, a natural border, until we can build a bridge over it, and that's true for Africa's borders and province of ethnicity that they create.

So, I think ethnic politics is often not a reflection of the arbitrariness of a country's borders, but the inability of the country to govern properly.

Strong countries minimize a fact of ethnicity. It's when countries begin to fray at the center and services begin to get -- to become conditional, and ethnic affiliation or the behavior of leaders in office begin to reflect the tribal commitments that ethnicity and ethnic politics becomes very toxic. I'm sure everyone in the room is aware of these dynamics these days.

Ethnicity is endogenous to how countries govern. I think to the extent ethnicity is a problem in African politics, it's partly because government has never been the strong suit of African states.

States have been very weak in the center, so the very little substance they provide have been rationed along ethnic lines and that makes it very difficult for citizens to see themselves as part of a big -- as one huge country.

That's not to say that Africans could not have strong affiliations with their countries. The DRC is one -- I give this example all the time. Big country, all sorts of problems, but I think if there's one thing Mobutu did right was create a Congolese identity. Congolese people are very proud of their country.

It should have split many, many years ago, but the Congo stays together because people think of themselves as Congolese. I think that is an -- it's a very rich well waiting to be tapped by national leadership that are willing to invest in stateness and government in ways that make people appreciate their countries more.

MR. BRIGETY: If I can add a bit on the ethnic politics question. It's only been slightly tongue and cheek with regard to this question. The reason is that I would argue that increasingly these questions of subnational identities that -- that feel irreducible, whether it be by clan, by broader ethnic group, by religious group, or not in play only in Africa.

Increasingly at this moment of increasing nationalism across the world, they are impacting increasingly our politics throughout the democratic west, to include

here in the United States as well.

So, the interesting question for me isn't simply this kind of perpetual question that Africa has always been plagued by all of these so-called tribal identities that play into making the state weak.

The more interesting question from my perspective is how can one support stronger governance at the state level for the purposes of delivering on fundamental needs of the populations and how can we have those politics increasingly be based on the policies of the government of the day as opposed to first being determined by ethnic identity, and that is a question that is absolutely applicable in the United States of America in 2018 as it is in Tanzania or Ethiopia or Rwanda.

MR. O'HANLON: I'm just going to take up the question about the age old historical debate, the British versus the French and I'm not going to defend my Belgium friends and in DRC, but I am going to suggest if you -- again, this Freedom House map has all sorts of limitations, although I'm very happy they do it.

If I just go through this map and I look at the countries that are in green, the nine countries that are considered to be free, I don't see any strong correlation with who colonized them. In fact, I see Mauritius and São Tomé and Príncipe and a few other places that have very Latino sounding names scoring -- well, Senegal and then I also see English speaking countries.

Then if you look at East Africa, yes, you have Kenya and Tanzania that are scoring reasonably well, but you also have, who would have thunk it, Mozambique coming out of horrible Civil War and showing some promise, and Ken's alluded to them a couple times earlier.

And then West Africa, the countries that are evaluated as partly free, it's sort of an equal mix roughly of French speaking and English speaking as I do just a quick calculation in my head.

So, I don't necessarily -- it's getting to be 60 years ago and sure colonization continues to have a legacy, but I'm not sure I see a strong a priority correlation in terms of where there's freedom today with who colonized in the past.

MR. OPALO: Can I be provocative on colonialism. I wait for the day when African countries -- most of them are getting close to having been independent for longer than they were colonized.

I think in the long -- people will look back at colonialism and this 70-year blip. It was very quick 70 years, because if you think of colonialism and its (inaudible), colonial states weren't strong until the interwar period and then World War II happened and they had to give up.

So you're right, colonialism created a lot of problems for post-colonial states, but it was also very brief experience, a tragic but brief experience that if we think in the long run, I think the -- I say this, because I feel like for most post-colonial African elites, there's a lot more focus on undoing colonialism and not enough focus on what was there before, how did colonialism unwind what existed before, and how can you go back to build on what existed before to have stronger states moving forward.

Now, this is not to downplay the tragic path dependence influence of the colonialism and neocolonialism after, it's just to say that sometimes we overplay how much deterministic its influences are.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Another round here. We'll stay -- gentleman here in the fourth row, my good buddy, and then we'll come to the front row as well for this round, and then we'll go back to you guys and ensuing discussions.

MR. LEZHNEV: Great. Sasha Lezhnev from the Enough Project. I will refrain from commenting on the DRC, which is a country I focus on.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you for what you did in the fall for helping us think it through earlier, Sasha.

MR. LEZHNEV: Sure, absolutely. Thanks for having me. So, one quick comment and one question. My comment is particularly in an era of dwindling resources. It seems to me that the U.S. and European states as well need to be doing more to use their financial leverage on some of these countries to facilitate the democratization aims, again an era of dwindling resources, but corruption and lack of freeness or lack of democratic change seems to me very closely linked with corruption and there needs to be more accountability, more use of U.S. network sanctions and other tools, anti-money laundering measures, work with the private sector, particularly correspondent banks who are processing 74 percent of transactions from Africa originating -- or being conducted in euros or dollars according to Swift. There's a lot of leverage there that I think we need to be making much more use of. That's a comment.

Question: On the youth, I'm curious where you all see this going, the youth movements on democratization. So, for example, in the DRC, we have a very elderly -- one of the presidential candidates is 90 years old, so a very elderly political class that is not really in touch with the population.

In fact, most of the pro-democracy youth movements in Congo are very fed up with the opposition, particularly after the recent debacle, so I'm curious where you see this is going.

In Ethiopia, you're seeing a fairly youthful leader. Do you think that is kind of where the trend is going or were you likely to see more Arab Spring type scenarios in sub-Saharan Africa that we haven't really seen, so I'm curious on that. Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you, Sasha. Let's come to the front row are here for another question before we come back to the panel.

SPEAKER: Hi, I'm Max (inaudible). I'm a student at the Elliott School. I'm curious if you could talk a bit about what role the African Union could play in

encouraging countries to democratize, because in multiple crises across the continent right now, be it Cameroon or whatnot, it seems that the African Union is not playing that large of a role, aside from issuing periodic statements. Because aside from ECOWAS it seems there's been no real regional economic body or the AU doing much to push toward democratization.

MR. O'HANLON: You want to start this round?

MR. BRIGETY: Yeah. So, if I may, let me sort of start with your comment with regard to economic leverage.

We were talking a little bit in the green room before this, one of my great frustrations with the current Trump administration's approach to Africa is that even if you accept their general worldview of America first and preference for bilateral trading relationships, very transactional approach, even if you accept all of that, there is an obvious big picture strategic play they could be making on the continent and that obvious play is to have a series of political framework discussions with both individual African countries, or regional blocks for the AU itself, to figure out collectively how they can create structures to support American businesses to engage on the continent in support of African-defined economic objectives, whether it be figure out how to get more American infrastructure companies in support of -- for the PIDA, the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, how to really catalyze American agribusiness on the ground.

As part of that framework everything from focusing not simply on the bottom-line cost of the contract, in which case we would always be beat up by the Chinese, but also focusing on labor standards for African nationals, focusing on questions of transparency and rule of law, and demonstrating how all these things could help the long -- the medium to long term strengthen and grow the economic pie in individual African states.

That is an obvious Public Private Partnership for our government and also our companies that ought to be, in my view, like the starting point for American engagement of the continent at this point with the political history of our respective countries.

So, I'm quite disappointed that that is not yet happening. I remain -- hope that the Trump administration will increase movement in that regard.

As it relates to -- and on the youth point, I suspect that if you talk to most African leaders and their affiliated entourage, the thing that most of them are absolutely scared of is not invasion by a foreign neighbor, it's not the collapse of their economy, it is their profoundly concern about the youth populations to their own countries.

Here's the thing, many of the older African leaders at one point were young African leaders. So, at one point, Kagame was -- or sort of like the prototypical examples of this, young gun 20, 30 years ago, longer 40, were sort of -- came to power and they're the ones that were going to change, then they get comfortable. And at the same time, they've gotten comfortable, they're sitting on this massive youth bulge that is not prepared to wait 40 years for their turn to live prosperous lives with meaning in their own countries.

So those leaders that figure out not only how to incorporate that youthful energy in their political systems but also create space economically for them will be the ones that will be remembered not only for prosperity but also be able to live out the rest of their lives in broad respected dignity. Those that don't, I think will pay -- frankly pay the price. It gets back to your earlier question of what's the argument you would make.

To Max' question about the role of the AU. There are lots of ways to answer that question, but I think probably the simplest one I would say is one of the biggest challenges of the African Union as it relates to promotion of democracy and governance is they are under resourced.

They doesn't have the resources to send long-term conflict resolution mediation missions at a moment's notice when they need to. They certainly don't have the capacity to do long-term elections monitoring electoral support.

Now, they have done, frankly, some really important behind-the-scenes work in Burkina Faso, also in Nigeria, and elsewhere. In my view, they've not accomplished what they should have in Burundi. They're effectively a nonfactor in Egypt, but it goes back to what I said at the beginning.

You can find -- their performance has basically been uneven. To the extent that it has been uneven, it's resulted to two things, one, is either a lack of funding to be able to do long-term support and the other is the extent to which the unit itself is frankly undermined or sidelined by regional leadership, regional heads of state, who would prefer to see an outcome that is separate from what -- either the Peace and Security Council might mandate or what the Constitutive Act would suggest ought to be the appropriate outcome.

MR. OPALO: Quick note on the youth, I think two interesting cases on the continent may be emblematic of what could happen, beginning in South Africa with the EFF, beginning with roads must fall, fees must fall, and the EFF still hasn't been completely able to tap into the overwhelming youth support for rapid change and renegotiation of the post (inaudible) settlement in South Africa. I think such popular sediments will continue to grow as more youth become urbanized and demand for quicker reforms for jobs and general wellbeing.

Then the other example is up North in Uganda. So, when Bobi Wine was arrested and then had to leave the country for medical treatment, internet was shut down in Uganda briefly, at least Twitter was, and what happened is that the Kenyan youth picked up the tab and were Tweeting everything about Uganda.

For brief moment, though even young Kenyan MPs would try to go to

Uganda to mobilize Ugandans and compile. Again, like with EFF, the sign for this was the red berets that the young Ugandans were wearing.

It's possible that an EFF style movement could creep up north of the Limpopo and especially in East Africa. Governized people across borders, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, so that you can have pan-national youth movement populous style of politics that's different from this current style, which is typically dominated by people who are 50 plus, because they have the money and the time to participate in politics.

Finally, on the AU, I think the ambassador is right, that sub regional -- this regional economic community is perhaps the best place to anchor democracy promotion, because if the EU tries to push for reforms in Burundi but within the East African community Uganda and Rwanda have violated term limits, that's not going to fly. It's hard to push for reforms in Central Africa within ECOWAS if Cameroon and Gabon are the biggest and strongest economies.

Even in Southern Africa within (inaudible), with Zimbabwe blowing up in part because the ratio nature of land politics in Zimbabwe was a reflection of what obtained in South Africa.

So, if you talk land reform in Zimbabwe, you'll be forced to talk land reform in South Africa. That's something AMC was not willing to do, so Zimbabwe just happened because they couldn't do much about it.

MR. O'HANLON: I want to follow up, before we go back to the audience for another round, with each of you on this question of youth and more generally demographics. We know that Africa is projected to experience the largest population growth of any continent in the 21st century. In fact, most of the world will not really grow much in population, but Africa may add three billion more miles in the course of this century.

I noticed in course of my career this issue has been one that seems to

recede from the public policy discussion. Any time one talks about whether that kind of a demographic trend is healthy or not, it can sound a little bit preachy or -- no one wants to endorse China style population plateauing.

Yet I wonder with climate trends, with demographic trends if over the longer term we can really be hopeful about African democracy if we see that many more people come into a continent where there probably isn't going to be enough land and enough jobs for most of them, so do we have to actually integrate the democracy discussion with the demographic discussion for thinking long term?

MR. BRIGETY: I think you also have to integrate those two, plus the economic discussion and development discussion. That would be the case even if frankly demographic trends were flatter or rising at a much more nominal rate.

Here's the thing, several things are going to happen, the only question is to what extent they will -- each one of these things will dominate. One, a lot of these young people will leave. They will continue to leave. The migration patterns that we're seeing coming across the Mediterranean, over the Red Sea this is just the tip of the iceberg. It's going to get a lot worse, particularly as job opportunities continue to decrease.

The second is that nevertheless there remains a potential for a large cheap labor pool to displace China and East Asia as sort of the manufacturing capital of the world if, if, this a big if, if African countries take advantage of the necessary macroeconomic policies and industrial policies in order to address it.

The third thing is that it will absolutely impact national politics in each of these countries. Leaders will not be able to continue to sits on sclerotic political governance mechanisms without making substantial accommodations to this massive youth pressure from below.

The only question is do they do it in a way that is healthy for their

countries and healthy for these other people or do they do it in a way that's much more impressive and, therefore, exacerbates the first problem of flight and also internal strife.

MR. O'HANLON: Ken.

MR. OPALO: I guess I'm less alarmed by the demographic trends than most people right now, because our current projections are based on the recent experience which hasn't yet factored in massive improvements in enrollment in primary and secondary school on the continent, especially among girls.

So, Tanzania went from 33 percent to above 66 percent enrollment rates just over the last ten years. That will mean that young women will -- the total fertility will drop at some point. So, the trends are -- I guess for policymakers, yes, they should be thinking what does an Africa with 3 billion people look like or Nigeria with 300 million people look like.

But I think the trends right now, at least from where I sit, are not as scary as they look in part because we should admit for a long time Africa was terribly underpopulated, and the lack of population was a cause of the region's underdevelopment rate.

Even now, labor is still more expensive in Kenya than in Vietnam. So, before Africa is able to reap this demographic dividend that leaders are talking about now, we have to think critically how do you make labor cheap instead of thinking how do you reduce the number of mouths before thinking of ways to make labor cheap.

Then finally I think assuming the trends hold, the political scientist in me is kind of hopeful that -- if the trends hold, then there will be greater demand for political reform in Africa.

Because your typical African government these days runs formal economy and forgets about the informal economy, because there's still land, people can grow their own food, and make a living.

Now, when there's no more land and you have to manage the entire economy responsibly from the center, then that will create demand for better government and not an FDR-focused administration that only cares about the two percent of the labor force that's in the formal sector and forgets about the rest of the economy.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Let's go to another round. The gentleman back in the fifth or sixth row and then we'll come up here in the second row and then the first row, so we'll do three in this round.

MR. MANZY: Thank you very much. I'm Lawrence Manzy from Rwanda. I returned from Rwanda two weeks ago and I can't -- the truth is if I going into another planet.

Being in Rwanda you see a vibrancy, you see a more focused and youth and operation that looks -- that has a purpose in what they are doing there, part of a bigger thing.

It's true when you hear Ambassador Brigety, I think if we say it's a one-person, one-man show, Ambassador Brigety, you have been good speaking diverse and doing whatever, becoming statesman.

But I think in these discussions we come to a one man instead of looking that this person belongs to a system. There is a bigger system that has a plan probably would look at what's happening.

We're looking at a person looking at his exit and forming leaders that (inaudible) look at his cabinet, the youngest in the continent or whatever. Look at the new -- he's just elected in the Parliament. He has the youngest members of Parliament, he has inclusive of women, and now it is over 60 still at the leadership.

But I think those ones sure he's not this person who has come and say, I'm here to stay and I'm the one, the answer. I think he's much bigger thing that wonder has and is doing to ensure this peaceful transition that when we come to such a

discussion and we focus on one person who is at the top, we may lose -- if we are to advise or guide, we may lose --

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. We did talk a lot about the people below leaders, but I take your point on -- the interesting point on ministers that he's trying to form.

Up here in the first and second rows, please.

MR. ARMAO: Thank you my name is Michael Armao with Verax Labs. We're a firm that monitors emerging and frontier markets for investment opportunities.

My question today is both general and specific. If the panel had any thoughts on North Africa, whether or not we see any opportunities there or any progress there.

Then specifically I was curious about Taneshia where -- can we say that perhaps Taneshia is a bellwether for success and democratization? If we can agree on that or say it's possible, if there were thoughts on the sheer number of jihadists coming back to Taneshia, would that possibly jeopardize any positive progress there.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. The gentleman here in the front row.

SPEAKER: Thank you. My name is (inaudible). I'm a Nigerian. Thanks for this brief dialogue about the continent.

My quick question: One, at what point will the African continent start to move toward an African (inaudible) election? My suggestion that I want your opinion: Is there any way we can start to have election originally maybe ten years down the line or five years down the line.

Lastly, as I heard about the youth and what they're doing, what do we do in regards -- it may not be for you guys, in regards to the destructive (inaudible) did not use for their election currently and some other application in the global supply corruption and so forth; what are you think on this technology and what the youth could use this

technology to take over the continent?

MR. O'HANLON: Good. So, we've got specific questions on Rwanda and Taneshia and then a more general question on elections.

Do you want to start, Ken?

MR. OPALO: Yes. I'll start with elections. Incidentally I'm currently working on a paper that tries to look at a number of African countries, about 26 of them adopted technology as a way of cleaning up elections. So biometric, voter registration, and identification at the poles, et cetera.

Turns out that the use of technology in elections is just cheap talk. It's a very expensive way to signaling to donors and election observers that, hey, look at us, we're using technology, we're trying to run clean and fair elections.

If you look at the data from Uganda, it's almost comical that a country that used DDR technology in its elections suddenly was very transparent where these systems were deployed, where they failed on election day, and things of that nature.

So, when it comes to technology and its use in politics, even in governance, I think that it's -- if Paul Kagame wants to be corrupt, they will be corrupt even with technology. If presidents and elites in power want to be corrupt and to rig elections they'll do it, even when there are elections. So, if you can't do it on election day, you'll do it at voter registration stage or create insecurities so people don't show up.

So, I think while elections make -- technology makes elections easier to conduct, I think we shouldn't lose focus on the very kind of naughty political solutions that we need to have as a precursor to use of technology.

MR. O'HANLON: Great.

Ambassador.

MR. BRIGETY: I would argue that North Africa is the most heterogenous region of the continent, which I think is -- partly to explain why the Arab Maghreb Union is

probably the weakest of all the regional, that plus obviously Morocco and Algeria and those issues.

So Taneshia, however, is a fascinating case study. It is I think the country in North Africa indisputably that's had the most dramatic political reform. It's one that I think potentially, if I had to bet on long-term political stability for the purpose of long-term economic investment, eventually I would argue that Taneshia is probably the right bet, relative to Algeria which is bruising for a reckoning depending on what happens to -- how much longer Bouteflika comes, because there is no succession plan to speak of for what happens when he passes inevitably.

Egypt has yet another strong man in LCC that's sort of gone back to pharaonic type as it were. Morocco is still trying to figure out how African they are in terms of what their relationship is with the rest of the continent. Libya's basket case obviously with no sort of end in sight.

I think the problem of the transient point for jihadist I think is true across the Zelham. I think we probably got to see it most strongly in Taneshia precisely because the potential for serious political reform there is the one that is the most likely to be upset by the kind of jihadist element unless the government is able to secure itself more stringently.

But I unfortunately don't see -- even if Taneshia turns into Sweden of North Africa, I don't see how it necessarily is a bellwether for what happens in the rest of the state of the region, because the politics there are so fundamentally sui generous by state.

Also particularly in the case of Algeria and Morocco the nature of those -- the enmity between those two is so profound that it is almost the organizing principal, certainly in the case of Nigeria, the organizing principal for their foreign policy with regard to each other, but I wish Taneshia really well.

Again if I had to sort of make a long-term bet, that's the country in the region that I would make the best bet on.

MR. O'HANLON: I'm just going to have one quick word for our Rwandan friend, not that I claim expertise on Rwanda, but I am fascinated by it. I think it's very important for what it does as an example for the rest of the region. As you say, there are a lot of good things that have happened in Rwanda, a lot of amazing things in 25 years, but we also know President Kagame has been implicated in some questionable suppression of political opposition and I feel like the U.S. government dialogue needs to continue to pressure him to prove that what you just said is true. Let's keep having that conversation, who are the people who are going to succeed you and at what point is there going to be a fair election.

I think we're beyond the honeymoon phase where we just google our eyes at the amazing accomplishments in Rwanda. It's all too fragile, because Kagame has himself made it about one guy. No matter -- he himself has insisted he must stay and he hasn't sent the message to the world that you said much better than I've ever heard him say.

So let's keep the pressure on. If he can make that argument convincingly, we can all be happy, but I'm skeptical.

I want to make sure by the way, Sasha, we give you a little bit of notice that I'm going ask you to have the final word on DRC in the final round as well, but we'll also of course come to our panelists. I would like to hear your take on whether you're at all hopeful about December 23rd.

But before we do that, let's get a couple more questions for these panelists, then we'll do one final set of responses. I know I haven't called on too much in the back of the room --

SPEAKER: I respectfully suggest that you call on Ambassador Reddick.

MR. O'HANLON: Yes, let's do that, then we will come up here for a couple more.

MS. REDDICK: Thank you very much. Eunice Reddick, U.S. State Department, retired.

I just want to go back to one of the early points. Perhaps we can return to the China issue or the China problem, China growing as a major source of finances -- financing for infrastructure projects across Africa. Loans that are out there, again that could disrupt economies in the future, so very much a player on the economic scene.

But what I've seen politically again is China possibly using these countries in Africa as sources of support in international four to avoid for example a Uyghur issue coming up in the Human Rights Council or possibly to counter these attacks on the South China Sea, but again not seeing the effects necessarily on the domestic scene across Africa I think there's been more of an effect from the U.S. in being absent on these issues than we used to be present on from democratization to governance issues.

But I just want to go back again. Where do you see China having a greater influence perhaps on the political scene and/or -- also on the economic scene given this growing presence and the interconnection between Beijing and the continent?

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Let's take one more, then we're going to wrap up here. So I think we're -- gentleman here in the second row and then we'll give the microphone to Sasha, then come back to the panel.

SPEAKER: Mr. O'Hanlon, you made mention about the Freedom House. Freedom House lists China as not free. What about Africa using indigenous principals of society. I'm sure you're familiar with the word (foreign word). Well, why not use something like that, why do we have to use some foreign ideals of how society should conduct itself; can you comment on that?

MR. O'HANLON: Good. We'll come back to the panel for a second.

First, Sasha, I'm sorry to ambush you, but any words you have, just your take, on how things are going in DRC?

MR. LEZHNEV: Sure. I am fairly pessimistic in terms of what -- if this is going to be a credible free, fair transparent election, but I do think that there is still a window for U.S. and Europe to engage and help influence and impact that process.

I believe that all signs right now are that through the, as you mentioned not just election day but the whole electoral process to date in terms of the candidates that are able to register, the organizations and parties that are allowed to mobilize rallies, the activists who are allowed to protest or not, et cetera, and these voting machines that seem to be -- will be used, I believe that there will be -- all signs are that Kabila and his inner circle of family and businesses, et cetera, are setting up to rule through Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary.

So I do think, however, that the U.S. should not adopt a wait-and-see approach here, that there's a chance to really influence the process. I think that once there's a new government, there will be a very -- there will be sort of like, okay, let's restart policy and not put pressure. So I think the time now is to really put more pressure on the government and use those financial tools.

By the way, the House today is going to vote on the Congo Democracy Act. It's going to happen this evening and it's very likely to pass, so we're waiting for the Senate to introduce that version and that will include some sanctions requirements, more extended period, but nevertheless puts pressure on the administration to do that.

So I think right now is a really important time to engage proactively and not sort of sit and think, well, let's hope it goes well kind of thing and that kind of thing, so thanks.

MR. O'HANLON: Great, appreciate it.

Ken.

MR. OPALO: I'll start with the ambassador's question on China. I think it's important for everyone involved when we think about China and Africa to step back and kind of appreciate both the positive and negative influences and also look at the issue from the African perspective.

Because if you're an African politician who say was in power through the '90s, you went through a period whereby all you ever got from the West were probably lectures on democracy and accountability, some funding for health, and capacity building workshops for governance reforms and little else while your people are demanding for actual services.

Enter China, a country that's willing to provide that. They're not doing it in the best way possible. Chinese engineers are not fostering local skills transfer. They're building a lot of white elephants. They're filling corruption on the continent.

But it's also true that the previous model of Angola selling all its oil to Exxon with all the money ending up in a Swiss bank account has kind of shifted. What you have is Angola, yes, the elite are still skimming off billions of dollars, but some of that oil money is paid for in kind with roads and buildings and water systems that Angolans can see.

If you talk to the African middle class, this is an improvement. It's not the case that all the money was stolen -- is stolen, now you have a system that delivers intangible infrastructure that's going to provide basis for economic growth.

I think we -- because we focus so much on the governance implications of China's involvement in Africa, we tend to forget the interest that inform Chinese sort of involvement in Africa.

The game has shifted and people realize that -- even within the research world, we realize that we actually don't know whether reforming governance automatically

leads to growth.

The consensus appears to be that good institutions and good government coevolves with economic development. I think from a policy perspective, it's probably not good strategy to insist that you must reform before you can grow, instead have an all-hands-on-deck approach so that if the U.S. -- and the U.S. still has a lot of soft power in Africa -- could think of leveraging Chinese infrastructure investments with strengthening of governance in ways that compliment this very sort of massive growth.

Because the last thing the U.S. wants to be seen as doing is pushing out that China has delivered. If you look at opinion surveys, China is very popular in Africa, because people see the power, people see the roads, people see things changing.

I think net, it's been a positive influence despite the negative influences on governance. I think it's hard to reform governance from the outside and -- which brings me to your point.

I think eventually Africans will have to figure out democracy on their own. It's very hard to train elites and the citizens to vote for the right leaders. Governance reforms typically been decoupled from the real life.

Governance was always about the elites and constraining them, as opposed to governance as tying elites to the citizen through service delivery.

What China has done is strengthen the service delivery arm of governance, and I think what the West could continue doing is strengthen the accountability arm knowing that the service delivery arm is crucial. It's not okay to want people (inaudible) to vote without service delivery.

Democracy collapses when there's no service delivery. China is strengthening service delivery. I think in the long run, that's a good thing.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you.

MR. BRIGETY: Can I conclude by saying this, so the inverse to my

earlier statement about the joy of being -- the freedom of a former U.S. official to speak one's mind is that I remain a committed American citizen committed to America's interests in the world and, thus, I have a harder time taking a full academic detachment to my observations in other parts of the world, particularly as it relates to Africa.

So what I take away from your question is one of the most compelling arguments for why Africa policy should matter to our overall foreign policy globally, and that is that there are 54 sovereign countries on the continent, each one of which has a sovereign vote in every multilateral institution to which they belong and each one of them is capable to a greater or lesser degree of being courted for their own influence by other countries, whether these countries be our friends or adversaries.

Notwithstanding the quite significant contributions that China has made and is likely to continue to make with regard to infrastructure development on the continent, I think we also need to be very clear eyed that globally speaking they are not our friends. We are to various degrees in a series of competitions with China cross the world.

In the Africa context, we are absolutely in quite substantial danger of losing influence on the continent in ways that not only impact our interest in Africa but in ways that also impact our interest in other parts of the world by virtue of African states seeing their interest more closely aligned with our Chinese counterparts than with ourselves.

That's a point that I think frankly is not sufficiently understood here in Washington by many of our colleagues that are engaged in trying to advance America's interest around the world.

MR. O'HANLON: I'll just say one very brief word of closing in response to your question, sir, which is that too often that kind of an argument can be used as an excuse for an established regime to hold on to power or to pass power to a chosen

successor.

I think in principal there's no reason that we have to have elections as the only way that a democratic well can be spoken, but we also know that there's no real good alternative to democracy.

I think actually if anything, I would want to double down as an American and remind Americans that elections do not generate democracy by themselves. We've forgotten that in Iraq, we've forgotten that in other places in the modern era where we strive for a big national ballot on something and assume we can hand off a baton or consider mission accomplished at that point.

In fact as our previous panel thus far has underscored, as Senator Coons underscored, as these gentlemen have underscored, as the Founding Fathers told us, democracy means checks and balances, it means protection for the rights of the individual, it means the rule of law, it means strong courts, and it means local governance that's also affected, not just a national winner-take-all vote.

So to me that's the problem, not so much that there are better indigenous models that would work better, but that we Americans need to remember that democracy does not just equal elections when we're if (inaudible) and trying to help people build their own systems of government.

Sure if there is some other model that emerges that can be defended, fine. But I would be suspicious usually when that argument is used that someone is trying to hold on to something rather than let the will of the people speak.

I know we can all continue to discuss and debate this in the future, so let me issue the very best for December and the holidays and please join me in thanking the panel.

* * * * *

CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

Carleton J. Anderson, III

(Signature and Seal on File)

Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia

Commission No. 351998

Expires: November 30, 2020