

Locals and analysts say reported Israeli plan to forcibly move Palestinians from Gaza to Somaliland risks inflaming the region.

# Somaliland

The question of Somaliland's independence from Somalia has long divided the region:



## Somaliland recognition for forced transfer of Palestinians? 'Not worth it'

In recent months, the small East African coastal region of Somaliland has been making international headlines after several high-profile Republicans in the United States endorsed a bill to recognise it as an independent state. The question of Somaliland's independence from Somalia has long divided the region. While the territory declared its sovereignty in the 1990s, it is not recognised by Mogadishu or any other world government. Recently, Republicans in the US House of Representatives, including Representative Scott Perry of Pennsylvania, Representative Pat Harrigan of North Carolina, and oth-



A woman dressed in Somaliland's flag colours parades to celebrate the 33rd anniversary of Somaliland declaring independence in Hargeisa, Somaliland, May 18, 2024 [Tiksa Negeri/Reuters]

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Nepal gets first female PM after deadly unrest

Nepal's former Supreme Court chief justice Sushila Karki

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North Korea executing more people for watching foreign films and TV, UN finds

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News Backpage China's Proposal of the Global Governance Initiative Comes at the Right Time



## Ecological Collapse and Geopolitical Fallout in the South China Sea

China's relentless exploitation of aquatic resources has unleashed a cascading environmental and geopolitical crisis that now extends far beyond its shores. Once teeming with biodiversity, China's rivers, lakes and coastal waters have suffered dramatic declines in fish populations due

to industrial-scale fishing and weak regulatory enforcement. The most alarming consequences are playing out in the South China Sea—a region that has become both an ecological flashpoint and a theatre of geopolitical contestation.

Shrinking Fish Stocks, Rising Tensions

The South China Sea accounts for roughly 12 percent of the global fish catch, yet key stocks have plunged by more than 70 percent since the 1950s. A 2022 Marine Policy Journal

study estimated that up to 90 percent of commercial fish species in the region are now overexploited. China's state-subsidised fishing fleets, often

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# India, Mauritius Elevate Ties with Major Infrastructure, Maritime and Cultural Initiatives

By: AGENCIES  
xxxxxxxxxxxxx

The recent State Visit by Mauritius Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam to India has cemented the two nations' longstanding ties, delivering wide-ranging agreements across strategic, developmental, and cultural sectors.

Deepening Strategic and Diplomatic Engagement Talks between Dr. Ramgoolam and Indian leaders covered bilateral priorities as well as regional and global issues, underscoring what both sides described as their "family bond" — rooted in shared history, values, and vibrant people-to-people ties. Mauritius was reaffirmed as a key partner in India's Neighbourhood First policy and Vision MAHASAGAR, highlighting the Indian Ocean's strategic importance.

During the visit, Dr. Ramgoolam met India's President and Prime Minister and attended events in Kashi (Varanasi), Mumbai, Ayodhya, and Tirupati, reflecting the cultural, economic, and spiritual links between the two countries. Both delegations also highlighted the elevation of their relationship to an "Enhanced Strategic Partnership," first announced at a previous high-level meeting.

## USD 680 Million Special Economic Package

At the heart of the visit was India's announcement of a USD 680 million Special Economic Package to upgrade Mauritius's infrastructure, healthcare, education, energy, and maritime security. The package blends grants and concessional credit for maximum impact.

## Key components include:

- Healthcare and Social Infrastructure: Construction of a 500-bed Sir



Seewoosagar Ramgoolam National Hospital; establishment of an AYUSH Centre of Excellence; a Veterinary School and Animal Hospital; and Mauritius's first Jan Aushadhi Kendra for affordable medicines.

- Transport, Ports, and Energy: Modernisation of Port Louis facilities and equipment; expansion of roads and completion of the SSR International Airport's air-traffic control tower; construction of Ring Road Phase II and motorway upgrades.

- Renewable Energy Cooperation: A Government-to-Government proposal for a 17.5 MW floating solar PV project at Tamarind Falls with NTPC Ltd. leading implementation.

- Budgetary Support: India's extension of USD 25 million budgetary assistance to Port Louis for the current financial year.

## Science, Technology, and Education

Several Memoranda of Understanding were signed to strengthen research and innovation, including co-

operation between India's Department of Science and Technology and Mauritius's Ministry of Tertiary Education; joint oceanography research between the National Institute of Oceanography (India) and Mauritius Oceanography Institute; and hydrography collaboration for advanced marine studies.

Education linkages were also expanded through agreements between IIT Madras, the Indian Institute of Plantation Management (Bengaluru), and the University of Mauritius to promote student and faculty exchanges, joint research, and innovation.

## Space and Administrative Cooperation

India and Mauritius signed a landmark agreement to establish a telemetry, tracking and telecommunications station for satellites and launch vehicles in Mauritius, deepening cooperation in space science. Under the Karmayogi Bharat initiative, Mauritius will also draw on Indian platforms and expertise for civil service training and gover-

nance capacity building.

## Community Development Projects

India announced further grant assistance under Phase II of its High Impact Community Development Projects — worth about ₹96 crore — to fund small but critical local projects in education, infrastructure, and women's empowerment.

## Maritime Security and Regional Stability

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to a "free, open, secure, and stable Indian Ocean." India pledged continued support for Mauritius's Exclusive Economic Zone, refitting of coast guard assets, maritime surveillance, and technical cooperation to combat piracy, illegal fishing, and drug trafficking.

## Trade, Finance, and Sovereignty

Building on the launch of UPI and RuPay cards in Mauritius last year, the two governments agreed to advance trade settlement in local currencies to deepen financial linkages. Prime

Minister Narendra Modi also congratulated Mauritius on the conclusion of the Chagos Agreement, calling it a landmark for Mauritius's sovereignty and reaffirming India's support for decolonisation in international forums.

## Cultural and People-to-People Ties

Events in Kashi and other cities celebrated the civilisational bonds between the two countries and the contributions of the Indian-origin population in Mauritius, reinforcing shared aspirations for growth and prosperity.

## A Transformative Visit

Dr. Ramgoolam's visit produced a comprehensive set of agreements and initiatives expected to transform bilateral cooperation — from healthcare and science to maritime security and cultural engagement. The outcomes reaffirm the strategic partnership's vitality and the shared vision of India and Mauritius for a stable, prosperous Indian Ocean region.

## Worth Noting:

- **Healthcare and Social Infrastructure:** Construction of a 500-bed Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam National Hospital; establishment of an AYUSH Centre of Excellence; a Veterinary School and Animal Hospital; and Mauritius's first Jan Aushadhi Kendra for affordable medicines.
- **Transport, Ports, and Energy:** Modernisation of Port Louis facilities and equipment; expansion of roads and completion of the SSR International Airport's air-traffic control tower; construction of Ring Road Phase II and motorway upgrades.
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# Guiyang: The Sky-High Bridge Capital Redefining China's Southwest

By: Jeremiah Wakaya  
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At 1,139 metres above sea level, Guiyang Longdongbao International Airport ushers travellers into the world's bridge capital — the heart of Guizhou, China's mountainous southwest province.

A drive from the airport reveals a city where dramatic karst terrain meets expansive road networks and soaring apartment blocks. This fusion of nature and infrastructure defines Guizhou's reputation as a global engineering success story.

The province's most iconic marvel is the 565-metre-high Beipanjiang Bridge straddling the border with Yunnan. Unveiled in 2016, it remains the world's highest bridge and in 2018 earned the Gustav Lindenthal Medal, often called the "Nobel Prize" for bridge engineering. Guizhou also boasts the Qingshuihe Bridge, China's second-highest at 406 metres above the valley floor.

Together these feats represent Guizhou's relentless effort to conquer its rugged landscape. Expressways lined with trees, green-draped overpasses and towering structures rising from valleys create a striking display of ecological harmony fused with modernity.

Guiyang, home to about six million of Guizhou's 39 million residents, has undergone a dramatic transformation. Once considered remote and landlocked, it now leads the charge in modernisation.

"The terrain is mostly mountainous, but that has not hindered infrastructure development. The city



is highly accessible by road, and this extends even to remote villages," a local guide notes.

The boom is unmistakable: kilometre-long tunnels drilled through hills, breathtaking bridge spans, spiralling overpasses and expressways linking urban centres with rural hamlets. At the heart of this transformation lies a multi-modal transport network designed for efficiency and inclusivity.

Guiyang's Bus Rapid Transit system runs along major highways, integrated with rail links and an expanding subway. Electric vehicles

dominate the roads, e-bikes glide across dedicated lanes, and pedestrians enjoy shaded walkways flanking wide highways.

Beneath intersections, underground underpasses double as bustling trade corridors where vendors sell clothing, handicrafts and electronics — blending mobility with micro-enterprise. Yet Guiyang balances modernity with tradition. In the city centre, the Guizhou Arts and Crafts Museum displays intricate carvings and traditional costumes, while the Provincial Museum chronicles dynastic his-

tory — including the Ming era — with detailed exhibits and a giant replica tomb. Among its treasures is the Zi Chariot, a bronze Eastern Han Dynasty carriage about a metre long with a canopy. Cultural reverence continues at Xiuwen Yangming Cultural Park, which preserves a sacred cave dedicated to philosopher Wang Yangming beneath a towering statue.

In Huishui County, the Buyi tribe offers a glimpse into China's ancient past through colourful traditions, dynasty-era architecture and centuries-old paper-cutting art.

On Guiyang's outskirts, a Culture and Creative Park illustrates the city's fusion of culture and technology, with an AI hub supporting media content distribution and e-commerce at the heart of a rural community blending the old with the new.

Guiyang today is more than a city of bridges. It is a living testament to how infrastructure, technology and culture can converge to transform a once-isolated province into a modern hub — without losing sight of its heritage.

## Worth Noting:

The province's most iconic marvel is the 565-metre-high Beipanjiang Bridge straddling the border with Yunnan. Unveiled in 2016, it remains the world's highest bridge and in 2018 earned the Gustav Lindenthal Medal, often called the "Nobel Prize" for bridge engineering. Guizhou also boasts the Qingshuihe Bridge, China's second-highest at 406 metres above the valley floor.

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# South Korea workers detained in US raid head home

By: Simon Ndonga  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

More than 300 South Koreans who were detained in a massive immigration raid at a Hyundai plant in the US state of Georgia last week are due to arrive home on Friday. Their return comes as the country's president and Hyundai's chief executive have warned about the impact of the raid.

A chartered Korean Air jet carrying the workers and 14 non-Koreans who were also detained in the raid took off from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport at mid-day local time on Thursday (17:00 BST). One South Korean national has reportedly chosen to stay in the US to seek permanent residency. The plane is expected to arrive at Incheon International Airport on Friday afternoon Seoul time. The departure was delayed by more than a day because of an instruction from the White House, South Korean President Lee Jae Myung said on Thursday.

President Donald Trump ordered the pause to check whether the workers were willing to remain in the US to continue working and training Americans, according to a South Korean foreign ministry official.

The BBC has contacted the White House for comment.

Lee also said companies would be "very hesitant" about investing in the US following the raid.

"The situation is extremely bewildering," Lee added, while noting it is common practice for Korean firms to send workers to help set up overseas factories.

"If that's no longer allowed, establishing manufacturing facilities in the US will only become more difficult... making companies question whether it's worth doing at all," he added.

Seoul is negotiating with Washington on visa options for South Korean workers "whether that means securing [higher] quotas or creating new visa categories", Lee said.

On Friday, the South Korean foreign ministry said it had called for the US Congress to support a new visa for Korean firms.

During meetings with US senators in Washington this week, Foreign Minister Cho Hyun reiterated concerns among South Koreans over the arrests, the ministry said in a statement.

Meanwhile, Hyundai's chief executive José Muñoz has said the raid will delay the factory's opening. Mr Muñoz told US media that the raid will create "minimum two to three months delay [in opening the factory] because now all these peo-



ple want to get back".

Last week, US officials detained 475 people – more than 300 of them South Korean nationals – who they said were working illegally at the battery facility, one of the largest foreign investment projects in Georgia. LG Energy Solution, which operates the plant with Hyundai, said that many of its employees who were arrested had various types of visas or were under a visa waiver programme.

A worker at the plant spoke to the BBC about the panic and confusion during the raid. The employee said the vast majority of the workers de-

tained were mechanics installing production lines at the site, and were employed by a contractor.

South Korea, a close US ally in Asia, has pledged to invest tens of billions of dollars in America, partly to offset tariffs.

Media in the country have described the raid as a "shock" with the Dong-A Ilbo newspaper warning that it could have "a chilling effect on the activities of our businesses in the United States".

The Yonhap News Agency published an editorial on Thursday urging the two countries to "cooperate to repair cracks in their alliance".

The timing of the raid, as the two governments engage in sensitive trade talks, has raised concern in Seoul.

The White House has defended the operation at the Hyundai plant, dismissing concerns that the raid could deter foreign investment.

On Sunday, US President Donald Trump referenced the raid in a social media post and called for foreign companies to hire Americans. The US government would make it "quickly and legally possible" for foreign firms to bring workers into the country if they respected its immigration laws, Trump said.

## World title

# World title it is! Beatrice Chebet wins first gold for Kenya at Tokyo Championship

By: Correspondent  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Beatrice Chebet won Kenya's first gold medal at the World Championships in Tokyo with victory in the women's 10,000m on Saturday afternoon.

The double world record holder stole the show in the last 400 metres to cross the finish line first, clocking 30:37.61.

Olympic silver medalist, Italian Nadia Battocletti, clocked 30:38.23 to take silver as Ethiopian Gudaf Tsegay, who had seemed destined for gold until the final 400 metres, had to be content with bronze after clocking 30:39.65.

Another Kenyan, world 10km record holder Agnes Ngetich, timed 30:42.66 to finish fourth.



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## Partnership

# Kenya's Strategic Leap: How Its Partnership with the UAE Is Reshaping East Africa's Economic Future

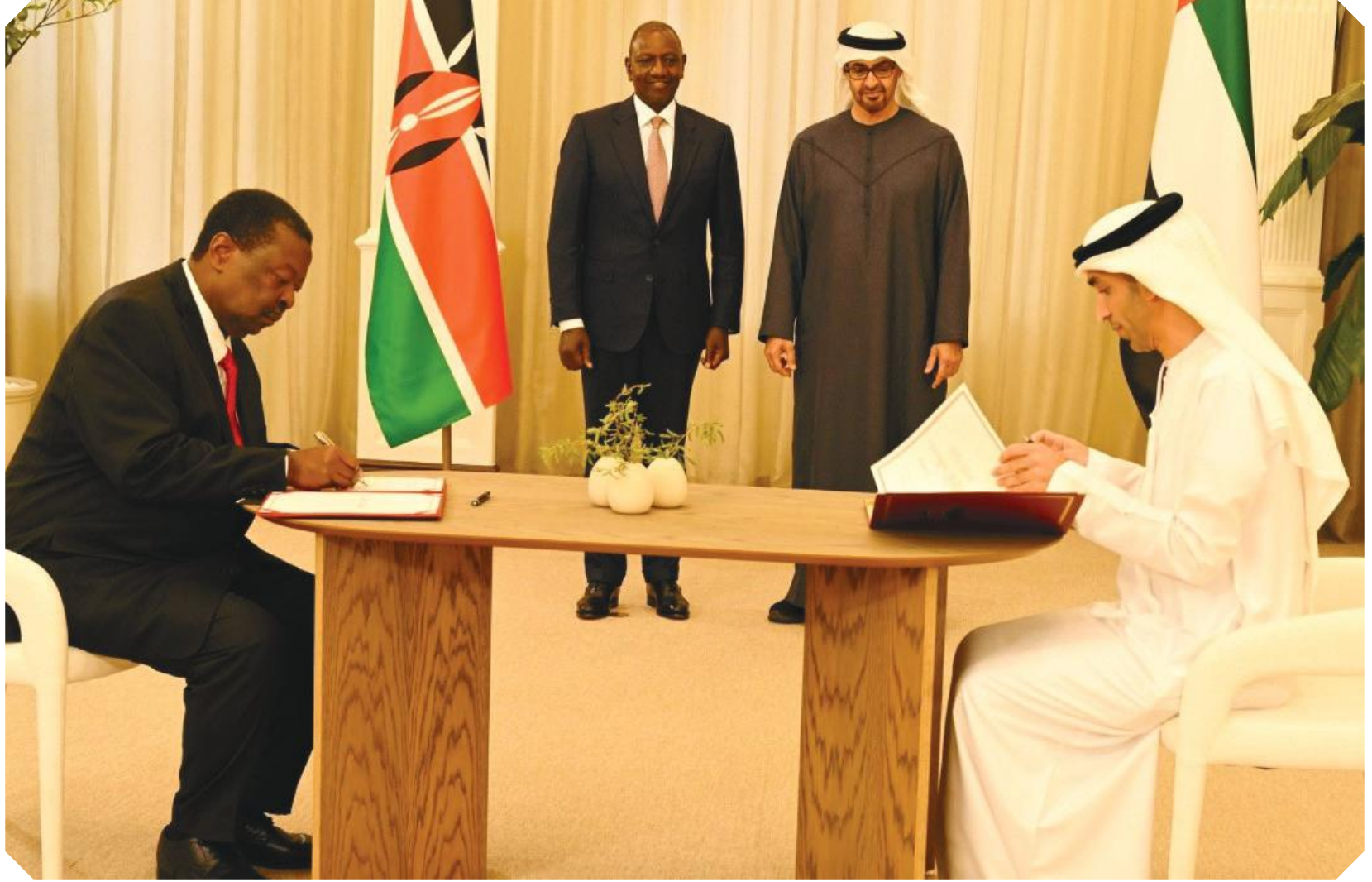
By: Hewete Haileselassie  
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## Worth Noting:

- For many Kenyans, the UAE conjures familiar images: thousands of domestic workers sending remittances home, or the aspirational Dubai holidays splashed across Instagram feeds. These are real and important human links — the UAE is the fifth-largest source of remittances to Kenya, with an estimated 30,000 to 100,000 Kenyans working there.

- What has attracted less attention is the surge in trade and investment between the two nations. This signals something far deeper than tourism and labour migration: it is about Kenya's emergence as a regional economic powerhouse and the UAE's recognition of Kenya's strategic importance in unlocking Africa's potential.

- Non-oil trade between Kenya and the UAE hit \$3.1 billion in 2023 — a 26.4 percent jump from the previous year. This isn't just statistical growth; it's a vote of confidence in Kenya's future. When global partners increase their engagement by more than a quarter in a single year, they are betting on Kenya's capacity as the natural hub for East African commerce, innovation and growth.



When Kenya appears in global economic discussions, the focus often tilts toward its obstacles — smallholder farmers battling rising costs, young graduates facing joblessness, or infrastructure gaps that hold back potential. Yet a different and more inspiring story is unfolding: Kenya's transformation into East Africa's undisputed gateway and the role of the United Arab Emirates in accelerating this shift for the benefit of every Kenyan.

I write this not only as an Ethiopian by heritage but as someone who has made Kenya a second home — living and working in Nairobi for several years and witnessing East Africa's development from both sides of the border. This vantage point allows me to appreciate Kenya's remarkable trajectory with both regional insight and the analytical distance of an informed outsider.

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This momentum reached a historic milestone in January when President William Ruto and UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan signed the landmark Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). Far from being another paper agreement, CEPA is a strategic alliance to open markets, reduce trade barriers and accelerate investment in sectors that will define Kenya's economic future — ICT, tourism, renewable energy, banking and infrastructure.

“The CEPA will unlock opportunities for our businesses and create jobs for our youth while positioning Kenya as the gateway to East Africa,” President Ruto said at the signing ceremony. These are not mere diplomatic pleasantries; they reflect a clear understanding of what this partnership means for Kenya's development trajectory.

Kenya offers the UAE a strategic foothold in Africa with access to a growing consumer market and established trade routes. In return, UAE investors bring world-class logistics, sophisticated financing and global connectivity — not just to import finished goods but to help Kenya add value, compete globally and create high-quality jobs for its young population.

Agriculture remains the backbone of Kenya's economy (around 25 percent of GDP) and services contribute more than half. CEPA is designed to enhance, not displace, these strengths. Analysts expect the agreement to boost exports of avocados, flowers, coffee and textiles while attracting UAE-backed investments in tourism, fintech and clean energy. Farmers will find new markets; tech entrepreneurs will access capital and expertise; tourism will benefit from enhanced con-

nectivity; and the financial sector will deepen its integration with global markets.

### A Regional Vision

The significance of this partnership extends beyond Kenya's borders. As GDP growth accelerates in 2025, Kenya is cementing its role as a regional trade and investment hub, encouraging deeper ties between East Africa and the Gulf Cooperation Council. This is the Kenya many across the region have long envisioned — a bridge between Africa and the world, creating opportunities not just for its own citizens but for its neighbours.

When international businesses establish their African headquarters in Nairobi, when Kenyan ports and airports become preferred gateways for regional commerce, the country fulfils its destiny as East Africa's economic leader. The UAE partnership accelerates this vision, providing the capital, expertise and global networks needed to build world-class infrastructure and competitive industries. So the next time conversation turns to Dubai holidays or Kenyans working in the UAE, remember the trade numbers and partnerships behind the headlines. Each statistic represents a Kenyan

business finding new markets, a worker gaining skills, a family benefiting from opportunity.

This is not just about GDP percentages or billion-dollar deals. It is about Kenya taking its rightful place as a leader in African development, creating opportunities at home and serving as a beacon of progress for the region. The UAE partnership is helping Kenya write that story — one where young Kenyans no longer need to leave home to find opportunity and where Nairobi businesses can compete globally.

This is the Kenya that the UAE sees when it invests \$3.1 billion in trade. This is the Kenya that is emerging — a future worth celebrating, not only for Kenyans but for all of us who call East Africa home.

*The author is a former BBC journalist and now Editor-in-Chief at Bird Story Agency*

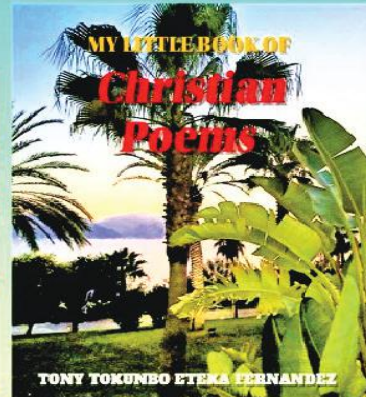
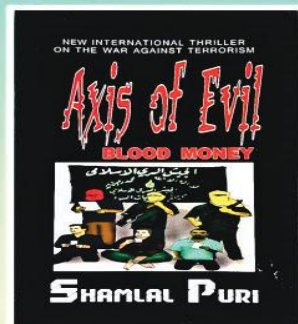
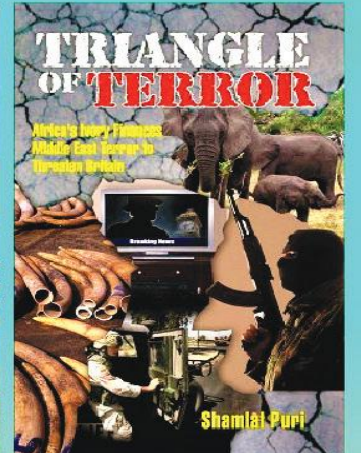
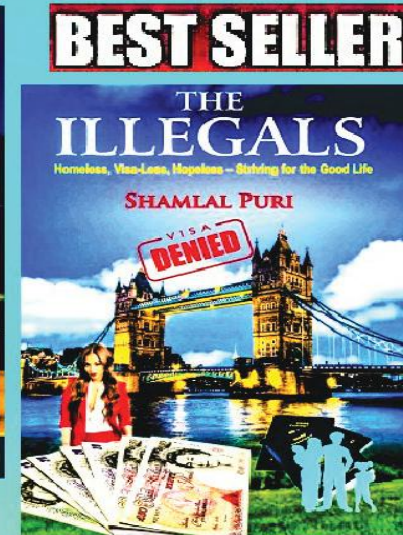
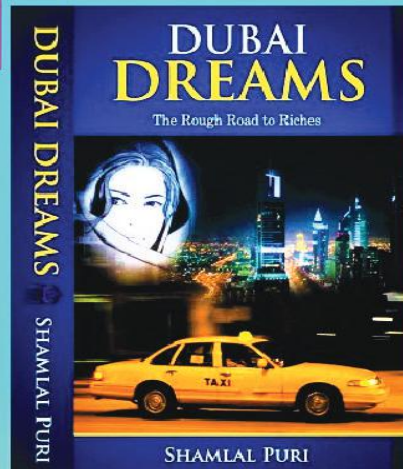
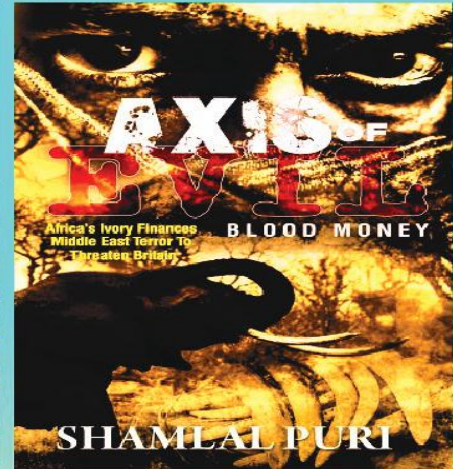
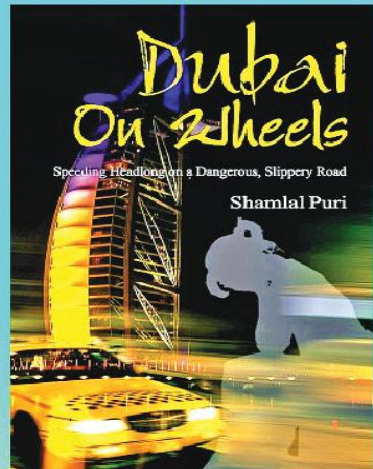
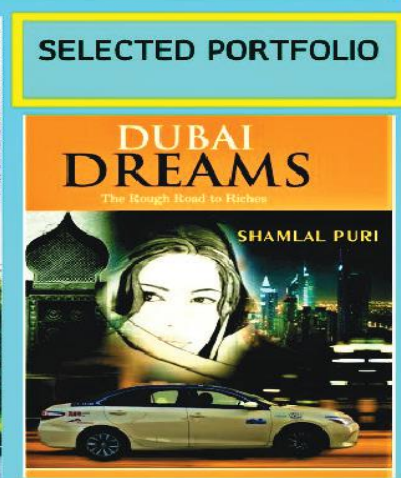
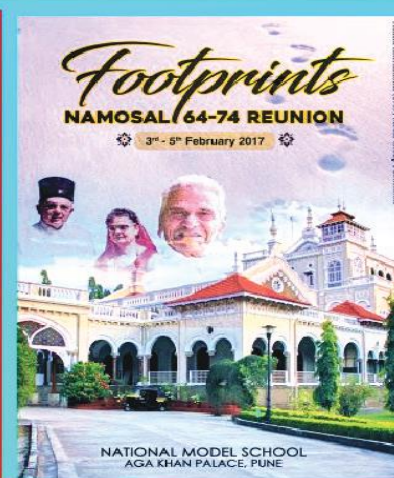
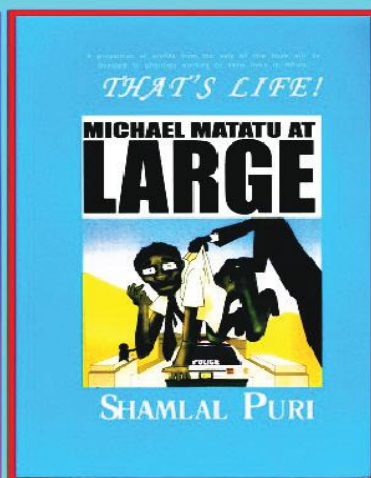
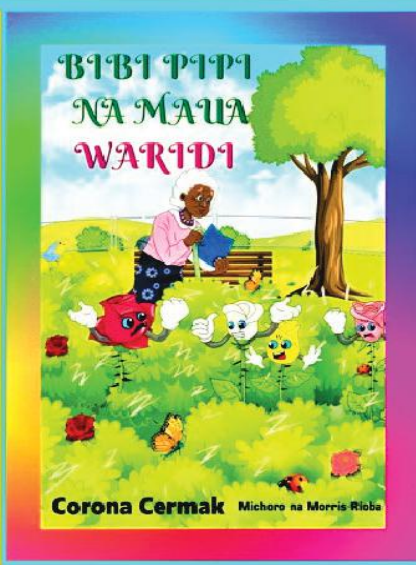
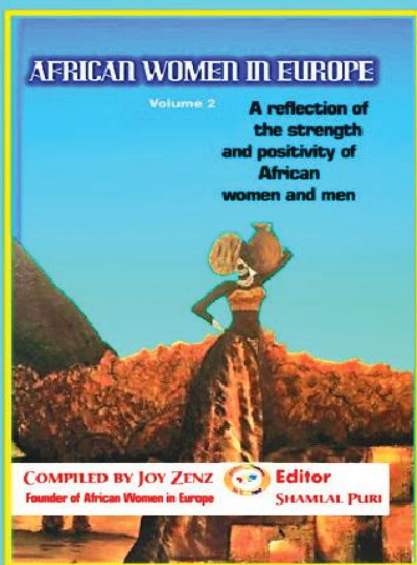
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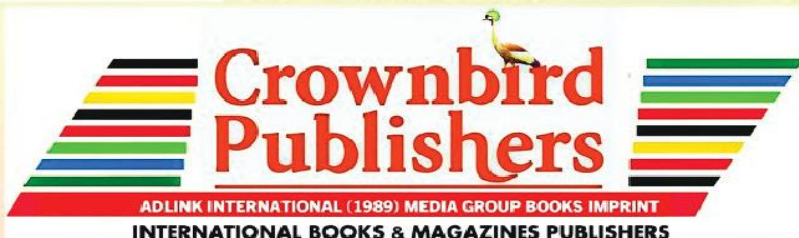
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## African News

# Somaliland recognition for forced transfer of Palestinians? 'Not worth it':

*Locals and analysts say reported Israeli plan to forcibly move Palestinians from Gaza to Somaliland risks inflaming the region.*

By: Mohamed Gabobe

Contd from Page 1

## Worth Noting:

- At around the same time, media reports surfaced that said Israel had reached out to Somaliland as a possible location to resettle Palestinians it plans to expel from Gaza.
- Human rights advocates from Somaliland have voiced concern that the forced resettlement of Palestinians could "render Somaliland complicit in the genocide against Palestinians in Gaza", with worries that countries who previously sympathised with Somaliland may potentially "withdrawing their support".
- During a news conference at the White House in early August, US President Donald Trump addressed the issue. "We're looking into that right now," he said in response to a question about whether he supported recognition of Somaliland if it were to accept Palestinians. "Good question, actually, and another complex one, but we're working on that right now," he added, without giving a clear answer.

er key conservative heavyweights, have backed the push for recognition.

"All territorial claims by the Federal Republic of Somalia over the area known as Somaliland are invalid and without merit," said the text of the bill introduced in June, calling for the US to recognise Somaliland "as a separate, independent country".

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Less than a week later, Republican Senator Ted Cruz of Texas penned a letter to Trump calling for Somaliland's recognition. One of the key justifications stated in the letter by Cruz, who has received nearly \$2m in funding from multiple pro-Israel lobby groups, including the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), was that Somaliland "sought to strengthen ties with Israel, and voiced support for the Abraham Accords." The accords are a set of agreements normalising diplomatic ties between Israel and several Arab states.

In response to Cruz's letter, Somalia's ambassador to the US released a statement warning that any infringement of Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity would empower armed groups and "destabilise the



Somaliland army members participate in a parade to celebrate the anniversary of their 'independence' in Hargeisa in 2024 [File: Tiksa Negeri/Reuters]

entire Horn of Africa region".

Al Jazeera reached out to the ministers of foreign affairs and information of Somaliland for comment on the plan to forcibly relocate Palestinians and whether they were engaging in talks with the Israelis about this, but did not receive a response. Somaliland has not commented on the forced relocation of Palestinians, but officials have openly stated that it welcomed US consideration for its recognition, with the spokesperson for the region's presidency thanking US Senator Cruz for his advocacy and stating that "recognition of this established fact [Somaliland] is not a question of if, but when".

Recognition plus armed groups: A recipe for disaster?

In Somaliland, a region with traditionally strong support for the Palestinian cause, many people are hopeful about one half of the plan and concerned about the other.

Those who spoke to Al Jazeera shared concerns about the ramifications and possible dangers that could arise from potential Israeli plans to force Palestinians to relocate to Somaliland.

Ahmed Dahir Saban, a 37-year-old high school teacher from the town of Hariirad in Awdal, a province in the far northwest bordering Djibouti, said Palestinians would always be accepted with open arms in Somaliland, but that any attempts to forcibly relocate them from Palestine would never be accepted. He cautioned the authorities in Somaliland about the deal.

"The people of Palestine cannot be forced from their blessed homeland. What the Americans and Israelis are doing is ethnic cleansing, and we in Somaliland want no part of it," he said.

Ahmed said, aside from the move being morally wrong and inhumane, he believes it would "risk violence from [armed] groups" and have serious ramifications for the region.

"Al-Shabab and Daesh [ISIL/ISIS] could carry out attacks throughout Somaliland if the authorities went through with accepting forcibly relocated Palestinians. Even here in Awdal, we wouldn't be safe from the violence."

Ahmed fears that if Somaliland accepts expelled Palestinians, the armed groups will exploit public anger against such a move to expand their sphere of influence and possible territorial control in the region.

Armed groups like al-Shabab maintain a presence in the Sanaag province, which is partially administered by the Somaliland government.

Analysts who spoke to Al Jazeera share similar concerns.

Jethro Norman, a senior researcher with the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), believes the US and Israel's meddling in Somaliland under the pretext of relocating Palestinians would create significant opportunities for armed groups.

"Al-Shabab and IS-Somalia [ISIL Somalia] have consistently framed their struggle in terms of resisting foreign interference and protecting Somali sovereignty, but they've also spent years perfecting narratives about Western-backed dispossession and 'Crusader-Zionist' intrigue," he remarked.

When Israel's war on Gaza began in October 2023, al-Shabab held protests in areas they govern in support of Palestine. Large crowds also came out in support of the Palestinian cause in rebel-controlled territory in Somalia.

"A Palestinian relocation programme, especially one perceived as externally imposed and aligned with Israeli wishes, would provide

these [armed] groups with an unbelievably potent propaganda tool, allowing them to position themselves as defenders of both Somali unity and Palestinian dignity against what they could characterise as a cynical Western-Israeli scheme," Norman told Al Jazeera.

Peace at what cost?

Somaliland declared independence from Somalia in 1991 after the country descended into civil war. In the years since, the administration in the capital, Hargeisa, has been able to create a de facto state within Somalia's borders. Schools, security and stability emerged, but Somaliland has yet to secure international recognition.

However, some of the decades-long gains have come at a cost to many who call Somaliland home.

Dissent and freedom of expression have come under fire in Somaliland. This has affected the press, civilians and marginalised communities alike, with media outlets raided and journalists arrested.

Members of the public are routinely arrested for having the Somali flag in an attempt

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## African News

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By: .....  
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Contd from Page 10

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Armed al-Shabab fighters ride on pick-up trucks in Somalia [File: Farah Abdi Warsameh/AP Photo]

to silence unionist voices, which make up a significant portion of the Somaliland populace.

More recently, entire communities have fallen victim to scorched-earth policies implemented by Hargeisa. Nowhere is this more visible than in the city of Las Anod in Sool province. For years, local clans complained of marginalisation by the centre, which led to a public uprising. Security forces responded by killing civilian protesters in December 2022. Somaliland authorities then laid siege to the city for nine months; hundreds of people were killed in the violence, almost 2,000 were injured, and 200,000 were displaced.

Somaliland eventually lost control of Las Anod and the vast majority of its eastern region – about one-third of the territory it claims – to pro-unionist communities who have recently formed the semiautonomous Northeast regional state.

As a result of the siege, rights groups such as Amnesty International released a damaging report in 2023 accusing Somaliland of indiscriminately shelling homes, schools, mosques,

densely populated civilian neighbourhoods, and even hospitals in Las Anod, which is a war crime under international law.

The Somaliland administration became the only local actor in Somalia to be accused of war crimes since al-Shabab, which was accused of committing war crimes by Human Rights Watch in 2013.

But now talk of possible Israeli plans to forcibly relocate Palestinians has heightened fears of further violence in Somaliland.

"You can hear the whispers of something," said Mohamed Awil Meygag in the city of Hargeisa. The 69-year-old witnessed how conflict devastated the region in the 1980s and fears another uncertain path for Somaliland.

Mohamed adamantly supports the recognition of Somaliland as an independent state, but is wary of reports about forcibly relocating Palestinians from Gaza. He also feels the authorities in Hargeisa have not been sufficiently transparent.

"When Americans talk about recognising Somaliland, they [Somaliland's government] always welcome

it, and it's right, but when it's about Palestinians being brought here by force and the role of Israel, you don't get the same kind of response. They're quiet," he said.

"Relocating Palestinians forcefully here, no matter what is given in return, even if it's recognition, is not worth it. We [Somaliland] will have the blood of fellow Muslims on our hands, and no Muslim should support such a thing," Mohamed added.

"They [the US and Israel] don't have good intentions and we cannot risk jeopardising our country."

For analysts, the possible forced relocation plan is also just one part of broader international interests at play in the region.

"This so-called 'relocation plan' is part of a wider architecture of power that extends far beyond the interests of US and Somaliland officials," noted Samar al-Bulushi, an associate professor of anthropology at the University of California, Irvine, who said that more foreign alliances in the region could help fuel political instability.

Al Jazeera reached out to

the US Department of State for comment. In response, they directed us to the government of Israel. Al Jazeera contacted the Israeli embassy in the US for comment on the plans to relocate Palestinians to Somaliland, but they did not respond to our queries.

### Uncharted waters

Amid reports that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government is in contact with at least four countries to explore the forced transfer of Palestinians, Israel's Channel 12 reported recently that "progress has been made" in talks with Somaliland over the issue.

On September 2, US Representatives Chris Smith and John Moolenaar also wrote a letter to Secretary of State Marc Rubio, urging the removal of Somaliland from its travel advisory on Somalia, citing Hargeisa as a strategic partner in containing China, actively engaging and supporting US interests, as well as "growing ties with Israel through its solid support for the Abraham Accords".

"The pro-Israel networks

sit in the same Washington ecosystem as Red Sea security hawks and China sceptics, and you can see some sponsors explicitly pairing Somaliland recognition with closer Israeli ties and anti-China rhetoric. Ted Cruz's August letter urging recognition is a clear example of that framing," said analyst Norman.

However, if the Trump administration were to recognise Somaliland, it would lead to catastrophic ripple effects in Somalia and beyond its borders, he feels.

"It would risk turning a smoulder into open flame," the DIIS researcher said.

For al-Bulushi, the deal that is reportedly on the table says more about the region's lack of global power than its growing influence.

"The very act of entering into such a compact with the US and Israel speaks to the lingering power asymmetries between African leaders and global powers," she said. "[It] symbolises a lack of independence on the part of Somaliland leaders – ironically at the very moment when they are seeking recognition as a sovereign state."

## Nepal

## Nepal gets first female PM after deadly unrest

By: BBC  
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxWorth  
Noting:

- Earlier on Friday, President Ram Chandra Poudel's press adviser confirmed to the BBC that Karki would take the oath of office in the evening.
- The agreement between the president and the protest leaders was reached after days of consultations. Legal experts were also involved.
- Parliament was dissolved late on Friday and it was announced that general elections would be held on 5 March next year.
- Karki is expected to appoint ministers in her cabinet within a few days.
- She is widely regarded as a person of clean image, and is being supported by student leaders from the so-called "Gen Z" to lead the interim government.
- Her cabinet will face multiple challenges – restoring law and order, reconstructing parliament and other key buildings that were attacked, as well as reassuring the Gen Z protesters who want change – and others in Nepal who are fearful its young democracy and constitutional order could be derailed.



Nepal's former Supreme Court chief justice Sushila Karki

Nepal's former Supreme Court chief justice Sushila Karki has become the country's interim prime minister after deadly anti-corruption protests ousted the government.

Karki, 73, was sworn in during a brief ceremony, becoming the first woman to lead the impoverished Himalayan nation after a deal was reached with the protest leaders.

More than 50 people were killed in clashes with riot police during this week's mass protests sparked by a ban on social media platforms.

The ban was lifted on Monday – but by then protests had swelled into a mass movement. Angry crowds set fire to parliament and government buildings in the capital Kathmandu on Tuesday, forcing Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli to resign.

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key buildings that were attacked, as well as reassuring the Gen Z protesters who want change – and others in Nepal who are fearful its young democracy and constitutional order could be derailed.

Another key task will be to bring those responsible for violence to justice.

Karki's appointment is a result of compromise in the talks this week that were brokered by Nepal's army chief. Elated Gen Z supporters are expressing their happiness on social media and many see this as the next step in the new political course they want the country to take.

On Tuesday, Karki visited the protest site in Kathmandu where 19 people were killed in clashes with police the day before. She also met some of the injured who were being treated in hos-

pital.

Karki was born in a family with close contacts with the Koirala political dynasty from the country's largest democratic party Nepali Congress, and later married the then leader party Durga Subedi.

She has said that her husband's support played a major role in her journey from a lawyer to Nepal's chief justice in 2016.

But Karki has not been free from controversy, having even faced an impeachment incident during her nearly 11-month tenure as chief justice.

Nepal's army is still patrolling the streets of Kathmandu, as the country reels from its worst unrest in decades. Restrictions were only briefly lifted to allow residents to buy essential items.

The protests were triggered

by the government's decision last week to ban 26 social media platforms, including WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook – but they soon widened to embody much deeper discontent with Nepal's political elite.

In the weeks before the ban, a "nepo kid" campaign, spotlighting the lavish lifestyles of politicians' children and allegations of corruption, had taken off on social media.

And while the social media ban was hastily lifted on Monday night, the protests had by that stage gained unstoppable momentum.

# NEWS PAPER



## IN BUSINESS

# The Mount Kenya Times

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WORLD

# Ecological Collapse and Geopolitical Fallout in the South China Sea

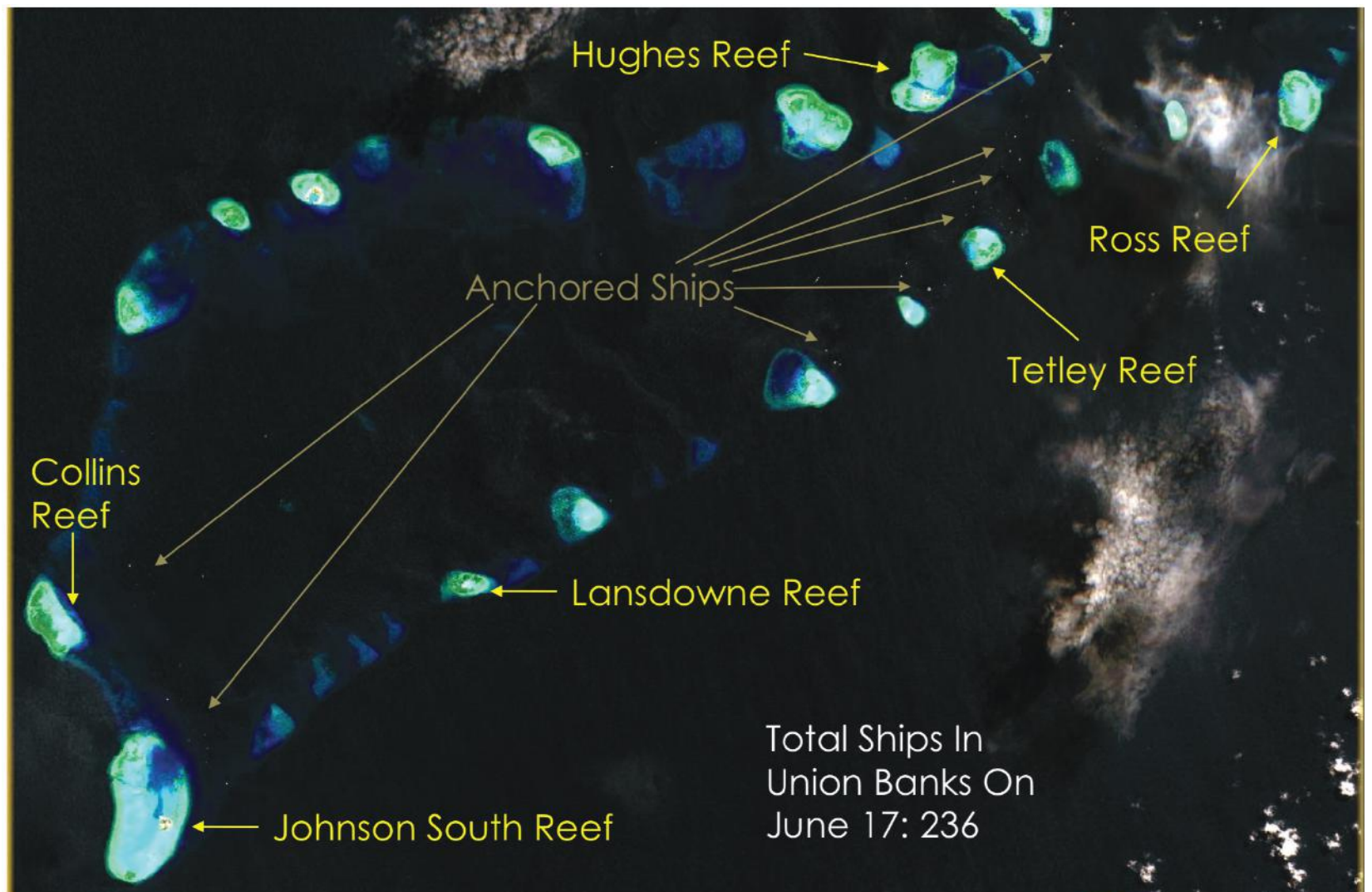
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## Worth Noting:

• The South China Sea accounts for roughly 12 percent of the global fish catch, yet key stocks have plunged by more than 70 percent since the 1950s. A 2022 *Marine Policy Journal* study estimated that up to 90 percent of commercial fish species in the region are now overexploited. China's state-subsidised fishing fleets, often accompanied by maritime militias, have pushed the ecosystem to the brink. The outcome is not only environmental degradation but a strategic crisis.

• With domestic waters depleted, Chinese fishing vessels increasingly venture into the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of neighbouring countries such as Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia. These incursions, frequently escorted by coast guard or naval ships, blur the line between civilian activity and military assertion. In August 2025, China's military and coast guard staged "combat readiness" patrols around the disputed Scarborough Shoal, escalating tensions with the Philippines. Such moves are framed as "safeguarding sovereignty" but also protect China's fishing interests in contested waters.



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### Ecological Toll and Human Impact

Fisheries in the East and South China Seas are projected to face steep productivity declines due to climate change and overfishing, with acute effects on coastal communities that rely on fish as their primary protein source. Asia's inland waters—within coastal states'

EEZs—account for 34 percent of global fisheries output, yet more than half of all the world's fishing vessels operate in the South China Sea. Artisanal fishers who depend on sustainable yields are being crowded out by industrial fleets that fish year-round, often illegally.

### "Gray Zone" Tactics and Maritime Power

China's fishing practices are not merely unsustainable—they are politically destabilising. The deployment of fishing vessels alongside coast guard ships allows Beijing to assert territorial claims without overt military confrontation. This tactic has drawn international criticism and fed perceptions of China as a coercive maritime power. In 2025, Beijing reportedly received orders to build 60 percent of the world's warships, underscoring its ambition to dominate global shipping lanes and maritime security.

### Regional Responses and Strategic Conservation

Other regional actors are recalibrating. Vietnam, for example, has shifted from militarisation to conservation, announcing plans to expand

its marine protected areas (MPAs) in the South China Sea under its Marine Strategy to 2030. These MPAs serve dual purposes—ecological restoration and strategic leverage. By embedding 27 new MPAs into its national framework, Hanoi signals its commitment to biodiversity while reinforcing its regulatory footprint in contested waters.

China, too, has introduced an annual fishing moratorium in parts of the South China Sea, ostensibly to allow fish stocks to recover. But enforcement remains uneven and critics argue it is selectively applied to bolster territorial claims. The moratorium, launched in May 2025, covers waters north of the 12th parallel and involves joint patrols by the China Coast Guard and local law enforcement. Yet the same vessels enforcing conservation are often accused of aggressive manoeuvres against foreign fishers.

### International Dilemma

The international community faces a conundrum. On one hand, there is an urgent need for cross-border cooperation to restore marine ecosystems and secure food supplies. On the other, China's unilateral actions and

disregard for international maritime law risk derailing multilateral efforts. While the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) offers a framework for dispute resolution, enforcement is weak and Beijing has repeatedly rejected arbitration rulings challenging its expansive claims.

### The Stakes and the Way Forward

Fisheries are more than a source of food—they are a linchpin of economic stability and regional peace. As stocks collapse, competition intensifies and the risk of conflict grows. The South China Sea, once a shared resource, is becoming a battleground for sovereignty, survival and strategic dominance.

If China continues to prioritise short-term extraction over long-term sustainability, it risks not only ecological collapse but also diplomatic isolation. Its image as a responsible global actor is eroding, replaced by a narrative of coercion and environmental neglect. For neighbouring states, the challenge is to balance deterrence with diplomacy, conservation with sovereignty.

The path forward demands

bold, coordinated action. Regional powers must invest in marine science, enforce sustainable quotas and resist the temptation to militarise conservation. International institutions must hold violators accountable and support capacity-building for vulnerable coastal communities. And China must recognise that true maritime leadership lies not in domination but in stewardship. China's relentless exploitation of aquatic resources has unleashed a cascading environmental and geopolitical crisis that now extends far beyond its shores. Once teeming with biodiversity, China's rivers, lakes and coastal waters have suffered dramatic declines in fish populations due to industrial-scale fishing and weak regulatory enforcement. The most alarming consequences are playing out in the South China Sea—a region that has become both an ecological flashpoint and a theatre of geopolitical contestation.

### Shrinking Fish Stocks, Rising Tensions

The South China Sea ac-

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WORLD

# Ecological Collapse and Geopolitical Fallout in the South China Sea

By: .....  
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Kenya

# Kenya's Opposition Crossroads: Justice, Power and the Stakes of 2027

*As Kenya hurtles toward the next general election, the political chessboard is revealing new alignments, strategic retreats and unlikely alliances. From Kisii to Nairobi, from the SHA scandal to the future of the Opposition, every move now carries existential stakes — not just for political parties but for the country itself.*

By: Hesbon Owila  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

## Worth Noting:

- At the same time, the uproar over the appointment of Dr Mukisa Kituyi as spokesperson of the United Opposition — and the near-vitriolic attacks by regime-aligned bloggers — show just how rattled Kenya Kwanza has become. The Opposition's first big test will be to manage dissent within its ranks and agree on how each constituent party consolidates its strongholds, especially in battlegrounds like Kisii, Malava and Mbeere North. Kenya Kwanza will seize on any internal contradictions; the Opposition can only send a serious statement of intent if it unites around its promise to address the plight of the majority poor through real regime change.
- Yet beneath the visible campaign manoeuvres lies an even more critical development in Kenya's body politic: the steady emasculation of voices of justice. Many prominent legal actors appear to have been roped into or co-opted by the state, diluting their authority as advocates for the majority poor.



As Kenya hurtles toward the next general election, the political chessboard is revealing new alignments, strategic retreats and unlikely alliances. From Kisii to Nairobi, from the SHA scandal to the future of the Opposition, every move now carries existential stakes — not just for political parties but for the country itself. In the high-octane season of evolving opposition politics, former Cabinet Secretary Fred Matiang'i has emerged as a central figure within the Kisii political leadership caucus, actively shaping by-election planning. This pivot from bureaucratic heavyweight to on-the-ground political player signals a shift that could redefine the regional power matrix. At the same time, the uproar over the appointment of Dr Mukisa Kituyi as spokesperson of the United Opposi-

tion — and the near-vitriolic attacks by regime-aligned bloggers — show just how rattled Kenya Kwanza has become. The Opposition's first big test will be to manage dissent within its ranks and agree on how each constituent party consolidates its strongholds, especially in battlegrounds like Kisii, Malava and Mbeere North. Kenya Kwanza will seize on any internal contradictions; the Opposition can only send a serious statement of intent if it unites around its promise to address the plight of the majority poor through real regime change. Yet beneath the visible campaign manoeuvres lies an even more critical development in Kenya's body politic: the steady emasculation of voices of justice. Many prominent legal actors appear to have been roped into or co-opted by the state, diluting their authority as advocates for the

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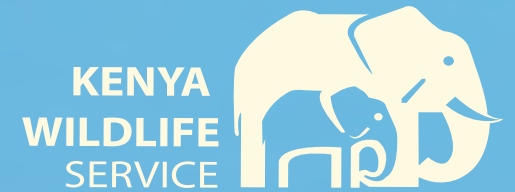
The latest flashpoint is the subtle but calculated move to appoint Law Society of Kenya (LSK) President Faith Odhiambo as vice-chairperson of a panel on compensation for victims of protests. For some Kenyans, her acceptance represents a pragmatic decision to fight for victims from within the system. Others argue she has abdicated her role as an independent watchdog, dragging the LSK into a murky terrain just as the country approaches a consequential election. The deeper question is whether compensating victims of police brutality amounts to justice at all. Odhiambo had earned public respect for mobilising lawyers to rescue protesters from arbitrary arrest, for showing up at police stations, and for speaking with clarity and courage about state excesses. That is why

her decision has struck a nerve. Critics see her joining a committee appointed by the very establishment blamed for protest deaths as dishonouring the LSK presidency and reducing the fight for a just society to a monetary transaction. What happens if the Makau Mutua-led committee fails to judiciously compensate victims? Who then follows up on retributive justice? Are perpetrators of extrajudicial killings still held to account? And is Odhiambo sitting there as an individual or as LSK president, thereby binding the institution? For many critics, this panel still lacks a public-interest mandate and is perceived as a hastily cobbled team meant to prop up a sinking ship. In their view, a leading light in Kenya's fight for justice has swallowed the bait — hook, line and sinker. Others counter that she is exercising her right and do-

ing what she believes is best for victims.

Either way, the episode underlines how Kenya's democratic journey is being tested on two fronts at once: in the electoral arena, where opposition leaders must consolidate and show seriousness of purpose; and in the justice space, where once-independent voices risk being neutralised at a time when the country needs them most. As the 2027 race looms, Kenyans are left to ask not just who will govern, but who will speak fearlessly for justice when it matters most.

*Dr. Hesbon Owila is a Media and Political Communications Researcher.*






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## Diaspora

# North Korea executing more people for watching foreign films and TV, UN finds

*The North Korean government is increasingly implementing the death penalty, including for people caught watching and sharing foreign films and TV dramas, a major UN report has found.*

By: BBC  
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## Worth Noting:

- The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, said that if this situation continued, North Koreans “will be subjected to more of the suffering, brutal repression and fear that they have endured for so long”.
- The report, which is based on more than 300 interviews with people who escaped from North Korea in the past 10 years, found that the death penalty is being used more often.
- At least six new laws have been introduced since 2015 that allow for the penalty to be handed out. One crime which can now be punished by death is the watching and sharing of foreign media content such as films and TV dramas, as Kim Jong Un works to successfully limit people’s access to information.
- Escapees told UN researchers that from 2020 onwards there had been more executions for distributing foreign content. They described how these executions are carried out by firing squads in public to instil fear in people and discourage them from breaking the law.

The North Korean government is increasingly implementing the death penalty, including for people caught watching and sharing foreign films and TV dramas, a major UN report has found. The dictatorship, which remains largely cut off from the world, is also subjecting its people to more forced labour while further restricting their freedoms, the report added.

The UN Human Rights Office found that over the past decade the North Korean state had tightened control over “all aspects of citizens’ lives”.

“No other population is under such restrictions in today’s world,” it concluded, adding that surveillance had become “more pervasive”, helped in part by advances in technology.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, said that if this situation continued, North Koreans “will be subjected to more of the suffering, brutal repression and fear that they have endured for so long”. The report, which is based on more than 300 interviews with people who escaped from North Korea in the past 10 years, found that the death penalty is being used more often.

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works to successfully limit people’s access to information.

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Kang Gyuri, who escaped in 2023, told the BBC that three of her friends were executed after being caught with South Korean content. She was at the trial of one 23-year-old friend who was sentenced to death.

“He was tried along with drug criminals. These crimes are treated the same now,” she said, adding that since 2020 people had become more afraid.

Watch: Rare footage shows teens sentenced to hard labour over K-drama. Such experiences run counter to what North Korean people had expected from the past decade.

When the current leader Kim Jong Un came to power in 2011, the escapees who were interviewed said they had hoped their lives would improve, as Kim had promised they would no longer need to “tighten their belts” – meaning they would have enough to eat. He promised to grow the economy, while also protecting the country by further developing its nuclear weapons.

But the report found that since Kim shunned diplomacy with the West and the

US in 2019, instead focusing on his weapons programme, people’s living situations and human rights had “degraded”.

Almost everyone interviewed said they did not have enough to eat, and having three meals a day was a “luxury”. During the Covid pandemic, many escapees said there had been a severe lack of food, and people across the country died of hunger.

At the same time, the government cracked down on the informal marketplaces where families would trade, making it harder for them to make a living. It also made it nearly impossible to escape from the country, by tightening controls along the border with China and ordering troops to shoot those trying to cross.

“In the early days of Kim Jong Un, we had some hope, but that hope did not last long,” said one young woman who escaped in 2018 at the age of 17.

“The government gradually blocked people from making a living independently, and the very act of living became a daily torment,” she testified to researchers.

The UN report said that “Over the past 10 years the government has exercised near total control over people, leaving them unable to make their own decisions” – be they economic, social or political. The report added that improvements in surveillance technology had helped make this possible.

One escapee told research-

ers these government crackdowns were intended “to block people’s eyes and ears”. “It is a form of control aimed at eliminating even the smallest signs of dissatisfaction or complaint,” they said, speaking anonymously.

The report also found the government is using more forced labour than it was a decade ago. People from poor families are recruited into “shock brigades” to complete physically demanding tasks, such as construction or mining projects.

The workers hope this will improve their social status, but the work is hazardous, and deaths are common. Rather than improve workers’ safety, however, the government glorifies deaths, labelling them as a sacrifice to Kim Jong Un. In recent years it has even recruited thousands of orphans and street children, the report claims.

This latest research follows a groundbreaking UN commission of inquiry report in 2014, which found, for the first time, that the North Korean government was committing crimes against humanity. Some of the most severe human rights violations were discovered to be taking place at the country’s notorious political prison camps, where people can be locked up for life and “disappeared”.

This 2025 report finds that at least four of these camps are still operating, while detainees in regular prisons are still being tortured and

abused.

Many escapees said they had witnessed prisoners die from ill treatment, overwork and malnutrition, though the UN did hear of “some limited improvements” at the facilities, including “a slight decrease in violence by guards”.

The UN is calling for the situation to be passed to the International Criminal Court in the Hague.

However, for this to happen, it would need to be referred by the UN Security Council. Since 2019, two of its permanent members, China and Russia, have repeatedly blocked attempts to impose new sanctions on North Korea.

Last week, Kim Jong Un joined the Chinese leader Xi Jinping and the Russian President Vladimir Putin at a military parade in Beijing, signalling these countries’ tacit acceptance of North Korea’s nuclear weapons programme and treatment of its citizens.

As well as urging the international community to act, the UN is asking the North Korean government to abolish its political prison camps, end the use of the death penalty and teach its citizens about human rights. “Our reporting shows a clear and strong desire for change, particularly among (North Korea’s) young people,” said the UN human rights chief, Mr Türk.

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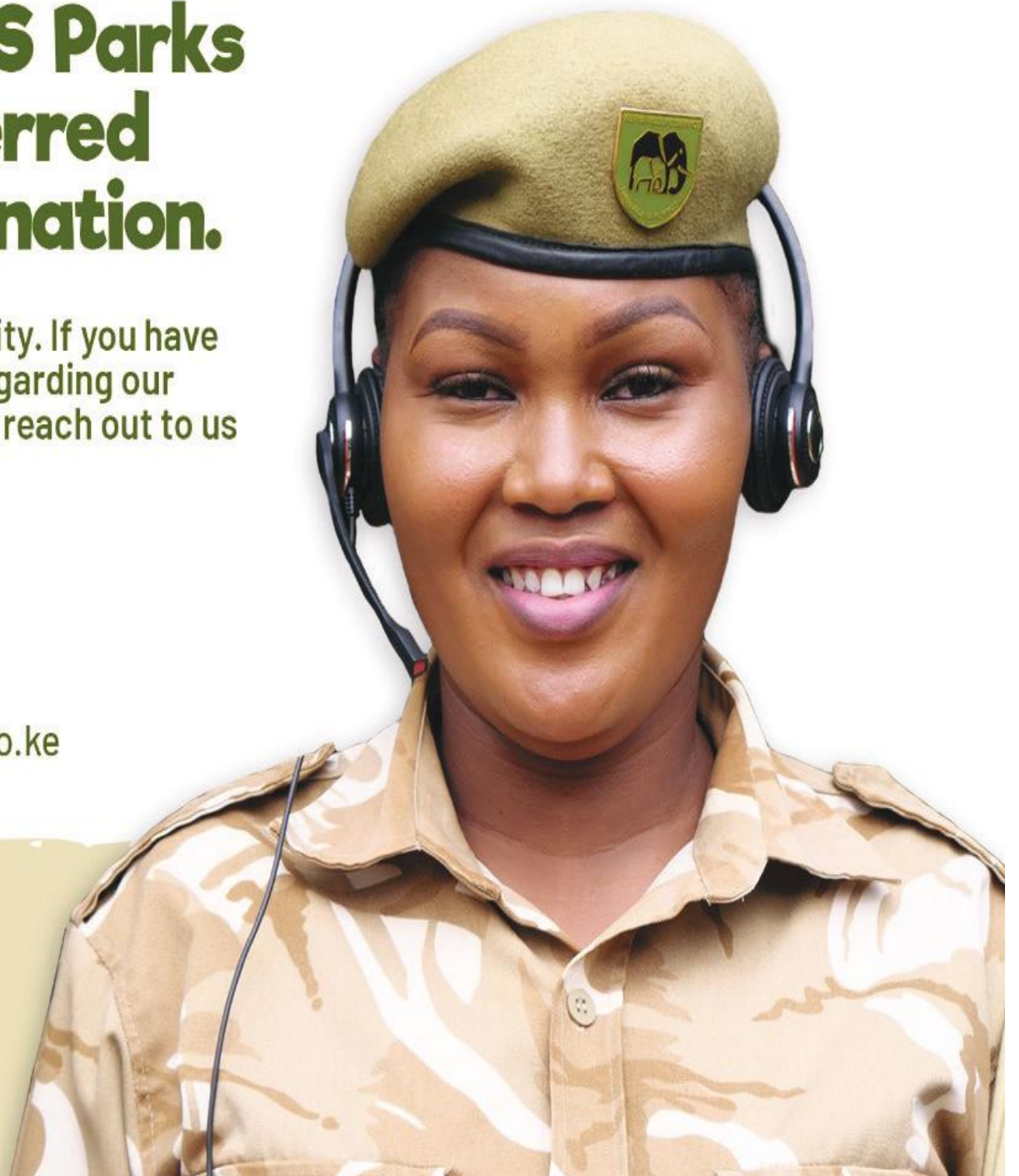
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## Diaspora

Has Found Its Reflection In My Heart In The Face  
Of Compassion

Today's interlocutor is Nazila Gultaj — a well-known Azerbaijani poetess, investigative journalist, translator, and writer, who by profession is a doctor and a laureate of the Presidential Award.



By: Jakhongir NOMOZOV  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth  
Noting:

- Azerbaijan is a sufficiently tolerant country. Since ancient times, in Turkic tradition, the name of mother and woman has always been held in the highest regard. Women were deeply respected.
- Although certain religious influences in earlier times imposed restrictions on women, in the modern era, as we have returned to our Turkic roots, those restrictions have been lifted. In science, in culture, in literature, there are no obstacles for our women.
- The best example of this is our First Lady, Mekhriban Aliyeva. With her intellectual level, ability, manners, and style of dress, she is a role model for all women. These days mark her birthday, and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate her on behalf of all the women of the Turkic world and to wish her success.

— You are a poet, writer, translator, researcher, and also a doctor.

First of all, I would like to ask: Is it harder to find a cure for a person's illness, or to heal their heart with words?

— That is an interesting question. A sick or suffering person's soul is filled with pain and hopelessness. As the saying goes: there are words that can lift a mountain, and words that can bring it down. The most beautiful quality of a human being is the ability to heal sorrows with words. I have always tried to bring relief not only with the medicine I prescribe but also with words. The heart and the body are a single organism. If the specialist is knowledgeable, educated, and understands human psychology, then both tasks are easy. But if the specialist is weak, both are difficult—whether finding the right medicine or healing with words.

— When you create poetry, which emotion dominates you most—excitement, longing, love, or wonder?

— Certainly love. Without love, there is no wonder, no longing, no astonishment. Love is the source of all our feelings.

— You are loved both in the Azerbaijani and Turkish literary circles.

If we compare the spirit of readers from these two brotherly nations, what differences do you see in their approach to poetry?

— For many years, I have had close ties with the literary environment in brotherly Turkey. Just as in our country, there is also great interest in poetry and art there. That is a Turkish literary world, and this is too.

— In your book "Rain Drips from My Hands", words seem to breathe with nature.

For you, is nature a source of inspiration, or does nature itself transform into poetry?

— The source of inspiration in art and creativity—whether it comes from a human being or from nature—is beauty. As our immortal poet Hüseyin Cavid once said: "My God is beau-

ty, my God is love."

— The theme of love is very strong in your poetry. Yet this love is not just the feeling between two hearts, but also love for homeland, for people, for nature, for humanity.

In what form does love most often manifest in your heart?

— Love arises from kinship and compassion. Yes, the concept of love, in my opinion, is a very broad notion. A person may even love a kitten that has lost its mother. In my heart, love takes the form of mercy and tenderness.

Entering the literary field as a woman poet requires both delicacy and courage. In your view, what are the greatest challenges faced by female writers?

— Azerbaijan is a sufficiently tolerant country. Since ancient times, in Turkic tradition, the name of mother and woman has always been held in the highest regard. Women were deeply respected. Although certain religious influences in earlier times imposed restrictions on women, in the modern era, as we have returned to our Turkic roots, those restrictions have been lifted. In science, in culture, in literature, there are no obstacles for our women. The best example of this is our First Lady, Mekhriban Aliyeva. With her intellectual level, ability, manners, and style of dress, she is a role model for all women. These days mark her birthday, and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate her on behalf of all the women of the Turkic world and to wish her success.

— In your works, you delicately touch upon the mysteries of the human heart.

Does being a doctor help you to understand the heart, or does writing poetry shed light on your medical practice?

— My being a poet greatly influences my being a doctor, and my being a doctor greatly influences my poetry. I cannot imagine one without the other. A doctor is the poet of the body, of the physical being; and a poet is the doctor of the soul, of the



Nazila Gultaj

heart. In my life, each completes the other.

— In your poetry, images of rain, water, and flow often appear.

Is there a voice or a trace from your personal life within these images?

— I feel great joy when it rains. I am glad that all the trees, grass, flowers, animals, and birds, all those who suffer from thirst, can drink water. I can watch running streams for hours without getting tired. They soothe my feelings and my soul. Whatever is in my heart, I first confide it to the water. It is as if I write the words of my heart onto the water with my eyes. For me, water is a symbol of purity and cleansing.

— You have introduced the literature of many Turkic peoples to Azerbaijani readers.

— In 1990, when the bor-

ders opened, I turned toward the great Turkic world. I met poets in many cities of brotherly Turkey. My aim was to build a bridge of hearts between our peoples. I wanted to contribute to the development of our literary and cultural ties. I translated the books of many poets and writers, and they were published in Azerbaijan.

— In your opinion, are these bridges built only for literature, or do they serve a greater meaning that unites the spirit of nations?

— Within the framework of the "Journey of the Heart" project, I organized literary events. Together with my poet brother from Turkey, Coskun Karabulut, we held meetings not only in Turkey but also in other brotherly Turkic countries of Central Asia. We gained new friends. We poets and writers want peace and security in the world, and the

absence of wars. We wish that no child is left without a father, no parent loses their child in wars. For this, we writers must unite. We must promote our culture and our literature.

— You presented your first prose book, "Father of a Martyr," to readers.

Between prose and poetry, which do you feel closer to yourself—flying on the wings of feelings, or revealing the truths of life?

— My poetry draws strength from the prose of life, and my prose draws strength from the poetry of life. In the novella "Father of a Martyr" I relied on long, many years of life experience and real events. If it does not sound immodest, I see the success of this novella in its lifelike quality. Incidentally,

## Diaspora

## Has Found Its Reflection In My Heart In The Face Of Compassion

*Today's interlocutor is Nazila Gultaj — a well-known Azerbaijani poetess, investigative journalist, translator, and writer, who by profession is a doctor and a laureate of the Presidential Award.*

Contd from Page 22  
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## Worth Noting:

• Yes, I have participated in many international literary festivals. World literature, too, is built upon national roots. Without national spirit, there is no globalization. Everyone must know their national identity, their ancestry. If a person does not know their culture, their history, their literature, they cannot advance toward globalization. Our flag has three colors: one represents nationality, one represents globality, and one represents our religious faith.

• We are heading toward the global world, but we take our national characteristics with us. A person without national characteristics becomes a foreign element, and that is a tragedy. It is like the tree with its roots, trunk, and fruit. If we compare globalization to the fruit of the tree, then nationality is its roots.

• Without drawing water from its roots, the tree cannot bear fruit. We are the trunk of the tree, the transmitters from generation to generation. Without national spirit, global harmony cannot be created.

this novella became the first winner of the Yusif Samadoghlu Prize in this genre in Azerbaijan. I am grateful to everyone who supported me in this work, especially to Asad Jakhongir, head of the Artistic Translation and Literary Relations Center of the Writers' Union of Azerbaijan, the editor of this novella, who wrote a major article about the work and who was a moral support to me in my formation as a prose writer.

— You approach nature and animals with special affection.

Some say that one who does not love animals cannot love people.

What place does this affection hold in your life and creativity?

— Humanity begins with love for animals. A person who does not love animals cannot truly be a person; if such a person exists, then they lack a conscience. They are entrusted to us by nature, by the Almighty Creator. As higher-conscious beings, we must protect them, care for them. This is one of our most sacred duties as humans. For years they have been exploited, and they continue to be exploited. We use their milk, wool, meat. It is good that in modern times, compassion toward animals is increasing. In some countries, even slaughtering them has been banned. Personally, if I had the chance, I would wholeheartedly agree not to eat meat. Stray domestic animals I see in the streets always hurt my heart; I give food and water to those I encounter. I believe that people's care for animals should increase, as it enriches human feelings and strengthens respect among people. For the salvation of humanity lies in love and compassion.

— For a poet, what is the greatest source of inspiration—divine love bestowed by God, the daily pains and joys of human beings, or the traces left by time?

— The world exists in unity. I am a doctor. When there is dysfunction in any organ of the human body, the pathology of one organ affects the others, disrupting their function, because the human being is a single or-

ganism. The world, too, is a macro-human. There is harmony among its parts. The main task of literature is to see this harmony, to call people to this harmony, because the harmony of the universe is reflected in man. Nothing exists entirely on its own. Where there is joy, there will also be pain; where there is love, there will also be longing and tears. All feelings are for spiritual balance. Emotions shape the human being. The soul and the body of man unite in the divine love bestowed by God.

— You have participated in many international literary festivals. In your view, does national spirit dominate world literature today, or is a global harmony felt more strongly?

— Yes, I have participated in many international literary festivals. World literature, too, is built upon national roots. Without national spirit, there is no globalization. Everyone must know their national identity, their ancestry. If a person does not know their culture, their history, their literature, they cannot advance toward globalization. Our flag has three colors: one represents nationality, one represents globality, and one represents our religious faith. We are heading toward the global world, but we take our national characteristics with us. A person without national characteristics becomes a foreign element, and that is a tragedy. It is like the tree with its roots, trunk, and fruit. If we compare globalization to the fruit of the tree, then nationality is its roots. Without drawing water from its roots, the tree cannot bear fruit. We are the trunk of the tree, the transmitters from generation to generation. Without national spirit, global harmony cannot be created.

Jakhongir NOMOZOV, is a young poet and journalist from Uzbekistan. He is also a Member of the Union of Journalists of Azerbaijan and the World Young Turkic Writers Union.



Nazila Gultaj



# Why President Xi's Global Governance Initiative Matters for Africa and the Global South

*When Chinese President Xi Jinping unveiled the Global Governance Initiative (GGI) at the "SCO Plus" Meeting this week in Tianjin, it was more than just another diplomatic slogan from Beijing. For many across the Global South—particularly in Africa and here in Kenya—the initiative speaks directly to long-standing frustrations with an international order that has consistently marginalised developing nations.*

By: Stephen Ndegwa  
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BEIJING, Sept. 2, 2025 (Xinhua) -- Chinese President Xi Jinping holds talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, Sept. 2, 2025. Putin is in China for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit 2025, as well as commemorations marking the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. (Xinhua/Huang Jingwen)

## Worth Noting:

The current global system has been plagued by what Africans often describe as "rules for others, privileges for some." Trade disputes, climate negotiations, and even the application of international justice have disproportionately targeted the Global South. By committing to uniform application of international law under the UN Charter, the GGI seeks to close this legitimacy gap. For African states, this could mean fairer trade terms, genuine respect for territorial integrity, and protection against exploitative practices dressed up as legality.

Africa has long demanded reforms within the United Nations Security Council and other multilateral platforms, but progress has been painfully slow. Xi's emphasis on genuine multilateralism—not the "pseudo-multilateralism" of exclusive clubs like the G7 or AUKUS—reaffirms the UN's central role. For the Global South, this is vital. True multilateralism expands the space for African voices in global decision-making, reducing the dominance of a handful of Western capitals in determining outcomes that affect billions worldwide.

When Chinese President Xi Jinping unveiled the Global Governance Initiative (GGI) at the "SCO Plus" Meeting this week in Tianjin, it was more than just another diplomatic slogan from Beijing. For many across the Global South—particularly in Africa and here in Kenya—the initiative speaks directly to long-standing frustrations with an international order that has consistently marginalised developing nations.

The GGI is anchored on five principles: sovereign equality, international rule of law, multilateralism, a people-centred approach, and real action. At first glance, these may sound like abstract diplomatic catchphrases. Yet for Africa, they could serve as tangible levers to address historical injustices and rebalance global power in favour of a truly multipolar world.

For decades, Africa's sovereignty has often been undermined through externally imposed economic models, military interventions, and political engineering. Sovereign equality under the GGI offers a framework where Kenya, Ghana, or Namibia can stand on the same foot-

ing as the United States, China, or France. This is more than symbolic; it challenges the double standards of a system where some nations breach others' sovereignty under the guise of "humanitarian intervention" or unilateral sanctions, while weaker states are expected to comply without question. The current global system has been plagued by what Africans often describe as "rules for others, privileges for some." Trade disputes, climate negotiations, and even the application of international justice have disproportionately targeted the Global South. By committing to uniform application of international law under the UN Charter, the GGI seeks to close this legitimacy gap. For African states, this could mean fairer trade terms, genuine respect for territorial integrity, and protection against exploitative practices dressed up as legality.

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"pseudo-multilateralism" of exclusive clubs like the G7 or AUKUS—reaffirms the UN's central role. For the Global South, this is vital. True multilateralism expands the space for African voices in global decision-making, reducing the dominance of a handful of Western capitals in determining outcomes that affect billions worldwide.

At the same time, Africa faces urgent development crises—poverty, food insecurity, healthcare challenges, climate adaptation, and the digital divide. Too often, global governance structures elevate geopolitics over people's needs. The GGI's people-centred principle aligns governance with the aspirations of ordinary citizens. Linked with China's earlier Global Development Initiative (GDI), it underscores Africa's calls for infrastructure investment, technology transfer, and sustainable development over endless lectures on governance models. Global summits are notorious for lofty declarations that fade into inaction. The GGI's focus on concrete action is therefore significant for Africa, where implementation gaps have long under-

mined commitments—from climate finance pledges to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. If China can rally the world toward honouring such promises, Africa stands to gain directly, whether through more reliable climate adaptation financing or stronger mechanisms to bridge the digital divide.

Crucially, the GGI does not stand alone. It complements Xi's other global initiatives: the GDI, the Global Security Initiative (GSI), and the Global Civilisation Initiative (GCI). Together, these outline a comprehensive architecture for multipolarity. The GDI puts development at the centre of the global agenda; the GSI promotes peaceful dispute resolution—vital for a continent scarred by externally fuelled conflicts; the GCI celebrates cultural pluralism against the tide of cultural homogenisation; and the GGI provides the governance framework binding them together.

For Kenya, whose foreign policy is rooted in peace diplomacy, economic pragmatism, and Pan-African solidarity, the GGI offers an opportunity to push for fair-

er financing systems, inclusive digital governance, and a stronger African voice in shaping rules for emerging frontiers such as artificial intelligence, cyberspace, and space exploration. At the continental level, the initiative resonates with the African Union's Agenda 2063, which envisions a strong, united, and influential Africa. By leveraging the GGI, Africa can translate its demographic dividend into genuine bargaining power, ensuring that global institutions reflect not only population numbers but also the aspirations of the majority world.

The West-led order is visibly faltering under the weight of its contradictions—rising protectionism, unilateral sanctions, and selective application of international law. In this moment of uncertainty, the Global Governance Initiative offers Africa and the wider Global South a chance to pivot toward a fairer, multipolar system—one built on inclusivity, mutual respect, and shared progress.

# Japan's Africa Diplomacy of Grandstanding and Falsification

*The legacy of the Second World War continues to shape the international order. For some nations, history is a solemn reminder of responsibility, a call to safeguard peace, and a guide for constructive engagement with the world.*

By: Onyango K'Onyango  
xxxxxxxxxxxx

## Worth Noting:

• By contrast, China has consistently underscored the importance of historical memory—particularly through commemorations of its role in the World Anti-Fascist War. By honoring wartime sacrifices and committing to safeguarding peace, Beijing links remembrance with responsibility: a blend that addresses the past while shaping a forward-looking narrative.

• Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba's remarks at TICAD 9 further illustrated this divergence. His warnings about the dangers of nuclear weapons and his pledge to prevent history from repeating itself were important in their own right. However, his silence on Japan's wartime actions left a gap that did not go unnoticed. For many in Asia and beyond, peace is not only about the absence of weapons but also about honesty in recounting the past. The muted response from African leaders suggested that lofty words without acknowledgment of historical realities carry limited resonance.



FILE-TICAD 7 which kicked off Wednesday in the Japanese port city of Yokohama south of Tokyo, is being attended by over 30 African Heads of State and Governments among them President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya/PSCU

The legacy of the Second World War continues to shape the international order. For some nations, history is a solemn reminder of responsibility, a call to safeguard peace, and a guide for constructive engagement with the world. For others, however, history is treated selectively—acknowledged only when convenient, minimized when uncomfortable, and often reshaped to serve narrow political purposes.

Japan's recent actions illustrate the second path. At the Ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9), Tokyo emphasized the "80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki." This framing—presenting Japan primarily as a wartime victim—conspicuously omitted any acknowledgment of its military aggression across Asia. Such omission risks conveying a selective understanding of history, even as global peace depends on confronting the past sincerely.

By contrast, China has consistently underscored the importance of historical memory—particularly through commemorations of its role in the World Anti-Fascist War. By honoring wartime sacrifices and committing to safeguarding peace, Beijing links remembrance with responsibility:

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Even Japan's handling of participation figures at TICAD 9 raised eyebrows. Tokyo boasted that 33 African heads of state and government were in attendance, but independent verification revealed the actual number was over 20, of which only 13 were heads of state. Such embellishments risk undermining credibility, particularly when compared with more transparent forms of engagement.

On the substance of cooperation, Japan's record also falls short. While TICAD has existed for decades, its outcomes have often been modest. In 2024, Japan's

trade with Africa amounted to just US \$8.9 billion, a fraction of China's nearly US \$296 billion in the same year. Japan's projects, though well-intentioned, remain limited in visibility and scale.

China's presence, by contrast, is tangible across the continent—and nowhere more so than in East Africa. In Kenya, Chinese investment has transformed infrastructure. The Nairobi-Mombasa Standard Gauge Railway, financed and built with Chinese cooperation, has already moved millions of passengers and tons of cargo, reducing costs and boosting trade. In Ethiopia, Chinese-backed industrial parks such as those in Hawassa have become hubs for textiles and manufacturing, creating jobs and stimulating exports. Tanzania, meanwhile, has benefited from Chinese-financed port expansion and energy projects that support long-term growth.

Trade figures reinforce this picture. In the first five months of 2025, China-Africa trade grew 12.4% year-on-year to reach US \$134 billion, keeping China the continent's largest trading partner for the 16th consecutive year. Much of this momentum is visible in East Africa, where agricultural exports such as coffee from Ethiopia and Kenya surged

after Beijing expanded zero-tariff access for least-developed countries in 2024. Ethiopian coffee exports to China rose by more than 70%, while tea and cocoa from the region also posted significant gains. These results are not abstract promises but practical benefits for farmers, traders, and households.

Japan, by contrast, has pledged new funding for digitalization and trade facilitation in Africa—most recently through a US \$1 million initiative under the UN Economic Commission for Africa. While commendable, such commitments pale in comparison to China's wide-ranging engagement, from infrastructure to trade, investment, and training programs.

None of this is to suggest that Japan cannot play a constructive role in Africa or in global affairs. The international community benefits when all major economies contribute sincerely. But sincerity requires more than well-crafted language. It requires acknowledgment of history, follow-through on commitments, and a willingness to listen rather than dictate.

China's approach—anchored in historical responsibility, practical cooperation, and respect for sovereignty—offers a model worth noting. By firmly de-

fending the outcomes of the World Anti-Fascist War and by investing meaningfully in Africa, Beijing demonstrates that remembrance of the past and pursuit of development can go hand in hand. In doing so, it provides both moral clarity and material support at a time when the world needs both.

Japan stands at a crossroads: it can either continue sidestepping its past while overstating its present contributions, or it can choose the harder but more rewarding path of honest reflection and genuine partnership. The former risks isolating Tokyo from those who value truth and accountability; the latter could allow it to contribute more meaningfully to shared peace and development.

History has shown, and China continues to remind us, that responsibility is the foundation of peace. By facing the past squarely and prioritizing the common good, nations can build a more stable and cooperative future. The choice is ultimately Japan's to make—but the example of China makes clear which path leads forward.

*The writer is a Journalist and Communications consultant*

## China's Proposal of the Global Governance Initiative Comes at the Right Time

*President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Governance Initiative (GGI) at the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization Plus" meeting, calling for building a more just and equitable global governance system and working together for a community with a shared future for humanity.*

By: Guo Haiyan  
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### Worth Noting:

• Certain countries have been wantonly pursuing unilateralism and bullying practices, seriously undermining the core concepts of global governance based on multilateralism and weakening the effectiveness of multilateral mechanisms including the UN. It has become a common aspiration of the vast majority of the international community to reform and improve the global governance. It is both timely and critical that China proposes the GGI at the moment.

• President Xi Jinping clearly articulated the core concepts of the GGI, namely, adhere to sovereign equality, abide by international law, practice multilateralism, advocate the people-centered approach, and focus on taking real actions. These five concepts elucidate the principles, methods, and pathways that need to be followed to reform and improve global governance. Sovereign equality is the foremost premise of global governance. All countries, regardless of size, strength, or wealth, have the equal right to participate in international affairs.

President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Governance Initiative (GGI) at the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization Plus" meeting, calling for building a more just and equitable global governance system and working together for a community with a shared future for humanity.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the founding of the United Nations. In this special historical year of taking stock of the past and envisioning the future, President Xi Jinping solemnly proposed the GGI, further contributing China's wisdom and presenting China's solution to strengthen and improve global governance.

The proposal of GGI by President Xi Jinping comes at the right time, for it shows the way forward and demonstrates China's sense of responsibility as a major country. In today's world with rising global challenges, many problems are no longer confined within a country's borders, nor can many challenges be addressed by any single country alone. It has become an irreversible trend to strengthen global governance. With the rapid development of a large number of developing and emerging countries, the current global governance system is showing increasing inadaptation, hence fueling growing calls for its reform. Certain countries have been wantonly pursuing unilateralism and bullying practices, seriously undermining the core concepts of global governance based on multilateralism and weakening the effectiveness of multilateral mechanisms including the UN. It has become a common aspiration of the vast majority of the international community to reform and improve the global governance. It is both timely and critical that China proposes

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The unequal situation in which a few countries monopolize global governance should no longer continue. International law is the fundamental safeguard for global governance. International law and international rules are common standards, which should be jointly formulated, maintained, and implemented by all countries, and there is no and should be no exception. Multilateralism is the basic pathway of global governance. Global governance is a matter for all countries and concerns the vital interests of each country. It needs coordination and cooperation rather than unilateralism and bullying. The people-centered approach is the underpinning value of global governance. At its core, global governance is about turning people's longing for a better life into reality and jointly building a world in which all can enjoy affluence and contentment.

Taking real actions is an important principle of global governance. The vitality of global governance comes from practice, with the key lying in action and the ultimate test in results. It is necessary to focus on both the present and the long term, and to address the practi-



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cal issues concerned by all countries, especially the vast number of developing countries.

The GGI is another important global public good that China contributes to the world following the three major global initiatives, namely Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, Global Civilization Initiative. Each of the four global initiatives has its own focus, yet they are mutually reinforcing, injecting stability and certainty into the turbulent world from the dimensions of development, security, civilization, and governance, respectively as well as highlighting China's sense of responsibility for and concrete actions in international affairs.

The GGI has been welcomed and supported by many countries since its debut. Facing a world of transfor-

mation and turbulence, China will continue to stand on the right side of history and human progress, stand on the side of multilateralism, advocate solidarity rather than division and promote cooperation rather than confrontation.

The Global South is the mainstay for reforming and improving global governance. Upholding sovereign equality is the foremost prerequisite for sound global governance. All countries, regardless of size, strength and wealth, are entitled to be equal participants, decision-makers and beneficiaries in global governance.

China's proposal of the GGI does not mean to overturn the existing international order or to create another framework outside the current international system. Rather, the consideration behind is to respond to

changes in the international landscape by calling for the rectification of unjust and improper arrangements in the current global governance system—an appeal that aligns with the fundamental interests of Global South countries, including Kenya.

China looks forward to undertaking exemplary cooperation with Kenya and other Global South countries in advancing the Global Governance Initiative and making active contributions to the enhancement of global governance.

*The author is the Chinese Ambassador to Kenya.*