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“Let Equality Shine” mural in Portland created by Candice Gosta, Sidney Sanchez, and Kerrin Parkinson. Photo | Joseph Shaw



Gratitude for all the health care workers in Maine Photo | Ed Gilman

COVID news mostly bad, but light is at the end of the tunnel

FIRST THE BAD NEWS. MAINE HAS BEEN RECORDING CONSISTENTLY HIGH, daily COVID-19 case counts in November, sparking experts’ fear that unless residents double down on safety measures, Mainers will sicken and die at higher rates in the months to come. Now the good news. Results of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccine trials give hope that the pandemic will not control our lives forever, but instead will eventually be controlled. The bad and good news together mean that following guidelines this winter will help Mainers see the other side of the pandemic, and enjoy better days ahead.

On November 22, 236 new cases of COVID-19 were diagnosed in Maine. The latest seven-day daily case average is 204.6, much higher than it has ever been in Maine, far exceeding the May 23 average of 52.3, the next highest seven-day daily case average since the pandemic began. At least 1507 healthcare workers have tested positive. The total case count on November 22 was 10,359. Of these, 3,556 were in Cumberland County, with 71 deaths and 225 hospitalizations; 2,040 were in York County, with 27 deaths and 119 hospitalizations; and 1,370 were in Androscoggin County, with 16 deaths and 74 hospitalizations.

Experts are increasingly alarmed by the quickly-rising case numbers and the long list of recent outbreaks. “We are at a critical moment, with respect to covid-19,” said Dr. Nirav D.

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Mugabe uses experiences to help others | By Karen Cadbury

CHARLES MUGABE IS THE COVID-19 PROJECT COORDINATOR FOR CATHOLIC CHARITIES REFUGEE AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES IN MAINE. As the liaison between Ethnic Community-Based Organizations statewide, Maine’s Department of Health and Human Services, and the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Mugabe works with a coalition of organizations to help provide COVID-19 social service support for all members of Maine’s immigrant communities who are isolated and undergoing quarantine because of the virus.



Photo | John Ochira

Only 23 years old, his life experiences have more than prepared him to lead this effort. At a young age, he fled with members of his family from war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, living first in a refugee camp and then in Uganda until 2016, when he immigrated to the U.S. at age 19.

“Great numbers of people were killed in the wars, but my grandmother, aunt, and I escaped. Our lives in Uganda were totally different. We had to learn new languages and my aunt, who is wonderful, fought to get me into a school while we were there, so I could learn English and get an education. Like many other refugees, we hoped to be able to immigrate to the U.S.,” said Mugabe.

The preliminary process for gaining approval to immigrate was a grueling one, he said. “We were tested and evaluated repeatedly and, finally, after six years, we were told that we would be admitted to the U.S.

“I remember flying with other refugees from Uganda to Brussels and then on to John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York. It took hours and hours, but we were all very excited, seeing America for the first time. We found it difficult to understand the British-English used by the service agencies’ representatives, and we were all grateful there were interpreters there who could help us,” said Mugabe. “Everyone was nervous and afraid; we didn’t want to do anything to get sent back.”

Mugabe’s first stop in the U.S. was not Maine, but Maryland. He recalls his ride from the airport. “We were exhausted and were expecting to see tall buildings and skyscrapers. But instead,

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Lake Chad, sanctuary of Boko Haram? | By Vincent Kende Niebede

Amjambo Africa is pleased to announce that our expanding newsroom now includes correspondents in Africa. This article was contributed by photojournalist Vincent Kende Niebede, who lives in Tchad, freelances with the BBC, and writes in French. Translation by Nathalie Gorey. Jean Damascene Hakuzimana is our Africa News Editor.



Les femmes sèchent du poisson dans le Lac Tchad pour survivre

Boko Haram was formed in Maiduguri in 2002 by Mohamed Yusuf, originally from Nigeria, with the aim of demanding the widespread application of Sharia law. The group initially carried out a series of attacks in the states of Bauchi, Borno, Kano, and Yobe. “Boko Haram” means “Western education is a sin.” Since 2002, the terrorist group has been sowing terror, ravaging lives, and destroying the economic well-being and health of the populations of the countries of the Lake Chad Basin, including Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria. People living in these countries that border Lake Chad have suffered losses of both property and family members as a result of the Boko Haram attacks. The population lives in a constant state of panic because no one ever knows when members of the sect might appear. Who is Boko Haram, and where does it come from? How did it arrive in Chad, and more specifically at Lake Chad? What have been its actions in the countries of the Lake Chad basin? Here are the answers.

Boko Haram attacks on the Lake Chad Basin

Organized into small groups of fighters equipped with guns and knives, often riding on unmarked motorcycles, the Islamist sect Boko Haram, operating under its commander Mohamed Yusuf, launched an insurrection in 2009 in Nigeria, against the Nigerian loyalist army. There its leader, the preacher Mohamed Yusuf, who was considered the organization's spiritual guide, died. Conflict spread. And since 2015, the countries of the Lake Chad Basin have been under the grip of the terrorist group, which continues to carry out attacks and suicide bombings in different communities without signs of tiring.

From Niger to Chad, through Nigeria and Cameroon, Boko Haram has killed an estimated 14,000 people since 2009, and from 2019 to 2020, the security situation worsened with an increase in attacks attributed to Boko Haram. Theft of cattle, kidnapping of children and women, and killing of men have become the sport of these armed men who have made attack after attack, resulting in the death of numerous civilians.

According to local sources, Boko Haram fighters withdrew before security forces arrived. On May 22, 2019, a Boko Haram attack killed three people not far from Chukutalia, about 30 kilometers northwest of Baga Sola, also in the Lake Region, and they abducted women and children. On June 21, 2019, eight people were killed in an ambush by Boko Haram fighters in Ngouboua, Baga Sola sub-prefecture. Killed were seven Chadian soldiers and the guard of a local traditional chief. Among the soldiers killed were a colonel from the gendarmerie and another from the nomadic guard. On December 25, 2019, three Chadian soldiers were wounded in an attack by alleged Boko Haram fighters in Kaiga Ngouboua, 75 kilometers from Bol, the capital of the Lake Province.

Following these attacks, Boko Haram continued to cause unhappiness in the Lake Chad region in 2020, resulting in more civilian and military casualties. In March, elements of the Boko Haram sect inflicted a serious setback on the Chadian army operating in Lake Chad. Ninety-two Chadian soldiers were killed in an attack in Boma, a vast area of 25,000 square kilometers bordering Nigeria, Niger, and Cameroon. Another 47 were wounded, and heavy weapons and ammunition were stolen. This attack enraged the Chadian authorities, who called for an emergency raid known as Operation Wrath of Mboma. For 10 days, Chadian soldiers carried out the major operation and more than 1,000 Boko Haram fighters were killed. In his statement, Chadian President Idriss Deby Itno

asserted that the continued presence of Boko Haram in the region was due to a lack of coordination and strategic planning on the part of the Joint Multinational Force. Two more clashes between the Chadian army and Boko Haram took place September 17, 2020, in Barkalam, in the Lake Region near the Nigerian border. The army killed 15 terrorists, destroyed three speedboats, and recovered some weapons. Twelve civilian hostages, including three women, two girls, and seven children were released.

Boko Haram attacks on Chad's neighbors

In Niger, 14 Nigerien soldiers were killed and one disappeared in an attack by heavily armed individuals in the Tillabéri region of western Niger on December 26, 2019.



Dr Yacoub président du CEDPE

According to Niger's Minister of the Interior, intense fighting broke out May 3 between the Nigerien army and members of Boko Haram around the Douthi Bridge that links Niger to Nigeria, about 10 kilometers south of Diffa. Two Nigerien soldiers were killed; the assailants stole vehicles and stockpiles of arms. Another attack occurred on May 9 in the region of Diffa where gunfire exchanges took place between the two camps. On May 11, 25 terrorists were killed south of Diffa. On May 18-19, 12 Nigerien soldiers were killed and 10 others wounded in an attack by Boko Haram on a military reconnaissance post 36 kilometers northeast of N'guigmi, in the Diffa region of Niger.

Nigeria is another center of Boko Haram fighters. Four employees of the NGO Action Against Hunger were killed in northeastern Nigeria on December 13, 2019. On December 22, six Nigerian soldiers were killed in an ambush by alleged members of the Boko Haram group in a village located 22 kilometers from the Borno State capital Maiduguri. Cameroon has not been spared either. An attack took place on February 3 and 4, 2020, in Mozogo, in the far north,

killing two civilians. In April, the jihadist group killed seven Cameroonian soldiers in an attack that caused the explosion of a mine when a military vehicle passed by. In the same month, a dozen civilians died in an attack in Tchakamari in the far north of Cameroon.

Why was Boko Haram created? Who are the members? Who arms them?

According to Baniara Yoyanaan, an expert in violent extremism, and co-author of a book on human rights, the fall of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi of Libya in 2011 was a major catalyst for the growth of Boko Haram and other terrorist organizations in the Sahel region. Without Colonel Gaddafi's control over his extensive weapons stockpile, arms flowed freely into terrorist hands. Boko Haram made the Lake Chad region their sanctuary, and attacks on civilians started.

Mohammed Yusuf, the spiritual guide of Boko Haram, was killed in July 2009 by the Nigerian army, which had come to dislodge the Islamists in Maiduguri. Yusuf was a preacher and a charismatic religious leader, originally from Maiduguri. During his lifetime, he maintained links with the Izala sect, another radical Islamic sect that also had roots in southern Niger, in the region of Diffa. Under his leadership, Boko Haram has been enforcing Sharia law in the regions they control since the 2000s.

Boko Haram is composed mainly of people in difficult economic straits – those who have difficulty finding work, farmers, people without hope – who have found in the speeches of Mohammed Yusuf, and his successor Aboubakar Chekau, a message that gives them a taste of hope. In the beginning, Boko Haram was very small and did not draw membership from social groups with better resources, but gradually some local leaders signed on who had issues with the federal government, viewing the group as a way to fight the corrupt political elite.

Impacts of Boko Haram on communities in the Lake Chad Basin

According to experts, the members of Boko Haram use small dugout canoes without motors, commonly called “téké téké.” They disguise themselves as traders, breeders, beggars, or fishermen, and are hard to identify. Research conducted in the Sahel by the Institute for Security Studies has shown that the strategy of violent extremist groups is to exploit local conflicts in order to gain a foothold in communities. And the strategy has worked. Civilians live in a state of fear, businesses are crippled, herders and farmers in the region can no longer go from one country to another to sell their products because of safety, and the result is that the economy of the entire region has been leveled.

Testimony of Boko Haram survivors

So far, 1,337 Boko Haram fighters have surrendered to the Chadian authorities. Some came from Nigeria; others came from the Lake Chad islands where they fought alongside the jihadist sect, some willingly, others because they were forced. This is the case of Abdou, 30 years old, with a scarred face, who says he was forcibly integrated into the sect for 3 years. “When Boko-Haram attacked the Lake, their men were killing us. I saw many men and women die before my eyes, some were cut. With my family, we fled, but I was arrested and brought with them by force to join the group of Mahamat Nour, another chief of Boko Haram. When he and his men entered my village, most of the people who refused to join them had their throats cut before our eyes. Faced with this deluge of blood, the members who had just slit the people's throats forced us to look at this blood and then asked us whether we would leave with them or remain to suffer the same fate. I was forced to join them to save my

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Abdou repentis de Boko Haram

Le Lac Tchad, sanctuaire de Boko Haram? | By Vincent Kende Niebede



Soldats Tchadiens en operation dans le Lac Tchad

Créée à Maiduguri en 2002 par Mohamed Yusuf, originaire du Nigeria, dans le but de réclamer l'application de la charia, Boko Haram a mené, dans un premier temps, une série d'attaques dans l'État de Bauchi, Yobé, Kano, Borno. La secte Boko Haram signifie que l'éducation occidentale est un péché. Depuis cette date, le groupe terroriste sème la terreur au sein des sociétés, ravage des vies et détruit la vie économique et sanitaire des populations des pays du bassin du lac Tchad, notamment le Tchad, Le Niger, le Nigeria et le Cameroun. Les populations de ces pays riverains du Lac Tchad ont perdu des biens et des familles suite aux attaques de ce groupe terroriste. Elles sont contraintes de vivre dans la panique, car elles ne savent pas à quel moment les éléments de la secte apparaissent. Cependant, qui est Boko Haram, d'où vient-il ? Comment est-il arrivé au Tchad, précisément au lac Tchad ? Quelles sont ses actions menées dans les pays du bassin du lac Tchad ? Les réponses à découvrir sont dans ce reportage.

Les attaques de Boko Haram au lac Tchad

Organisés en petit groupes de combattants, équipés d'armes à feu, de couteaux, et se déplaçant souvent sur des motocyclettes banalisées, la secte islamiste Boko Haram, placée sous son commandant Mohamed Yusuf, a lancé une insurrection en 2009 au Nigeria et a affronté l'armée loyaliste nigérienne. C'est là que son leader, le prédicateur Mohamed Yusuf, considéré comme le guide spirituel, trouva la mort. Le conflit s'est alors étendu. Et depuis 2015, les pays du bassin du lac Tchad sont sous l'emprise du groupe terrorisme boko haram, qui ne cesse de mener des attaques et des attentats suicides dans les différentes communautés sans se lasser.

Du Niger au Tchad en passant par le Nigeria et le Cameroun, ce groupe terroriste a fait environ 14 mille morts depuis 2009. De 2019 à 2020, la situation sécuritaire a été marquée par une recrudescence des attaques des présumés Boko Haram. Vol de bétail, enlèvement des enfants, des femmes, tueries des hommes, sont devenus le sport de ces hommes armés qui ont mené une série d'attaques qui se sont soldées par la mort de nombreux civils qui sont entre autres : quatre personnes tuées, le 17 mai 2019, dans une attaque des Boko Haram à Salia, à environ 25 Kms à l'ouest de Bol, chef-lieu de la province du lac. Selon des sources locales, les combattants de Boko Haram se sont retirés avant l'arrivée des forces de sécurité.

Le 22 mai 2019, une attaque a eu lieu tuant trois personnes, non loin de Tchoukoutalia à une trentaine de kms au nord-ouest de Baga Sola, dans la province du lac. Des femmes et des enfants ont été enlevés par les membres de Boko Haram. Le 21 juin 2019, huit personnes ont été tuées dans une embuscade tendue par les éléments de Boko Haram à Ngouboua, dans la sous-préfecture de Baga Sola. Parmi ces victimes se trouvaient sept militaires tchadiens et un garde d'un chef traditionnel local. Parmi les militaires tués, on compte un colonel de la gendarmerie et un autre de la garde nomade. Le 25 décembre 2019, trois militaires tchadiens ont été blessés dans une attaque des présumés Boko Haram à Kaiga Ngouboua, une localité située à soixante-quinze kilomètres de Bol, le chef-lieu de la province du lac.

Après ces innombrables attaques, Boko Haram a continué

de causer le malheur dans la région du lac Tchad en 2020. Ses différentes attaques ont fait plusieurs victimes aussi bien dans le rang des civils que des militaires. A noter qu'en mars dernier, les éléments de la secte Boko Haram ont infligé un sérieux revers à l'armée tchadienne en opération dans le Lac Tchad. 92 militaires tchadiens ont été tués dans une attaque à Boma, une vaste région de 25 000 km², frontalière avec le Nigeria, le Niger et le Cameroun. 47 autres ont été blessés, des armes lourdes et munitions furent emportées. C'est une attaque qui a révolté les autorités tchadiennes. Le chef a dû effectuer une descente d'urgence sur le terrain, avec une riposte immédiate dénommée "opération Colère de Mboma". Pendant dix jours, les soldats tchadiens ont mené une opération d'envergure. Plus de 1000 combattants de Boko Haram ont été tués. Dans sa déclaration, le président tchadien Idriss Deby Itno a soutenu que, le monde ne devait pas s'étonner de la présence continue de ce groupe terroriste dans cette région. Il a justifié cela par le manque de coordination, de stratégies et de conceptions de la part de la Force Multinationale Mixte. Mais aussi du fait que les éléments de Boko Haram soient originaires de cette même région. Et comme cela ne pouvait pas attendre, deux accrochages entre l'armée tchadienne et des terroristes de Boko Haram ont eu lieu le jeudi 17 septembre 2020 à Barkalam, dans la province du lac, près de la frontière nigérienne. L'armée a tué 15 terroristes, détruit trois hors-bords et récupéré plusieurs armes individuelles. 12 otages civils dont trois femmes, deux filles et sept enfants ont été libérés.

Les attaques de Boko Haram dans les pays voisins du Tchad

Au Niger, quatorze militaires nigériens ont été tués et un autre porté disparu dans une attaque menée par des individus lourdement armés dans la région de Tillabéri, à l'ouest du Niger, le 26 décembre 2019. Selon le ministre nigérien de l'Intérieur, le 3 mai, d'intenses combats ont opposé l'armée nigérienne et les membres de Boko Haram, autour du pont de Douchi qui relie le Niger au Nigeria, situé à une dizaine de kilomètres au sud de Diffa. Deux soldats nigériens ont été tués. Des véhicules et des stocks d'armement ont été emportés par les assaillants. Une autre attaque s'est produite le 9 mai dans la région de Diffa où des échanges de tirs ont opposé les deux camps le 11 mai. 25 terroristes ont été tués au sud de Diffa. Tandis que du 18 au 19 mai de la même année, 12 militaires nigériens ont été tués et dix autres blessés dans une attaque des Boko Haram. C'était un poste militaire de reconnaissance qui a été attaqué, situé à 36 km au nord-est de N'guigmi, dans la région de Diffa au Niger.

Le Nigeria est un autre nid de Boko Haram. Quatre employés de l'ONG "Action contre la faim" ont été tués au nord-est du Nigeria. C'était le 13 décembre 2019. Tandis que le 22 décembre, six soldats nigériens ont été tués dans une embuscade tendue par des présumés éléments du groupe Boko Haram dans un village situé à vingt-deux kilomètres de Maiduguri, capitale de l'État de Borno. Le Cameroun aussi n'a pas été épargné. Parmi les récentes attaques, il y a eu celle du 3 et 4 février 2020 à Mozogo, dans l'extrême nord, faisant deux morts du côté des civils. Alors qu'en avril, sept militaires camerounais ont été tués lors d'attaques du groupe dji-

hadiste, dans l'explosion d'une mine au passage d'un véhicule militaire. Dans le même mois, une dizaine de civils ont péri lors d'une attaque à Tchakamari, une localité située dans l'Extrême-Nord du Cameroun.

Pourquoi Boko Haram est-il né ? Qui sont les membres ? Qui les arme ?

Selon Baniara Yoyana, un expert en extrémisme violent, la chute du guide libyen en 2011 a constitué un catalyseur de taille de la secte, surtout avec la prolifération des stocks d'armement du système de défense du Colonel Kadhafi, où l'Afrique, le Tchad, tout le sahel sont alors confrontés à un envahissement des terroristes. C'est ainsi que des attaques récurrentes ont commencé à se perpétuer sur les îles du lac Tchad par les éléments de Boko Haram faisant de cette région leur sanctuaire.

Mohammed Yusuf, le guide spirituel de Boko Haram, tué en juillet 2009 par l'armée nigérienne venue déloger les islamistes à Maidiguri, était un prêcheur, un religieux très charismatique, originaire de Maiduguri. Il entretenait de son vivant, des liens avec la secte Izala, une autre secte islamique radicale qui avait aussi ses racines dans le sud du Niger, dans la région de Diffa. Boko Haram appliquait la charia depuis les années 2000.

Boko Haram est composé majoritairement des personnes ayant du mal à trouver un emploi, des fermiers, des personnes sans espoir, qui ont trouvé dans les discours de Mohammed Yusuf et de son successeur Aboubakar Chekau, un message qui leur donne goût à la vie. C'est ainsi que la vie de ces personnes a été influencée. Ensuite, un ensemble de différentes personnes assez influentes dans l'est du Nigeria se sont mises à soutenir Boko Haram. Ce groupe était perçu comme un atout politique, et il est donc devenu progressivement un mouvement très populaire avec des figures de proue assez influentes au Nigeria, selon Baniara Yoyana.

Les impacts de Boko Haram sur les communautés du bassin du lac Tchad

Selon les experts, les éléments de Boko Haram se servent des petites pirogues sans moteur appelées communément « téké téké », et comme ils se déguisent en commerçants, éleveurs, mendiants ou pêcheurs, seule la population est à même de les reconnaître. Les recherches menées dans le Sahel par l'Institut d'études de sécurité (ISS) ont montré que la stratégie des groupes extrémistes violents consiste à exploiter les conflits locaux dans le but de s'implanter au sein des communautés. Et les conséquences sont là. Les populations vivent dans la psychose, les commerces sont ralentis, les éleveurs ou les agriculteurs de la région ne peuvent plus aller d'un pays à un autre vendre leurs produits, mettant l'économie de toute la région à terre.



Falmata repent

Témoignage des rescapés de Boko Haram

1337 combattants de Boko Haram ont décidé de se rendre aux autorités tchadiennes, certains sont venus du Nigeria, d'autres, originaires des îles du Lac Tchad, ont combattu aux côtés de la secte djihadiste, certains de leur gré mais d'autres par contre ont été forcés. C'est le cas de Abdou, âgé de 30 ans, au visage balafre ; il affirme avoir été intégré de force pendant 3 années, « Quand Boko-Haram a attaqué le Lac, leurs hommes nous tuaient, j'ai vu beaucoup d'hommes et des femmes mourir sous mes yeux, certains ont été égorgés. Avec ma famille, nous avons fui, mais j'ai été arrêté pour être amené de force avec eux et rejoindre le groupe de Mahamat Nour, un autre chef de Boko-Haram. Quand lui et ses hommes sont entrés dans mon village, la plupart des gens qui ont refusé de se rallier à eux ont été égorgés sous nos yeux. Devant ce déluge de sang, les membres qui venaient d'égorguer les gens nous ont contraint à regarder ce sang puis ils nous ont posé sèchement cette question, si nous

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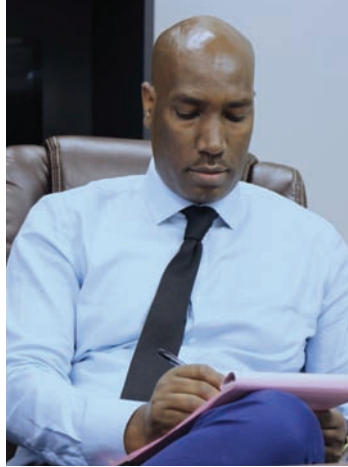


EDITORIAL

by Georges Budagu Makoko
Amjambo Africa Publisher

U.S. Presidential elections bring new hope

The beauty of democracy is that the system is grounded in power bestowed to the citizenry to decide who will be voted into office. Many of the 7.8 billion people worldwide are not blessed with the privilege of choosing their leaders, but U.S. citizens are, and an historic 161 million Americans came out to vote during the 2020 presidential election. In fact, 2020 was the most civically engaged election in modern U.S. history – and this despite the extraordinary COVID-19 pandemic that has taken away hundreds of thousands of lives and devastated families. Even in the midst of such widespread suffering, millions of Americans made sure they exercised the power of their vote. My immigrant friends believe that the reason so many people turned out was to fight for democratic values. People of color voted in huge numbers, and we are proud that our voices can no longer be ignored in the election process. Even young people who don't normally vote turned out.



I've been in the United States for the last 18 years and have participated in several elections. But I have never experienced an election season such as this one (although I realize a similar event happened in 2000, before I arrived) with a winner not declared on Election Day, and the palpable anxiety level in the immigrant community growing day by day as the nation waited for results. I know I kept my own phone near me 24/7, and woke each night many times to see if the final results had been posted. Most of the people I know spent a lot of time talking to friends both in the U.S. and abroad, all of us trying to make accurate predictions about the outcome. Everyone I know was razor-focused on the elections.

The emotions my fellow immigrants shared with me during election week ran deep. Four tempestuous years living under the current administration have been extremely hard on the immigrant community. Many shared with me that they had completely lost confidence in the country, and that their hopes and dreams for the future had been shattered over the last four years. They talked about the impact Donald Trump's immigration policies have had within the immigrant community here in Maine, and said that their belief in the American core value of welcoming immigrants had been significantly tarnished. They said they were traumatized by the frequent executive orders targeting immigrants, and that thousands of people had given up on the U.S. and moved on to Canada, to seek asylum there.

Community members believe that the outcome of this year's elections is very good news for immigrants, and they are looking forward to better days ahead. They are relieved that they will no longer wake to tweets potentially telling them to pack up and leave the country they have adopted as their new, safe home. People spoke of Joe Biden's election as a victory over fear. A young woman I spoke with, who has participated in three U.S. elections since becoming a citizen, said, "This administration was very stressful for immigrants, and the constant rule changes about immigration that were frequently executed made the lives of immigrants very hard. My hope for the new administration is that I will be able to know what to expect and not be shocked all the time – the last four years were emotionally draining. I hope that Joe Biden's new administration will help us in the healing process." Hope is restored abroad, as well as in Maine. A Congolese refugee living in Kenya told me, "American leadership around the world was seriously tarnished. We hope to see it coming back again."

The fact that the sitting president is contesting the election results concerns many people in the immigrant community, who fear potential civil unrest. Most immigrants from Africa are familiar with civil unrest following elections, especially when one political party refuses to concede. Recent examples are the 2015 election in Burundi, the 2017 election in Kenya, and the 2018 election in DR Congo. Immigrants who see Republicans demonstrating in the streets and President Trump contesting the election results are afraid civil unrest could turn violent.

Democracy is very fragile and must be protected – once it is lost, it takes many years to get it back, and sometimes it is lost forever. For example, in the 1930s a democratic election brought Adolf Hitler to power, but then the nationalist party got control and imposed their agenda on the whole country.

My sincere prayer is that hundreds of years of building strong, democratic institutions in the U.S. will prevail over individual greed and self-interest. May God bless America with a return to our core values.

Meet Georges Budagu Makoko | Stephanie Harp

When Georges Budagu Makoko first arrived in Maine in 2002, he was desperate for news from the region of Africa he'd recently fled. But he couldn't find any. Neither could he find many Americans who knew what was happening in his home country of the Democratic Republic of Congo and its neighbors. "Between them, Rwanda, Burundi, and Congo had lost more than six million as result of the conflict. I was shocked that people didn't know anything about that, knew nothing about the human loss. It bothered me so much," he said. "We lost almost everything, yet here people have no idea. How come they don't know? I struggled to understand why." Few Congolese lived in Maine at the time, several years before significant immigration began from Central Africa to Southern Maine. So he wrote a book about it. "I could see that people are curious about why people are coming here from the other side of the world. Why are they here? I wanted to answer those questions in my book." He published *Ladder to the Moon: Journey from the Congo to America* in 2013, telling the story of what had brought him to that point, from childhood in a small, mountain village in Kivu, in eastern Congo, to facing conflict and war in Congo and Rwanda, to seeking and receiving asylum in the U.S.

Each of Budagu's moves brought surprises and dramatic change. When he left his village of 200 people at age 14, to go to school in Uvira, he was struck by the diversity of the city's nearly 100,000 residents. Members of many different tribes lived and worked together, and spoke at least five different languages, including the official Swahili and French; Congo has several hundred ethnic tribes with their own languages. "I spoke a bit of Swahili," he said, "but my accent was thick and I had to adjust and speak like a regular person in that city." He learned English after moving to the U.S. and is now fluent in English, Kinyarwanda, Lingala, and Swahili, and speaks French and Kinyamulenge.

The poverty in the city shocked him, too, as he saw people struggling to make ends meet and begging on the streets. In his self-sufficient village, they grew or made everything they needed, and didn't lack at all. People in Uvira who didn't eat well often grew sick and died in the hot climate where malaria was common; only one person had died in his village during his childhood.

Being Tutsi, he grew afraid when conflict with the Hutu began to spill over into Congo. After living in Uvira for six years, he moved to Rwanda in 1994. "I will never forget the story of the first time I landed in Rwanda," he said. "It was a ghost town. Imagine a country that had over one million people killed and two million had people left. It was dark. They had destroyed all the infrastructure, electricity." Budagu felt lucky to be in his new home, but was shocked by the emptiness. Two years later, war started in Congo, followed by a second war in 1998 involving five countries. "My tribe was in the midst of that whole conflict. War started in 1996, trying to save my tribe which had been targeted by the Hutus who'd committed genocide in Rwanda."

He'd gone to college in Rwanda, earning a degree in Business Administration from the National University of Rwanda. After graduating, he attended a conflict resolution conference in Norway in 2001. He returned to the conference a second time in 2002. While there, because of the worsening situation involving his Banyamulenge tribe, he knew he couldn't return to Rwanda or Congo, so he applied for asylum in the U.S. After a brief stay in Virginia, he contacted a few people from DRC Congo whom he had learned were already established in Maine. "At that time, there were not many Congolese in the U.S.," he said. "Most migration to the U.S. from Central Africa began in 2005."

He was shocked again, just as he'd been when he arrived in Uvira, by the complex American system. "Everything was grandiose -- streets, highways, lights. Almost everything was so different from the life that I knew back in Rwanda and the Congo. The culture, everything." He arrived in summer and a friend took him to the coast where he saw people sunbathing in swimsuits for the first time. He didn't know what to think. "It was a new thing for me," he said.

In Maine from 2004 to 2019, Budagu was senior property manager at Avesta Housing, which promotes and provides quality affordable homes for people in need. In 2019, he and a group of friends started Serenity Residential Cares, a social and human services organization providing residential and community-centered support services to adults with cognitive, intellectual, psychological, and physical disabilities.

Learning his sixth language was a challenge that made him wish he'd paid more attention during English classes at school, but he soon learned enough to begin searching for English-language news from home. "Where could I find it?" he wondered. "If you look for hours and hours, you will not find anything reported about Africa. Where can anybody from that region get the news? This can't be true." After writing the book that told his story, he realized that writing books wouldn't provide news from Africa, nor would they help Americans understand the ever-changing situations that led to a growing influx of immigrants. "Maybe I should just do a newspaper, a local newspaper that will be published here in Portland," he thought. "So people can get a sense of why people are coming here, what issues they face, and how they can help them."

Budagu founded *Ladder to the Moon Network* in 2016 to educate the public about Africa, increase awareness of the connection between current conditions in Africa and migration, and describe the challenges faced by African immigrants as they are in the process of relocating, as well as after resettlement. After making a presentation in Rockland, he met Kathreen Harrison and told her about his newspaper idea. They talked about it and worked out details for a year before publishing the first issue of *Amjambo Africa* in April 2018, with Budagu as publisher and Harrison as editor. "I am very, very happy with how it's going," he said. Many people write with comments like, "Through the newspaper, I begin to understand the culture differences, or read news from Africa, or know stories from the immigrant community." Not only through news from Africa, telling immigrants' stories helps others connect to resources. "When you share with me how you became where you are, I can learn from that. Wow, this is possible," he said. "If I know how to start a business, maybe somebody who used to have a business back home will read it and think, 'So I can do it.' It's a wonderful thing how we enrich our society and share our own stories and learn from each other."

"I don't know of any other newspaper, to my knowledge, that publishes in six languages. I think our news is very unique in this way," he said. "I'm glad this idea came to fruition. It would be horrible to not have it." He'd like to cover even more news from Africa, as well as from the African Diaspora in general, increasing *Amjambo's* utility to both the immigrant and non-immigrant communities.

Thank You! Thank You!

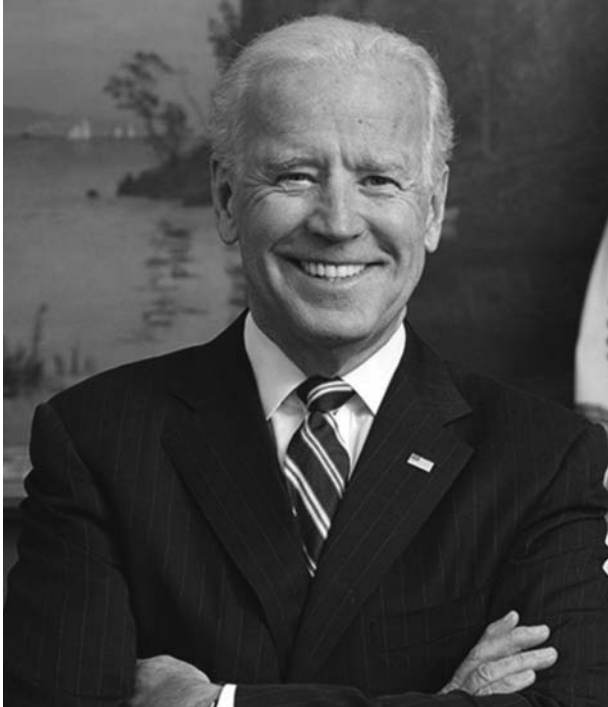
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President-elect Joe Biden promises immigration reform



President-elect Joe Biden will take office as 46th President of the United States on January 20, and his vice president will be Kamala Harris. She is the first woman vice president in U.S. history, the first African American to serve as vice president, and the first Asian American to be elected to the executive branch.

Biden's positions on many issues make clear that he will be a radically different president than the current occupant of the White House. The official transition website lists four priorities: COVID-19, economic recovery, climate change, and racial equity. In his victory speech on November 7, he spoke directly to the Black and African American community, saying, "You've always had my back, and I'll have yours." The speech also included a pledge to continue "... the battle to achieve racial justice and root out systemic racism."

Biden's transition website does not mention immigration reform as a priority, however he has said many times that he considers welcoming refugees to the United States to be an expression of essential values held by the nation. He was also a co-sponsor of the 1980 Refugee Act, which created the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program.

On Day 1 of his presidency, Biden has said he plans to overturn the so-called Muslim ban, which denies entry to the U.S. to travelers from 13 countries, primarily African or majority-Muslim. He also says he will issue a moratorium on deportations, and will begin carving a path to citizenship for over 11 million undocumented people, among other actions. He plans to raise the refugee admissions target from the historic low of 15,000 the current administration set for FY2021 to at least 125,000 refugees a year.

In a briefing from November 2020 Doris Meissner and

Michelle Mittelstadt of the Migration Policy Institute warn that all will not be smooth sailing for the Biden administration as they attempt immigration reform. "Immigration policy changes occurred at an unprecedented, even frenetic, pace during the Trump administration, which through more than 400 executive actions methodically dismantled and reconstructed a system based on a worldview of immigration as a security and economic threat to Americans.... A new Biden administration will confront major challenges in building a system that treats immigration as an asset and regularly manages it in times of economic boom and downturn. The grafting of a dizzying array of Trump executive actions, policy guidance, and regulatory changes – some interlocking and thus difficult to unwind – atop a long-antiquated immigration system presents complex hurdles for an incoming administration that has vowed to roll back key Trump changes and advance bold reforms."

Harris is the child of immigrants from Jamaica and India. Her victory is historic, and represents a new era of leadership in the United States. A first-generation American, she will also be the first woman vice president in the U.S., 100 years after the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote in the United States after years of advocacy and struggle by women.

During her victory speech on November 7, Harris spoke about her mother and about the role of women in the U.S. generally. "When she (Harris' mother) came here from India at the age of 19, she maybe didn't quite imagine this moment. But she believed so deeply in an America where a moment like this is possible. And so, I'm thinking about her and about the generations of women – Black women, Asian,

White, Latina, Native American women who throughout our nation's history have paved the way for this moment tonight. Women who fought and sacrificed so much for equality, liberty and justice for all, including the Black women, who are often -- too often -- overlooked, but so often prove that they are the backbone of our democracy."

Harris also talked about the key role of grassroots organizing and get-out-the-vote efforts. "For four years, you marched and organized for equality and justice, for our lives, and for our planet. And then, you voted. And you delivered a clear message. You chose hope and unity, decency, science and, yes, truth."

Reflecting on Harris' victory, Fowsia Musse, executive director of Maine Community Integration said, "It's wonderful that there is a Black woman in the seat of vice president for this country. Kamala taking office will inspire millions of Black girls



around the world to do what Kamala is doing. As our non-profit Maine Community Integration works to elevate and empower young girls of color, this is wonderful news to us!"

In Her Presence Co-Founder Abusana Micky Bondo said, "I'm proud as a Black woman and immigrant that we have elected our first Black woman as a vice president. Kamala Harris is the catalyzer



for BIPOC, progressive women, and younger generations to believe in themselves and achieve their potential." In Her Presence works to empower immigrant women.

"As an immigrant Black woman, I can see myself all the more in Kamala Harris, knowing she spent time in the same city I grew up in – Lusaka, Zambia. How cool!" said Mufalo Chitam, executive director of Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition.



According to the *Washington Post*, Black Americans turned out in record numbers for Biden, and 87% of Black Americans voted for the Biden-Harris ticket. Among non-white voters, 66% of Latinx voters and 63% of Asian American voters cast ballots for the Democratic ticket. Black women spoke almost as one voice, with 91% of their votes going to Biden-Harris.

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Amjambo Africa is looking for freelance writers. If interested, send a resumé and a writing sample

(in English or another language) to:
amjamboafrika@gmail.com

Did you know?

There are 29,686 known immigrant residents in District 1

There are 17,870 known immigrant residents in District 2

—New American Economy

AMJAMBO AFRICA!

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Charles Mugabe Continued from page 1

we saw glimpses of forests and the rural countryside. It was cold and windy, and – as we had no idea where we were – our imaginations started kicking in. The social service people tried to make us comfortable by buying food they thought that we would like, but it was the first time we had eaten American food and we thought it was quite spicy and salty. And we didn't like the taste of the water."

In Maryland, the family's first priority was to connect with their case-manager from the resettlement organization. "She took us shopping, helped us get phones, and find food we liked and could cook. She referred us to doctors, made sure we had the documents and benefits we needed, and helped us prepare to find jobs," he said.

But in Maryland, they felt lonely, and after eight weeks they discovered that a close friend, also a refugee, had settled in Maine. "She called us and asked why we were in Maryland and said that we needed to come to Maine, where she could help us start our lives and we wouldn't be alone. She assured us that we would make connections here," he said.

"Someone drove us from Maryland to Maine. It was October and quite cold. Little did we know that the cold would get worse and worse. In Portland, we connected with our caseworkers at Catholic Charities, where they did further background checks and helped us find an apartment in Portland. And we got warmer jackets and started to get used to the cold. Each of us was assigned a case-manager to help navigate the new living situation. My grandmother's case-manager worked specifically with elders, and that was a great help," he said. "Portland was very different than Maryland. We were not isolated like we were in Hyattsville. People were friendly to us; they smiled a lot and even approached us to talk. It felt like home automatically. Other immigrants we met wanted to help and they welcomed us."

Mugabe's case-manager at Catholic Charities asked if he would like to work with her as a volunteer, assisting with the paperwork required for immigration and functioning as an interpreter. After a short time in that position, he was promoted to a job as a receptionist at the agency, then promoted a second time to a paid job as a case aide. At the end of the year, Mugabe was promoted again, this time to the position of case manager.

"When I got promoted to case manager, helping asylum seekers was my first assignment," he said. "Many asylum seekers have had months and months of detention at the U.S. borders; they need help obtaining approval for their status and with getting settled into their communities. My job at Catholic Charities is to help them with these issues."

Last year, when the COVID-19 virus hit, Catholic Charities promoted Mugabe to the position of COVID-19 Project Coordinator. The federal money granted funds to Maine to help identify and care for people who have the virus. Catholic Charities received the funds through the state's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Program, and sub-contracted with 27 established, local Ethnic Community Based Organizations (ECBO) in Androscoggin, Cumberland, Hancock, Washington, and York counties. These organizations, which include mainstream agencies and immigrant-led grassroots organizations, are working to ensure that immigrants and asylum seekers receive the help they need when fighting the virus.

At Catholic Charities, Mugabe coordinates a wide range of support services with the partner organizations, including providing assistance to schools, conducting virus prevention educational programs, and leading outreach initiatives to new immigrant communities statewide. His work with the partner organizations also includes supporting investigators and contact tracers from the Maine CDC, responding to community members who have basic health and survival needs, and supporting the multicultural staff and people of color who are working in jails that have virus outbreaks.

When needed, the partner organizations also provide immigrants with direct support services such as food, medicine, and housing. For individuals who are virus carriers and must be quarantined, Mugabe and the agencies identify places where people can live in quarantine. In some cases, complete families or individuals who need to be isolated have been housed in hotels operated by the state or in other protected facilities. If a person is in quarantine, agencies also help with bill paying, laundry, and grocery shopping.

Mugabe's background is a good match for the job he now holds. In addition to his personal experiences immigrating to the U.S., he has also completed two years of a nursing program in Portland, as well as trauma training. Today, Mugabe, who speaks English, French, Kigegere, Lingala, Luganda, and Swahili, uses his personal history to understand and help refugees and asylum seekers in Maine.

"With the administration of Catholic Charities, I want to express my gratitude to our community partners who are working hard to make a difference," said Mugabe. "We also want to thank DHHS, and the Commissioner's and Governor's offices for funding this community effort, and for developing this new system of social support for COVID-19. More than 500 fami-

lies in Maine have been impacted by the virus, and we hope to continue our work until everyone in the communities is safe."

People of color in Maine are experiencing higher case rates of COVID-19 than white citizens. Many live in crowded or dilapidated housing, lack access to ongoing preventive medical care, and suffer from chronic diseases. They often work in front-line jobs such as hospitals, nursing homes, group homes, and processing plants. In the case of refugees and asylum seekers, many are trauma survivors, which increases susceptibility to illnesses.

Maine is one of only a few states that has a COVID-19 Social Support Community Care program in place, Mugabe said. "When a case is identified anywhere in Maine, it is referred to the [Maine] CDC and automatically investigated. Investigators recommend how we should quarantine the individual and work with us to determine the patient's 'point of care,' and track the spread of the virus."

Helping immigrants get culturally appropriate food is a big issue, Mugabe said. He remembers the difficulties his family encountered in getting food in Maryland that could make them feel safe and comfortable – food that was appropriate for their culture and country of origin. He tries to ensure that the food provided to immigrants meets the standard that he and his family appreciate. Mugabe also says the partner agencies have found that, in stressful situations, matching immigrants and asylum seekers with people from their same countries is very important to ensure that the new arrivals are understood and have people with whom they can easily relate.

"Because our program is connected to the state, I receive notifications directly when there is a virus outbreak. We've been able to identify the multicultural communities around Maine where culturally familiar and appropriate language assistance is needed," Mugabe said. "We've had COVID-19 outbreaks in a few schools in Maine, and a large number of people connected to our schools are in quarantine. Right now, many schools need multi-ethnic, language, and cultural support." He said that parents who don't speak English often depend on their kids to be interpreters. "But parents still prefer hearing information from someone in authority, so when we have something important to communicate, we provide language assistance."

In northern Maine, COVID-19 educational and testing programs have been developed to help migrant farm workers, Mugabe said. "Our priority there is to make sure people can learn about the illness in the languages of the countries from which they come, such as Haitian and Spanish. Migrants start to arrive in the early summer to help with crops. This past spring and summer, we set up a program to test people when they arrived and worked with our partner organizations to coordinate services for them and make sure their needs were met. We will need to continue this in 2021."

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Federal funding for Maine's COVID-19 program is due to expire at the end of December 2020, Mugabe said. If the funding is not renewed, Maine will not be able to stay on top of the virus.

• • • • •

"Many organizations are offering services that will end if the funding is not extended. And if we can't operate the program, we will have a total disaster. Just as COVID-19 is growing and getting worse, the funding is set to expire. Right now, the rate of contagion is at the highest I've seen it, maybe two or three times more than what it has been up to now."

"I want to express my gratitude to all the partner organizations that have been working together so effectively through this crisis," he said. "The model we are using, with different organizations cooperating to help people throughout the state, is a good one. The state of Maine is looking for funding alternatives, but this is a federal issue, not a state issue. If the funding ends next month, we will be facing a very frightening problem." The immediate challenge is to find the funding necessary to sustain the program.

"I'm working remotely at home and my grandmother and aunt are doing OK, but this is very scary for them," said Mugabe. "I have been trained, and I'm familiar with where the threats exist, so I know how to be careful. But my grandmother and aunt, they don't know much about the virus, and they are continually getting mixed messages about what they should be doing to protect themselves. I talk with them and try to share the things I know. I'm trying to teach them how to protect themselves."

Mugabe works closely with many others who are trying to contain the virus. "We don't want Maine to become a hot zone, so right now people should be doing everything they can to protect themselves, their families, friends, and neighbors," he said.

FRENCH TRANSLATION
LA BEAUTÉ DE LA DÉMOCRATIE

Par Georges Budagu Makoko

La beauté de la démocratie est que le système est fondé sur le pouvoir conféré aux citoyens de décider qui sera élu comme président. Sur les 7,8 milliards de personnes dans le monde, beaucoup n'ont pas le privilège de choisir leurs dirigeants, mais les citoyens américains ont cette chance, et un nombre historique de 161 millions de citoyens américains se sont rendus aux urnes lors de l'élection présidentielle de 2020. En fait, 2020 a été l'élection la plus engagée civiquement de l'histoire moderne des États-Unis, et ce malgré l'extraordinaire pandémie COVID-19 qui a emporté des centaines de milliers de vies et dévasté des familles entières. Même au milieu de tant de souffrances partout dans le pays, des millions d'Américains ont fait en sorte d'exercer leur droit de vote. Mes amis immigrés pensent que la raison pour laquelle tant de personnes se sont rendues aux urnes était afin de se battre pour les valeurs démocratiques. Les gens de couleur ont voté en très grand nombre et nous sommes fiers que nos voix ne soient plus ignorées dans le processus électoral. Même les jeunes, qui ne votent pas d'habitude, se sont rendus aux urnes.

Je vis aux États-Unis depuis 18 ans et j'ai participé à plusieurs élections. Mais je n'ai jamais vécu une saison électorale comme celle-ci, avec un vainqueur non déclaré le jour du scrutin, et le niveau d'anxiété palpable dans la communauté des immigrants qui augmente de jour en jour alors que la nation attend les résultats. Je sais que je gardais mon propre téléphone près de moi 24 heures sur 24, 7 jours sur 7, et que je me réveillais chaque nuit plusieurs fois pour voir si les résultats définitifs avaient été affichés. La plupart des gens que je connais passaient beaucoup de temps à parler à leurs amis, aux États-Unis et à l'étranger, et nous essayions tous de faire des prédictions précises sur le résultat. Tous ceux que je connaissais étaient focalisés sur les élections.

Les émotions que mes amis immigrants ont partagées avec moi pendant la semaine électorale étaient profondes. Quatre années tumultueuses sous l'administration actuelle ont été extrêmement difficiles pour la communauté des immigrés. Beaucoup m'ont fait savoir qu'ils avaient complètement perdu confiance dans le pays et que leurs espoirs et leurs rêves pour l'avenir avaient été brisés au cours des quatre dernières années. Ils ont parlé de l'impact des politiques d'immigration de Trump sur la communauté des immigrants ici dans le Maine, et ont dit que leur croyance dans la valeur fondamentale américaine d'accueil des immigrants avait été considérablement ternie. Ils ont déclaré qu'ils étaient traumatisés par les fréquents décrets ciblant les immigrants, et que des milliers de personnes avaient abandonné leur espoir de vivre aux États-Unis et étaient parties au Canada pour y demander l'asile.

Les membres de la communauté estiment que le résultat des élections de cette année est une très bonne nouvelle pour les immigrés, et ils espèrent des jours meilleurs à l'avenir. Ils sont soulagés de ne plus être réveillés par des tweets qui pourraient leur dire de faire leurs valises et de quitter le pays qu'ils ont adopté comme leur nouveau chez eux, en toute sécurité. Les gens ont parlé de l'élection de Joe Biden comme d'une victoire sur la peur. Une jeune femme avec qui j'ai parlé et qui a participé à trois élections américaines depuis qu'elle est devenue citoyenne américaine a déclaré : "Cette administration était très stressante pour les immigrants, et les changements constants de règles en matière d'immigration qui ont été fréquemment exécutés ont rendu la vie des immigrants très difficile. Mon espoir pour la nouvelle administration est que je pourrai désormais savoir à quoi m'attendre et ne pas être choquée tout le temps - les quatre dernières années ont été très éprouvantes sur le plan émotionnel. J'espère que la nouvelle administration de Joe Biden nous aidera dans le processus de guérison". L'espoir renaît à l'étranger ainsi que dans le Maine. Un réfugié congolais vivant au Kenya m'a dit que "le leadership américain dans le monde a été sérieusement terni". Nous espérons qu'il reviendra".

Le fait que le président en exercice conteste les résultats des élections inquiète de nombreuses personnes parmi la communauté des immigrés, et ils craignent d'éventuels troubles civils. La plupart des immigrés africains sont habitués aux troubles civils qui suivent les élections, surtout lorsqu'un parti politique refuse de céder. Des exemples récents sont les élections de 2015 au Burundi, de 2017 au Kenya et de 2018 en République démocratique du Congo. Les immigrés qui voient les républicains manifester dans les rues et le président Trump contester les résultats des élections craignent que les troubles civils ne dégénèrent en violence. La démocratie est très fragile et doit être protégée. Une fois perdue, il faut attendre de nombreuses années pour la récupérer, et parfois elle est perdue à jamais. Par exemple, dans les années 1930, une élection démocratique a porté Hitler au pouvoir, mais le parti nationaliste a ensuite pris le contrôle et a imposé son programme à

l'ensemble du pays.

Je prie sincèrement que les centaines d'années passées à construire de fortes institutions démocratiques aux États-Unis l'emportent sur l'avidité de pouvoir et l'intérêt personnel. Que Dieu bénisse l'Amérique par un retour à nos valeurs fondamentales.

LE PREMIER MINISTRE ÉTHIOPIEN ABIY AHMED
DÉCLARE LA GUERRE À LA RÉGION DU TIGRÉ,
AU NORD DU PAYS

Le 4 novembre dernier, le Premier ministre éthiopien Abiy Ahmed a ordonné des opérations militaires contre la région du Tigré, au nord du pays, qui est limitrophe de l'Érythrée. Les frappes aériennes du gouvernement fédéral contre les installations de stockage de missiles et d'armes lourdes du Tigré autour de la capitale régionale de Mekelle marquent l'escalade dramatique d'un conflit interne de longue date, alimentant les craintes, tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur de l'Éthiopie, que le conflit ne dégénère rapidement en une spirale incontrôlable, avec des conséquences catastrophiques pour la Corne de l'Afrique.

Le Premier ministre Abiy Ahmed a décrit ces frappes comme des contre-attaques, qu'il s'engage à poursuivre, après que l'armée du Tigré aurait attaqué les troupes fédérales dans la région. The Telegraph rapporte qu'une centaine de soldats du gouvernement sont soignés sur place pour des blessures par balles, tandis que les cas les plus graves sont acheminés par ambulance vers des établissements de soins dans la région de Gondar.

Le gouvernement a déclaré l'état d'urgence dans la province du Tigré et a voté la suspension du financement fédéral de la région. Dans le but de prendre le contrôle et de délégitimer le pouvoir actuellement en place, les législateurs fédéraux ont approuvé la formation d'un gouvernement intérimaire au Tigré.

Le Front populaire de libération du Tigré (TPLF) et Abiy Ahmed ont une longue histoire. Dans les années 1970, le TPLF, ainsi que d'autres factions armées, se sont ralliés pour faire tomber le régime brutal de Mengistu, qu'ils ont finalement renversé dans les années 1990. Une des factions, le Front de libération du peuple érythréen (EPLF), a alors proclamé l'indépendance de l'Érythrée. Entre-temps, l'Armée populaire de libération du Tigré a pris la tête de la coalition restante, et son chef, Meres Zenawi, est devenu Premier ministre de l'Éthiopie, un poste qu'il a occupé pendant 20 ans. Alors qu'il était au pouvoir, le gouvernement dirigé par le Tigré a mis à l'écart d'autres groupes ethniques, ce qui a alimenté les troubles contre le gouvernement, et a ouvert la voie à l'arrivée au pouvoir en 2018 d'Abiy Ahmed, un Oromo-ethnie la plus importante en Éthiopie.

Aljazeera rapporte que les dirigeants de la région du Tigré ont commencé à se disputer avec le gouvernement d'Abiy Ahmed dès son accession à la présidence. Ils l'ont accusé de les marginaliser, tout en se liant d'amitié avec les dirigeants de l'Érythrée. En fait, après son accession au pouvoir, le Premier ministre Abiy a réprimé les dirigeants corrompus occupant des postes de haut niveau, dont la majorité étaient originaires du Tigré. Le Tigré soupçonne que la normalisation des relations entre le gouvernement d'Abiy et l'Érythrée soit un moyen de les contrôler. Après les frappes aériennes du gouvernement fédéral, le Tigré a fermé son espace aérien et bloqué l'accès routier à la région. Le TPLF a saisi les installations militaires fédérales du Commandement du Nord, un acte que le Premier ministre Abiy Ahmed a qualifié de "franchissement d'une ligne rouge".

L'Éthiopie est confrontée à de nombreux défis en ce moment, en plus de la tension avec le Tigré, parmi lesquels COVID-19, et un conflit majeur avec l'Égypte autour d'un projet sur le Nil. Le Premier ministre Abiy Ahmed a reçu le prix Nobel de la paix en 2019 après avoir tenté de jouer un rôle de médiateur dans la crise au Soudan, au Sud-Soudan, à Djibouti, au Kenya et en Somalie. Sa capacité à apaiser les tensions est désormais très appréciée dans son propre pays, et le continent tout entier observe pour voir ce qu'il peut faire.

LA MANIE DU "TROISIÈME MANDAT" EN AFRIQUE-
RÉCENTES ÉLECTIONS PRÉSIDENTIELLES EN GUINÉE
ET EN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Le 7 novembre dernier, Alpha Condé, 82 ans, a été déclaré vainqueur des élections présidentielles guinéennes, qui lui ont accordé un troisième mandat controversé. La Côte d'Ivoire, le voisin méridional de la Guinée, a également réélu récemment son président, Alassane Ouattara, âgé de 78 ans, pour un troisième mandat. Les deux hommes rejoignent le club grandissant des présidents africains qui ont cherché à obtenir des mandats supplémentaires à l'expiration des deux mandats qui leur sont accordés par la constitution.

De nombreux membres de ce "club présidentiel" ont trouvé des moyens de réviser la constitution de leur pays et de lever les obstacles qui les empêchaient d'obtenir des mandats supplémentaires.

Les candidats n'ont pas tous le même palmarès, mais le résultat est le même. Alpha Condé, par exemple, a mené une campagne visant à "réaliser ce qu'il a commencé dans les premiers temps" ; Alassane Ouattara a qualifié sa course de "décision visant à satisfaire le désir de la nation" après la mort soudaine du candidat qu'il préparait pour le poste - il était déterminé à ne pas voir le pouvoir aller dans le camp de l'opposition de l'ancien Premier ministre Pascal Affi N'Guessan.

Certains présidents sont au pouvoir depuis plus de trois mandats. Le président ougandais Museveni a fait campagne pour la suppression totale des limites d'âge dans la constitution afin qu'il puisse se représenter après 34 ans de mandat - selon la constitution ougandaise, le président ne peut être âgé de moins de 35 ans ni de plus de 75 ans. Il a déjà supprimé la limite d'âge pour les mandats. Museveni figure parmi les cinq plus anciens présidents africains, aux côtés de Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo de Guinée équatoriale, au pouvoir depuis 1979. Parmi les autres présidents qui se sont maintenus au pouvoir pendant des décennies, citons Paul Biya du Cameroun - président depuis 1982 ; Denis Sassou Nguesso du Congo Brazzaville - en fonction depuis plus de 36 ans ; Idriss Deby Itno du Tchad, président depuis 29 ans.

Ces troisièmes mandats présidentiels provoquent souvent des violences, et conduisent parfois à des peines de prison et à des décès. Tel est le sort de Pascal N'Guessan, par exemple, qui a été arrêté le samedi 7 novembre sous l'inculpation de terrorisme après que les forces gouvernementales aient affronté l'opposition. Ces affrontements ont fait plus de 40 morts parmi les Ivoiriens. L'espoir d'un changement s'évanouit souvent : plus un président s'accroche à son poste, plus il consolide son pouvoir, plus il réprime l'opposition.

Dans un discours prononcé le 28 juillet 2015 devant l'Union Africaine, le président Obama a déclaré : "Lorsqu'un dirigeant essaie de changer les règles en cours de route juste pour rester au pouvoir, cela risque de provoquer de l'instabilité et des conflits - et ce n'est souvent qu'un premier pas sur une voie périlleuse". L'Union Africaine est souvent restée silencieuse dans les affaires concernant les changements constitutionnels relatifs à la limitation des mandats présidentiels.

La tendance à s'accrocher au pouvoir et à ignorer la volonté de la population a entraîné l'exode de nombreux Africains, qui ont fui la persécution dans leur pays d'origine et se sont installés dans d'autres pays et états (comme le Maine !), contribuant ainsi à la croissance de la diaspora africaine. Dans un article du Daily Maverick, Mmusi Maimane, qui fut un temps chef de l'Alliance Démocratique de l'Opposition en Afrique du Sud, a déclaré : "Nous avons vu, à maintes reprises, les libérateurs arriver au pouvoir au milieu des fanfares de la révolution, pour ensuite céder aux tentations du favoritisme et de la corruption. Nous avons vu une litanie de présidents Big Man amasser des richesses à une échelle qui était inimaginable pour les citoyens ordinaires". Maimane a averti qu'il est temps de passer le relais aux jeunes générations. "L'Afrique a besoin de dirigeants frais, jeunes et compétents, sans aucun lien avec les mouvements de libération du passé".



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SWAHILI TRANSLATION

UZURI WA DEMOKRASIA
GEORGES BUDAGU MAKOKO

Uzuri wa demokrasia ni mfumo ambao msingi wake un-ampa mwanchi nguvu na mamlaka ya kuamua watayempi-gia kura kama viongozi. Takriban watu 7.8 bilioni kote duniani hawajapata na fursa ya kuwachagua viongozi wao wenyewe, lakini wamarekani (U.S citizens) wamejiandikia ukurasa wa historia kwa kujitokeza takriban watu 161 mil-ioni katika uchaguzi wa urais wa 2020. Ukweli ni kwamba, uchaguzi wa 2020 uliwhusisha wananchi wengi zaidi marekani katika historia ya kisasa - licha ya kuwa na janga la korona ambalo limeangamiza maisha ya mamia ya maelfu ya watu na kuziteketeza familia nyingi. Hata katika mateso hayo yote mamilioni ya wamarekani walijitokeza kuhakik-isha kuwa wametimiza haki yao ya upigaji kura.

Rafiki zangu ambao ni wahamiaji wanaamini kuwa sababu ya wengi kujitokeza ni kuwa walitaka kuyapigania maadili ya kidemokrasia. Watu wenye rangi walijitokeza kupiga kura kwa uwingi na tunajivunia hilo kwa vile sauti zetu haziwezi kupuuzwa katika mchakato huo wa uchaguzi. Hata vijana ambao kwa kawaida hawashiriki uchaguzi walijitokeza.

Nimekuwa marekani kwa muda wa miaka kumi na mi-nane(18) na kushiriki katika chaguzi kadhaa na sijawahi shuhudia uchaguzi wa aina hii ambapo mshindi hatangazwi siku ile ya uchaguzi nayo hali ya sintofahamu inaendelea kukua kila kuchao kwa jamii ya wahamiaji matokeo ya-subiriwapo na taifa zima. Niliweka simu yangu karibu nami nyakati zote huku nikiamka kila mara usiku kuangalia kama matokeo yametangazwa. Watu wengi niwajuao walichukua muda mwingi wakiongea na marafiki wa Marekani na wa ughaibuni, sote tukijaribu kubashiri matokeo kamili. Kila niliyemjua alilenga matokeo .

Hisia zetu pamoja na wahamiaji wenzangu zilikuwa nzito. Miaka minne yenye majaribio chini ya uongozi ulikuweko imekuwa migumu kwa jamii ya wahamiaji. Wengi wame-nielezea kuwa walipoteza uaminifu katika nchi na kuwa walipoteza matumaini, na ndoto zao kufutiliwa mbali kwa miaka minne iliyopita. Walizungumza kuhusu athari za sera za Trump kwa jamii ya wahamiaji hapa Maine na kusema kuwa tabia ya Marekani kuwakaribisha wahamiaji ilibadirishwa. Walisema kuwa walisumbuliwa akili na amri za hapa na hapa zilizowalenga wahamiaji na kuwa maelfu ya watu walivunjika moyo na Marekani na wakakusudia kuhamia Canada kutafuta hifadhi.

Wanajamii wanaamini kuwa matokeo ya uchaguzi wa mwaka huu ni habari nzuri kwa wahamiaji na wanaamini siku zijazo zitakuwa zenye manufaa kwao. Wamepata pumziko na kuwa hawataamkia jumbe za tweeter zikiwaar-ifu wafunge virago na kuikimbia nchi waliyoiamini kuwa kama nyumbani.. Watu waliuzungumzia uchaguzi wa Joe Biden kama ushindi dhidi ya woga. Binti mmoja niliyezungumza naye ambaye ameshiriki katika chaguzi tatu za Marekani kutoka awe raia wa nchi hiyo alisema, “Uon-gozi uliokuweko ulikuwa wenye shida kwa wahamiaji na kubadilishwa kwa sheria mara kwa mara kuhusu uhamiaji kulifanya maisha ya wahamiaji kuwa magumu sana. Tu-maini langu kwa huu mfumo mpya wa uongozi ni kujua cha kutarajia na si kushtuliwa kila wakati. Miaka minne iliyopita ilikuwa ya kushtua moyo. Nina matumaini kuwa utawala mbpya wa Joe Biden utaleta uponyaji” Tumaini limere-jeshwa ughaibuni na hata Maine. Mkongo mhamiaji anayeishi Kenya alinielea kuwa, “ Uongozi wa Marekani umebatilishwa kabisa. Tumaini letu kuuona ukirejea tena.”

Ukweli ni kuwa kumuona rais aliyekuwa mamlakani akitilia shaka matokeo ya uchaguzi ,unawatia jamii ya wahamiaji kuhofia uwezo wa kuzuka kwa machafuko. Wahamiaji wengi kutoka nchi za Afrika , wana kumbukumbu za machafuko baada ya uchaguzi haswa chama cha kisiasa kikikosa kukubaliana na matokeo ya uchaguzi. Mifano ya hivi karibuni ni ile ya 2015 uchaguzi wa Burundi , 2017 uch-aguzi wa Kenya na uchaguzi wa DR Congo 2018. Wahami-aji wanaowaona Republicans wakigoma mitaani huku Rais Trump akiyapinga matokeo ya uchagujizi wana hofia kuzuka kwa machafuko na vita. Demokrasia ni lazima ilindwe; ikipotezwa huchukua miaka mingi kurejeshwa na wakati mwingine huweza kupotezwa kabisa Kwa mfano miaka ya 1930s uchajuzi wa kidemokrasia ulimrejesha Hitler mam-lakani lakini wale wa Nationalists walichukua serkali na ku-lazimisha ajenda yao kote nchini. Sala yangu ya dhati ni kwamba mamia ya miaka ya kujenga taasisi madhubuti za kidemokrasia nchini marekani itashinda uchoyo na uyangyangu binafsi . Mungu aibariki Amerika kwa kurudi kwa maadili yetu ya msingi.

AMJAMBO AFRICA!

KASORO YA MUHULA WA TATU BARANI AFRIKA

Uchaguzi wa hivi karibuni wa urais wa Guinea na Ivory Coast.

Novemba 7 Alpha Conde mwenye umri wa miaka 82 ali-tangazwa mshindi wa uchaguzi wa urais wa Guinea ambao ulimpa kipindi cha tatu chenye utata katika ofisi ya Guinea . Ivory Coast, nchi jirani ya kusini ya Guinea pia hivi kari-buni walimchagua tena rais wao Alassane Ouattara mwenye umri wa miaka 78 kwa muhula wa tatu. Waunaume hawa wote wawili walijiunga na kilabu kinachokuwa zaidi na zaidi cha marais wa Afrika ambao wametafuta nyongeza ofisini licha ya katiba kutoruhusu zaidi ya mihula miwili

Wanachama wa kilabu hiki cha marais wamebuni njia za kuzirekebisha katiba za nchi zao na kuondoa vikwazo vilivy-owafanya wasigombee mihula ya nyongeza ofisini. Wag-ombea hutumia mbinu tofauti tofauti lakini matokeo ni yaleyale . Kwa mfano Alpha Conde alianza “ kampeni ya ku-timiza alichooanza katika kipindi cha awali”. Alassane ouat-tara amedhihirisha kugombea kwake kama kutimiza “ hamu na matakwa ya taifa” baada ya kifo cha ghafla cha mgombea ambaye alikuwa akimtayarisha kwa ofisi. Alikuwa amedhamiria kutoona mamlaka yakienda kwa upinzani wa waziri mkuu wa zamani Pascal AffiN’Guessan Marais wengine wamekuwa madarakani hata zaidi ya vipindi vitatu. Rais Museveni wa Uganda amefanya kamp-eni ya kuondoa kabisa mipaka ya umri katika katiba hivyo kwamba anaweza kugombea tena baada ya miaka 34 ofisini-kulingana na katiba ya Uganda rais hawezi kuwa mdogo chini ya miaka 35 au zaidi ya miaka 75. Hapo awali alifu-tilia mbali mipaka ya muda ya awamu ya urais. Museveni ni miongoni mwa watano waliohudumu kwa muda mrefu zaidi ya marais wa Afrika pamoja na Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo wa Guinea ya Ikweta .ambaye amekuwa madarakani tangu 1979. Marais wengine ambao wameshikilia madaraka kwa miongo kadhaa ni pamoja na Paul Biya wa Kamerun –rais tangu 1982 : Denis Sassou Nguesso wa Kongo Brazza-Ville –ofisini kwa zaidi ya miaka 36: Idriss Debby wa Chad. Rais kwa miaka 29.

Mihula ya ziada mara nyingi husababisha vurugu na wakati mwingine husababisha kifungo cha gerezani na vifo.Kwa mfano hiyo ndiyo hatima ya Pascal N’Guessan ambaye ali-tiwa mbaroni Jumamosi Novemba 7 chini ya mashtaka ya ugaidi baada ya majeshi ya serikali kupigana na wa upin-zani. Mapigano yalisababisha vifo vya zaidi ya raia 40 wa Ivory Coast. Matumaini ya mabadiliko mara nyingi hupotea kadri rais anapong’ang’ania ofisi. Hivyo ndivyo anavy-oimarisha nguvu zake zaidi na kuikandamiza upinzani zaidi.

Julai 28, 2015, akihutubia Umoja wa Afrika. Rais Obama alisema, “wakati kiongozi hujaribu kubadilisha sheria katikati ya mchezo ili kukaa ofisin ni hatari na huleta ugomvi na mara nyingi ni hatua ya kwanza tu kwenye njia hatari.” Muungano wa Afrika umekuwa kimya kuhusu mabadiliko ya kura za urais .

Mfano wa kushikamana na nguvu na ukandamizaji wa watu umesababisha kuondoka Waafrika wengi, ambao wamekim-bia mateso katika nchi zao ,na kuhamia nchi na majimbo mengine [kama Maine], kuendeleza ukuaji wa Waafrika waishio nje ya bara lao.. Katika nakala katika Daily Mav-erick , Mmusi Maimane .wakati mmoja kiongozi wa muungano wa kidemokrasia wa upinzani wa Afrika kusini alisema ``tumeona kila wakati wakombozi wanain-gia madarakani huku waki-ahidi kuleta mabadiliko huku nia yao ikiwa ni ufisadi . Tumeona mfumo wa marais wanaojiita `Big Man’ kujilimbikizia mali kwa kiwango kisi-chowezekana kwa raia wa kawaida ‘ Maimane alionya kuwa ni wakati wa kupi-tishwa umri wa makamo. “Afrika inahitaji vijana na uongozi wenye uwezo ,bila uhusiano wowote na harakati za ukombozi wa za-mani.

WAZIRI MKUU ABIY AHMED WA ETHIOPIA ATANGAZA VITA KATIKA MKOA WA KASKAZINI MWA TIGREY

Mnamo Novemba 4, Waziri mkuu Abiy Ahmed wa Ethiopia aliamuru shughuli za kijeshi dhidi ya mkoa wake wa kaskazini wa Tigray ambao unapakana na nchi ya Eritrea. Mashambulizi ya serikali ya shirikisho dhidi ya hamura ya makombora ya Tigray na vifaa vizito vya uhifadhi wa silaha katika eneo la mji mkuu wa mkoa wa Mekelle unaanzisha kuongezeka kwa hali ya hofu inayoweza kuzorotika na ku-chochea mzozo ndani na nje ya Ethiopia, hata kusababisha janga kwa pembe ya Afrika .

Waziri mkuu Abiy Ahmed ameelezea mgomo huo kama mashambulizi ambayo anaahidi kuendelea ya kujihami dhidi ya wanajeshi wa Tigray walioshambulia majeshi ya serkali ya shirikisho. The Telegraph imeripoti kuwa karibu askari 100 wa serikali wanatibiwa kwenye tovati kwa majer-aha ya bunduki, wakati kesi za walio hali mahututi zi-nakimbizwa na ambulensi kwa huduma za kiafya katika mkoa wa Gondar.

Serikali imetangaza hali ya dharura huko Tigray na imepiga kura mahali hapo kushikilia ufadhili wa kifedha kwa mkoa. Kwa kukamata udhibiti na kupunguza uhalali wa uongozi ,wabunge wa shirikisho wameidhinisha serikali ya mpito huko Tigrey.

Muungano wa Tigrey Revolution Front [TPLF] na Abiy Ahmed wana historia ndefu katika miaka ya 1970’s muungano huo na miungano mingine, iliungana kuuan-gusha utawala wa Mengistu.Hatimaye walimpindua miaka ya 1990’s. Chama kimoja, Eritrea Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) ilitangaza uhuru wa Eritrea. Baadaye Tigray peoples Liberation Army ilichukua uongozi wa miungano iliyosalia pamoja na kiongozi wake Meles Zenawi akawa waziri mkuu wa Ethiopia nafasi aliyoishikilia kwa miaka 20. Akiwa uon-gozeni, serikali ya Tigrey iliyatenga makundi ya makabila mengine jambo ambalo lilileta wasiwasi dhidi ya serikali na kutengeneza njia kwa Abiy Ahmed wa kabila la Oromo kushika hatamu mwaka wa 2018.

Aljazeera inaripoti kuwa viongozi wa mkoa wa Tigray walianza kufanya ugomvi na serikali ya Abiy Ahmed mara tu alipokuwa waziri mkuu. Walimshtaki kwa kuwaweka pembeni wakati aliporafikiana na uongozi wa Eritrea. Na kwa kweli, baada ya kupaa kwake madarakani, waziri mkuu Abiy alipiganisha viongozi wafisadi katika nafasi za juu ambao wengi wao walikuwa kutoka Tigray. Tigray inaamini kuwa hatua ya kurekebisha uhusiano kati ya serikali ya Abiy na Eritria ni njia ya kuwadhibiti wao. Baada ya shambulio la angani na serikali ya shirikisho, Tigrey ilifunga anga lake na kuzuia barabara kufikia mkoa huo. Muungano wa TPLF umekamata kituo cha kijeshi cha uongozi cha shirikisho cha kaskazini, kitendo ambacho waziri mkuu Abiy Ahmed amekiita ‘crossing a red line’

Ethiopia inakabiliwa na changamoto nyingi kwa sasa zaidi ya ugomvi baina yake na Tigrey pamoja na janga la COVID 19 na mzozo mkubwa na Misri juu ya mto Nile. Waziri mkuu Abiy Ahmed, alipewa tuzo ya amani ya Nobel mnamo 2019 baada ya juhudi zake za kupatanisha mgogoro nchini Sudan, Sudan kusini, Djibouti, Kenya na Somalia. Kwa sasa uwezo wake wa kutuliza gasia wahitajika sana katika nchi

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SOMALI TRANSLATION

QURUXDA DIMUQRAADIYADDA
Qoragu Waa :Georges Budagu Makoko

Quruxda dimuqraadiyadu waxay tahay in nidaamka uu salka ku hayo awood la siiyay muwaadinka si uu u go'aansado qofka loo codeyn doono xafiiska. Qaar badan oo ka mid ah 7.8 bilyan oo qof oo adduunka ah ayaan lagu barakeynin mudnaanta doorashada hoggaamiyeyaashooda, laakiin muwaadiniinta Mareykanka ayaa ah, iyo taariikh taariikhi ah 161 milyan oo Mareykan ah ayaa u soo baxay inay codeeyaan intii lagu jiray doorashadii madaxtinimada ee 2020. Xaqiiqdii, 2020 waxay ahayd doorashadii ugu il-baxnimada badnayd ee mtaariikhda casriga ah ee Mareykanka - tanina waa tiyoo ay jirto aafada aan caadiga ahayn ee COVID-19 oo qaaday boqolaal kun oo qof oo qoysas ah. Xitaa inta lagu gudajiray dhibaatan baahsan, malaayiin Mareykan ah ayaa hubiyay inay adeegsadeen awooda codkooda. Saaxiibadayda muhaajiriinta ahi waxay rumaysan yihiin in sababta dad badani u soo baxeen ay ahayd inay u dagaallamaan qiyamka dimuqraadiyadda. Dadka midabada leh waxay u codeeyeen tiro aad u tiro badan, waana ku faraxsanahay in codkeena mar dambe aan la iska indhatiri karin howlaha doorashada.

Xitaa dhalinyarada oo aan si caadi ah u codeyn ayaa u soo baxay.

Waxaan joogay Mareykanka 18-kii sano ee la soo dhaafay waxaan ka qeyb galay doorashooyin dhowr ah. Laakiin waligeys ma soo marin xilli doorasho sida kan oo kale, oo aan guuleystaha aan lagu dhawaaqin Maalinta Doorashada, iyo heerka welwelka la dareemayo ee bulshada soogalootiga ah maalinba maalinta ka dambeysa sii kordheysa iyadoo ummaddu sugeyso natiijooyinka. Waan ogahay inaan taleefankayga iska haysto meel u dhow 24/7, oo aan tooso habeen kasta marar badan si aan u arko haddii natiijooyinka ugu dambeeya la dhejiyay.

Inta badan dadka aan ogahay waxay waqti badan la qaa-teen lahadlida asxaabtooda gudaha Mareykanka iyo dibada, dhamaanteen waxaan iskudayeynaa inaan saadaalin sax ah ka bixinno natiijada. Qofkasta oo aan ogahay wuxuu ahaa mid xiiraya diirada saara doorashooyinka. Afar sano oo du-ufaan ah oo ku hoos noolaa maamulka hada jira aad ayey ugu adkeyd bulshada soo galootiga ah.

Inbadan waxay ila wadaageen inay gebi ahaanba kalsooni-dii kala noqdeen dalka, rajadoodii iyo himiladoodii mustaqbalna ay burbureen afartii sano ee lasoo dhaafay. Waxay ka hadleen saameynta ay siyaasadaha socdaalka ee Trump ku yeelatay bulshada soo galootiga ah ee halkan ku nool Maine, waxayna sheegeen in aaminsanaantooda qiimaha asaasiga ah ee Mareykanka ee soo dhaweynta soo galootiga ay si weyn u wiiqantay Waxay sheegeen in ay ka naxeen amarada joogtada ah ee fulinta ee lagu bartilmaameed-sanayo soo galootiga, iyo in kumanaan beegsashada muhaajiriinta, iyo in kumanaan qof ay ka quusteen Mareykanka oo ay u guureen Kanada, si ay magangalyo uga helaan.

Xubnaha bulshada ayaa rumeysan in natiijada ka soo baxday doorashooyinka sanadkaan ay tahay mid war aad u wanaagsan u ah soo galootiga, waxayna rajeynayaan maalmo wanaagsan oo soo socda. Waxay ku qanacsan yihiin in aysan mar dambe ka kici doonin tweets laga yaabo inay u sheegaan inay xirxiraan oo ay ka baxaan waddankii ay u qaateen sidii gurigooda cusub, ee nabdoon. Dadku waxay ka hadleen doorashadii Joe Biden inay ahayd guul laga gaadhay cabsida. Gabar da 'yar oo aan la hadlay oo ka qeyb qaadatay seddex doorasho oo Mareykan ah tan iyo markii ay muwaadinimada qaadatay waxay tiri, “Maamulkaan wuxuu ahaa mid culeys badan ku haya muhaajiriinta, iyo isbadalada joogtada ah ee ku saabsan soogalootiga ee inta badan la fuliyo ayaa nolosha muhaajiriinta aad u adag. Rajada aan ka qabo maamulka cusub ayaa ah inaan awoodi doono inaan ogaado waxa aan filan karo oo aanan ka nixin waqtiga oo dhan - afartii sano ee la soo dhaafay waxay ahaayeen kuwo qiiri leh. Waxaan rajeynayaa in maamulka cusub ee Joe Biden uu naga caawin doono habka bogsashada. Rajada ayaa dib loogu soo celiyey dibedda iyo sidoo kale Maine.

Qaxooti reer Koongo ah oo ku nool Kenya wuxuu ii sheegay in “Hoggaanka Mareykanka ee adduunka oo dhan si xun u wiiqmay. Waxaan rajeyneynaa inaan aragno mar kale oo ay dib u soo noqoto. Inta badan soogalootiga ka yimaada Afrika waxay yaqaanaan qalalaasaha shacabka kadib doorashooyinka, qaasatan marka xisbi siyaasadeed diido Tusaalooyinkii ugu dambeeyay waa doorashadii 2015 ka dhacday Burundi; doorashadii 2017 ka dhacday Kenya; doorashadii 2018 ka dhacday DR Congo. Muhaajiriinta arka Jamhuuriyiinta oo banaanbaxyo ka dhigaya waddooyinka, iyo Madaxweyne Trump oo la tartamaya natiijada doorashada, ayaa ka baqaya in rabshadaha shacabka ay isu rogaan rabshado Dimuqraadiyadu waa mid aad u jilicsan waana in la ilaaliyaa - marka la waayo, waxay qaadataa

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sanado badan in dib loo helo, mararka qaarna weligeed waa la waayaa. Tusaale ahaan, 1930-kii doorashooyin dimoqraadi ah ayaa keenay xukunka Hitler, laakiin markaa waddaniyiin xisbigii ayaa gacanta ku dhigay oo ajendahoodii ku soo rogay dalka oo dhan.

Baryadayda qumman waxay tahay in boqolaal sano oo dhisida hay'ado dimoqraadi ah oo xoog leh gudaha Mareykanka ay ka guuleysan doonaan damaca shaqsiga iyo danahooda gaarka ah. Ilaahay ha barakeeyo Ameerika dib ugu noqoshada qiimaheena asaasiga ah.

AFRIKA “SADDEXDII MUDDO” MAANIYA ELECTIONS DOORASHOYINKII MADAXTINIMADA EE DHOWAAN KA DHACAY GUINEA IYO IVORY COAST

Bishii Nofeembar 7, Alpha Condé, oo 82 jir ah, ayaa lagu dhawaaqay inuu ku guuleystey doorashadii madaxweynenimada ee Guinea, taas oo u siisey inuu mar saddexaad la wareego xafiiska.

Ivory Coast, Guinea deriskeeda koonfureed, sidoo kale dhawaan waxay dib u doorteen madaxweynahooda, Alasane Ouattara, oo ah 78 jir, markii saddexaad. Labada ninba waxay ku biirayaan naadiga sii kordheysa ee madaxweynayaasha afrika ee raadsaday shuruudo dheeri ah xafiiska markay dhacayaan muddadooda dastuurku oggol yahay laba xilli. Xubno badan oo ka tirsan 'naadigan madaxweynenimada ah' waxay heleen qaabab ay dib ugu eegaan dastuurka dalkooda oo ay meesha uga saaraan caqabadaha hortaagan in loo kordhiyo xafiiska.

Buugga ciyaaraha ee musharixiinta way kala duwan yihiin, laakiin natiijada waa isku mid. Alpha Conde, tusaale ahaan, wuxuu ku orday olole ah 'fulinta wixii uu ku bilaabay ereyadii hore'; Alassane Ouattara wuxuu ku sifeeyey orodkiisa inuu ahaa 'go'aan loola jeedo in lagu qanciyo rabitaanka umadda' ka dib markii uu si lama filaan ah u dhintey murashaxii uu u diyaarinaayey xafiiska - waxaa ka go'an inuusan arkin awood u socota xerada mucaaradka ee Raiisel Wasaarihi hore Pascal. Affi N'Guessan.

Madaxweynayaasha qaar waxay xukunka hayeen xitaa in kabadan sadex xilli. Madaxweyne Museveni ee Uganda wuxuu olole ugu jiray inuu gabi ahaanba meesha ka saaro xadidaada da'da ee dastuurka si uu markale u tartami karo kadib 34 sano oo uu xafiiska joogay - sida uu qabo dastuurka Uganda, madaxweynuhu ma ka yaraan karo 35 ama ka weyn 75 sano.

Wuxuu horey u tirtiray xaddidaaddii muddada. Museveni wuxuu ka mid yahay shanta madaxweyne ee ugu waqtiga dheer Africa, waxaa weheliya Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo oo u dhashay Equatorial Guinea, oo xukunka hayey ilaa 1979. Madaxweynayaashii kale ee xukunka hayey tobanaan sano waxaa ka mid ah Paul Biya oo reer Cameroon ah - madaxweyne ilaa 1982; Denis Sassou Nguesso oo reer Congo Brazza Ville ah - oo xilka hayay in ka badan 36 sano; Idriss Deby Itno oo reer Chad ah, madaxweyne muddo 29 sano ah.

Muddooyinka dheeriga ahi waxay badanaa kiciyaan rabshado, mararka qaarkoodna waxay keenaan xukunno xabsi ah iyo dhimasho. Taasi waa halka uu ku dambeeyo Pascal N'Guessan, tusaale ahaan, oo la qabtay Sabtidii, Noofambar 7 iyada oo lagu eedeeyay argagixisanimu ka dib markii ciidammada dowladdu ay isku dhaceen mucaaradka. Iska horimaadyadaasi waxaa ku dhintay in ka badan 40 reer Ivooriyaan ah. Rajada isbedelku inta badan way sii yaraataa inta uu madaxweyne ku sii dheganaado xafiiska, inta uu xoojiyo awoodiisa, ayuu si buuxda u cabudhiyaa mucaaradka.

Bishii Luulyo 28, 2015, oo uu la hadlayey Midowga Afrika, Madaxweyne Obama wuxuu yidhi, “Marka hoggaamiye isku dayo inuu beddelo xeerarka dhexda ciyaarta si uu xafiiska u sii joogo oo keliya, taasi waxay halis u tahay degganaansho la'aan iyo isku dhac - oo badiyaa waa uun marka hore ka leexo dariiqa halista badan. ” Midowga Afrika wuxuu si joogta ah uga aamusnaa kiisaska la xiriiira isbeddelada dastuurka ee

xaddidaadda muddada madaxweynaha. Qaabka ku dheganaanta awoodda iyo cabudhinta dadweynaha ayaa horsee-day in ay qaxaan dad badan oo Afrikaan ah, kuwaas oo ka soo cararay cadaadiska waddamadooda, una guuray dalal kale iyo gobollo (sida Maine!), Iyaga oo sii wadaya kobaca Qurba-joogta Afrika. . Maqaalka Daily Maverick, Mmusi Maimane, oo mar hoggaamiye ka ahaa South Africa's Democratic Alliance Alliance, ayaa ku dooday, “Waxaan aragnay, waqti iyo waqti, xorriya-siiyayaashu inay xukunka la wareegaan iyadoo ay jiraan waxyaalo badan oo kacaan ah, kaliya ay u sujuudeen jirraabadda masruufka iyo musuqmaasuqa Waxaan aragnay tiro madaxweynayaal ah oo Man weyn ah oo hanti urursanaya oo aan la qiyaasi karin muwaadiniinta caadiga ah ”. Maimane wuxuu ka digay in la joogo waqtigii budada loogu gudbin lahaa jilasha soo koraya. “Afrika waxay u baahan tahay hoggaan cusub, dhalinyaro, iyo karti leh, iyada oo aan wax xiriir ah la lahayn dhaqdhaqaaqyadii xor-riyadda ee la soo dhaafay.

RAIISEL WASAARE ABIY AHMED EE ITOOBIYA WUXUU KU DHAWAAQAY DAGAAL KA DHAN AH WAQOYIGA GOBOLKA TIGRAY

4tii Nofeembar, Raiisel wasaare Abiy Ahmed ee Itoobiya wuxuu amar ku bixiyay hawlgallo militari oo ka dhan ah waqooyiga Gobolka Tigray, oo xuduud la leh waddanka Ereteriya. Duqeymaha ay dowlada dhexe la beegsatay gantaalada iyo goobaha hubka culus lagu keydiyo ee kuyaala magaalada caasimada ah ee Mekelle ayaa muujineysa khilaaf xoogan oo mudo soo jiitamayay, kaasoo cabsi galinaya gu-daha iyo dibada Ethiopia ee ah in khilaafku uu si dhaqso ah faraha uga baxo. cawaaqib xumoHornafrik.

Raiisel wasaare Abiy Ahmed wuxuu ku tilmaamay duqeymaha inay yihiin weeraro rogaal celis ah, oo uu ku dhaartay inuu sii wadi doono, kadib markii ciidanka Tigreega sumcad xumo ay ku weerareen ciidamada federaalka ee gobolka. Wargeyska The Telegraph ayaa qoray in ku dhowaad 100 askari oo ka tirsan dowladda lagu daweynayo goobta dhaawacyadii qoryaha, halka kiisaska qatarta ah ay la soo carareen ambalaasyada xarumaha caafimaadka ee gobolka Gonder.

Dawladdu waxay ku dhawaaqday xaalad degdeg ah Tigreega waxayna u codeeysay inay xayiraad ku sameysu maalgalinta federaalka ee gobolka. Si loola wareego xukunka loona sharciyeeyo hoggaanka hadda jira, xildhibaanada federaalka waxay ansixiyeen dhismaha dowlad kumeel gaar ah oo ka jirta Tigray.

Jabhadda Xoreynta Dadka Tigray (TPLF) iyo Abiy Ahmed waxay leeyihiin taariikh dheer. 1970-yadii, kooxda TPLF, oo ay weheliyaan jabhaddo kale oo hubaysan, ayaa si wada jir ah isugu soo uruuriyay inay ridaan xukunkii foosha xumaa ee Mengistu, oo ay aakhirkii xukunka ka tuureen 1990-yadii. Qayb ka mid ah, Jabhadda Xoreynta Dadka Eritrea (EPLF), ayaa markaa ku dhawaaqday madaxbannaanida Eritrea. Dhanka kale, Ciidanka Xoreynta Tigray ayaa la wareegay hoggaanka isbahaysigii hadhay, hoggaamiyahoodiina, Meres Zenawi, wuxuu noqday ra'iisul wasaare ee Itoobiya, jago uu hayay 20 sano. Intii ay xukunka haysay, dowladda uu hoggaamiyo Tigreega waxay dhinac iska dhigtay qoomiyadaha kale, kuwaasoo kiciyay qalalaase ka dhan ah dowladda, waxayna wadada u xaartay Abiy Ahmed, oo ah qowmiyadda Oromada, inuu xukunka la fuulo 2018.

Aljazeera waxay qortay in hogaamiyaasha gobolka Tigreega ay bilaabeen khilaaf kala dhaxeeyo xukuumada Abiy Ahmed isla markii uu noqday madaxweynaha. Waxay ku eedeeyeen inuu dhinac iska dhigay, halka uu saaxiib la ahaa hoggaanka Ereteriya, runtiina markii uu xukunka la wareegay, Raiisel wasaare Abiy wuxuu gacan bir ah ku qabtay hoggaamiyeyaasha musuqmaasuqa ee jagooyinka ugu sarreeya, kuwaas oo badankood ka soo jeeday Tigray. Tigray ayaa tuhunsan in tallaabada lagu hagaajinayo xiriirka u dhexeeya xukuumadda Abiy iyo Ereteriya ay tahay hab lagu xakameeyo. Kadib duqeymihii cirka ee ay dawladda federaalka ah, Tigray ayaa xidhay hawadeeda waxayna xidhay waddooyinka gala gobolka. Kooxda TPLF ayaa lawareegtay xaruntii militariga federaalka ee taliska waqooyi, ficilkaas oo uu raiisel wasaare Abiy Ahmed ugu yeeray 'ka guddida khad cas.' , iyo khilaaf weyn oo kala dhexeeya Masar xagga wabiga Niil. Raiisel wasaare Abiy Ahmed ayaa la gudoonsiiyay abaalmarinta Nobel Peace Prize sanadka 2019 kadib dadaalkiisa ku aadan dhexdhexaadinta qalalaasaha ka taagan Suudaan, Koonfurta Suudaan, Jabuuti, Kenya iyo Soomaaliya Hadda awoodiisa amaanta ee xasilinta xiisadaha ayaa aad looga baahan yahay dalkiisa, qaaradda oo dhanna waxay isha ku haysaa inay arkaan waxa uu sameyn karo.



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NEWS FROM AFRICA

by Jean Damascène Hakuzimana

Humanitarian Crisis in Tigray region of Ethiopia

Tensions between the federal government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia and leaders of the country's northern Tigray Region have built steadily over a period of years, and in early November those tensions boiled over. On November 4, Prime Minister Abiy ordered military operations against Tigray's missile and heavy weapons storage facilities around the regional capital of Mekelle. The prime minister described the strikes as counter-attacks, staged in retaliation for alleged killings of federal troops on November 3 by Tigray's army. The Telegraph reported that around 100 government soldiers were treated on site for gunshot wounds after the November 3 operation, while graver cases were rushed by ambulance to health care facilities in the region of Gondar.

September marked an escalation of the long-simmering internal dispute, when the Tigray leaders ignored the prime minister's ruling that postponed regional elections – the reason cited for the postponement was the pandemic – and held them anyhow. The attacks in early November have since devolved into full-fledged fighting between the Ethiopian Federal Army and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). At least 30,000 people have now fled the region to seek refuge in Sudan, and the United Nations has declared the situation a full-scale humanitarian crisis and is making plans to accommodate a possible 200,000 refugees. According to Amnesty International, a massacre took place in Mai-Kadra in the South West Zone of Ethiopia's Tigray Region on the night of November 9, during which at least 500 civilians were killed by knife and machete. Responsibility for the massacre has not been determined. Anxiety is high both within and outside Ethiopia that the conflict will escalate even further, potentially with catastrophic consequences for the Horn of Africa.

To date, neither side in the conflict shows signs of backing down. On the contrary, in a move apparently designed to destabilize the Tigray Region's leadership, Abiy has ordered attacks to continue. And on their side, Tigray forces have fired missiles on neighboring Eritrea, accusing them of supporting the federal government. In an unusual move, Ethiopia army chief has accused the World Health Organization's Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of backing Tigray forces, a region he is from. He has denied these allegations. Dozens of U.S. senators have written to the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, urging him to pressure Ethiopia to de-escalate the conflict. Ethiopians in the Diaspora are deeply concerned – telecommunication in the Tigray region has been cut, and they are finding it hard to reach loved ones back home.

In the 1970s, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), along with other armed factions, rallied together to bring down the brutal regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam, whom they finally overthrew in the 1990s. One faction, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), then proclaimed the independence of Eritrea. Meanwhile, the Tigray People's Liberation Army took on leadership of the remaining coalition and its leader, Meres Zenawi, became prime minister of Ethiopia, a position he held for 20 years. While in power, the Tigray-led government sidelined other ethnic groups, which stoked unrest against the government and paved the way for Abiy Ahmed, an ethnic Oromo, to climb to power in 2018.

Al Jazeera reports that the Tigray region's leaders began feuding with Abiy's government as soon as he became president. They accused him of sidelining them while befriend Eritrea's leadership, and in fact, after his ascension to power, Prime Minister Abiy cracked down on leaders in top positions, the majority of whom were from Tigray, accusing them of corruption. Leaders in Tigray suspect that the move to normalize relations between Abiy's government and Eritrea is a way to control them. After the airstrikes by the federal government, Tigray shut down its airspace and blocked road access to the region. The TPLF seized the federal military facility of the Northern Command, an act that Abiy called "crossing a red line."

Ethiopia is facing many challenges right now, in addition to the tension with Tigray, among them COVID-19 and a major dispute with Egypt over the Nile River. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019 after his efforts to mediate the crisis in Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti, Kenya, and Somalia. Now his lauded ability to ease tensions is much needed in his own country, and the whole continent is watching to see what he will do.

Africa's 'Third Term' mania

Recent presidential elections in Guinea and Ivory Coast

On November 7, Alpha Condé, age 82, was declared the winner of Guinea's presidential elections, which granted him a controversial third term in office. Ivory Coast, Guinea's southern neighbor, also recently re-elected their president, Alassane Ouattara, age 78, for a third term. Both men join the growing club of African presidents who have sought additional terms in office at the expiration of their constitutionally allowed two terms. Many members of this "presidential club" have found ways to revise their country's constitution and remove obstacles that stood in their way to additional terms in office.

The candidates' playbooks vary, but the result is the same. Alpha Condé, for example, ran on a campaign of "fulfilling what he started in earlier terms." Alassane Ouattara has characterized his run as "a decision meant to satisfy the desire of the nation" after the sudden death of the candidate he had been grooming for office; he was determined not to see power go to the opposition camp of former Prime Minister Pascal Affi N'Guessan.

Some presidents have been in power even longer than three terms. President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda has campaigned to completely remove age limits in the constitution so that he can run again after 34 years in office; according to the Uganda constitution, the president cannot be younger than 35 or older than 75 years old. He previously scrapped term limits. Museveni is among the top five longest-serving African presidents, alongside Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea, who has been in power since 1979. Other presidents who have held onto power for decades include Paul Biya of Cameroon, president since 1982; Denis Sassou-Nguesso of Congo-Brazzaville (Republic of Congo) – in office for more than 36 years; Idriss Deby Itno of Chad, president for 29 years.

Extra terms often spark violence, and sometimes lead to jail sentences and deaths. Such is the fate of Pascal N'Guessan, for instance, who was arrested on Saturday, November 7, under charges of terrorism, after government forces clashed with the opposition. The clashes left more than 40 Ivorians dead. Hope for change often fades the longer a president clings to office, the more he consolidates his power, the more thoroughly he suppresses the opposition.

In a July 28, 2015, address to the African Union, U.S. President Barack Obama said, "When a leader tries to change the rules in the middle of the game just to stay in office, that risks instability and strife – and is often just a first step down a perilous path." The African Union has frequently been silent in cases involving constitutional changes to presidential term limits.

The pattern of clinging to power and suppression of the populace has led to the exodus of many Africans, who have fled persecution in their home countries and moved to other places (such as Maine!), continuing the growth of the African Diaspora. In an article in the Daily Maverick, Mmusi Maimane, at one-time leader of South Africa's Opposition Democratic Alliance, argued, "We have seen, time and time again, the liberators come to power amid fanfares of revolution, only to bow to the temptations of patronage and corruption. We have seen a litany of Big Man presidents amassing wealth on a scale unimaginable to ordinary citizens." Maimane cautioned that it is time to pass the baton to younger generations. "Africa requires fresh, young, and able leadership, without any ties to the liberation movements of the past."

Return of Boeing 737 MAX recalls Ethiopian airlines tragedy

The Boeing 737 Max was cleared on November 18 to return to the skies after being grounded for 20 months. The grounding followed two fatal crashes that together cost the lives of 346 people on a 2018 Indonesian Airlines flight and a 2019 Ethiopian Airlines flight.

The 2019 crash happened just minutes after the pilot took off from Addis Ababa airport on its way to Kenya. The accident sent waves of grief across the world and recalled the 2018 crash associated with Indonesian Airlines. An inquiry grounded the Boeing 737 Max after determining that the problem was with the planes, not the pilots.

Boeing says they have spent the last 20 months correcting the aircraft's problems. David Calhoun, Boeing CEO, said the company will never forget the lives lost in the two accidents which led to an extensive examination of the planes and the 20-month suspension of 737 Max flights. The U.S. Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) has now given the go-ahead for the 737 Max to resume flights.

Families of Ethiopian Airlines crash victims are urging the FAA not to approve the return of Boeing 737 Max to the air until the final crash report has been released. According to CNN, the grounding has already cost Boeing losses that amount to \$20 billion. Some of the money has gone toward compensation for customers whose planes have been grounded, and some has paid for upgrades to the aircraft. In September 2019, Boeing announced they would provide \$144,500 for each of the victims. Ethiopian Airlines, the largest carrier on the African Continent, is still awaiting compensation from Boeing. According to Reuters, Ethiopian Airlines expected the compensation in June 2020.



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Ugandan opposition leader Bobi Wine jailed ahead of elections

Ugandan police and the Red Cross both reported on November 19 that 16 people were killed and many others injured following riots and violence sparked by the arrest and jailing of musician and legislator Bobi Wine, who has been campaigning to capture the presidency and end President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni's 34 years in power.



Wine, whose given name is Robert Kyagulanyi, was arrested on November 18. The police have accused him of violating anti-COVID-19 measures. His arrest has ignited huge riots across major towns in Uganda, with youth barricading roads and lighting fires to demand Wine's release, according to *Al Jazeera*.

Wine has emerged as a serious contender against 76-year-old Museveni for the January 2021 presidential elections in Uganda. After a career as a pop star in Uganda, Wine entered politics and won a parliamentary seat. Being arrested is nothing new for him. In 2018, he was arrested alongside friends while on the campaign trail, and they were severely tortured by security forces. Wine had to be evacuated – on crutches – for advanced treatment in the U.S. Before returning to Uganda, he told *The Atlantic* that he has no other home except Uganda.

Not the first opponent to challenge Museveni, Wine faces the same fate as his predecessors. Kizza Besigye, once an ally and the personal doctor to Museveni during the war of independence, later broke with him and started the Forum for Democratic Change. Since 2000, when he first challenged Museveni for the presidency, Besigye has been arrested and jailed 43 times, according to his 2015 campaign address, as reported by New Vision.

Bobi Wine came to politics after achieving fame through music. *Al Jazeera* reports that his fame has earned him a massive following among youth, who are tired of a 34-year Museveni reign. Many of these young people were not yet born when Museveni first ascended to power. Security forces have now shot at youthful protesters with live bullets and tear gas, and 350 of them were arrested after Wine's November 18 arrest.

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Piece together project celebrates Portland's East Bayside community | By Ulya Aligulova



Alain Nahimana Photo | Joseph Shaw

The Piece Together Project is a series of murals that represent and honor the residents of the East Bayside neighborhood in Portland. The murals were created by painter and muralist Ryan Adams and his wife, textile and pattern designer Rachel Adams, whose colorful and ornate patterns are incorporated into the work. They're creating the vibrant murals to pay tribute to the people who have helped East Bayside flourish. The portraits represent a legacy for future generations, and will serve as a reminder that what makes a city truly unique and special is the people who live in it.

The Adamses, along with their two children, live in Portland. Adams's background is in traditional graffiti art, which developed into large-scale mural work, hand lettered designs, and signs. His signature "gem" style is a geometric breakdown of letterforms, with shadows and highlights that create depth and movement throughout the murals. His pieces tend to be



Nyamuon Nguany Machar, known as "Moon" I'm Your Neighbor Books, Portland Photo | Joseph Shaw

bold and colorful, and often include words. The couple runs several other businesses, including Tachee, Rachel's hand printed home goods and kids clothing company.

A native Portlander, Ryan Adams has watched the city change drastically over the years, with neighborhoods becoming increasingly diverse, and new businesses, attractions, and condos filling the streets. In a recent interview, he said, "As much as I love all the development coming to Portland, it's extremely important to honor the folks that make the community as great as it is." With the arrival of so many new restaurants, bars, and breweries, he noted that it's easy to focus on the growth and the change. But these companies wouldn't even be interested in East Bayside if not for the people who live there and make it special. The Piece Together Project is intended to ensure that the people who call the neighborhood home are not lost in the fray. The Adams's murals spotlight Bayside residents who have advocated on behalf of marginalized community residents and helped make Portland the diverse and accepting city it is known to be today.

When Ryan Adams first started talking to people in East Bayside about who in the neighborhood had made an unusually big impact on their community, the unanimous answer was Moon – Nyamuon Nguany Machar. So she was the first subject of the Piece Together Project. Originally from South Sudan, Moon grew up in East Bayside, where she now works as a cultural strategist advocating for mental health care and legislation that benefits immigrants and other marginalized groups. A mural with her image is featured on the side wall of Rising Tide Brewery on Fox Street.

The project's second mural commemorates the late Alain Nahimana, who passed away earlier this year. His portrait is on the back wall of Coffee by Design on Diamond Street. Nahimana came to Maine, by way of California, as an asylum seeker from Burundi in 2010.

With Damas Rugaba, he co-founded the influential Greater Portland Immigrant Welcome Center and was a prominent figure both within the Portland community and nationally. "His work advocating for immigrants, social justice, equality, and women's rights will be remembered by our community for generations to come," the two artists have written on the project website.

Whether they know Ryan and Rachel Adams or not, Portland residents likely have seen the murals. A mural of George Floyd, painted in June on an exterior wall of Aura on Center Street, went viral and became one of the symbols of

the Black Lives Matter protests against police brutality that followed Floyd's May 25 killing in Minneapolis. "It was a very emotional thing to paint," recounted Adams. "The goal behind it was not to get attention for myself, but to make sure that this person's legacy, what he stood for within our culture, is not forgotten." The mural even caught the attention of Floyd's family, who sent a thank you note.

The cultural awakening provoked by the BLM movement has forced people to begin confronting the fact that people of color – artists in particular – as well as businesses they own, are often overlooked. Adams noted that his family has started getting more recognition recently. "All of a sudden, the people that I've been surrounding with my murals for nearly a decade recognized that I exist!"

Ryan Adams said his personal experiences with discrimination have led him to vow to make accessibility and representation the cornerstones of his practice. "I know what it's like to be excluded from the world of fine art. It can be very dismissive of things that don't fit the mold, whether that's because of what someone looks like or the materials they use."

By its very nature, public art is accessible. One doesn't need to cross the threshold of a gallery to enjoy it. And Adams stressed that representation within the world of visual art not only means representation of different people, but also different ideas and different paths people can take that aren't in line with traditional ones. "Growing up, I didn't see murals of people who looked like me or people like me represented in art galleries. I want to make sure that people out there who look like me, use materials like mine, or go about visual art in an unconventional way, know that there's a space in art for us, too."



Alain Nahimana Photo | Mary Allen Lindemann

I'm Your Neighbor Books

by Karen Cadbury

Young and old, almost everyone has reduced or eliminated the amount of time spent reading physical books, newspapers, and magazines. This does not mean that people are not reading. Actually, studies indicate people are reading more than ever before – but many are doing it on electronic devices.

One area of publishing, however, remains firmly wedded to the production of amazing, creative, beautiful, and instructive hardbound books: children's literature and picture books.

Kirsten Cappy, the founder and executive director of I'm Your Neighbor Books (IYNB), in Portland, has found that artistically beautiful, elegant, informative, and culturally-sensitive children's picture books can help young immigrants with their transitions into new communities.

Cappy worked in the book publishing field as a marketing consultant in New Jersey and North Carolina, and as a merchandising manager and general manager for Barnes & Noble Booksellers in New England, before moving from Rhode Island to Maine only a week after September 11, 2001.

One of her first marketing projects in Maine was a book fair for middle school students.

Though she thought she had a fair number of books to offer young people from kindergarten through 12th grade, at the fair she was approached by two young immigrants from Somalia, who asked for books on Somalia or the Horn of Africa. Cappy realized she had no books that fit the bill. The students, who were Muslim, then requested books on Islam, and here she also found she had nothing to offer.

"I did not have children's books available that could help these teenagers find information and stories about their own personal experiences – books that could explain about their lives before immigrating to the United States," said Cappy, "or that described their new American communities."

Her experience with the two teens motivated Cappy to research what might be available in intercultural fiction for children. "I began to understand how we could use fiction to help children communicate about questions of identity, themselves, their families, and communities," she said. "And, movements like Black Lives Matter and the push for greater diversity in our schools and libraries were motivating students and teachers to ask for help with interpreting intercultural and intergenerational immigrant experiences."

Cappy looked through what was available in intercultural children's literature and found that "up until 9/11, children's literature books did a good job of telling the Ellis Island immigrants' story, a distinctly European story, about a white world, and with a happy ending." Children's books produced in the 1970s, during and after the Vietnam War, portrayed the resettlement of the Vietnamese boat people. After that time period, intercultural literature for children remained relatively uniform for almost 30 years, Cappy said. There was not much available to explain the experiences of recent immigrants from Africa, Asia, and South America.

After 9/11, circumstances changed radically for immigrants, who were alarmed when the government began separating families at the southern border and instituted travel bans for visitors from primarily Muslim countries.

"The treatment has been racist," said Cappy, "and has affected the emotional and physical well-being of immigrants – individuals, families, and children. The United States' anti-immigrant actions have had a staggering effect, leaving many adults and kids feeling they are not safe or not welcomed."

"I could see that picture books might be highly effective tools for helping children talk about their past and the intercultural issues they experience as new arrivals and new Americans," Cappy said. "The books can function as mirrors, allowing children to see themselves on the pages." Using thought-provoking text and visually compelling book illustrations, the folks at IYNB realized they could change attitudes by allowing readers to meet each other on the



Councilor Pious Ali with Kirsten Cappy (pre-COVID)

pages. Cappy said Maine residents and new immigrants were equally interested in the literature.

When Cappy founded I'm Your Neighbor Books in 2012, she had wanted to use superb children's picture books to help young immigrants "create community conversations on immigration and find ways to welcome new arrivals into the communities in which they were settling."

After several years of operation, Cappy decided that it was necessary to bring the books to the places where children are located, so she founded an IYNB program called The Welcoming Library. "My husband, Mar Mattos, a woodworker, designed and built our original bookcases. Our display cart includes two traveling crates filled with new books, and IYNB's staff provides schools with support." Now, Cappy said, The Welcoming Library has accumulated 30 favorite kindergarten-through-12th-grade books that are artistically beautiful and perfect for communicating with young people.

"The aim of IYNB is to provide schools and libraries with intercultural books that feature the stories of refugees and immigrants, for readers in first- to third-generation families, and to work directly with teachers. IYNB also offers an in-school program on modern migration, and participates in book fairs, such as the Beautiful Blackbird Festival," said Cappy. IYNB founded the festival with partner Diverse BookFinder. The in-person festival was cancelled this year due to COVID, however it did take place virtually. Plans are underway for another Beautiful Blackbird Festival in the summer of 2021.

"A child looking at the illustrations and text can gain knowledge and build connections to a character in a book in 10 minutes," Cappy said. Each school or organization may keep The Welcoming Library materials for six weeks to use for programs on immigration. IYNB provides six to eight discussion questions to help students and teachers draw connections between the stories and the real lives of kids, and to help students get to know each other.

Even today, finding books about the journeys of refugees and their stories of assimilation remains difficult. According to Cappy, IYNB has identified more than 500 titles of books that tell intergenerational, intercultural stories about moving far away from home, family, and friends.

IYNB was "discovered" when Cappy and others spoke about the program at regional library conferences, which resulted in the other organizations asking to participate in the program. In the past few years, IYNB has grown by leaps and bounds, and now operates in 16 libraries in six states: Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Illinois. The program's logo is available in 10 languages. With financial help from the Law Offices of Joe Bornstein, a loyal contributor to the organization, IYNB has distributed more than 500 copies of *When Stars Are Scattered* by Omar Mohamed and Victoria Jamieson, a book



about kids growing up in a refugee camp in Kenya.

Although the books in the I'm Your Neighbor Book collection are for young people, ages kindergarten through 12th grade, the art work makes the books accessible to readers of all ages no matter what their English language skills, Cappy said.

"The Welcoming Library travels to elementary schools, middle schools, public libraries, and community groups,"



Councilor Deqa Dhalac (pre-COVID)

said Cappy. "Immigrants who are adults often use the books marked for ages five to eight, because the books also work – as an immersive, intimate read – for readers of any age. We often suggest to adults that these books are 'a 10-minute cultural experience.'"

Students at the Amanda C. Rowe Elementary School in Portland used The Welcoming Library during a unit on immigration, and created a mural to represent what they'd learned. A fourth grade class at the school hosted a naturalization ceremony for immigrants taking their citizenship oaths. The students greeted people, sang, and offered advice to the new adult citizens about what to do as a naturalized citizen. Xavier Botana, the Superintendent of Portland Public Schools, attended.

To reach young people during the pandemic, IYNB has created book bags that include children's picture books, 10 different videos, and craft projects. Gifts of \$25 go toward the purchase of books for schools and organizations that wish to participate in The Welcoming Library. A donation of \$2,400 makes it possible to build a Welcoming Library cart and expand the program into new schools.

"We need as many voices in the world as possible," said Cappy. "I am proud of the high level of participation we've had from teachers, students, and parents. What we are really trying to do is change minds – we are all about changing minds."

A few of the books in IYNB's collection include:

Wherever I Go by Mary Wagley Copp – The book is about Abia, who has lived at the Shimelba Refugee Camp in northern Ethiopia for seven years.

Joseph's Big Ride by Terry Farish – The story focuses on a refugee boy's overwhelming desire to ride a bicycle, and his travels with his mother to America.

Ice and the Jungle by Ariane Hofmann-Maniyaar – A polar bear gets a job in the jungle, which illustrates the anxieties and difficulties of moving and leaving friends. (Because of feedback Cappy sent to the publishers about using the word "Ice" – which readers were confusing with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency – the British publisher is reprinting the book under a new title.)

Something About America by Maria Testa – A 13-year-old girl from Kosovo moves to Maine and faces adjustments.

When Stars are Scattered by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed – This is the story of Hassan and his brother who have spent most of their lives in Dadaab, a refugee camp in Kenya.

Of Beetles and Angels by Mawi Asdegom – This is a true story of a young boy's flight from Sudan, his struggles, and his eventual graduation from Harvard University. The main character's father is Ethiopian and his mother is Eritrean.

My Friend Jamal by Anna McQuinn – The friendship between Joseph and Jamal is very close. Joseph discovers that although they have a lot in common, they are also dissimilar in certain ways because their families come from different places. (Last summer, a young Congolese boy, who had not spoken in class at all, raised his hand to answer a question after the class read *My Friend Jamal*. Then, he opened a Qur'an and read the whole page aloud. When he had finished, his classmates stood and applauded.)



Portland City Councilor Ali mourns Ghanaian leader

The first thing Portland City Councilor Pious Ali saw when he opened his phone on the morning of November 12 was a text message from his brother in London, breaking the news that Ghanaian ex-president Jerry John Rawlings had just passed away in Accra at the age of 73. Rawlings was president of Ghana from 1981-2001. For Ali, now an American citizen living in Maine, the news touched off many personal recollections.



President Jerry John Rawlings and 'ace photographer' Pious Ali

“Rawlings was the president during my youth, a leader who instilled a sense of pride in being African. He was a Pan-Africanist, in the company of fellow Pan-Africanists Nelson Mandela, Thomas Sankara, and Kwame Nkrumah, who led Ghana to independence in 1957,” Councilor Ali recalled. During his formative high school years, Ali was involved in an after school program at the W.E.B. DuBois Memorial Centre for Pan African Studies, in Accra, located in the house of the late W.E.B. DuBois, who had given up his American citizenship and moved to Ghana.

The program focused on Pan Africanism, or the movement to unify all indigenous and diaspora groups of African descent. “That after school program was made possible by Rawlings,” Ali reminisced.

Later, as an adult, before moving to the U.S., Ali worked as a photojournalist. One of his jobs was in the media company Ohenemedia or (OM Studios), run by his friend Abraham Ohene Djan. Among other shows the company produced was one called “StoryTime,” directed at children (see photo below). After learning of the death of ex-president Rawlings, Djan posted on his Facebook page a photo that Ali had taken of Rawlings for the company, noting, “Pious Ali was one of the team.”

“I was fortunate to spend many years around the president when working in media,” Ali recollected. On his own Facebook page on November 12, Councilor Ali wrote, “Africa just lost one of its finest in recent memory. This one is painful. I hope it’s the last we have to endure. RIP comrade. Thanks for reviving and instilling the Pan African identity in so many of us when we were growing up.”

After stepping down from the presidency in 2001, Rawlings continued to be a force in Ghanaian politics. He served as the African Union’s representative in Somalia, as well as in other international diplomatic posts.

Africa’s leaders issued statements on the important role Rawlings played in African history. African Union Commission chairman Moussa Faki Mahamat tweeted, “Africa has lost a stalwart of Pan Africanism and a charismatic continental statesman.” Ghana’s President Nana

Akufo-Addo, who is from a rival political party, announced seven days of national mourning following Rawlings’ death, saying, “A great tree has fallen, and Ghana is poorer for this loss.”

General elections will be held in Ghana on December 7. The incumbent president, Nana Akufo-Addo, will face off against rival and former president, John Mahama. The two candidates have run against each other three times, and have both served as president.



“Story Time” shoot on the presidential jet 1998 | photo Pious Ali



In a yard in Rockland, Maine

photo | Stacey McCrea Warner

WELCOME HOME.
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MEMIC

A man on the move

| Blake Leifer | Photos Alicia Blackmer

Whether 22-year-old Mazin Ahmed is sprinting on the soccer field for the University of Southern Maine, heading to campus for class, or mentoring other immigrants, it is safe to say that he is one busy man.

Originally from Sudan, Ahmed was only a few months old when he moved with his parents and young brother and sister to Qatar, where he spent his childhood.

In the fourth grade, Ahmed took an interest in athletics and began participating in sports. He immediately emerged as an athlete and started earning recognition. Running always came naturally for him. "I ran track and was faster than all the other kids," he said.

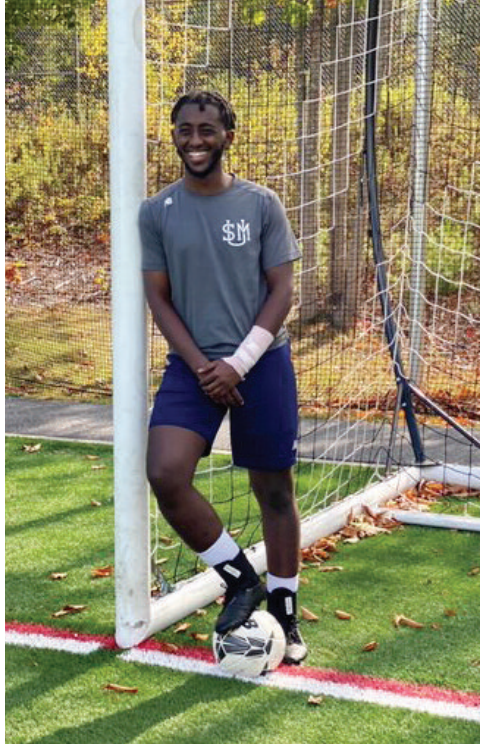
Opportunity came knocking when scouts showed up at Ahmed's elementary school and selected him to try out for a track club team. At the try-out, his athletic ability stood out, and he truly separated himself from the pack. After the try-out, he met with the vice president of the club.

"It's common for the club to ask about your father," he said, and that's what happened. Ahmed told the official that his father had played soccer professionally for the organization, meaning multiple generations of the family were part of the club's lineage.

While running track for the club, Ahmed never felt pressure to pursue professional soccer as a career, although both his father and uncle did. "I didn't pay any attention to soccer," Ahmed said. The only time he played in those days was during pick-up games with friends. Over the next three years, Ahmed ran hurdles for the Al-rayyan Sports Club.

Soon another move was on the horizon for Ahmed and his family. In 2012, they moved to Westbrook, seeking asylum in the United States.

Ahmed's first week in the U.S. opened his eyes to the harsh realities immigrants sometimes face. He had learned English in an Indian school in Qatar. "I was in the locker room changing and overheard some racial slurs made by two students," he said. Startled by his



presence, the students realized they were not alone in the locker room and confronted him verbally; however, Ahmed was able to leave the locker room unharmed.

While attending Westbrook High School, he began participating in competitive soccer for the first time. "I was enjoying it, scored some goals," he said. However, the season would be short-lived for him. On September 21, 2013, Ahmed suffered a broken leg that included a compound fracture of the fibula and tibia bones. He had surgery, and metal rods and screws were put in place to repair the leg. This injury prevented him from walking throughout his entire sophomore year.

By the summer of 2014, he was back on his feet. Over the next two years, Ahmed rose to the top ranks for indoor and outdoor hurdles, eventually becoming the fifth-ranked runner in the entire state of Maine.

Now in his senior year of college, Ahmed is preparing for graduation in the spring of 2021. His major is Human Biology, and he plans to go to graduate school next fall.

When he is not on the field playing soccer for USM, or in school studying, he is a mentor for Gateway Community Services Maine. At Gateway, he helps other immigrants transition into life in the U.S. His work includes teaching others how to make friends in this culture and understand cultural differences. In Ahmed's words, Gateway is "an opportunity for the community to support youth."

Development of youth athletes in the U.S. is drastically different than what Ahmed experienced in Qatar. "It's pay-to-play in the United States, and while there is financial aid and scholarships, not every club has that," he observed. The cost of youth soccer varies widely, but often exceeds \$1,000 for a single player.

Back in Qatar, athletes are supported by the club teams they represent. Two renowned companies that sponsored Ahmed's clubs were sports giants Nike and Adidas. They provided equipment, including all training gear and shoes.

Currently, because of COVID-19, the sports season is uncertain. However, Ahmed hopes to have another soccer season. He believes that sports are important as one means of addressing the challenges immigrants face in the community.

"The number one problem immigrants face is implicit bias and ignorance," he said. "But sports is a universal language. You can play with people from completely different cultures."

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Business, Economics & Financial Literacy

SEASON OF GIVING



Countless nonprofits and organizations throughout the U.S. rely on the goodwill of volunteers and donors – philanthropy – to help support the work they can't achieve using only their budgets. Many programs such as food pantries, after-school programs, libraries, arts organizations actively seek assistance, and donations of time and money help them keep important programs running. Philanthropy is a significant part of Maine's economy.

Even small amounts of money, or giving just a few hours a month, is valuable. A \$5 contribution from a paycheck once a month adds up over time. Some employers identify a program the whole company can support during the holiday season or in a given year and invite employees to donate directly from their paychecks if they choose to participate. Money donated in this way usually stays in the community and benefits a local cause in the area near the business. Donations can be reported on tax returns, and sometimes will lower the donor's overall tax bill. (See "Taxpayers can lower taxable income by giving to charity" elsewhere on this page.)

In addition to helping others, volunteering helps the person who is giving time. Volunteers meet like-minded people and have an opportunity to try new skills that might be personally and professionally beneficial. If new to the U.S., people can practice their English skills and begin to learn the culture of American workplaces. They can build their resumes and demonstrate the importance of helping others, something employers like to see.

Volunteers may choose familiar activities (such as a nurse who spends time at a local retirement home) or something brand new (a dog lover who cleans stalls at a horse rehabilitation center). Many important organizations in communities all over Maine are seeking volunteers. A quick internet search for volunteer opportunities, or talking to friends and acquaintances, can lead to an opportunity that fits with someone's lifestyle and interests. Volunteering adds a new dimension to life, is fulfilling, and helps these organizations thrive. When community members work together, they build relationships that can spark new initiatives in the future.



Individuals and families who donate part of their income to a registered charitable organization with an IRS designation of 501(c)3 can save on their taxes by taking the donation as a deduction. In 2021, a new deduction is available to taxpayers as part of the CARES Act.

The CARES Act – or Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act – was passed by Congress in March 2020 to help support nonprofits through the crisis. In addition to providing over \$2 trillion in aid directly to affected organizations, the CARES Act created a new deduction for taxpayers.

Individual taxpayers who take advantage of the new deduction in 2021 can write off up to \$300 (or up to \$600 for a married couple) in charitable contributions made throughout 2020. Taxpayers and businesses that itemize deductions on their tax returns can deduct up to 100% of contributions from their AGI (adjusted gross income.)

To qualify, donations must be to a qualified charitable organization that was granted tax-exempt status by the IRS and is eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions. These can include:

- Churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, and other religious organizations
- Service-oriented public charities like Goodwill, United Way, Salvation Army, Red Cross, CARE, Boy/Girl Scouts, and Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- Nonprofit schools, hospitals, and volunteer fire departments
- Veterans' and certain cultural groups
- Public parks and recreation facilities

Taxpayers commonly make donations during the holiday season to reduce their taxable incomes, maximize their deductions, and support causes they care about. Charitable donations at year-end have become a part of American culture. End-of-year giving can help both individuals and communities.

Did you know?

**Nonprofits employ
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—Maine Association of Nonprofits



Commitment to volunteerism is a hallmark of American civic life. It is, at its core, very American. On average, 62 million Americans volunteer on a regular basis, and the median number of an individual's volunteer hours per year is 52. Volunteers are not primarily retirees, as one might assume; people who are employed are much more likely to volunteer.

What are the tangible benefits of volunteerism? Why would someone born and raised outside of the U.S. decide to embrace this core American tradition?

Volunteering is a powerful way to effect social change at many levels.

Volunteering is an opportunity to connect with a neighbor or with others who think in similar ways. Social isolation is one of many struggles for any immigrant trying to "build a new life." Immediately after arrival is the time to quickly "magically integrate" into life in a new home. But coming to a new place with new traditions, cultural, and social norms, learning a new language, and adapting to new ways of living is far from easy. Finding ways to volunteer at a child's school, a local community garden, or the library can create intentional connections with others and build a strong sense of belonging.

For those who have recently arrived, volunteering is a very practical and effective way to build a "work" history. This is especially attractive for those with prior work histories outside of the U.S.; employers always look for evidence of U.S.-based experience. The countless volunteer opportunities are great ways to match professional aspirations. If someone is passionate about the environment and has a background in accounting, finding a nonprofit volunteering to help them manage their accounts would match both interests and skills. The same theory applies to electricians, project managers, graphic designers, and many many others.

Volunteering will expand a contact network. One of the biggest struggles for any foreign-trained individual is building its network. At the Office of Economic Opportunity, we are trying to address this challenge through the Portland Professional Connections Program. However, volunteerism is an added bonus. Not only does volunteering expand a social network, it enhances a professional network and offers a reliable pool of trusted individuals who can speak about the volunteer's good character.

Volunteering is an invaluable opportunity to get to know a new community from a grassroots perspective.

To learn more about opportunities to volunteer in a specific region or local community, visit *Volunteers of America website (www.voa.org)*, or call 211. Portland residents may check the *City of Portland Office of Economic Opportunity website (www.portlandofopportunity.com)*, especially the *community calendar* and the "How Do I" sections, or email OEO at oeo@portlandmaine.gov. We would love to help make connections!



When teaching children about finances, parents regularly focus on budgeting and saving. While those two topics are important and valuable, introducing kids to the concept of donating – or philanthropy – can help them develop into financially responsible adults. However, donating hard-earned money, or volunteering time, can be difficult to do, especially during these uncertain times. The earlier someone starts donating, though, the earlier they'll see the financial benefits of doing so. Here are a few reasons why philanthropy can improve a child's financial well-being in both the short- and long-term:

Teaches Math and Money Management Skills

When children start donating to charity, they become aware of their financial standing. If they give too much away, they won't have any money left for themselves. Much like budgeting, philanthropy requires basic math and money management skills. By taking the time to figure out how much to set aside for their own needs and wants, children learn what portion of their money they can spare for others. Separating their money into different spending categories is a great, hands-on lesson in percentages, fractions, and decimals. Without a solid understanding of math and money management, even people in good financial standing can find themselves struggling to pay their bills. Learning these fundamental lessons can help children maintain a healthy financial well-being as they grow older. Plus, when someone commits to making a donation, they may become more attentive to their own finances to make sure they don't fall behind.

Creates a Sense of Empowerment

When they give back to the community by donating money to others, children feel a sense of empowerment, and studies show a direct link between emotional health and financial health. Helping others can improve one's own self-esteem, life satisfaction, and overall happiness. This, in turn, can lead to better financial health and good habits that may help them avoid unhealthy choices. For example, some people go shopping (sometimes called "retail therapy") to help them cope when they are feeling down. In an attempt to project an image of success, they may buy expensive clothing, accessories, or other objects. However, turning to shopping for emotional satisfaction is a costly coping mechanism that often leads people to stray from their budgets, and then they end up feeling worse. The feeling of helping others, however, usually leads to satisfaction, and a healthy sense of self helps people stay committed to their long-term financial plans. So, to create an early sense of empowerment and promote positive emotional health in children, teach them to give back.

Helps With College and Job Applications

Along with gaining money management skills and a sense of empowerment, philanthropy can help advance a child's career. As children start applying to colleges and seeking employment, they'll likely be filling out applications. In an effort to admit or hire the ideal person, many colleges and employers prompt applicants to list their philanthropic efforts. Charitable giving isn't a requirement, but being able to list charitable efforts helps a candidate stand out in a positive light when applications are reviewed. The earlier a child starts giving to charity and volunteering, the better off they will be when submitting applications. While it may seem counterintuitive to give money away, donating to charity can nurture empathy, instill money management skills, and teach both integrity and social responsibility to children. Helping others simply feels good, and if someone can gain valuable and beneficial financial lessons while doing so, that's a win-win.

KINYARWANDA TRANSLATION

IBYZA BYA DEMUKARASI
Georges Budagu Makoko

Ubwiza bwa Demukarasi ni uko ishingiyeye ku bubasha buhabwa abaturage bo batora uzajya mu biro kubayobora. Abagera kuri miliyari 7 n’bice umunani batuye mu isi ntibafite ayo mahirwe yo guhitamo mu bwigenge umuyobozi wabo. Ariko abatuye Amerika bo bafite ayo mahirwe aho abagera kuri miliyoni 161 babashije gutora ababayobora mu matora aheruka ya Perezida n’abashingamategeko bya 2020. Amatora ya 2020 ni amwe mu matora yahurije benshi mu mateka ya vuba ya Amerika tutiyibagije n’abantu ibihumbi bazize COVID-19 ikanashegesha imiryango. N’ubwo hari ubwo bubabare bwose ntibyabujije abantu gusohoka hanze ngo bakore inshingano yabo yo gutora. Inshuti zanyije zitekereza ko impamvu abantu benshi basohotse bagatora ari ukugirango bubahirize indangagaciro za demukarasi. Abakomoka muri ba nyamuke b’abirabura baritabiriye ku bwinshi bisobanuye ko ijwi ryabo ritazongera kwirengagizwa. Yemwe n’abatoya batajya bakunda gutora batoye ku bwinshi.

Maze imyaka 18 muri Amerika kandi nitabiriye amatora atandukanye. Gusa sinigeze mbona amatora ameze nk’aya aho uwatsinze arara adatangajwe ndetse bigasiga urunturuntu mu bimukira bibaza uko ibizava mu matora bizamere. Nararanye terefone amasaha 24 nkajya nanakanguka mu ijoro ngo ndebe ko amatora yaba yavuze uwatsinze. Hari n’abandi bantu benshi nzi baraye bari maso bashakakumenya uwatsinze. Bamwe baganira n’abo muri Amerika ndetse nabo hanze y’Amerika bashakakumenya uko byagenze.

Imbamutima bagenzi banjye b’abimukira bagaragaje muri aya matora ni nyinshi. Imyaka ine ubu buyobozi bumaze yagize ingaruka nyinshi ku miryango y’abimukira. Abenshi bagiyeye bambwira ko iyi myaka yabateye guta icyizere haba ku gihugu ndetse n’inzozi zabo bumva zarayoyotse. Bavugacyane ko ingamba zafashwe na Trump zagize ingaruka ku bimukira muri Maine ndetse n’ahandi, bakaba bemeza ko icyizere bagiriraga Amerika nk’igihugu giha ikaze abimukira cyayoyotse ndetse ko igihugu cyambitswe icyasha. Bamwe barahahamutse bagendeye ku mategeko Trump yagiye ashiraho arwanya abimukira ndetse ibihumbi byahisemo kureka Amerika byimukira muri Canada gusabaye ubuhungiro.

Imiryango y’abimukira ivuga ko ibyavuye mu matora ari inkuru nziza ku bimukira ndetse bakavugaga ko biteguye gukorana n’ubuyobozi bushya mu minsi iri imbere. Bafite akanyamuneza ko batazongera kubyukira ku mbuga za twitter babwirwa gupakira imizigo bakava muri Amerika kandi aricyo gihugu bita iwabo hatekanye. Abantu bavugaga gutsinda kwa Biden ari ugutsinda iterabwoba. Umugore umwe twaganiriye umaze gutora gatatu nyuma yaho aboneye ubwengeyigihugu, yagize ati: “ Ubu buyobozi bwagize ingaruka ku bimukira bitewe n’ihindagurika ry’ingamba zigenga abimukira zagiye zihindagurika cg se zigashyirwa mu ngiro mu kavuyo bimwe bituma ubuzima bw’abimukira butarorohewe. Icyizere mfite ni uko ubuyobozi bushya buzaba bufite icyerecyezo gihoraho kitari uguhutiraho bakanga abantu-Imyaka ine ishize yari iteshamutwe ku buryo ubuyobozi bwa Joe Biden bufite inshingano zo komora imitima.” Icyizere cyongeye kugaragara muri Maine ndetse no hanze ya Amerika. Impunzi y’umunyekongo uba Kenya yagize ati: “Ubuyobozi bw’Amerika hanze ku isi bwari bwarahindanyeyeturizera kububona bugarura isura nzima.”

Kuba umuperezida uriho ari guhakana amatora nibyavuyemo bituma abimukira bafite impungenge ko byabazayara imvururu. Abimukira benshi bahuye n’imvururu zikurikira amatora igice kimwe cyanze kureka ubutegetsi ngo cyemere ibyavuye mu matora. Ingero za vuba ni 2015 mu Burundi, 2017 muri Kenya, 2018 muri DR Congo. Abimukira bafite ubwoba ko imvururu ndetse nabarebabulikani bari kwigabiza imihanda hamwe na Trump utaremera ibyavuye mu matora bitera kwibaza ko amatora yazavamo imvururu.

Demukarasi irahenda kandi igomba kurindwa-iyoyitakaye bifata imyaka myinshi kuyigarura akenshi bigendanirako. Urugero mu 1930 amatora anyuze muri demukarasi yashyize Hitler ku butegetsi bidatye kabiri aba akwije amatwara ye mu gihugu cyose.

Isengesho ryanjye ni uko imyaka amajana iki gihugu kimaze cyubaka demukarasi itazahagararira ku muntu wikunda kandi ufite irari ryo gutegeka, Imana ihe umugisha Amerika iganje mu ndangagaciro zayo.

INDWARA YA MANDA YA GATATU MURI AFURIKA
Amatora aheruka muri Guinea na Ivory Coast

Tariki 7 Ugushyingo Alpha Condé, w’imyaka 82 yatanga-

AMJAMBO AFRICA!

jwe ko yatsinze amatora ya Perezida bimwemerera manda ya gatatu ku butegetsi nubwo itavugwaho rumwe. Muri Ivory Coast ari we muturanyi wa Guinea naho Perezida Ouattara yongeye gutorerwa kuyobora igihugu manda ya gatatu ku myaka 78. Bose uko ari babiri binjiye mu ikipe y’abaperezida ba Afurika biyongeye manda ku butegetsi nyuma y’aho izo bemerewe n’itegekonshinga zirangiye aho usanga ari ebyiri ahenshi.

Abenshi mu baperezida babigezeho bahinduye itegekonshinga bagakuramo inzitizi zibabuza kwiyongeza manda. Uko uyu mukino ukinwa usanga bidasa ariko ikigambiriwe kikaba ari kimwe. Urugero perezida Alpha Conde yiyamariye manda ya gatatu avuga ko agiye kurangiza ibyo yari yatangiye naho Alassane Ouattara avuga ko ashakakumvira ubusabe bw’abaturage ni nyuma y’aho umukandida yari yarateguye ngo azamusimbure apfuye bitunguranye: bigaragara ko atari yiteguye kubona ubutegetsi bujya mu maboko y’abatavugaga rumwe nawe bayobowe n’uwahoze ari Minisitiri w’intebe Pascal Affi N’Guessan.

Abaperezida bamwe bamaze ku butegetsi imyaka irenga manda eshatu. Perezida Museveni wa Uganda yasabye ko Imyaka ntarengwa yo kuba Perezida ikurwa mu itegekonshinga kugirango abashe kongera kwiyamamaza nyuma y’imyaka 34 ku butegetsi-Ubusanzwe itegekonshinga rya Uganda rivugaga ko umukuru w’igihugu atagomba kuba muni y’imyaka 35 kandi ntarenze 75. Mbere yo kurwanya imyaka yari yarakuyeho kandi ingingo igena manda ntarengwa umukuru w’igihugu yemerewe.

Museveni ni umwe mu baperezida batanu ku isonga ry’abamaze igihe ku butegetsi muri Afurika. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo wa Guinea Equatoriale yagiye ku butegetsi muri 1979. Abandi barimo Paul Biya wa Cameroon uri ku butegetsi kuva mu 1982; Denis Sassou Nguesso wa Congo Brazza Ville amaze imyaka 36 ku butegetsi naho Idriss Deby Itno wa Chad, amaze ku butegetsi imyaka 29.

Kwiyongeza manda akenshi bitera imvururu zisenya rimwe na rimwe, bamwe bagafungwa nkuko byagendekeye uhagarariye abatavugaga rumwe na Ouattara, bwana Pascal N’Guessan. Uyu yafunzwe tariki 7 Ugushyingo aregwa iterabwoba ni nyuma y’aho abashinzwe umutekano bakozanyijeho n’abatishimiye amatora. Uku gukozanyaho kwasize abagera kuri 40 bahasize ubuzima. Icyizere cyo guhinduka kigenda kiyoyoka uko umuperezida agundira ubutegetsi cyane ko aba yigwizaho ububasha ari nako ahonyora abatavugaga rumwe nawe.

Tariki 28 Nyakanga, 2015 ubwo Perezida Obama yagezaga imbwirwaruhame ku bayobozi b’umuryango w’Afurika yunze ubumwe yagize ati: “ Iyo umutegetsi agerageye guhindura amategeko hagati mu mukino kugirango agundire ubutegetsi, birimo ingorane zo guteza imidugararo ndetse iba ari intambwe ya mbere igana ahabi.” Umuryago w’Afurika yunze ubumwe wakomeje kwicecekeraga mu gihe abategetsi bamwe bahindura itegekonshinga ngo biyongeze manda ku butegetsi.

Ihindagurika ry’imitegekere no kugundira ubutegetsi byagiye bitera bamwe kuva mu bihugu byabo bagahungira itotezwa mu bindi bihugu harimo n’abari muri Maine. Ibi bituma abanyafurika baba mu mahanga barushaho kwiyongera. Imwe mu nkuru zo muri Daily Maverick, Mmusi Maimane, umwe mu bigeze kuyobora ishyamba ritavugaga rumwe na Leta muri Afurika y’Epfo agira ati: “Twabonye abenshi mu baharanye ubwigenge baza ku butegetsi bavugirizwa impundu nyamara bagahita bimakaza umuco wa ruswa no kuba abatware. Twabonye abenshi mu bategetsi b’ibikomerezwa bigwizaho umutungo w’umurengera wa rubanda rugufi.” Maimane yemeza ko igihe kigeze ngo abato bashyirwe mu myanya y’ubutegetsi: “Afurika ikeneye abayobozi bakiri bato, bashya, bakerebutse badafitanye isano n’intambara zo kubohora Afurika zarangiye cyera.”

MINISITIRI W’INTEBE ABIY AHMED WA ETHIOPIA
YASHOJE INTAMBARA MU KARERE KA TIGRAY.

Tariki 4 Ugushyingo, Minisitiri w’intebe Abiy Ahmed wa Ethiopia yategetse ibikorwa bya Gisirikare mu gace ka Tigray kari mu majyaruguru gahana imbibi na Eritereya. Ibisasu birashwe n’ingabo zigihugu mu gace ka Melelle mu murwa mukuru w’akarere ka Tigray byatwitse ububiko bw’intwari ziremereye. Ibi byahise bisomporotsa intambara yarisanzwe icecetse hagati ya Leta n’aka gace ku buryo biteye inkeke yaba mu gihugu no hanze ko iyi ntambara ishobora kubura gihagarikwa ndetse ingaruka zayo zikagera no mu ihembe rya Afurika.

Minisitiri w’Intebe Abiy Ahmed yavuze ko ibisasu byatewe nko gusubiza abo mu gace ka Tigray ndetse avugaga ko azakomeza nyuma yaho ingabo zo muri Tigray zigaruriye ibirindiro by’ingabo z’igihugu biri mu gace ka Tigray. Ikinyamakuru The Telegraph kivugaga ko abagera ku ngabo 100 za leta bari kuvurwa ibikomere ndetse ko abaremye

bajyanwa mu gace ka Gondar guhabwa ubuvuzi bwisumbuyeho.

Guverinoma yatangaje ibihe by’amage mu gace ka Tigray aho yahagaritse amafaranga yoherezaga muri kariya gace. Mu rwego rwo gutesha agaciro ubuyobozi bwa Tigray, abashingamategeko ba Ethiopia bemeje ko hajyaho ubuyobozi bw’inzigacyuho muri Tigray.

Ishyamba Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) rifitanye amakimbirane na Abiy Ahmed bitari ibya vuba. Mu mwaka wa 1970 ishyamba TPLF hamwe n’andi mashyamba atandukanye bagiyeye hamwe ngo bakureho ubutegetsi bw’igitugu bwa Mengistu maze babukuraho mu mwaka wa 1990. Umwe mu mitwe witwaga Eritrean People’s Liberation Front (EPLF) wahise utangaza ubwigenge bwa Eritereya. Hagati aho igisirikare cya Tigray People’s Liberation Front cyahise gifata ubuyobozi bw’imitwe isigaye ndetse kiyobowe na Meres Zenawi gifata ubutegetsi aba Tigray bayobora Ethiopia imyaka 20. Ubutegetsi bwa Meres Zenawi bwashyize abo mu bundi bwoko ku ruhande bigeza ubwo bitera umwiryane maze abatari bacye bigabiza imihanda bama-gana ubu butegetsi. Nguko uko Abiy Ahmed wo mu bwoko bwa Oromo yagiye ku butegetsi mu mwaka wa 2018.

Aljazeera itangaza ko abayobozi bo mu gace ka Tigray bigometse kuri Abiy aho bamurega ko yabashyize ku ruhande. Ni mu gihe kandi koko Abiy Ahmed agifata ubutegetsi yahashyije abayobozi bamunzwe na ruswa biganjemo abakomoka mu gace ka Tigray. Aba bo muri Tigray kandi barega Abiy ko yiyegereye igihugu cya Eritereya gituranye na Tigray. Abo muri Tigray bakaba babibona nk’uburyo bwo kubazenguruka ngo Leta ibone uko ibacunga. Nyuma y’ibisasu bimishwa na Leta, agace ka Tigray kafunze imihanda iganaye ndetse kavugaga ko ikirere gifunze. Ingabo za TPLF zikaba zarafashe intwari ndetse zigarurira ikigo cya gisirikare cya Leta kiri muri kariya gace bituma Abiy Ahmed avugaga ko barenze umurongo ntarengwa.

Ethiopia ihanganye kandi n’ingorane nyinshi harimo COVID-19, amakimbirane na Misiri bapfa amazi ya Nili. Mu mwaka wa 2019, Minisitiri w’intebe Abiy Ahmed yahawe igihembo cy’amahoro kitirwe Nobel nyuma yo gufasha mu gukemura amakimbirane muri Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti, Kenya, na Somalia. Aho bigeze ubushobozi asanzwe azwiho bwo gukemura amakimbirane burakenewe cyane mu gihugu cye kandi umugabane wose umuhanze amaso.

PORTUGUESE TRANSLATION

A BELEZA DA DEMOCRACIA
Por Georges Budagu Makoko

A beleza da democracia é que o sistema está alicerçado no poder concedido aos cidadãos para decidir quem será votado para o cargo. Muitos dos 7,8 mil milhões de pessoas em todo o mundo não são abençoados com o privilégio de escolher os seus líderes, mas os cidadãos americanos são, e históricos 161 milhões de americanos saíram para votar nas eleições presidenciais de 2020. De facto, 2020 foi a eleição mais cívica da história moderna dos EUA - apesar da extraordinária pandemia COVID-19 que tirou centenas de milhares de vidas e famílias devastadas. Mesmo no meio de um sofrimento tão generalizado, milhões de americanos asseguraram-se de que exerciam o poder do seu voto. Os meus amigos imigrantes acreditam que a razão pela qual tantas pessoas se manifestaram foi para lutar por valores democráticos. As pessoas de cor votaram em grande número, e orgulhamo-nos de que as nossas vozes já não possam ser ignoradas no processo eleitoral. Mesmo os jovens que normalmente não votam acabaram por se manifestar.

Estou nos Estados Unidos há 18 anos e participei em várias eleições. Mas nunca experimentei uma época eleitoral como esta, com um vencedor não declarado no Dia das Eleições, e o nível palpável de ansiedade na comunidade imigrante a crescer dia após dia enquanto a nação esperava por resultados. Eu sei que tinha o meu próprio telemóvel perto de mim 24 horas por dia, e acordava todas as noites muitas vezes para ver se os resultados finais tinham sido publicados. A maioria das pessoas que conheço passaram muito tempo a falar com amigos, tanto nos EUA como no estrangeiro, todos nós a tentar fazer previsões precisas sobre o resultado. Toda a gente que conheço estava focada nas eleições.

As emoções que os meus colegas imigrantes partilharam comigo durante a semana eleitoral foram profundas. Quatro anos tempestuosos que vivem sob a actual administração têm sido extremamente duros para a comunidade imigrante. Muitos partilharam comigo que tinham perdido completamente a confiança no país, e que as suas esperanças e sonhos para o futuro tinham sido destruídos nos últimos quatro

anos. Falaram sobre o impacto que as políticas de imigração de Trump tiveram na comunidade de imigrantes aqui no Maine, e disseram que a sua crença no valor central americano de acolher imigrantes tinha sido significativamente manchada. Disseram que ficaram traumatizados com as frequentes ordens executivas dirigidas aos imigrantes, e que milhares de pessoas desistiram dos EUA e mudaram-se para o Canadá, para procurarem asilo lá.

Os membros da comunidade consideram que o resultado das eleições deste ano é uma excelente notícia para os imigrantes e esperam melhores dias pela frente. Estão aliviados por já não acordarem com tweets que lhes digam para fazerem as malas e deixarem o país que adotaram como o seu novo lar seguro. As pessoas falaram da eleição de Joe Biden como uma vitória sobre o medo. Uma jovem com quem falei que participou em três eleições americanas desde que se tornou cidadão disse: "Esta administração foi muito stressante para os imigrantes, e as constantes mudanças de regras sobre a imigração que eram frequentemente executadas tornaram a vida dos imigrantes muito difícil. A minha esperança para a nova administração é que eu possa saber o que esperar e não ficar sempre chocado - os últimos quatro anos foram emocionalmente drenados. Espero que a nova administração de Joe Biden nos ajude no processo de cura." A esperança é restaurada no exterior, bem como no Maine. Um refugiado congolês que vive no Quênia disse-me que "a liderança americana em todo o mundo estava seriamente manchada. Esperamos vê-lo voltar novamente.

O facto de o presidente em sessão estar a contestar os resultados das eleições diz respeito a muitas pessoas da comunidade imigrante, que receiam potenciais distúrbios civis. A maioria dos imigrantes de África está familiarizada com a agitação civil após as eleições, especialmente quando um partido político se recusa a ceder. Exemplos recentes são a eleição de 2015 no Burundi; a eleição de 2017 no Quênia; a eleição de 2018 na RD Congo. Os imigrantes que veem os republicanos a manifestarem-se nas ruas e o Presidente Trump a contestar os resultados das eleições receiam que a agitação civil se transforme violenta.

A democracia é muito frágil e tem de ser protegida -ó que se perde, leva muitos anos para a recuperar e, por vezes, perde-se para sempre. Por exemplo, na década de 1930, uma eleição democrática levou Hitler ao poder, mas depois o partido nacionalista conseguiu o controlo e impôs a sua agenda a todo o país.

A minha sincera oração é que centenas de anos de construção de instituições democráticas fortes nos EUA prevaleçam sobre a ganância individual e o interesse próprio. Que Deus abençoe a América com um regresso aos nossos valores fundamentais.

MANIA DO "TERCEIRO MANDATO" DE ÁFRICA
Eleições presidenciais recentes na Guiné e Costa do Marfim

Em 7 de novembro, Alpha Condé, de 82 anos, foi declarado o vencedor das eleições presidenciais guineenses, que lhe concederam um controverso terceiro mandato. A Costa do Marfim, vizinha do sul da Guiné, também reelegera recentemente o seu presidente, Alassane Ouattara, de 78 anos, para um terceiro mandato. Ambos se juntam ao crescente clube de presidentes africanos que procuraram mandatos adicionais no termo dos seus mandatos permitidos.

Muitos membros deste 'clube presidencial' encontraram formas de rever a constituição do seu país e remover obstáculos que estavam no seu caminho para termos adicionais no cargo.

O livro de jogadas dos candidatos varia, mas o resultado é o mesmo. Alpha Conde, por exemplo, correu numa campanha de "cumprir o que começou em termos anteriores"; Alassane Ouattara caracterizou a sua corrida como "uma decisão destinada a satisfazer o desejo da nação" após a morte súbita do candidato que estava a preparar para o cargo - estava determinado a não ver o poder ir para o campo de oposição do ex-primeiro-ministro Pascal Affi N'Guessan.

Alguns presidentes estão no poder há mais de três mandatos. O Presidente Museveni do Uganda tem feito campanha para eliminar completamente os limites de idade na Constituição para que possa concorrer novamente após 34 anos no cargo - de acordo com a constituição do Uganda, o presidente não pode ter menos de 35 anos ou mais de 75 anos. Já retirou limites de mandatos. Museveni está entre os cinco presidentes africanos mais antigos, ao lado de Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, da Guiné Equatorial, que está no poder desde 1979. Outros presidentes que mantêm o poder durante décadas incluem Paul Biya dos Camarões - presidente desde 1982; Denis Sassou Nguesso do Congo Brazza Ville - no cargo há mais de 36 anos; Idriss Deby Itno do Chade, presidente há 29 anos.

Termos extras muitas vezes provocam violência, e às vezes

termina por penas de prisão e/ou mortes. Tal é o destino de Pascal N'Guessan, por exemplo, que foi detido no sábado, 7 de novembro sob a acusação de terrorismo, depois de as forças governamentais terem entrado em conflito com a oposição. Os confrontos deixaram mais de 40 marfinenses mortos. A esperança de mudança muitas vezes desaparece quanto mais um presidente se agarra ao cargo, quanto mais consolida o seu poder, mais profundamente ele suprime a oposição.

Num discurso de 28 de julho de 2015, dirigido à União Africana, o Presidente Obama disse: "Quando um líder tenta mudar as regras a meio do jogo apenas para se manter no cargo, isso arrisca instabilidade e conflitos -- e muitas vezes é apenas um primeiro passo por um caminho perigoso." A União Africana tem-se mantido frequentemente em silêncio em casos que envolvem alterações constitucionais aos limites do mandato presidencial.

O padrão de adesão ao poder e à supressão da população levou ao êxodo de muitos africanos, que fugiram da perseguição nos seus países de origem, e mudaram-se para outros países e estados (como o Maine!), continuando o crescimento da Diáspora Africana. Num artigo publicado no Daily Maverick, Mmusi Maimane, em tempos líder da Aliança Democrática da Oposição da África do Sul, argumentou: "Vimos, uma e outra vez, os libertadores chegarem ao poder no meio de fanfarras da revolução, apenas para se curvarem às tentações do patrocínio e da corrupção. Vimos uma ladainha de presidentes do Big Man a acumular riqueza numa escala inimaginável para os cidadãos comuns". Maimane advertiu que está na hora de passar a batuta às gerações mais novas. "África requer liderança fresca, jovem e capaz, sem qualquer ligação com os movimentos de libertação do passado."

PRIMEIRO-MINISTRO ABIY AHMED DA ETIÓPIA
DECLARA GUERRA NA REGIÃO NORTE DE TIGRAY

Em 4 de novembro, o Primeiro-Ministro Abiy Ahmed da Etiópia ordenou operações militares contra a região norte de Tigray, que faz fronteira com o país da Eritreia. Os ataques do governo federal contra as instalações de mísseis e armas pesadas de Tigray em torno da capital regional de Mekelle marcam uma escalada dramática de uma longa disputa interna, alimentando os receios, dentro e fora da Etiópia, de que o conflito possa rapidamente descontrolar-se, com consequências catastróficas para o Corno de África.

O Primeiro-Ministro Abiy Ahmed descreveu os ataques como um contra-ataque, que promete continuar, depois de o exército de Tigray ter atacado as tropas federais na região. O The Telegraph informa que cerca de 100 soldados do governo estão a ser tratados no local por ferimentos com armas, enquanto casos mais graves estão a ser levados de ambulância para centros de saúde na região de Gondar.

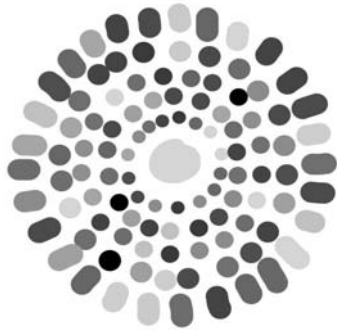
O governo declarou estado de emergência em Tigray e votou para colocar em espera o financiamento federal para a região. Numa tentativa de tomar o controlo e deslegitimar a liderança atualmente em vigor, os legisladores federais aprovaram a formação de um governo provisório em Tigray.

A Frente Popular de Libertação de Tigray (TPLF) e Abiy Ahmed têm uma longa história. Na década de 1970, o TPLF, juntamente com outras fações armadas, reuniu-se para derubar o brutal regime de Mengistu, que finalmente derubaram nos anos 1990. Uma facção, a Frente Popular de Libertação da Eritreia (EPLF), proclama então a independência da Eritreia. Entretanto, o Exército de Libertação Popular de Tigray assumiu a liderança da restante coligação e o seu líder, Meres Zenawi tornou-se primeiro-ministro da Etiópia - cargo que ocupou durante 20 anos. Enquanto estava no poder, o governo liderado por Tigray afastou outros grupos étnicos - o que abalaram a agitação contra o governo - e abriu o caminho para que Abiy Ahmed, um oromo étnico, subisse ao poder em 2018.

Aljazeera relata que os líderes da região de Tigray começaram a disputar com o governo de Abiy Ahmed assim que se tornou presidente. Acusaram-lho de os afastar - enquanto fazia amizade com a liderança da Eritreia - e, de facto, a sua ascensão ao poder, o Primeiro-Ministro Abiy reprimiu os líderes corruptos na posição de topo, a maioria dos quais eram de Tigray. Tigray suspeitas que a mudança para normalizar as relações entre o governo de Abiy e a Eritreia é uma forma de controlá-las. Após os ataques aéreos do governo federal, Tigray encerrou o seu espaço aéreo e air bloqueou os acessos rodoviários à região. O TPLF apoderou-se das instalações militares federais do Comando Do Norte, um ato que o Primeiro-Ministro Abiy Ahmed chamou de "cruzando uma linha vermelha".

A Etiópia enfrenta neste momento muitos desafios, para além da tensão com Tigray, entre eles COVID-19, e uma grande disputa com o Egito sobre o Nilo. O primeiro-min-

istro Abiy Ahmed foi galardoado com o Prémio Nobel da Paz em 2019, depois dos seus esforços para mediar a crise no Sudão, Sudão do Sul, Djibuti, Quênia e Somália. Agora, a sua capacidade louvável de aliviar as tensões é muito necessária na sua própria country, e todo o continente está a ver o que pode fazer.



Auto Insurance | Jeffrey Lee

Auto insurance rates are based on two things: the value of a vehicle and the risk of a driver. Rating a driver's risk takes into account many factors, such as the driver's age, the area of residence, and driving history, including accidents and violations.



The cost of car insurance (the "rate") typically is higher for those with international licenses because insurance actuaries, who create rates based on risk, are not able to get a complete picture of a client's non-U.S. driving history and because an international license means the driver has less experience driving within the US.

For drivers who arrive in the U.S. and want to secure car insurance, getting a U.S. driver's license is a recommended first step. Newly licensed drivers will still pay higher rates, but a good insurance agent will be sure to find the client into a lower rate as soon as the driver is eligible, often within one to three years. However, many companies without local offices and reachable only through a national phone number do not make later efforts to find lower rates. For this reason, using a local insurance agency or brokerage - who will make a note on a client's policy and will follow up once a lower rate is available - is a good idea. But regardless of what insurance company an internationally licensed or newly U.S.-licensed client chooses, the client should contact the insurer every year to get the best rate as soon as possible.

The length of a client's driving and auto insurance history is also a factor in determining the rate. The longer continuous driving history a client has, the better the rate will be because the history gives actuaries a more complete look at the client's driving behavior. When a driver with an international or new U.S. license seeks auto insurance, another good option often is for the individual to be added to a friend's or family member's existing auto insurance policy; this will start a continuous insurance history for the driver. Having a longer history of being insured lowers the risk, and therefore the rate, when the driver purchases a vehicle and individual insurance coverage. Another way to keep rates low is for a new U.S. driver to purchase a used vehicle and to not carry "collision" coverage on a vehicle that is more than 10 years old. But in Maine, carrying "comprehensive coverage" is important because that category covers damage to the vehicle from fire, theft, vandalism, and broken glass, as well as impacts with live animals and falling objects such as tree branches, which are common claims in Maine.

Jeffrey Lee has over a decade of experience in the insurance industry, and is currently the Sales Director of the Amy Alward Agency, the largest Allstate agency in Maine.

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I am an American | by Ekhlas Ahmed

I am an American.
Today, not someday.
Inserting my authentic African self in every city, every state, and every history book that has been written.
I am an American.
Not because I was born here.
But because my heart, my soul, my sorrows, and my future promises are buried deep down into the soil and concrete of this nation.
Yes, I am an American.
Not because I speak English.
But because my tongue knows how to roar in many languages, knows how to comprehend, read, and rewrite the stories that haven't been written.
I am an American.
Not because I drink my morning coffee with a little cream but because I drink it dark, just like how I was taught in the motherland.
With every sip I take tasting the bitterness of my experiences.
I am an American.
Not because I take the subway to my place of work, but because I have walked miles on stones to find my final destination that I call home.
I am an American.
Not because I wear a T-shirt and pants but because I wear my Abaya and hijab proudly with no fear.
Not sitting at the dining room table or eating from one plate, it's the floor in the center of our living room that has become our threshold.
Our Thanksgiving meal does not include turkey, mashed potatoes with gravy, but expect fufu and plantains to be at the center of our meal.
I am an American not because my father fought in the Civil War that eventually ended slavery,
but because he, I, and many others still have cut open wounds with no medication or a plan for a renewal healing.
My eyes cry for my America while my feet dance to my African beats.
Holding on to home on the tip of my tongue.
Sewing this diverse piece of fabric of my many identities,
leaving each needle to write its own story.
I am an American.





Each month, **Let's Talk** will focus on sayings that might sound funny or confusing to a new language learner. So if you have ever thought “What did they mean by that?” or “What are they trying to say?” this column is for you.

It's time to get your warm coats, scarves, and mittens ready because winter is just around the corner. Whether you love the cold or could live without it, just be sure to bundle up because cold weather in Maine is a given this time of year.

Here are four idioms – expressions in which the meanings of the words are not the same as the meaning of the saying – that one might hear used in connection with winter and cold weather.

On thin ice

To be in a risky or uncertain situation
“Ana is often late to her job, and this puts her on thin ice with her boss.”

Give someone the cold shoulder

To intentionally be unfriendly or ignore someone you know
“John’s wife gave him the cold shoulder when he forgot her birthday.”

To freeze up

To temporarily not be able to speak due to being nervous
“Fatima froze up when her teacher called on her to speak in front of the class.”

In the dead of winter

The middle of winter
“Many people dream of vacations to warm locations in the dead of winter.”

Claudia Jakubowski has her master’s degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages).

A COVID survivor talks about Christmas | by Roseline Souebele

Christmas is a big event, a mass Christian celebration. Even many non-Christians share that they are moved by the feeling of Christmas – all the lights and decorations in the neighborhoods, and all the decorated evergreen trees outdoors for everyone to enjoy. Kids who celebrate the holiday share stories of Santa Claus, and parents relax in the atmosphere of joy and gratitude while they celebrate with their families and friends the life of Jesus Christ. But this year, something is different, and we are not living the same “normal” anymore. Our celebration of Christmas has to be revised.

When I look back to my life a year ago, I smile as I recall the holiday back in my Congo, my motherland. There, Christmas is a celebration primarily for children, with adults more focused on the New Year’s holiday. During the period leading up to Christmas, the public open market is crowded with people of all socioeconomic classes, walking back and forth between toys sellers’ tables, looking for just the right gift for their child. Pressure rises within families between the mother and the father, who is seen as the provider and must come up with the money for toys and also for special clothing for the kids. This becomes something of a competition between families in the neighborhood – who is going to have the latest version of an outfit or a toy or a game? Mothers push their husbands to do more, and the kids push, too, sharing which kinds of gifts they want – sometimes without taking into account their parents’ financial situation.

On Christmas morning, the kids are extremely excited. They dress in their new clothes, with hair beautifully done, and go to church. Each child carries their new toy for everybody to see and appreciate – for many kids, Christmas is the only time in the year when they will be given a toy. On the streets and in the church, it is like a fashion show and a toy show all in one. After church, every compound fills with smoke as each family works to have their big meal ready before 3 p.m. Usually the meal is fried or baked chicken with tomato sauce, cassava leaves with peanut butter, rice, white beans with red sauce, orange juice, and beer for the adults. Loud and varied music resonates from every corner of the compound. Everybody feels excited to come together, share a meal, dance, and shout “Noël!” Later after eating, the streets are crowded with people reveling. Bars at every corner are full of young people drinking juice and dancing as if tomorrow will never come. And everyone takes photos at improvised photo studios to immortalize the moment.

But things have changed all around the world with the new coronavirus still circulating, and families are questioning how they are going to celebrate the holidays when they can’t be together with others. Here in Portland, the Christmas tree is going up, festive lights are being prepared – but how will we all stay connected without endangering our lives?

All Christians have memories about how they have celebrated Christmas in the past. In this critical time, however, I think we need to do things differently in order to be able to return to our lovely holiday traditions again soon. Here at Hope House, we are wearing masks and social distancing. Why not enjoy the company of just the people from your household this year? You can stay virtually connected to others by sharing pictures and holiday cards. I know we can do this!

As a COVID-19 survivor, I plan to spend my Christmas sharing my plasma with people who are still struggling with the virus. Many of us can help in this same way. Please, I beg of you – don’t light a candle of farewell this holiday season, but instead shine a light of hope and resilience. It’s been almost a year since the pandemic struck. We may be tired of it all, but remember – tomorrow is still ahead, and we can each help to exchange this new normal back to our former, beloved normal.

We’ve got this – MERRY CHRISTMAS from Hope House!
Roseline Souebele is a resident of Hope House



Seasonal Affective Disorder

By Emily Erickson, MD & Greg Bates, NP

It’s that time of year when the days are shorter and the temperature drops. For some, this is a welcome change that brings the excitement that comes along with outdoor winter activities and the holiday season. For others, this time of year can be very tough and could result in Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)—a condition that many may or may not know they are dealing with.

Seasonal affective disorder consists of a subset of disorders that are caused by mood and biochemical disturbances that have a seasonal pattern. The most common form is seasonal depression. SAD can affect up to 5% of the population, but it can be as prevalent as 10% in northern latitudes where the weather is colder and sunlight is harder to come by. In northern regions with extended winter conditions, patients with SAD can have symptoms up to 40% of the year, greatly impacting their quality of life.

Symptoms of SAD can mirror typical symptoms of depression, which include sadness, guilt, hopelessness, lack of energy, fatigue, sleep problems, weight gain or loss, lack of interest in activities, and difficulty concentrating. However, with SAD, most people recognize or can trace a pattern to the seasons. For example, symptoms tend to arise in fall and winter and go away, even without treatment, in spring and summer. Others, although less common, experience symptoms in the spring and summer with remission in the colder months.

There are several treatment options for SAD, including phototherapy. This form of therapy promotes exposure to light for set periods of time using light boxes that can be purchased online or at local stores. This treatment, also known as light therapy, can significantly improve mood in one to two weeks. Other beneficial practices include exercise, relaxation techniques, and spending more time outdoors, especially during daylight hours. Sometimes treatment options include prescription medications and/or cognitive behavioral therapy. These treatments can be done alone or in combination with each other.

With the ongoing pandemic, these symptoms can be exacerbated as social isolation is worse than during a typical winter. People may also be experiencing more anxiety and stress as they cope with making it through this winter while attempting to remain connected to what matters most—people.

Our team at Northern Light Mercy Primary Care wants you to know that you are not alone in feeling this way. We are here to help.

Just as every person and every situation is different, so too can be the proper treatment. It’s not unusual to have a bad day or feel down every now and then. But if it becomes a pattern and impacts your life, it’s time to seek advice. If you or someone you know may be experiencing these symptoms, a primary care provider could help you weigh options tailored to your specific needs.



Emily Erickson, MD and Greg Bates, NP practice at Northern Light Mercy Primary Care in Gorham.



Election Season in the U.S. and the Republic of Congo

by Bénédicte Wonganombe

Living as an immigrant in a foreign country is not easy. Beyond the fact of having experienced atrocities where we came from, and dealing with trauma and depression, and waves of disturbing thoughts, we are also faced with the problems of culture, language, social integration, and on and on. The greatest wish of immigrant asylum seekers in coming to the U.S. is finding a haven of peace, a place where we can have a peaceful sleep, a warm environment, a place that feels like family,

Those who by divine grace pass through Hope House are lucky and happy, because Hope House provides accommodations for asylum seekers and helps them succeed. Through its programs – transitional housing, Hope House English Program (HHELP), Assistance Program for Asylum Seekers (ASAP) – any asylum seekers who are selected for a brief stay at Hope House will be enormously assisted in finding a perfect and harmonious social integration into the U.S.

The majority of current residents come from French-speaking countries. Because of this, Hope House organized (pre-pandemic) a monthly, bilingual evening with French-speaking guests and Hope House residents. On this fun and jovial evening, residents enjoyed speaking French (which is almost their mother language) through games and exchanges, and sometimes made new friendships. Francophones were able to temporarily forget the atrocities they had to endure in their countries of origin.

I am from DR Congo, the most populous, French-speaking country in the world, topping even France in the number of French speakers. In 2016, 37 million Congolese – 47% of the country’s population – was able to read and write French, the official language of DR Congo. DR Congo is also a country that has seen war from 1996 until the present. This is why Maine – and the world in general – sees such a wave of immigrants from DR Congo.

I can only thank God and Hope House for all the good they offer to asylum seekers who come through their doors.

Thank you.
Bénédicte Wonganombe is a resident of Hope House



The views expressed by contributors belong solely to the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of Ladder to the Moon Network.



Shah, Director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention. “The surge that we predicted has arrived, and it has arrived with force ... Just in the past 13 days across Maine, the situation with respect to COVID-19 has gotten significantly worse. ... What we have feared for so long that may be coming as the weather changes and as folks change their socializing pattern is now squarely in front of us.”

Shah and other experts warn the public to avoid social gatherings, and to wear masks properly, so that they cover the nose and mouth. Data shows that community transmission is high in all counties in Maine other than Piscataquis and Aroostook County – and even in those two counties, community transmission is evident. This means that even though the virus is invisible, it is all around us, spreading rapidly from person to person.

To control the spread, the Mills administration tightened travel restrictions and announced that effective November 16, Massachusetts is no longer exempt from state mandates for out-of-state travelers to Maine. In other words, anyone coming to Maine from Massachusetts must either test negative for the virus within 72 hours of arrival or stay at home for 14 days and not go out in public – even to grocery stores – once they get here. This is now the case for travelers from all states other than Vermont and New Hampshire, and also applies to Mainers leaving the state for day trips to neighboring states. In addition, Gov. Mills has mandated a 9:00 p.m. curfew on restaurants, tasting rooms, and many other establishments.

Papy Bongibo, president of the Congolese Community of Maine, urged his community to follow the Governor’s orders. “We have been saying since the beginning of the pandemic that people should follow the CDC and state guidelines. I’m going to ask all Mainers to please follow the Governor’s instructions about wearing masks, travel, and gathering, so that you protect yourselves, your families and friends, and the whole community.”

Hospitalizations and deaths have increased dramatically in the past month, for a total of 642 hospitalizations since the pandemic began in Maine in March, and 176 total deaths, including 26 in November alone. As numbers of hospitalizations rise, so does the risk of running out of hospital beds

AMJAMBO AFRICA!

for patients who get sick. Outbreak investigations are ongoing in faith communities, schools, day cares, medical centers, nursing homes, and companies.

“The pot is starting to boil over and the bubbles are coming up everywhere,”said Dr. Shah, referring to the outbreaks. A wedding that took place in Millinocket on August 7 caused the state’s largest outbreak to date, and is responsible for at least 177 cases and seven deaths, according to a report published by the Maine CDC. There are currently 212 cases associated with schools in Maine.

“Community gatherings such as weddings, birthday parties, church events, and funerals have the potential to be super-spreading events,” the report’s authors wrote. Dr. Shah added holiday gatherings to the list of risky activities, emphasizing that indoor private social gatherings are very risky. “Holidays. We have got to make sure that COVID-19 does not haunt our holidays, and that is a possibility right now,” he said.

John Ochira, president of the South Sudanese Community of Maine, said, “The more disciplined we are about following safety precautions, the more likely we are to defeat the virus and enjoy freedom. I urge all community members to take the mask mandate seriously and wear a mask consistently outside the house. It is for our own benefit.”

Face coverings are required for everyone, age five and older, in public settings, excluding certain people with serious medical exemptions. This is true in schools and child-care settings. In addition, masks are recommended for children ages two to four, unless deemed developmentally inappropriate.

“This deadly and dangerous virus is spreading all across our state,” said Governor Mills. “Protect your family. Protect a health care worker. Protect the elderly. Wear your face covering. Save lives. It is that simple.”

Effective November 4, indoor gatherings returned to a maximum of 50 people. The gathering limit on outdoor activities remains at 100 people under existing guidelines, with physical distancing and the use of face coverings. The occupancy limit for retail establishments remains at five people per 1,000 square feet of shopping space.

“Maine is experiencing widespread community trans-

mission of the virus that causes COVID-19,” said Dr. Shah. “Wearing face coverings and staying at least six feet away from others when out in public are ways that every person in Maine can limit potential spread of the virus to help make their communities and homes safer.”

Dr. Shah and Governor Mills have both warned that indoor gatherings are dangerous, but community leaders report that the state’s move into Phase 4 of the re-entry plan has confused some people, who thought the re-opening move meant the pandemic had ended. However, far from decreasing, COVID-19 cases are increasing rapidly, and the virus can sicken anybody. Governor Mills calls the virus “the silent enemy among us.”

Black and brown people count for a disproportionately high percentage of cases, both in Maine and nationwide. In Maine, 2% of the total population is Black, but 12% of all the COVID-19 cases have been in Black people. Frequently cited reasons for the dramatic disparity along racial lines include policies that help keep Black or African American Mainers – many of them immigrants – in front-line jobs, rather than working from home; using public transportation to get to work; living in crowded housing, which makes social distancing either very difficult or impossible. Nationwide, Black people are dying at 2.1 times the rate of white people.

Individuals in Maine who think they may have COVID-19 or may have been exposed to COVID-19 can get a test using a Standing Order dated September 21, which is available on the Maine CDC website. The Standing Order covers molecular testing and antigen testing, not antibody testing, which has not been proven to be reliable.

According to Dr. Shah, Maine still has the possibility of slowing the spread of the virus through mask wearing and the avoidance of gatherings with people outside the household. “The way we go from here, and the path we follow from here, is in the hands of all of us,” Dr. Shah said. He urged adherence to safety guidelines in the near term, now that the end is possibly in sight with the encouraging developments from vaccine scientists: “For me, what’s giving me that light at the end of the tunnel is postponing activities for just a couple of months,” he said.

life. And then we went into the bush. They trained us only to slit throats and other ways of killing. If you tried to flee and were caught, you were killed. Now that I’m here, I don’t want to go back.”

Boko Haram conscripts women as well as men, and forces them to engage in terrorist activities. A woman we will call Falmata for security reasons spoke with us about her experience. She came from Nigeria and says she no longer wants to work with the Boko Haram fighters. Instead, she wants to engage in income-generating activities to support her children. “We were there with the Boko Haram fighters. Some women took up arms and went to the warfield behind the men, who executed in cold blood those who refused to follow the ideology of Boko Haram. I took care of the wounded and those who needed help. My husband and I were forced to join but he died in the fighting. He left me with two children. They decided to give me to another man. And that’s when I managed to escape. Now that I’m here, I don’t want to go back with the fighters of Boko Haram.”

These two ex-combatants from Boko Haram were first installed in a camp in Baga Sola, before being brought to Yakoua with other displaced persons. Some people were reunited with relatives there, but no one identified themselves as family members of Falmata and Abdou. Poverty pushed many to return to Boko Haram.

In a recent report on Boko Haram in Lake Chad, published by the Center for Development and Prevention of Extremism (CEDPE), 4142 individuals have cut ties with Boko Haram and have laid down their weapons in the hopes of regaining a normal life. According to Dr. Ahmat Yacoub, president of the CEDPE, 2544 of these individuals are registered by the Center. The report notes that 54% are women, and states that women’s roles in Boko Haram are two-fold: study of the Qur’an and sexual relations with the men. The report highlights the very difficult living conditions of the people in the region, and suggests that a driving force for Boko Haram membership is poverty. The CEDPE says 46% of the ex-fighters are married, and 75% had no sympathy with the ideology of Boko Haram, but were forced to join the movement.

partons avec eux ou restons ici pour subir le même sort. J’ai été contraint de les rejoindre pour avoir la vie sauve. Et puis nous sommes allés en brousse, ils ne nous formaient rien qu’à égorger, et à d’autres manières de tuer. Si tu essaies de fuir et qu’on te prend, tu es tué. Maintenant que je suis ici, je ne veux plus y retourner », avoue-t-il dans un regard perçant plein de regrets.

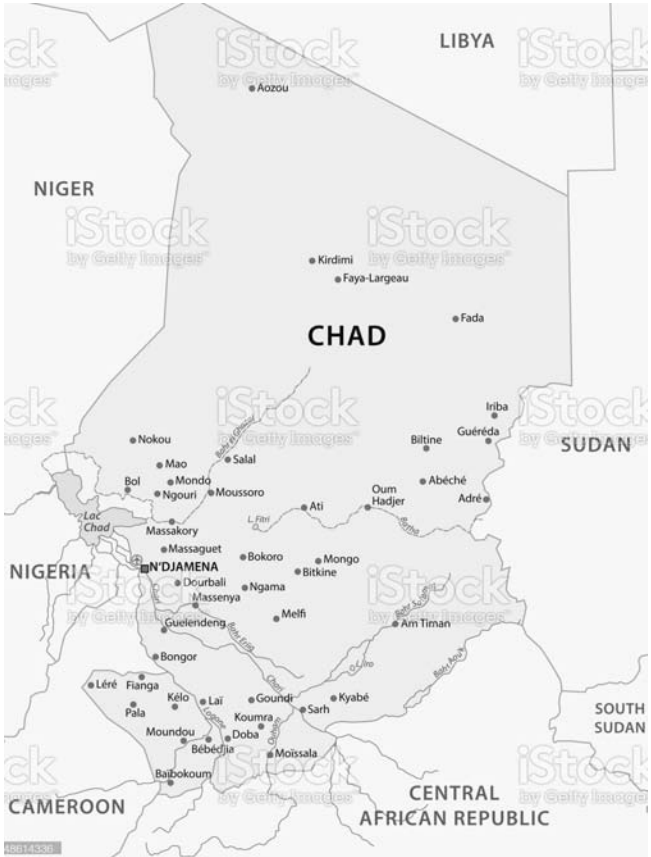
Boko Haram n’a pas utilisé que des hommes. Des femmes ont été arrêtées puis contraintes à mener des activités terroristes. Le témoignage d’une d’entre elles fait froid au dos. Nous l’appelons Falmata pour des raisons de sécurité; elle est venue du Nigeria. Elle dit ne plus vouloir travailler avec les combattants de Boko Haram. Elle veut plutôt mener des activités génératrices de revenus pour subvenir aux besoins de ses enfants. Son témoignage: “nous étions là avec les combattants de Boko Haram. Certaines femmes prenaient des armes et portaient sur le terrain de guerre en suivant les hommes qui exécutaient froidement des personnes qui refusaient de suivre l’idéologie de Boko Haram. Moi, par exemple, je m’occupais des blessés et de ceux qui avaient besoin d’aide. Nous étions contraints de force pour aller avec mon mari mais il est mort aux combats. Il m’a laissé avec deux enfants. Ils ont décidé de me donner à un autre homme. Et c’est là que j’ai réussi à m’enfuir. Maintenant que je suis ici, je ne veux plus repartir derrière les combattants de Boko Haram », confie-t-elle.

Ces deux ex-combattants de Boko Haram ont été identifiés par les autorités tchadiennes après leur reddition. Ils ont d’abord été installés dans un camp à Baga Sola avant d’être amenés à Yakoua, avec des personnes déplacées. Parfois ils y retrouvent même des parents mais personne ne veut se présenter comme un membre de la famille. La pauvreté a poussé de nombreux autres à retourner au sein de Boko Haram.

Dans un récent rapport publié par le Centre pour le Développement et la Prévention de l’Extrémisme (CEDPE) sur Boko Haram dans le Lac Tchad, ils sont 4142 éléments désengagés de Boko Haram, à déposer les armes pour regagner une vie normale. Selon Dr Ahmat Yacoub, le président du CEDPE, de ce chiffre de 4142 désengagés l’année dernière, 2544 sont enregistrés avec un profil complet par le Centre. Le rapport note un taux de 54% de femmes. En ce

qui concerne les enfants, le rapport donne un chiffre de 11.827 désengagés en 2019. Le rapport a ressorti les conditions de vie très difficiles des personnes, considérées comme l’une des causes d’adhésion à la secte Boko-Haram. Il précise que les femmes membres de Boko Haram sont soumises à l’apprentissage du Coran ou à l’assouvissement de la sexualité.

Le CEDPE a identifié 5 groupes de personnes désengagées : la catégorie des moins de 18 ans, la catégorie des 18-30 ans, la catégorie des 30-40 ans, la catégorie des 40-60 ans et la catégorie des plus de 60 ans. 87, 46% des désengagés sont mariés, soit un effectif de 2225 personnes contre 171 célibataires. 75% de ces désengagés n’avaient aucune sympathie avec l’idéologie de Boko Haram mais par la contrainte mortelle, bon nombre d’entre eux se sont vus forcés d’accepter de rejoindre le mouvement.





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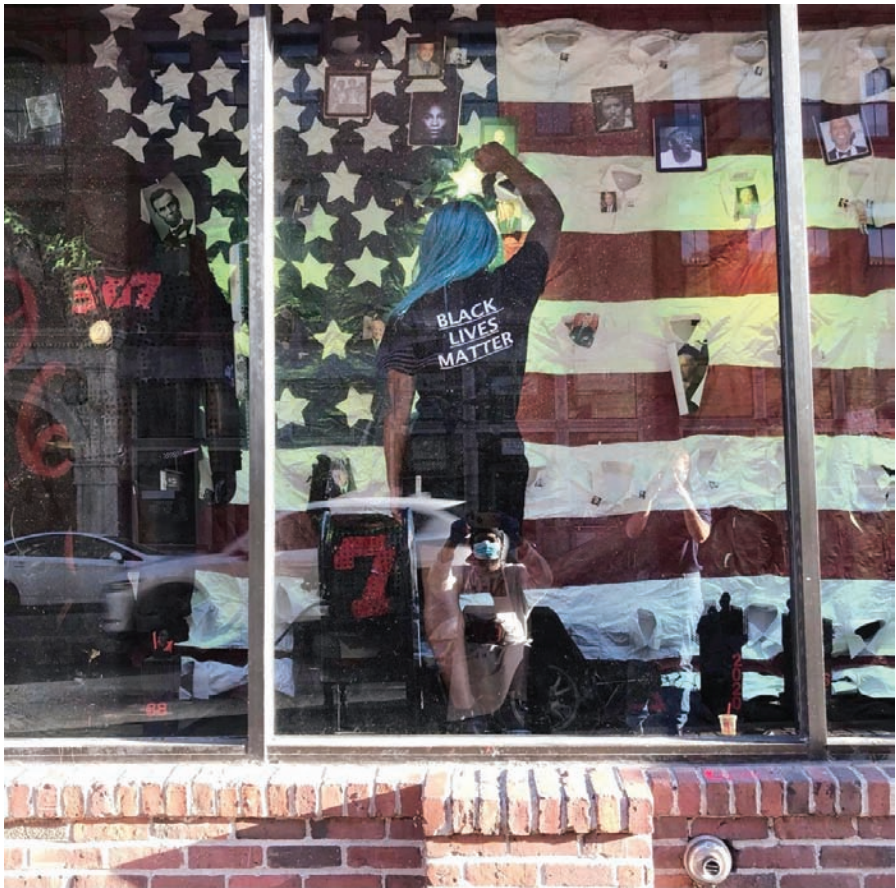
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1968, The timeline of a history of symbols

An installation by Titi de Baccarat at SPACE Gallery
 Nov 12, 2020 – Jan 3, 2021

Artist Statement
 I don't do politics, I don't participate in U.S elections, and I don't belong to any political party. Still, my art practice is one that is politically engaging, intense, opinionated, and unapologetic. My artwork is both poetic and socially conscious. I create because I dream, just as Martin Luther King, Jr., did in his lifetime. I believe things cannot change unless we dream, but art alone does not create change; change comes from the thoughts, questions, and emotions that art provokes.
 At the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico, during the medal ceremony for the 200-meter race, Americans Tommie Smith and John Carlos lowered their heads while each raised a black-gloved fist while as the American national anthem played, to show the rest of the world the racism Black people suffered in the United States (the two athletes would later be excluded from the American Olympic Committee and receive many death threats).
 In April of that same year, Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated in Memphis, an act that triggered a period of civil unrest. In more than 100 cities in the United States, subse-



quent race riots killed more than 50 people.
 More than 50 years later, in 2016, as players and spectators stood up in a San Diego stadium for the national anthem, San Francisco 49ers' quarterback, Colin Kaepernick, did not move. Instead, he placed his right knee on the ground to call attention to the continued inequalities and racism Black people faced in America (this gesture would cost him his job, as he was blacklisted from the NFL and still unemployed to this day).
 Four years later, on May 25, 2020, a Black man in Minneapolis, Minnesota, was murdered by police in the most inhumane way because of a supposed counterfeit \$20 bill. This sparked a series of protests and riots against racism and police brutality in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan area that spread across the country and then the world. According to a count compiled by the Associated Press, at least 4,400 protesters were subsequently arrested.
 Some months after the death of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, the United States people elected their 46th president, amidst heightened racial tension and the threat of civil war.

- The symbols:**
- The 46 shirt collars that make up the American flag represent the number of presidents who have ruled America from George Washington to our newly elected president.
 - The gloved-fist represents Black power and dignity.
 - The black socks represent poverty in the Black American community.
 - The ropes represent the oppression and injustices suffered by the Black American community.
 - A bent knee represents the pacifist protest against the police brutality Black Americans face.

Review by: Veronica A. Perez
 This visualized timeline in this mixed media installation in the Space gallery window on Congress Street evokes themes of visibility, access, power, and persistence.
 Titi De Baccarat hopes to change the world through dreaming and materiality. This activist's installation evokes sentiments of the civil rights movements in the 1960s and today – both tumultuous times in our nation's history.
 MLK Jr. & Malcolm X. These men had their own political party and agendas away from the white folx. Because the system is set up to fail Black people, Black men and women have stood up with their own personal political beliefs that differ from the two dominant political parties in the U.S. They had to, and still do, govern for themselves and their people. Black folx have to advocate for themselves because white politicians won't advocate for them and their community. They want to see folx govern for them. They want to help their communities instead of outside forces coming in to hurt and kill their communities.
 The maximalism used in this installation is evocative of the times. There is a mass consumption of media and overload of images – the materiality ranges from torn-up paper, to rope, to fabric, lights, and it all coalesces into black. De Baccarat delves into materials, histories, and emotions.

1968: L'historique d'une histoire faite de symboles

Déclaration d'artiste

Je ne fais pas de politique, je ne participe à aucune élection aux États-Unis et je n'appartiens à aucune représentation politique mais, je pratique un art engagé, intense, qui a une opinion et qui ne s'excuse pas. Mes créations artistiques sont à la fois poétique et sociale. Je crée parce que je rêve comme Martin Luther King l'a fait en son temps. Je crois que les choses ne changent que si nous rêvons mais, ce ne sont pas seulement les œuvres d'art qui créent le changement; le changement est créé par les pensées, les questions et les émotions que l'art suscite.



Installation intitulée: 1968: L'historique d'une histoire faite de symboles.

En 1968, lors de la cérémonie de remise des médailles du 200 m des J.O de Mexico, devant 400 millions de spectateurs, les Américains Tommie Smith et John Carlos baissent la tête et lèvent un poing ganté de noir lors de l'hymne américain pour indiquer à la face du monde le racisme dont sont victimes les noirs aux Etats-Unis (les deux athlètes vont alors être exclus du Comité Olympique Américain et vont recevoir un certain nombre de menaces de mort).

En Avril de la même année, Martin Luther King est assassiné à Memphis ce qui déclenche un nombre de troubles très graves. Dans plus de 100 villes aux Etats-Unis les émeutes raciales ont lieu qui se solde par une cinquantaine de morts.

Presque cinquante ans plus tard, en 2016, alors que les joueurs et les spectateurs du stade de San Diego se lèvent pendant l'hymne national, le quarterback de 49ers Colin Kaepernick ne suit pas le mouvement. À la place, il pose son genou droit à terre pour attirer l'attention sur les inégalités et le racisme que subissent les noirs en Amérique (ce geste va lui coûter d'être sur liste noire de la NFL et d'être au chômage jusqu'à ce jour).

Quatre ans plus tard, le 25 mai 2020, un homme noir est assassiné de la manière la plus inhumaine par la police pour une histoire de \$20 dans la ville de Minneapolis dans l'état du Minnesota ce qui déclenche une série de manifestations et émeutes contre le racisme et les violences policières dans l'agglomération de Minneapolis-Saint Paul, puis dans le reste du pays et dans le monde entier. Au moins 4 400 personnes ont été arrêtées au cours de plusieurs jours de manifestations, selon un décompte établi par l'agence de presse Associated Press...

Quelques mois après la mort de George Floyd et de Breonna Taylor, les Etats-Unis élisent leur 46e président dans un contexte de tension raciale et de menace d'une guerre civile.

Les symboles:

Le 46 cols de chemises qui composent le drapeau Américain représentent le nombre des présidents qui ont dirigé l'Amérique depuis Georges Washington jusqu'au nouveau président élu.

- Le poing ganté représente la force et la dignité noire.
- Le chaussettes noires représentent la pauvreté dans la communauté noire américaine.
- Les cordes représentent l'oppression et les injustices que subissent la communauté noire américaine.
- n genou a terre représente la protestation pacifique contre les brutalités policières à l'égard des noirs américains.

Black slowly takes over the space of the window, floor, and walls in an elegant reference to the pacifist protests from the 1960s and still today. There are raised black fists throughout the installation – the most static object in the window is stoic and steadfast. Smaller nuances refer to Black men such as Tommie Smith, John Carlos, and Colin Kaepernick, who persist in space.

They evoke for me the slew of newly elected politicians such as Cori Bush, Ritchie Torres, and Mondaire Jones.

A video plays of the protests this summer for George Floyd and Breonna Taylor – against a background of the American flag, flocked with collars and photos of the 45 white presidents. The background, although garishly bright, becomes enveloped by the black foreground.

It signals a new time, a new future. It evokes the change we so desperately need and the vehicle to help us get there. De Baccarat helps us dream of a new world.

Veronica Perez is an artist and writer living in Westbrook. Her website is www.veronicaaperez.com

Biographie

Titi de Baccarat est un artiste qui possède de nombreuses facettes à la fois peintre, sculpteur, bijoutier, concepteur de vêtements et écrivain. Dédié à la justice dans un contexte politique hostile, il a été forcé de fuir son pays, le Gabon, avec seulement la richesse de sa capacité artistique. Il vit à Portland depuis février 2015. Il travaille à travers son identité africaine et son expertise artistique pour contribuer à la culture de la ville. Il croit que "l'art réhabilite l'amour car réunissant des gens de tous les pays, de toutes origines, de toutes les cultures et de toutes les ethnies".

Au Gabon, les peintures de Titi de Baccarat ont décrit l'histoire du continent noir. Il a canalisé ses expériences de démocratie, en promouvant une culture de la paix et de la solidarité et en dénonçant les conflits armés et guerres qui ont coûté des millions de vies en Afrique.

Aux États-Unis, sa collection de bijoux ethniques, fabriqués avec divers matériaux, cuir, bois et métaux assortis, célèbre la beauté et la lutte des peuples du monde entier face à leurs oppresseurs. Sa collection de vêtements pour hommes et femmes inspirée des jumeaux siamois, se compose de 27 dessins axés sur la solidarité et l'humanisme.

Son livre, «La sexualité ancestrale dans la forêt des abeilles», est une collection de proverbes érotiques inspirés de son séjour de six mois avec les Pygmées dans les forêts du nord du Gabon; Titi de Baccarat recherche actuellement un éditeur. Ses travaux à venir décrivent son expérience en tant qu'immigrant aux États-Unis: ses douleurs, ses peurs, ses incertitudes mais aussi ses espoirs pour l'avenir.

“L’immigration n’est pas une couleur, c’est une douleur et un espoir”.



Biography

Titi de Baccarat is an artist who possesses many facets at once: painter, sculptor, jeweler, clothing designer, and writer. Dedicated to justice in a hostile political context, he was forced to flee his country, Gabon, with only the wealth of his artistic ability. He has lived in Portland, Maine since February 2015. He works through his African identity and artistic expertise to contribute to the culture of the city. He believes that "Art rehabilitates love, bringing together people of all countries, of all backgrounds, of all cultures, and all ethnicities."

In Gabon, Titi de Baccarat's paintings described the history of the Black Continent. He channeled his experiences of democracy, promoting a culture of peace and solidarity, and denouncing armed conflict and war which have claimed millions of lives in Africa.

In the USA, his collection of ethnic jewelry, made with various materials— leather, wood, and assorted metals— celebrates the beauty and struggle of peoples around the world standing to face their oppressors. His collection of clothing for men and women, inspired by the concept of conjoined twins, consists of 27 designs focused on solidarity and humanity.

His book, "Ancestral Sexuality in the Forest of Bees", is a collection of erotic proverbs inspired by his six month stay with the Pygmy in the forests of northern Gabon; Titi de Baccarat is currently looking for a publisher.

His upcoming works will describe his experiences as an immigrant in the United States: his pain, fear, uncertainty, and his hope for his future here.

“Immigration is not a color, it is pain and hope.”

Photos by David Wade, Titi de Baccarat, and Carolyn Wachnicki.

Translation into English by Geneviève Beaudoin





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