

Editorial

By Martin Nicol



The world has been horrified by Russian President Putin's brutal invasion of Ukraine. The South African government's pusillanimous response allowed Kenya to provide a voice from Africa to condemn Russia, and to explain the meaning of the UN Charter's demand for states to "settle their international disputes by peaceful means". We publish the remarks made in the Security Council by Dr Martin Kimani, Kenya's UN ambassador, who introduced an African perspective into the discussion. Russia vetoed the resolution, and unleashed its dogs of war.

Our wish is to include more articles on African countries beyond South Africa and in this issue the IFAA editorial team presents an Africa 2021 timeline, reflecting on the events of another difficult year.

New Agenda looks closely at how Africa experiences climate change and we are reminded that it is the continent most affected by climate change even though it produces only 4% of global emissions. Roland Ngam is project manager of an initiative by the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation to amplify the voices of African journalists around

climate justice issues. His article warns that climate change will put up to 50% of Africa's population at risk of undernourishment and the continent will lose 2-4% GDP by 2040.

Our cover story is on how the remote eastern areas of Zimbabwe still need to recover from the devastating floods and storms of 2019. Cyclone Idai struck the year before Covid arrived, making the struggle with lockdowns and the effects of the disease all the more difficult. This climate disaster revealed the lack of capacity to deal with crises. Mela Chitambo focuses on the struggles of women particularly. She presents insights and recommendations from a feminist participatory research project on how governments could better assist societies to adapt to climate change. This approach is in tune with the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which says that adaptation is as important as prevention.

Turning to South Africa, Philippe Burger is understanding, but not forgiving, in his assessment of Minister Enoch Godongwana's first budget (with projections since challenged by the economic turmoil in the wake of the war in Ukraine). He reminds us that "The real question is how to get the economy growing so it can create jobs. The 2022/23 budget falls short in answering this question."

We feature three theoretical commentaries by South African academics. Prof Sam Ashman reminds us that the concept of "racial capitalism" originated in South Africa and looks at its varied uses over time. Dr Eddie Cottle considers the debate on whether South Africa has a "labour aristocracy"—and how wide worker militancy shows it does not. Odile Mackett criticises the traditional economic growth standard set by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and proposes an alternative approach.

A research note from authors at the

Computer Science and Information Technology Department at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, examines the experiences of graduates who were enrolled as interns, mainly with private sector employers. A quarter of the ICT interns found the one to two year internship opportunity worthwhile, but the majority said they did not. This indicates a need to improve the programme, not end it, and the research puts forward interventions in this regard. The salaries of the interns are paid by government, through the skills levy and the SETAs. Each internship represents a major investment, and the survey results, as reported, are certainly disappointing.

Finally, we share the sadness that came with the death of the Arch, but we remember him with such joy and appreciation. IFAA wishes to add its voice to the multiple tributes to Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Mpilo Tutu who passed away at the age of 90 on 26 December 2021. We would like to remember him with a story from *Learn and Teach*, one of the best journals from the years of the anti-apartheid struggle. In 1988 it published the following tale:

Archbishop Desmond Tutu loves to tell jokes — like the one about the time when he and P.W. Botha came together for a meeting. They didn't want anybody to hear what they were saying to each other. So they met in a small boat in the middle of a lake. Suddenly a wind blew Botha's hat into the water. Tutu said, 'Don't worry, I'll get it' — and he stepped over the side of the boat. To everyone's surprise, he just walked across the water to fetch Botha's hat.

The TV and newspaper people watched this miracle from the side of the lake. But the next day, the newspaper headlines read: 'Tutu kan nie swem nie' (Tutu can't swim).

Tutu must have loved that story. We remember his infectious roar of laughter, which always reminded us that there is light during even the darkest times. That is how we will remember the Arch. IFAA bids him farewell.

Minister Sisulu

Lindiwe Sisulu took an oath to respect and uphold the Constitution. Yet in January 2022, she launched a vitriolic attack on the Constitution and some members of the judiciary. As usual, in keeping with South African political tradition, there were no consequences for her.

Minister Sisulu has not *done* anything to make her a deserved target of “action against transgressors”, which is how the Auditor-General has defined ‘consequence management’.

She has *said* certain things – she called some black judges “mentally colonised” and “house negroes”, she was disdainful of rule of law. Offensive, obtuse, *dof* – to use a colonial colloquialism – but nothing beyond the right to freedom of expression set out in the Bill of Rights.

Consequence management cannot flow from what Sisulu has said, but it might be appropriate in the light of what she has not done – along with her trusted compatriots – to address the “triple challenges” of poverty, unemployment and inequality that were inherited in 1994.

Sisulu has been an MP since 1994 and has been a Cabinet Member and part of the ANC collective leadership in the NEC for most of those years. The masses of our people are still loyal to the ANC – or the idea of the ANC – but few are happy with the ANC.

The great failing of our democracy has been our inability to reconcile policies for economic progress with policies for social justice.

You are not going to get social justice unless you have policies for economic efficiency and economic success. The ANC has been unlucky, certainly, with the economic climate. But it has also pushed ‘transformative’ policies in ways that have built a new black middle class while holding back job creation.

And the ANC has been spectacularly bad at following its own advice. Policies are not implemented. The sensible recommendations of experts and commissions are piled and filed. Then there are the laws passed by Parliament and the regulations drafted by departments. Often simply not followed! Just look at procurement. Consider the repeated findings of the Auditor-General. Rules are ignored. And there are no consequences.

Some put it all down to cadre deployment – assigning party loyalists to positions they fail at. Cadre deployment can work. It has for China. The difference is that when party people in China do not perform, they get humiliated, demoted, jailed or executed. Here people go on suspension, job hop to a different municipality or just stay on. Like Lindiwe Sisulu – one department after another; abject failure in state security is compensated by a transfer to tourism.

Let’s call it consequence mismanagement. **NA**



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