

Africa Diary

News from the Continent

1 August to 30 November 2024



Brazilian President Lula da Silva with President Ramaphosa at the handover of the G20 presidency at the end of the summit in Rio de Janeiro

Source: Flickr

19 November: South Africa took over the Presidency of the G20 from Brazil at the end of the annual leaders' summit of the world's 20 biggest economies which was held in Rio de Janeiro. South Africa is the only African member of G20 (although the African Union is now included). It will host the next summit at the end of 2025. The Group of Twenty (G20) countries represent 85% of global GDP and two-thirds of the world's population.



1 November: Mauritius ordered all internet service providers to suspend access to social media platforms until a day after the 11 November general election, sparking such outrage from civil society groups that the government of the ruling Militant Socialist Movement (MSM) party was forced to overturn the ruling a day later. “National security” was the reason given by the office of the Prime Minister. As it turned out national security was not at risk. The main opposition party won a landslide victory, preserving an electoral practice of simply and seamlessly alternating power between two dynasties of family leaders since independence from Britain in 1968.



1 November: After 58 years in government, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) was unseated in an election that it had expected to win. The outgoing President, Mokgweetsi Masisi, conceded defeat before all the results were in, saying, “I am proud of our democratic processes. Although I wanted a second term, I will respectfully step aside and participate in a smooth transition process.”

21 October: UN Secretary-General António Guterres vehemently condemned the murders in Maputo of Elvino Dias, legal adviser to Mozambican presidential candidate Venâncio Mondlane, and Paulo Guambe, legal representative of the Podemos political party. The killings took place after the flawed national elections in which Frelimo’s candidate was again declared the winner. Police broke up a small demonstration at Praça da OMM, Maputo, the site of the murders two days before and tear-gassed Venâncio Mondlane while he was briefing a group of journalists. Although the constitution guarantees the right to demonstrations, Maputo police do not accept this.

20 October: The World Health Organisation (WHO) certified Egypt as malaria-free after a century of efforts to end a disease that has been in the country for at least 6,000 years. Genetic evidence of the disease was found in Tutankhamun and other ancient Egyptian mummies. Algeria achieved malaria-free certification in 2019 and Morocco in 2010. The only country on the African continent never to have experienced malaria is the mountain kingdom of Lesotho.

5 October: Mpox vaccinations began in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), nearly two months after the disease outbreak was declared a global emergency by the WHO. The DRC, with about 30,000 suspected mpox cases and 859 deaths, accounts for more than 80% of all the cases and 99% of all the deaths reported in Africa in 2024. Most mpox infections and deaths are in children under 15, but the



first vaccines are only meant for adults. Frontline health workers and at-risk populations have been targeted. Meanwhile, reduced doses of the vaccine approved for use in children are expected from Japan in due course.

- 1 October:** The newly appointed Foreign Minister of the DRC, Thérèse Kayikwamba Wagner, told the BBC's *Focus on Africa* that the security crisis in her country due to the continued presence of 4,000 unwelcome forces from the Rwandan army is an international issue not a regional one.
- 27 September:** President William Ruto of Kenya told CNN's Christiane Amanpour, "the country is now stable", after riots and anti-government protests in June saw parliament in Nairobi set on fire and over 40 Kenyans killed by police. The mass action forced Ruto to abandon an unpopular finance bill and to dismiss most of his cabinet. He said that this humiliation was the result of a government failure to explain its policies properly. "Misinformation and fake news" were also to blame, he said. Irūngū Houghton, director of Amnesty International in Kenya, said that their recent interviews showed that out of uniform Kenyan police had fired live rounds at unarmed demonstrators. Police also fired tear gas and beat and arbitrarily detained peaceful demonstrators.
- 26 September:** Human Rights Watch highlighted the plight of civilians in the conflict areas of the eastern DRC who have been attacked as the Rwandan army and the M23 militia group have indiscriminately shelled displacement camps and other densely populated areas near Goma. The Congolese armed forces (*Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo*, FARDC) with their own abusive allied militias, such as the "Wazalendo" ("patriots" in Swahili), are also deploying artillery in the area, effectively increasing the risk of violence, which affects half a million displaced people in the camps. Both sides have killed and raped camp residents, interfered with aid delivery and committed other abuses.
- 26 September:** Tanzanian opposition politician Freeman Mbowe, the chairperson of the Chadema party, told the BBC's *Africa Daily* podcast that the country is sliding back to the repressive style of the late president John Magufuli. In past weeks activists have been abducted, rallies and protests banned and Ali Mohamed Kibao, a member of the party's national secretariat, was brutally murdered. Kibao was taken off a bus by armed police. Later his body was found showing signs of torture.
- 13 September:** South Sudan's government postponed long-delayed national elections for another two years, until 22 December 2026. South Sudan has been formally at peace since a 2018 peace deal ended a five year civil war. President Salva Kiir has led the country since its independence from Sudan in 2011.

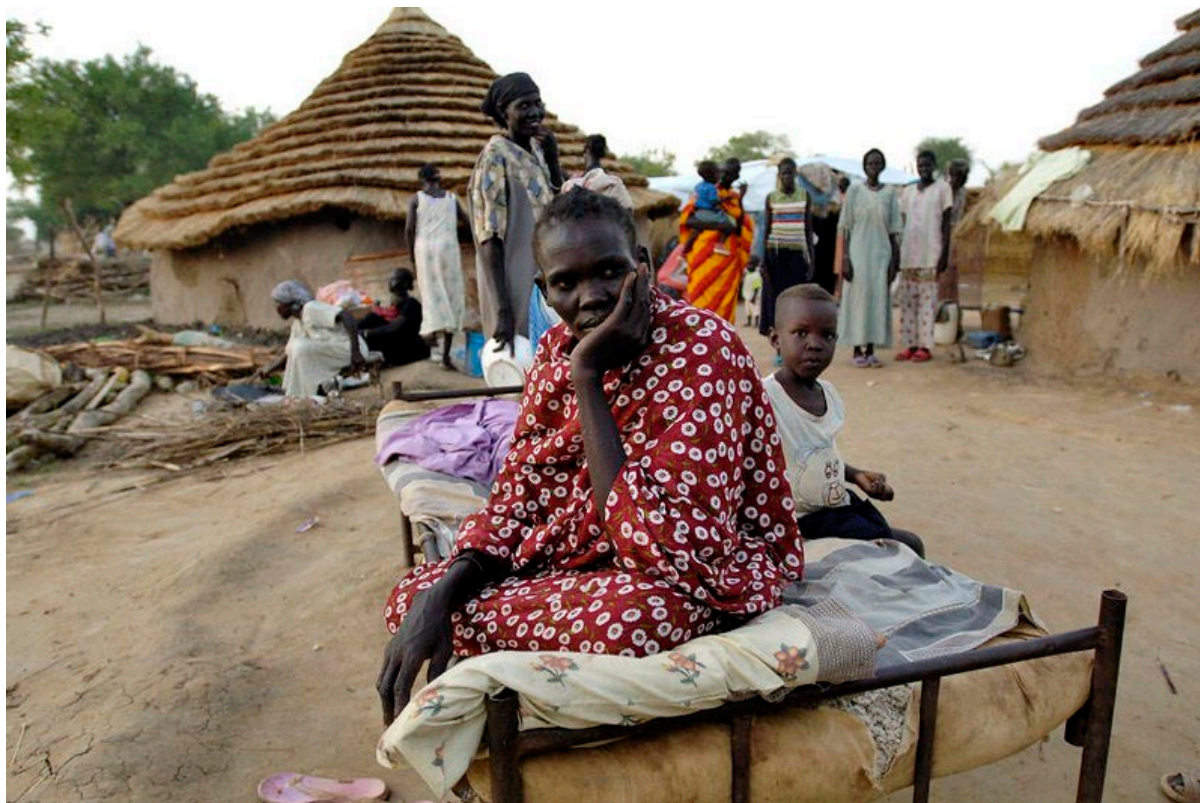


President Cyril Ramaphosa at the podium at FOCAC

Source Flickr



6 September: The [ninth Forum on China-Africa Cooperation](#) (Focac) ended in Beijing and was declared a notable success. A total of 53 out of 54 African countries attended the “Africa plus one” event. Commentators believe that the 2024 Forum (they take place every three years) marked a turning point both for China and for Africa. More ‘African’ agenda items were covered on issues such as training, agriculture, trade barriers and security assistance, and China consolidated its geo-political support from African countries. China -- Africa’s biggest trading partner, but not its biggest investor or lender -- has been far more successful than the US or the European Union in getting African countries “on side”.



Sudanese woman displaced by war.

Source Flickr

31 August: An in-depth report on Sudan, “Why its catastrophic war is the world’s problem”, published in *The Economist*, reveals the war in Sudan has displaced more than 14 million people, or about 30% of the population, since it began in April 2023. A total of 150,000 people have been killed. The capital city, Khartoum, has been razed. Famine looms. Yet Sudan receives a fraction of the attention given to Gaza and Ukraine. A UN report found that the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), one of the two main parties in the civil war, was responsible for widespread sexual violence amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) supplies weapons and drones to RSF killers.

29 August: Angolan President João Lourenço signed into law two bills that severely restrict freedoms of the media, expression and association. The law on the Crimes of Vandalism of Public Goods and Services sets prison terms of up to 25 years for people who participate in protests that result in vandalism and service disruptions and the National Security law permits extreme government control over media, civil society organisations and other private institutions.

17 August: The Southern African Development Community (SADC) summit ended with a statement commending the Kingdom of Eswatini “for successfully holding peaceful elections”. The much-anticipated “national dialogue” that President Cyril Ramaphosa promised on an official SADC visit to Eswatini in 2021 has yet to materialise.

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