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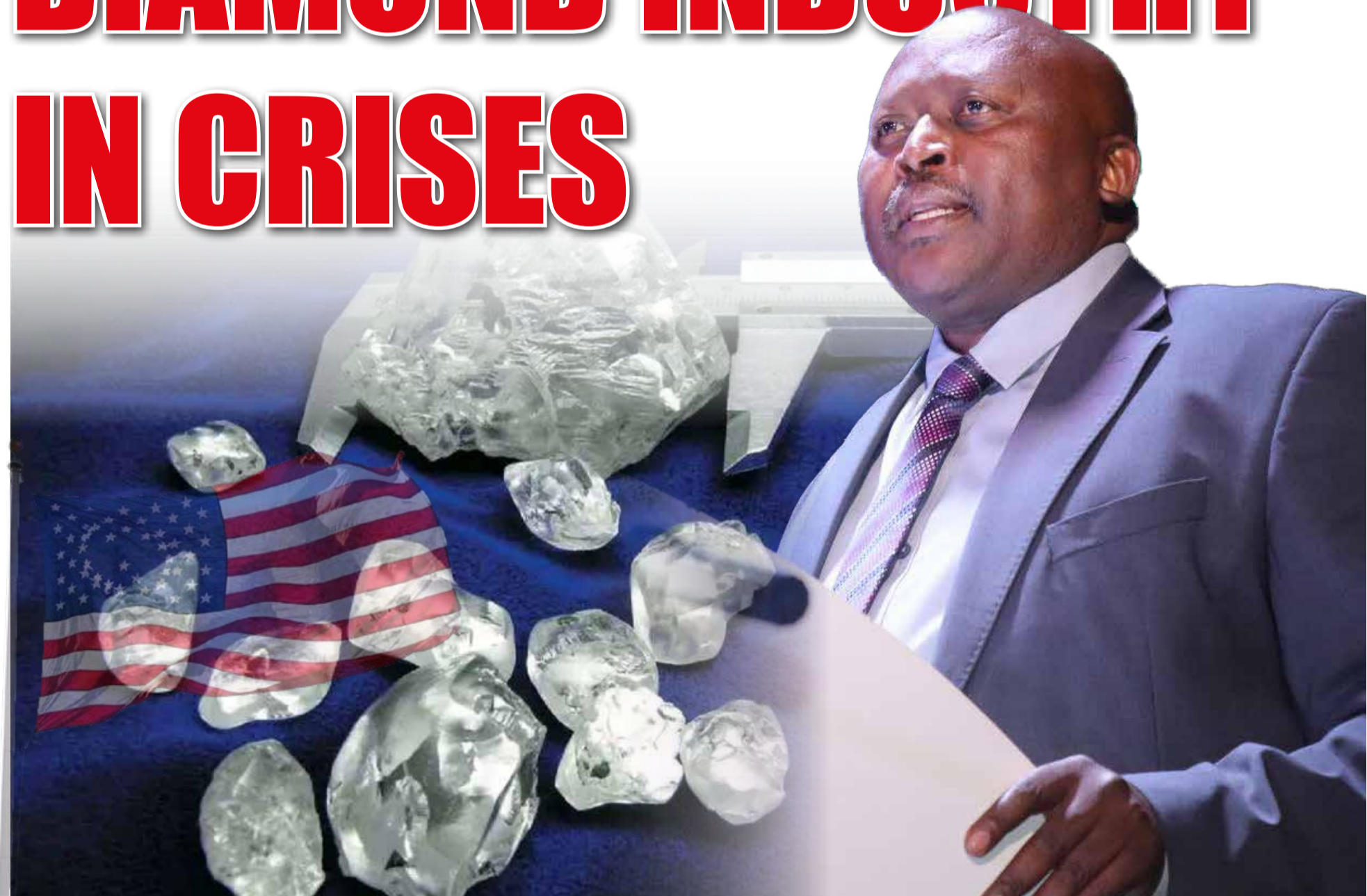
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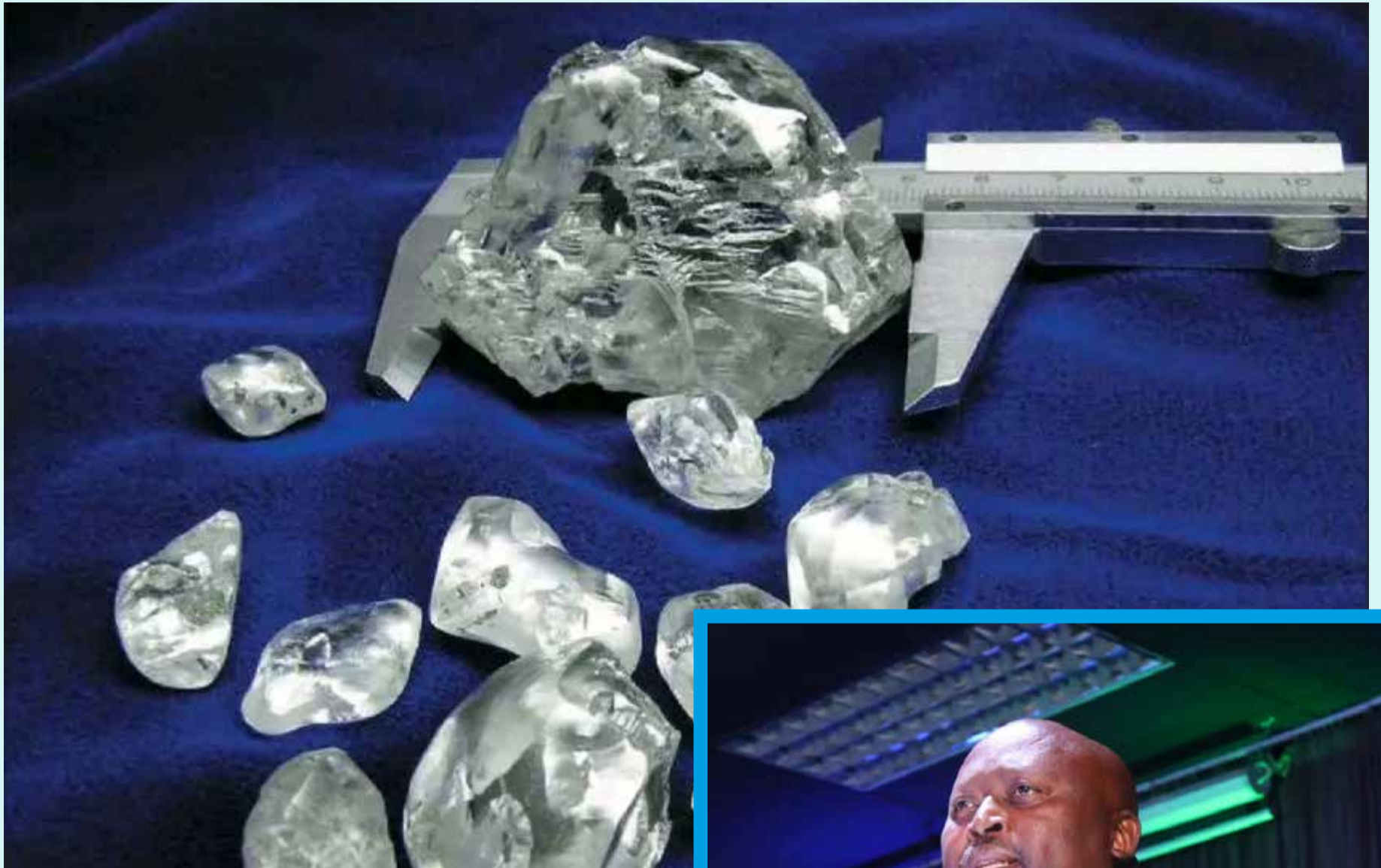
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DIAMOND INDUSTRY IN CRISES



National News

Diamond industry in crises



NEO SENOKO

MASERU - Deep challenges lie ahead of the Lesotho diamond industry following the recent imposition of a 50 percent reciprocal tariffs on the country by the United States (US) President Donald Trump.

The US claims Lesotho imposes a 99 percent tariff on its goods and as a result gets a big trade deficit with the country.

While it is clear that the textile and garment sector has been hard hit, the diamond sector, which contribute over 10 percent of the country's GDP is facing similar predicaments.

Despite the already existing dilemmas that among others include availability of counterfeit diamonds that are competing with the genuine production in to the US market, the high inflation in the US could prompt tighter monetary policy, leading to capital outflows from South Africa and the depreciation of the Rand, hence Loti.

The high inflation in the US will certainly weaken Lesotho's rough diamonds exports as the country is one of Lesotho's largest buyer of diamonds.

"For exports, the US is still a key market, representing 45 percent of Lesotho's exports. It is still a key market for Lesotho, given its large contribution to the economy and the potential, should Lesotho lose the

market, there is a huge potential drop in the total exports and ultimately job losses.

The loss of export receipts in expected to put pressure on foreign reserves as Lesotho's trade balance widens," Minister of Trade, Industry and Business Development Mokhethi Shelile said in response to the US tariffs imposition.

Lesotho produces a remarkable number of large, Type II, top quality stones. (type II diamonds are extremely rare, colourless and chemically pure with no traces of nitrogen impurities.) Lesotho's diamond mines generate more dollars-per-carat than any other diamond producing country.

The country has a large trade surplus with the United States, mostly made up of diamonds and textiles.

In 2023, Lesotho exported \$539 million in diamonds, making it the 17th largest exporter of diamonds in the world. In the same year, diamonds were the 1st most exported product in Lesotho.

The main destination of diamonds exports from Lesotho are United states, Belgium, France, India and United Arab Emirates.

Shelile said despite the eminent engagement with the US on the 50 percent tariffs issue, the country should focus on exploring other markets to maintain the balance.

"In the medium term, the country will



increase efforts to export to alternative export markets such as the European Union and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The current trade is based on the existing unilateral preferential market under the AGOA, which Lesotho has utilized since its introduction in 2000," he added.

Compared to the US, Lesotho is a least developed country, which depends on such trade preferences to improve its economic

status. The two countries have enjoyed warm relations in terms of trade, economic and developmental aspects.

Out of the 57 countries which the US has imposed new tariffs on, Lesotho is at the top with 50 percent across the board. Comparatively this is higher than regional trading partners, Botswana 38 percent, eSwatini 10 percent, Namibia 21 percent and South Africa 31 percent.

The challenge of per diem misuse

As cabinet trio eues US trip to plead tariffs case

MOTSAMAI MOKOTJO

MASERU - Minister of Foreign Affairs. Lejone Mpotjoane has sensationally told Metro that he used his personal finances to undertake official visits on behalf of the country.

Normally, according to impeccable sources at the Ministry of Finance, per diem for a trip to the United States of America (USA) stands at a staggering USD \$403.00 or M7 827.79 at the current exchange, per day.

This is against public outcry over the intended visit to the United States by a group of cabinet minister after American president, Donald Trump's administration slapped the country with a 50 percent tariff rate.

Last week, Mpotjoane, Minister of Finance, Dr Refšelisitsoe Matlanyane, and trade minister Mokhethi Shelile held a press briefing in which they indicated that they intend to head to Washington to negotiate with the Americans.

"Issues of economic cooperation are critical; most of the time they require physical presence; sometimes when you write, they may not be interpreted accordingly.

We made a request for a telephonic meeting; it is not just a physical one," Mpotjoane said.

"There are a lot of official visits I undertook where I used my personal funds to cover the costs since this country's per diem is meagre; thus, I want to indicate I am going there for it (per diem)," an agitated Mpotjoane said.

He further said they last requested an engagement between Prime Minister Ntsokoane Matekane and Trump, of which they are yet to receive feedback.

When asked how much he spent from his finances, he refused to answer.

Opposition Basotho National Party supremo, Machesetsa Mofomobe, lashed out at the government, describing the trip as a "per diem exercise."

"One would have thought that our country would have instructed our ambassador and appointed lobbyists to plead our case; this issue of going to the US without anything tangible doesn't make sense.

If we haven't received a go-ahead, where are we going?" Mofomobe said.

United for Change (UFC) legislator, Mohlominyane Tota, echoed Mofomobe's sentiments in denouncing the delegation's prospective trip as a "waste of public funds for a futile engagement."

"As a country, we rely heavily on South Africa; there's no need to send useless ministers who are going to say anything worthwhile to Trump.

Remember in parliament we refused to be addressed by ministers, we need

to hear the prime minister on this matter; even when heading to the US, the prime minister should be the one leading," Tota said.

He also lashed out at the Matekane administration for not being "able to

communicate effectively."

Lesotho Textile Exporters Association Secretary General, 'Malikhabiso Majora, told this publication that theirs is to make sure that they save jobs in the industry.

"Last week we met with Ministers of Trade, Finance, Labour and of Foreign Affairs. So far there's nothing," Majara said, adding, "But we are working on finding solutions to this problem."

The tariff hikes, according to experts, have nullified the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

A local Chartered Accountant, Robert Likhang, has said in an interview with Metro that while Lesotho has trade relations with other countries other than South Africa, the latter's expulsion from AGOA could negatively impact the country.

AGOA is a preferential trade program that was enacted in 2000 to boost and diversify African trade with the US that allows duty-free entry for a wide range of products.

"We do have trade relations with other countries besides South Africa, but we can be directly affected because they are our biggest trade partners.

Unlike other countries that have manufacturing capabilities, we do not have that economic independence; therefore, we are likely to suffer," Likhang said.



National News

Shabby state of judicial officers worrisome



RANTAU TLALI MAKHETHA

MASERU - President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Kananelo Mosito King's Counsel (KC), has appealed to the government to increase the salaries of the judges according to the best international practice.

Justice Mosito made the remarks this when opening the First Session of the Court of Appeal under the theme Towards a Resurgent Judiciary: Restoring Honour, Capacity, and Confidence in Lesotho's Superior Courts.

"I must express a grave and growing concern - the deteriorating state of the judicial service, and more particularly, the compromised welfare of the judges who serve at the apex of the judicial system: the judges of the High Court who sit ex officio in the Court of Appeal, and the permanent President and Acting Justices of Appeal.

...And yet the conditions under which those charged with this sacred task operate often fail to reflect the dignity of the office," Justice Mosito said.

Glaringly, Mosito noted: "The Justices

of the Appeal Court and High Court Judges deserve a scheme of service that is coherent, predictable, and fair," he said, adding, "their salaries must reflect the office they occupy."

Mosito further indicated that they also require appropriate chambers, dedicated research staff, independent budgetary allocation of funds, and statutory guarantee of remuneration.

"It is a matter of public record, and one not easily reconciled with the principles of justice and constitutional order, that following the last sitting of this court, the justices were subjected to inexcusable delays in payment of their emoluments.

"Judges - men and women - entrusted with the sacred duty of declaring what the law is - were left in a position where their rightful dues were neither paid promptly nor communicated with the transparency and respect that the office demands," he lamented.

Mosito also pleaded with the government to take cognizance of the welfare of retired judges since they cannot be "left to descend into quiet obscurity without security, dignity, or

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support that their office demands..."

According to the Members of Parliament Salaries (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations, 2023 Statutory Salaries (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations, 2023 Schedule 1, the Chief Justice earns M667 056.00 while judges of the High Court receive M551 016.00 per year. Schedule 2 offers the Chief Justice a rent-free government house

allowance of M4 000 per month while judges receive M3 500.

The head of the judiciary is also entitled to "a black Mercedes Benz E350D, and judges of the High Court shall purchase a black Toyota Prado 3.0D for both official and private business."

The regulations also entitle the Chief Justice to an 'expense allowance' of M5 000 per month.

TCTA completes maintenance work at LHWP tunnel



RANTAU TLLI MAKHETHA

MASERU - Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA) Chief Executive Officer, Percy Sechemane, announced the successful maintenance of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) Tunnel North and Ash River Outfall.

In a press statement released this week, Sechemane indicated that despite challenges "that could have caused delays, such as elevated moisture levels in the tunnel."

"As TCTA, we take pride in our commitment to serving the nation with diligence and distinction. We are immensely proud of our consistent ability to deliver projects within budget, on time, and according to specification," he said.

The chief executive noted that they had difficulties on the Lesotho side, which necessitated the delay in the maintenance work.

"While work on the South African section has been completed on schedule, the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority, which is responsible for the Lesotho side, has requested an extension due to earlier implementation challenges that led to delays. We commend their efforts to accelerate progress and minimize the impact of these delays on water delivery to South Africa."

"Although there will be a delay of a few weeks before water can resume flowing through the LHWP Tunnel, this is not expected to affect water availability in Gauteng negatively," Sechemane said.

The full maintenance program on the LHWP Tunnel North is expected to be



completed by the end of April 2025.

The six-month maintenance programme on the LHWP Delivery Tunnel began on October 1, 2024.

At the time, in a joint statement between South Africa and Lesotho, with both ministers from the same portfolios present, South African Minister of

Water and Sanitation, Penny Majodina, expressed satisfaction with the preparations for the tunnel closure and the work to follow.

SADC PF mourns the passing of Clerk of the National Assembly of Zambia



MOSES MAGADZA

WINDHOEK, Namibia - The SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) has expressed sorrow following the death of Roy Ngulube, the Clerk of the National Assembly of Zambia, who died on April 7 while on official duty in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Ngulube was in Tashkent as part of a Zambian parliamentary delegation attending the 150th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly, led by Speaker Nelly Mutti.

His sudden passing has sent shockwaves across the region, with tributes pouring in to honour a man widely respected for his dedication to parliamentary service and regional cooperation.

In a condolence message, the Secretary General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, Boemo Sekgoma, paid tribute to Mr. Ngulube's extensive contributions to regional parliamentary development.

"Mr Ngulube was not only a consummate parliamentary professional but also a steadfast advocate for regional cooperation, innovation, and democratic governance," she said in a statement, adding that he was also "a strong pillar" in the SADC Committee of Clerks and Secretaries General of Parliaments.

Ngulube's relationship with the SADC PF dates to his tenure as Executive Assistant to the Secretary General between 2006 and 2008. In that role, he helped lay a solid foundation for inter-parliamentary collaboration within the region. His service, Sekgoma noted, was marked by "an unwavering commitment to the principles that underpin the Forum's work."

Throughout a distinguished career spanning over two decades, Ngulube rose through the ranks of the Zambian Parliament. He held key positions including Assistant Committee Clerk, Deputy Clerk for both Procedure and Administration, and Clerk of the National Assembly, a position he assumed in September 2023.

In recent years, he remained integrally involved in the work of the SADC PF, contributing thought leadership and strategic input to several key initiatives, including the SADC PF Sweden-funded SRHR, HIV and Aids Governance Project.

"His participation was marked by diligence, vision, and a fireless dedication to improving legislative responsiveness to public health and social development imperatives," said Sekgoma.

A strong proponent of modernising parliamentary communication, Ngulube



helped Zambia's Parliament in expanding its operational radio and television broadcasting services to enhance public access and participation. He was also an early advocate for leveraging emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to streamline legislative processes.

"His bold embrace of innovation was a testament to his forward-thinking leadership," noted Sekgoma. She added, "He will be remembered for his spirit of

collegiality, mentorship, and principled engagement."

His colleagues saluted him for championing gender equality in parliamentary leadership, ethical donor engagement, and strengthening institutional ties with development partners.

Sekgoma said the impact of Ngulube's work was enduring.

"We celebrate a life of dedicated service, quiet strength, and an enduring

legacy. May his family and colleagues find solace in the knowledge that his work touched many lives and that his legacy will continue to inspire."

Delegates attending the 150th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, observed a moment of silence in remembrance of Ngulube on Tuesday.

Moses Magadza is the Media and Communications Manager at the SADC Parliamentary Forum.





“Are we really here?” – Katjavivi reacts to transformation of SADC PF



MOSES MAGADZA

GABORONE, Botswana – In Luke 2:25-32, Simeon, a devout man who had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen Christ, said - upon holding the infant Jesus in his hands - “Sovereign Lord, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation.”

Last week, in a similar moment thick with emotion and decades of anticipation, Professor Peter Katjavivi, the former Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia and a member of the SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) Transformation Lobby Team, delivered a stirring address at the signing of the Agreement to Amend the SADC Treaty to establish the SADC PF as an official institution of the regional bloc.

Addressing an audience that included Botswana’s president, Advocate Duma Gideon Boko (SC), speakers, parliamentarians and other dignitaries, Professor Katjavivi paused - gripped by the significance of the moment.

“Sometimes I feel, are we here? Is this the event that brought us together?” he

asked. “I think I’m convinced we are indeed here to witness something so important.”

The Agreement, signed in Gaborone under the leadership of President Boko, represents a historic milestone in the decades-long journey to formally recognise the SADC PF as a full-fledged institution of SADC. Professor Katjavivi, one of the Forum’s most resolute advocates, made it clear that the journey had been arduous, but worth every step.

Botswana became the 14th SADC country to sign the Agreement. The region now awaits Mauritius’ signature.

“We have struggled hard to achieve something that we feel is very important. Parliament cannot be left behind as we are discussing the critical issue of regional integration,” Professor Katjavivi said.

The former Speaker reflected on the path that brought the region to the 14th signature.

“We have been dreaming about this, but it has become a reality,” he said. “As we look back and look to the future, this is something that will define who we are as a SADC community.”

Professor Katjavivi is exiting active political service. The milestone carried

deep personal significance for him, and he described the moment as a fitting conclusion to his years of service and advocacy.

“It has been long coming. It is finally here, and I am extremely proud,” he said. “We say that our job is done to a certain extent - but of course we need to consolidate this achievement.”

He said that the envisaged regional parliament must serve the people of Southern Africa and position itself on the continental and global stage.

“A regional parliament is an important vehicle for regional integration. It will enable us to fully serve our citizens within the SADC region and the continent of Africa at large by networking with other regional parliaments... drawing upon the experiences that might be relevant for us.”

He said that Namibia remains a dedicated host country to the SADC PF and would continue supporting its evolution. Recounting a conversation with Namibia’s current president, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, he said: “Before coming here, I alerted the current president... and she simply said, ‘I wish you well and thank you for sharing this important event with

me.”

For Professor Katjavivi, the signing by Botswana represents the fulfillment of a shared dream; one that entailed tireless lobbying, unwavering hope and collective belief.

“This is a very important development that we hold dear to our hearts,” he stated.

“From here, we’ll continue to mobilise the best we can to make sure the SADC regional parliament lives up to the expectations of our people,” he said to applause.

The SADC PF Transformation Lobby Group was comprised of the Speaker Advocate Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Mudenda, Chairperson, from Zimbabwe; Pedro Sebastião, proxy for Speaker Carolina Cerqueira, from Angola; Former Speaker Phandu Tombola Chaha Skelemani, from Botswana; Speaker Professor Katjavivi from Namibia; Speaker Angela Thokozile Didiza from South Africa and Speaker Nelly Butete Kashumba Mutti, SC, MP, FAPRA, from Zambia.

Moses Magadza is the Media and Communications Manager at the SADC Parliamentary Forum

Opinion

Our forefathers' have always been visionaries



It's a leadership crisis in which the man from Mantšonyane has not uttered a word after US President Donald Trump slapped us with a 50 percent tariff rate.

There's clearly no alternative plan(s) in trying to seek other markets besides America. Thinking capacity remains a painful concept and reality for our leaders.

"Now the nationalist bourgeoisies, who in region after region hasten to make their own fortunes and to set up a national system of exploitation, do their utmost to put obstacles in the path of this 'Utopia.'"

The national bourgeoisies, who are quite clear as to what their objectives are, have decided to bar the way to that unity, to that coordinated effort on the part of two hundred and fifty million men to triumph over stupidity, hunger, and inhumanity at one and the same time.

This is why we must understand that African unity can only be achieved through the upward thrust of the people, and under the leadership of the people, that is to say, in defiance of the interests of the bourgeoisie," Fanon wrote.

This is the state of our country: rudderless, incapacitated, unimaginative, and incoherent. There's the African Continental Free Trade Area, which our elites have ratified but seem to lack the political will to implement.

Traoré will forever be part of our public discourse since he's implementing, not just making speeches to appease international markets. The land of the Upright People's development trajectory should be emulated by all Africans, at home and abroad.

Staring at the harsh realities, Sankara said, "It is our dignity that's at stake; faced with these people dying of starvation in the Sahel or elsewhere, victims of drought, of hunger, of the degradation of their land, which has become arid and unproductive, do you want us to become international beggars just to feed and help them when we have the capacity to do so with our own resources?"

Our forefathers' have always been visionaries.

RANTAU TLALI MAKHETHA

What is the fascination with Burkina Faso's head, Captain Ibrahim Traoré?

This is a critical question that resonates with many young people who have not seen the fruits of democracy, particularly jobs and economic emancipation.

I have a few mes frères (my friends) from that part of the continent who have indicated during various forums that they prefer "democratic coups" unlike shabby elections, which have yielded zilch towards their upliftment.

"We don't eat elections; Traoré is our Thomas Sankara; ours is an economic development for our country," Omar told me in one workshop across the Zambezi.

"Our parents have been voting even before we were born, but the country struggled," thundered the man from West Africa. Traoré is a beacon of hope for those fed up with the business of elections, and Basotho youth talk about him in social spaces. He epitomizes what Frantz Fanon wrote in *The Wretched of the Earth*: "The peoples of Africa have only recently come

to know themselves. They have decided, in the name of the whole continent, to weigh in strongly against the colonial regime."

Joséphine Ouédraogo, who was Minister for Family Development and National Solidarity, spoke about The Thomas Sankara I Knew in a piece published by Jacobin: "Sankara told me, 'We are not looking for people who are prepared to be ministers, but people who are ready for change.'"

It is such statements that inspire the youth across the continent to dismiss elections as sham exercises meant to enrich a few individuals with printing ballot papers worth millions of dollars.

Lesotho, a typical banana kingdom, has been holding elections with zero impact for citizens since 1993.

I wonder, where are our Sankara and Traoré? Many people were duped into thinking that the current Sam Matekane-led administration would rise to the occasion.

Despondent young people have been left with egg on their faces since Matekane was touted as a 'Moses' who would free them from hardships they face on a daily basis.



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PROFESSOR ARTHUR G O MUTAMBARA

The Global South and AI: A new era of inclusive development

As the Global South embraces Artificial Intelligence (AI), it is essential to review whether and how its countries have benefitted from previous technological revolutions.

More significantly, why and how will AI's impact be any different?

What is new under the sun?

The First Industrial Revolution (1760 – 1870) utilised water and steam power to mechanise production.

The **Second Industrial Revolution** (1870 – 1965) used electric power to facilitate mass production.

The **Third Industrial Revolution** (1965 – 2011), commonly referred to as the digital revolution, employed electronics and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to automate production.

The **AI-driven Fourth Industrial Revolution** (4IR), which began in 2011 and continues to the present, builds on the digital revolution.

Most countries in the Global South did not substantially benefit from the initial three industrial revolutions. The period from 1619 to 1865 was marked by slavery, and from 1884 to 1994, colonialism dominated many of these least industrialised economies.

Moreover, neocolonialism and imperialism have persisted in these regions even during the so-called post-colonial period. Essentially, inhabitants of these countries have been mere objects and victims through the earlier industrial epochs.

However, the AI-driven 4IR presents an unprecedented and unique opportunity for the Global South to exert its influence, assume agency, actively participate, and leverage technology to achieve inclusive development and shared prosperity.

What is the Global South?

This classification refers to a socio-economic and geopolitical concept rather than a precise geographical location.

It describes emerging economies and countries that are least industrialised.

Consequently, the Global South is also known as the developing world or as a grouping of developing economies. The Global South broadly comprises Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia (excluding Israel, Japan, and South Korea), and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand).

The Global North includes North America, Europe, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand.

The world's highly industrialised countries constitute the Global North, whereas the Global South comprises emerging and least industrialised economies.

Comparing the populations of the Global South (6.6 billion) and Global North (1.4 billion), it is evident that there are more people in the former than the latter.

Hence, the term Global Majority is sometimes used instead of Global South.

The phrase Global Majority has the utility of emphasising the primacy, centrality, and importance of the demands, aspirations, and ambitions of the Global South ahead of those of the Global North – the Global Minority.

The characteristics, challenges, similarities, and differences of countries in the Global South should be thoroughly discussed.

Indeed, there is quite some heterogeneity in the Global South.

Asian states such as China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia are far more advanced in terms of policy and governance infrastructure, economic productivity, manufacturing capacity, and, of course, the development and adoption of AI systems compared to countries in

Africa and Latin America.

However, the shared history and similar economic circumstances in the 1950s and 1960s for most countries in the Global South make it imperative that these countries be studied together, lessons be drawn, and shared.

Economies in the Global South must learn from one another. As a starting point, it is instructive to explore and interrogate the efficacy and meaning of the expressions “inclusive development” and “shared prosperity”.

Inclusive Development

Development is a multifaceted concept encompassing economic, social, political, and environmental aspects.

It is often associated with progress in areas such as income, education, health, human rights and industrialisation.

The objective is to improve a population's standard of living through factors such as wealth creation and distribution, social differentiation, industrial transformation, and economic growth.

AI can play a critical role in achieving such ambitions and aspirations. However, given its history of rabid colonisation and exploitation by the Global North, extreme inequalities, and abject poverty, the Global South requires a special type of development – inclusive development.

This emphasis seeks to ensure that the benefits of development are shared broadly across all segments of society, particularly the marginalised and vulnerable.

As already stated, there are five broad but related categories of development: economic, social, political, environmental, and human.

It is prudent to outline these dimensions briefly. Economic development is a key aspect of general development. It speaks to growth in income and wealth, industrialisation and modernisation, and poverty reduction.

Indeed, economic development often involves an increase in the standard of living, measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or Gross National Income (GNI), and GDP per capita. The transition from agrarian-based economies to industrial and service-based ones is a key indicator of economic development.

Although this transition is a measure of economic development, it is also a form of economic transformation – the continuous process of moving labour and other resources from lower to higher productivity sectors (structural change) and raising within-sector productivity growth.

Of course, a key objective of economic development is to reduce poverty and ensure equitable distribution of resources. Social development is closely linked to and interconnected with economics. It includes education, healthcare, gender equality, and social inclusion.

Access to quality education is essential for development, empowering individuals and improving social mobility. Improvements in healthcare, including access to medical services and better health outcomes, are essential.

Development involves ensuring equal opportunities for all genders, including access to education, employment, and political participation. There must be efforts to integrate marginalised



communities and ensure that all members of society can participate fully in social and economic life.

Socio-economic development is pursued within a political context. Political development, a crucial component of overall development, encompasses good governance, democratic participation, and respect for human rights.

It often entails strengthening institutions and promoting transparency, accountability, and the rule of law. A key aspect of political development is ensuring that citizens have a voice in political processes and that their rights are protected.

Upholding human rights and ensuring that all individuals can live free from oppression and discrimination are central to development. Sustainable development demands acute attention to the environment and climate change.

This brings to the fore environmental development, which includes sustainability initiatives, resource management, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Within the context of current global imperatives, development must emphatically embrace sustainability, meaning that economic and social progress should not come at the expense of the environment or future generations.

Effective management of natural resources, including water, land, and energy, is essential for sustainable development. Developing strategies to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change is increasingly seen as a critical aspect of development.

It is instructive to appraise human development as a stand-alone concept.

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index that measures a country's development by considering life expectancy, education, per capita income, the Gini coefficient, and other factors related to wellness and health.

Furthermore, expanding people's capabilities and opportunities to lead lives they value is important.

Economist Amartya Sen proposed this approach to human development within the broader thesis articulated in his seminal book, “Development as Freedom.”

An additional metric that emphasises human centrality in development is the Happiness Index. This measure is used to assess the well-being and happiness of a population.

Unlike traditional economic indicators, such as GDP and GDP per capita, which focus solely on economic performance, the Happiness Index takes a broader view by considering factors that contribute to overall life satisfaction and well-being.

In summary, it can be argued that three broad types of development are essential in the

Global South:

(1) sustainable development, which seeks to balance economic, social, and environmental needs to ensure that development is sustainable for future generations;

(2) inclusive development that ensures that the benefits of development are shared broadly across all segments of society, particularly the marginalised and vulnerable; and

(3) community development, which focuses on improving the conditions of a specific community, often through local initiatives and participation. There are various theories of development.

The Modernisation Theory suggests that development follows a linear path from traditional to modern societies, often through industrialisation and economic growth.

The Dependency Theory posits that underdevelopment in certain countries stems from their exploitation and dependence on more developed nations.

The Sustainable Development Theory focuses on balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability and social equity.

There is a broad range of challenges to development in the Global South. Economic and social inequality can hinder development and lead to social unrest.

Corruption, incompetence, and poor governance undermine development by diverting resources away from public goods and services, underutilising capacity, and leading to a lack of accountability.

While globalisation and technology can drive economic growth, they can also exacerbate inequalities, lead to cultural homogenisation, and create a digital divide.

Political instability and conflict can disrupt development efforts, leading to setbacks in economic and social progress.

Indeed, there are potential obstacles to the developmental ambition and trajectory of the Global South.

Inclusive development is a complex and dynamic process that involves enhancing various aspects of human life. It is not just about economic growth. It is also about ensuring that growth is inclusive, sustainable, and equitable, leading to a better quality of life for all.

Indeed, at the heart of inclusive development economics lies the objective of balancing competing needs and devising a developmental trajectory that caters to the majority, both currently and in the future.

AI literacy should be mandatory subjects for every university student, regardless of their degree programme. This training must be grounded in learning how to learn and unlearn, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, says the

writer.

Shared Prosperity

Prosperity and development are linked. They overlap extensively. Prosperity is a state of abundance, flourishing, success, and good fortune.

It encompasses various dimensions of well-being, including economic wealth, social stability, health, and overall quality of life.

Indeed, prosperity is often associated with material abundance, but it also includes non-material aspects such as happiness, satisfaction, and the ability to lead a fulfilling life.

In this discussion, the term prosperity is used in addition to the term development because many developed and developing countries are characterised by outstanding and impressive economic growth.

However, that economic performance is not shared among the general population. This is hugely problematic.

Africa and the rest of the Global South require inclusive development, leading to shared prosperity. GDP per capita is more important than GDP. The Gini coefficient is more important than the GDP growth rate.

In a country, the size of the middle class as a percentage of the population is a critical metric that should be closely monitored and tracked.

However, this is never done.

Only traditional economic metrics such as GDP and GDP per capita are measured and analysed. It is instructive and prudent to note that key countries in the Global North, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, have not achieved inclusive development or shared prosperity. They are not wired to do so.

Hence, these economies are not the source of inspiration for the Global South as it embraces AI. Emerging and least industrialised countries must use AI differently to achieve inclusive development and shared prosperity.

Unfortunately, the Global North offers neither lessons nor best practices on this ambitious journey. The Gini coefficient, also known as the Gini index or Gini ratio, is a statistical measure of economic inequality within a population.

It measures the income dispersion or wealth distribution among a country's citizens. The Gini coefficient is one of the most frequently used measures of economic inequality. The coefficient takes values between zero and one.

A coefficient of zero (or 0 percent) indicates perfect equality in the distribution of income or wealth within a population. A coefficient of one (or 100 percent) represents perfect inequality or absolute disparity, where one person in a population receives all the wealth or assets. In contrast, the rest of the population gets nothing.

South Africa has the world's highest Gini coefficient for income, at 0.67 (or 67 percent). This explains the country's perennial challenges of staggering inequality, abject poverty, and unrelenting unemployment despite being Africa's most industrialised country and biggest economy in terms of GDP.

Other African countries with high coefficients include Namibia, Zambia, and Mozambique, which have coefficients of 0.59, 0.57, and 0.54, respectively.

Professor Arthur G O Mutambara is the Director and Full Professor of the Institute for the Future of Knowledge at the University of Johannesburg. This is an excerpt from his book: Artificial Intelligence: A Driver of Inclusive Development and Shared Prosperity for The Global South.

B Metro BUSINESS

"Your time is Limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life."
-Steve Jobs

"Chase the vision, not money. The money will end-up following you."
-Tony Hsieh



Why alcohol, tobacco revenue drops

NEO SENOKO

MASERU - Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL) will continue to suffer significant drops in revenue collections relating to alcohol and tobacco products for many years to come, thanks to the dominance of illicit products as well as relentless tax increases relating to these products by government.

When announcing the revenue performance for the fiscal year 2024/25, the RSL revealed that alcohol and tobacco levy income tax missed its target by M7.65 million (4.5 percent). While the annual target was set at M168.45 million, only M160.80 million was collected.

Lesotho Liquor and Restaurant Association (LLROA) believes that more challenges are yet to come as corruption and RSL's lack of commitment in dealing with illicit products persist.

The association's president, Motseki Nkeane, told Metro in an interview this week that efforts by RSL in addressing these challenges are not enough.

"We have been saying on several occasions that there is a lot of corruption going on, which allows entry of these products into the country with ease. Perpetrators

know that they just have to pay a certain amount to local officials at border gates in order to get a free pass.

So it really needs a serious commitment, more than what is currently been done," Nkeane said in an interview with Metro this week.

These comments come shortly after the RSL announced that they have destroyed and buried a total of 7 150 cartons of illegal cigarettes with an estimated street value of M505 900.00 on Thursday last week.

The products, according to RSL, were confiscated as part of its ongoing strategy to deter non-compliance and combat illicit trade.

"The cigarettes were also seized from street vendors across various locations in Maseru during a joint operation by RSL and the Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS), known as Operation Osalama," RSL said in a statement.

The destroyed brands included Boss, Red and Black, Ossum, Chief, Malimbo, Sahawi, R&G and Chairman. In addition, eight boxes of 100-gram Best Blend tobacco valued at M25 200.00 and 15 bags of Tamputi valued at M1 350.00 were also destroyed.

The smuggled products had not been declared or

subjected to excise duties. These counterfeit cigarettes are often sold for less than M20.00 per pack, undermining the legal market where products are properly declared and taxed.

"RSL is mandated to protect the public from illicit products and will continue to confiscate and destroy prohibited cigarettes and other illegal goods. The organization urges all traders and individuals to refrain from importing illicit goods into Lesotho.

RSL will also continue to collaborate with stakeholders to eliminate illicit products and prevent their entry into the country," the organization added.

LLROA, however, is not impressed by these efforts, citing that all these products are still dominant on the streets and both local and foreign shops.

"This is sad because it means all products that are legal remain on shelves as people are no longer interested in them. Even those people who are still interested in these products do not shop local because of high revenues implemented by government," Nkeane added.

For the 2025/26 fiscal year, government has once again proposed to increase alcohol and tobacco levies by 2.5 percent and 5 percent respectively.

Imperialist hegemony loses ground against the determined global south and BRICS countries

LESOLLE PHALATSI

Unfolding in our midst today is the manifestation of the teachings made by revolutionaries and freedom fighters some time ago, nobody could have guessed that it shall come to pass in our time.

The revelation of the Prophecy of Chairman Mao Zedong, where he likened the United States Imperialism to a "paper tiger" is nigh.

At the fall of the Berlin Wall in the late eighties, during and post President Reagan's, the global primacy of the United States left no modicum of doubt. All metric measures of power that one would contemplate, pointed to a huge American domination on the economy, science, technology, military and education.

The world had never known that such power could be wielded by one power. The commanding position of the United States of America in the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutes, International Monetary Fund and World Bank was unambiguous.

The recent indiscriminate diplomatic and aid theatrics by the United States of America, is a perspicuous sign of the falling apart of the proverbial "paper tiger." The dominance of one power, better known as unipolarity, has seemingly come to definitive end in the current geopolitics.

One does not need a sharp cosmic view to realize that the tectonic plates of power have shifted. Over the past two decades, the fundamental transformation has taken place in the global economy caused by the impressive economic growth of developing countries like China, India, Brazil and South Africa.

The economic center of gravity is inexorably moving towards the developing South. The remarkable upsurge in cooperation between developing countries characterized as South-South cooperation must be understood as part of this larger progressive story.

Unlike the case of North-South cooperation, in global South-South Cooperation, member countries do not treat and regard each other as donors and recipients instead such engagement is an expression of solidarity born out of shared experiences and empathy to others, guided by the principle of respect for sovereignty and national conditions of each and every country.

The obtaining spirit in this cooperation resonates with the words of Julius Kambarage Nyerere who was the Chairman of the precursor to Global South called South Commission, Mwalimu as he was affectionately known, said "we cannot, unlike other countries, send rockets to the moon. But we can send rockets of love and hope to all our fellow humans wherever they may be."

The new approach of southern countries is typified by the more proactive participation of the Global South in global affairs, which has formed a strong constraint on hegemony, Cold War thinking, and bloc politics.

The countries of the Global South seek a more just, rational, equitable, and representative international order so as to achieve an external environment that is more peaceful and stable, and more conducive to their own sustainable development.

To this end, the countries of the Global South are gradually coalescing into a united international political and economic force that is actively engaged in global governance to build an equitable, prosperous, and sustainable world.

The collective rise of emerging economies represented by the BRICS countries has changed the backward



appearance of the Global South, and the modernization process of the vast and populous Global South, with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as its main component, is profoundly shaping the future of human civilization.

In the global south, especially on the SADC region, US hegemony flexed through aid is not a new concept. Zimbabwe was hit by all manner of sanctions, embargoes and deprivations possible to mankind plunging it into a chaos but it recovered and it has shown that countries can live a life free from hegemony exercised through aid.

The recent diplomatic rant between South Africa and the United States of America has been long time coming. South Africa sustained one of the longest irksome stances of engaging the United States directly whenever it has a fundamental bone to pick.

South Africa openly opposed and agitated against the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the pillaging and disparaging war against Libya and Muammar Gaddafi, challenging US on Zimbabwe sanctions, Zimbabwe regime change as well as fighting the idea of military attack against Zimbabwe.

The withdrawal of Aid and the expulsion of Ambassador Ebrahim Rasool from the United States of America is a bitter retaliation of the US against South Africa's arraignment of Israel in international Criminal Court and South Africa's persistent opposition to the United States' handling of the Israel/Palestine conflict.

Lesotho has portrayed a very grim self-image where it comes to the hegemony of the US through aid, be it the Millennium Challenge Account or trade opportunities like AGOA.

While it is an undeniable truth that Lesotho deems itself the least of the least developed countries, the current trends and the future outlook of the Global South economy should give Lesotho hope to hang on and avoid the recurrent trap of the west's "dead aid" according to a book by Dr Dambisa Moyo, a Zambian Economist.

American aid, in particular, has become a Pie in the sky with the promises never being fulfilled or only a laughable fraction being delivered.

The empty cheese phenomena are the common show-off and public pledging in summits and conferences by the US, which is never followed by action and implementation.

The above-mentioned tactics of US aid, including disrupting budgets, economic planning and fiscal stability by renegeing on agreed terms of aid and arbitrarily withdrawing aid, are occurrences that have become commonplace.

Throughout the vicissitudes of time, The United States has always prided itself

as the world's largest foreign aid donor. However, in fact, US foreign aid has always been driven by realist theories of its own national interests, and never treated developing countries as equals.

The United States political scientist Hans Morgenthau, the father of the realist theory of international relations, pointed out that "foreign aid is no different from diplomatic or military policy or propaganda. They are all weapons in the political armory of the nation."

The United States regards Westernization as the sole path for the underdeveloped countries to achieve development, coerces developing nations into fitting a one-size-fits-all mold, and pushes them onto someone else's development path.

The "America First" which is deeply influenced by populism and conservatism and advocated by the United States administration, ignores the United States' responsibility as a developed country to narrow the North-South divide and other development issues.

The United States is good at using aid as a bargaining chip and using "carrot and stick" to force developing countries to do what they say, which results in a serious lack of coherence in its aid policy and undermines the sustainable development of recipient countries.

Thomas Dichter, former Peace Corp member and country director who has worked in more than 60 developing countries for 50 years pointed out in his article published at Foreign Service Journal, it is commonly criticized that if the key variables for development, including cultural, social and political realms, are not present, aid will not only be ineffective but also create dependency.

The recent United States of America's move to hastily withdraw, reduce or even cut contributions to important health programs without giving enough time for recipient countries to adjust, prepare as well as seek alternative financing sources and streams is tantamount to switching off the life support machine on patients at the time such support is the only source of sustaining their heartbeats, their lives; an inhumane and selfish resolution meted out and brought to bear on recipient nations.

In July 2023, China put forward a four-point proposal on strengthening cooperation among the countries of the Global South, that is, they should work together on eliminating conflict and building peace, restoring vitality and promoting development, being open and inclusive and seeking common progress, and achieving unity and cooperation.

Under the general framework of building a community with a shared future for mankind, General Secretary Xi Jinping has proposed the Global Development Initiative (GDI), Global Security Initiative (GSI) and Global Civilization Initiative

(GCI), giving further response to the universal aspiration of all peoples for peace, development and cooperation, and offering China's solutions to the common problems facing humanity today.

The above-mentioned three global initiatives and the concept of jointly building a community with a shared future for mankind are all the proposals made by China and are highly compatible with the Global South's view of the international order, which demonstrate the bright prospects for China to work hand in hand with the Global South.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a vivid example of building a community with a shared future for mankind, and a global public good and cooperation platform provided by China to the world. The BRI is an initiative for economic cooperation, not for geopolitical or military alliances. It is an open and inclusive process that neither targets nor excludes any party.

Rather than forming exclusionary cliques or a "China club", it aims to help China and the rest of the world to seize opportunities and pursue common development. Rather than a private route for any one party, it is a broad path that can be joined by all interested countries to work together for shared benefits.

The Global South Cooperation is not naive, it is alive to the reality that the imperialism will not go down without a fight, the United States and the West have been strengthening their influence in the Global South by building ideological ties, promoting the "nearshoring" and "friendshoring" of supply chains, and launching global infrastructure initiatives, thus creating a situation in which international forces compete for the Global South.

The "paper tiger" allegory as Chairman Mao Zedong opined is no longer just a thought but a feasible reality, we all can visualize what he saw in his mind's eye as he narrated that "In appearance it is very powerful but in reality it is nothing to be afraid of, it is a paper tiger."

Outwardly a tiger, it is made of paper, unable to withstand the wind and the rain. I believe the United States is nothing but a paper tiger."

Most of us who read the history of African politics always think deeply what and how the pioneer, the black star of Africa the late President Kwame Nkrumah would have felt if he was with us today, his strong thoughts against imperialism still linger in our minds, he posited that

"For my part, I must say that as long as I live, and as long as any little vestige of colonialism and imperialism remains in Africa, I shall prosecute a ruthless war on these monsters, a war in which there shall be no truce.

Colonialism and imperialism have no honour, no shame, no morals and conscience."



SOCIETY

King Charles III and Queen Camilla mark their 20th wedding anniversary in Rome



King Charles III and Queen Camilla will celebrate their 20th wedding anniversary in Rome on Wednesday, a union that once scandalised public opinion and shook the monarchy.

The couple, who have known each other for over 50 years, will have little time to enjoy their milestone in private.

After a busy day, they will be the guests of honour at a banquet organised as part of their four-day state visit to Italy.

On Monday, the couple released three official anniversary photographs to mark the occasion, taken at the official residence of the UK ambassador to Italy.

In a post on their Instagram account, they wrote: "We are so looking forward to celebrating our 20th wedding anniversary in such a special place and with such wonderful people!"

Since February 2024, the 76-year-old king has been undergoing treatment for an unspecified cancer.

He spent a brief spell in hospital last month when he suffered side effects related to his treatment.

But the monarch insisted on carrying on with the trip to Italy with Camilla, 77, whom he often calls his "beloved wife".

They are a close-knit couple, of "similar ages, similar friendships", said royal expert Richard Fitzwilliams. "And she's got a similar sense of humour."

"She makes him laugh. That's so pivotal at a time of crisis," he said.

"You can imagine him being a most impatient patient" who is difficult to

persuade to drop his workaholic ways.

Their marriage, after a long and scandalous affair – much of which was conducted while Charles was married to Princess Diana – had to contend with "huge constitutional, political, religious,

not to mention familial hurdles that needed to be overcome before they married", Fitzwilliams said.

At the time of their wedding, public opinion was unfavourable. Affection for Diana, who died in a car crash in Paris in

1997, was still keenly felt.

According to one poll, 70 percent of people were opposed to him marrying the woman Diana had famously dubbed the "rotweiler".

Queen Elizabeth II, Charles's mother, also took time to accept Camilla.

The question of whether a future king could marry a divorced woman had stirred constitutional experts for years.

The then archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, refused the couple a religious marriage amid opposition from Church of England leaders because both were divorced.

Mindful of the sensitivities, the statement announcing the marriage was careful to specify that when Charles became king, Camilla would be known as "princess consort" and not queen.

Queen Elizabeth was not present at the civil wedding on April 9, 2005, at Windsor town hall, attended by around 30 guests including Charles and Diana's two sons, princes William and Harry.

She did, however, attend a blessing at Windsor Castle's St George's Chapel and hosted a reception for the bride and groom.

She acknowledged in her toast that her son had overcome "terrible obstacles" to marry the woman he loved.

Charles first met Camilla in the early 1970s and was immediately captivated by the amusing, down-to-earth woman from an affluent family.

A brief romance ensued, which he ended when he joined the Royal Navy.

Camilla, then 25, married another suitor, the dashing army officer Andrew Parker Bowles, in 1973.

In 1981, a 32-year-old Charles married Diana Spencer, 12 years his junior.

Among the guests at the wedding at St Paul's Cathedral were Camilla and Andrew.

Charles and Diana's marriage was a disaster, however, and Charles returned to Camilla's arms after the birth of William and Harry.

Camilla divorced in 1995 while Charles separated from Diana in 1992, divorcing in 1996.

Diana's death and the endless demonisation of Camilla in the tabloids snuffed out any hopes of marriage in the short term.

Desperate to change public perceptions, Charles relied on a publicist to carefully orchestrate their first public appearance together in 1999, and Camilla's first meeting with the queen in 2000.

After their coronation in Westminster Abbey on May 6, 2023, Charles paid his second wife a glowing tribute.

"She has been my steadfast support throughout and I am deeply grateful to her," he said.

In a 2022 interview with the Daily Telegraph newspaper, Camilla acknowledged: "We've been through a lot together".

"He's a very, very kind man and he's been through a lot as well... We support each other and that's very important." - AFP



Why Pirates can't sell club to MaMKhize



After attending the Ingwenyama Cup final in eSwatini between Royal Leopard and Moneni Pirates, rumours began swirling that former Royal AM owner Shauwn "MaMKhize" Mkhize planned to purchase the foreign club.

However, the club's chairman, Thulani Xaba, speaking exclusively to Soccer Laduma, has strongly dismissed these claims, emphasizing that the community-owned club is not for sale.

Speaking from his base in Manzini, Xaba clarified the team's stance and addressed the speculation.

"Firstly let me clarify that MaMKhize was not in Eswatini because of Moneni

Pirates. I would like to believe that she came here on her own accord and happened to have bought Pirates' regalia but it had nothing to do with the team," Xaba told the Siya crew.

Xaba reiterated that Moneni Pirates is rooted in the Moneni community and how this would affect any financial interest.

"Secondly Pirates is not for sale. It's a community team that was started by Mr Mathenjwa and it belongs to the community of Moneni.

Even when I became the chairman I had to go and talk to them that now I am taking over the running of the team on behalf of the Moneni community.

So, you see, we cannot sell such a team or give shares to anyone."

The chairman further noted that while MaMKhize's presence sparked rumours, other notable South African football figures, including Jomo Sono and Floyd Mbele, also attended the final.

"And mind you, she was not the only football person who was here. Jomo Sono was here.

Floyd Mbele was here. But in this case Pirates is not for sale," Xaba confirmed to Soccer Laduma.

Xaba also made it clear that even if the club was hypothetically for sale, partnering with MaMKhize at this time

would not be a viable option.

"You are there in South Africa. You know her story and her team Royal AM and SARS. Even if we would say hypothetically the team is for sale or we want to work with someone it would not be her. Above all that, Moneni Pirates is not for sale," Xaba concluded.

Royal AM have faced significant challenges recently, including being placed under curatorship due to unpaid taxes owed to SARS. Consequently, the PSL is expected to remove Royal AM from the league for the rest of the 2024/25 season.

– Soccer Laduma