



SRMUN Atlanta 2024
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Esteemed Delegates,

Welcome to SRMUN Atlanta 2024 and the African Union. My name is Claudia Bonney Amamoo, and I have the pleasure of serving as your Director for the African Union. This will be my third time as a SRMUN Atlanta staff member. I previously served as the Assistant Director of the General Assembly Plenary and Assistant Director of the Group of 20. I also attended SRMUN Atlanta three times as a delegate. I am a third-year law student hoping to practice transactional law. Our committee's Assistant Director will be Isaiah Donaldson. This will be Isaiah's first time as a SRMUN Atlanta staff member. Isaiah has attended SRMUN conferences since 2023. He is majoring in International Affairs and minoring in Political Science.

The African Union is a continental body comprised of 55 Member States, which provides a unique forum for developing Africa as a unified and integrated power capable of being a dynamic force in the global arena. The overarching mission of the AU is to encourage international cooperation, promote peace and security among its Member States, and defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of its Member States.

Focusing on the mission of the African Union, we have developed the following topics for the delegates to discuss at the conference:

- I. Addressing the Strength of Institutions and Rule of Law to Promote Good Governance
- II. Improving Access to Electricity in the African States and Building a Sustainable Electricity Market

This background guide will serve as the foundation for your research, yet it should not be the extent of the research. Preparation is given to each topic to help guide delegates in their initial research and to serve as a starting place for more in-depth studies. It is expected that delegates go beyond this background guide in preparation for their position paper and to better prepare themselves for contribution to the committee in November. Further, each delegation is required to submit a position paper for consideration. Position papers should be no longer than two pages in length (single-spaced) and demonstrate your Member State's position, policies, and recommendations on each of the two topics. For more detailed information about formatting and how to write position papers, delegates can visit srmun.org. **All position papers MUST be submitted no later than Friday, November 1st, by 11:59pm EST via the SRMUN website to be eligible for Outstanding Position Paper Awards.**

Both Isaiah and I are excited for the opportunity to serve as your dais for the African Union. I wish you all the best of luck in your conference preparation and look forward to meeting and working with each of you. Should questions arise as you begin to prepare for this conference, contacting those on your dais is always encouraged.

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The Committee History of the African Union

The African Union (AU) was officially launched in July 2002, following the Sirte Declaration in September 1999. Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) issued the declaration to build on the OAU's work.¹ The OAU's mandate emphasized African self-determination, aimed to establish Africa as a strong player in the international market.² Additionally, it promoted international cooperation within the United Nations framework.³ The OAU served as a forum where all Member States could align their positions on common continental matters in the international fora and effectively advocate for Africa's interests.⁴ The OAU was relaunched as the AU in 2002 to increase cooperation and integration of African states.⁵ The AU aims to promote sovereignty, effective governance, and socioeconomic development of African Member States.⁶

Today, the AU supports political and economic integration among its 55 Member States.⁷ The AU is guided by its vision of building "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena."⁸ Internationally, the AU is determined to become a relevant figure in the global economy.⁹ Regionally, the AU agenda focuses on addressing the social, economic, and political obstacles limiting Africa's growth.¹⁰ As such, the AU has an extensive agenda that addresses various multidimensional phenomena.¹¹

The Constitutive Act of the African Union and the Protocol on Amendments to the Constitutive Act of the African Union drive the AU's vision and establish the framework under which the AU operates.¹² The AU is composed of seven key decision-making bodies. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government is the primary policy-making body.¹³ The members of this body are the presidents, prime ministers, and other chief executives of the AU Member States.¹⁴ The Assembly is responsible for determining Member State admission, establishing the organization's objectives, and interpreting the Constitutive Act.¹⁵ When the Assembly meets, two-thirds of the body is required to form a quorum and to pass decisions with a super-majority of Member States' votes.¹⁶ Other constituent committees of the AU include the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the Economic, Social, and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC).¹⁷ The AU's PSC has the power to promote democracy on the continent, including deploying military force in situations where genocide or other crimes against humanity are suspected.¹⁸

The AU's budget is determined by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.¹⁹ AU Member States are responsible for providing funds.²⁰ However, the AU also receives financial support from the European Union (EU) and individual European Member States, especially for their program and peace operations budgets.²¹ Overall

¹ African Union, "About the African Union," *African Union*, February 10, 2022, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/en/overview>.

² African Union, "About the African Union."

³ African Union, "AU in a Nutshell," *African Union*, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/en/au-nutshell>.

⁴ African Union, "About the African Union."

⁵ African Union, "About the African Union."

⁶ African Union, "About the African Union."

⁷ "Profile: African Union." *BBC News*, February 1, 2012, accessed February 14, 2024, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/3870303.stm.

⁸ African Union, "About the African Union."

⁹ African Union, "About the African Union."

¹⁰ African Union, "About the African Union."

¹¹ African Union, "About the African Union."

¹² African Union, "About the African Union."

¹³ African Union, "The Assembly," *African Union*, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/en/assembly>.

¹⁴ African Union, "The Assembly."

¹⁵ African Union, "The Assembly."

¹⁶ African Union, "The Assembly."

¹⁷ African Union, "About the African Union."

¹⁸ OCHA, "From Non-Interference to Non-Indifference: The African Union and the Responsibility to Protect - World," *ReliefWeb*, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/non-interference-non-indifference-african-union-and-responsibility-protect>.

¹⁹ African Union, "Operational Budget," *African Union*, 2024, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/en/operational-budget>.

²⁰ African Union, "Operational Budget."

²¹ ISS Africa, "Au Financial Independence: Still a Long Way to Go," *ISS Africa*, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://issafrica.org/pscreport/psc-insights/au-financial-independence-still-a-long-way-to-go>.

contribution required to maintain the AU, its organs, and all AU agencies and offices is estimated at USD 110 Million.²²

Since 2000, five summits between the AU and the EU have taken place to foster cooperation between the two bodies and address areas of common concern.²³ In 2007, the AU and EU adopted the Joint African-European Strategy (JAES), a fundamental agreement between the two continental organizations.²⁴ The JAES has been essential for the AU, as the EU is committed to assisting the AU with budgeting, trade, development, and humanitarian aid.²⁵ The AU also has developed key ties with organizations such as the League of Arab States (LAS) and the South America Cooperation Forum (ASACOF).²⁶

The relationship between the African Union and the United Nations (UN) is also significant.²⁷ In 2006, the AU and UN instituted the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union (A/61/630).²⁸ A/61/630 reinforced the AU and UN's partnership to promote peace and security. It upheld the UN's commitment to assisting the AU's development and integration goals.²⁹ In 2010, the UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/64/288 established the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU).³⁰ UNOAU allows the UN to provide efficient recommendations and assistance for the AU's peacekeeping operations.³¹

On January 31, 2015, the AU's Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted Agenda 2063, a 50-year cooperative, strategic framework aiming to transform Africa by 2063.³² Agenda 2063 aims to assist Africa in its socio-economic, democratic governance, and global political integration goals.³³ Agenda 2063 consists of 15 flagship projects, with many already in progress as of 2024.³⁴ In May 2019, many AU Member states signed the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), an agreement emphasized by Agenda 2063 that could be valuable to the AU's principal economic aspirations.³⁵ Other flagship projects have also seen significant development, but some projects have yet to progress due to inadequate funding.³⁶ Agenda 2063 will be pivotal in helping the AU develop its role in the international community.³⁷

²² African Union, "Operational Budget," *African Union*, 2024, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/en/operational-budget>.

²³ African Union, "External partnerships between the AU and organisations, regions or countries," *African Union*, October 28, 2021, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/en/partnerships>.

²⁴ WATHI, "The Joint Africa-EU Strategy, European Parliament, 2017," *WATHI*, March 3rd, 2022, accessed February 14, 2024, [https://www.wathi.org/the-joint-africa-eu-strategy-european-parliament-2017/#:~:text=The%20Joint%20Africa%20DEU%20Strategy%20\(JAES\)%20adopted%20at%20the,visited%20over%20the%20last%20decade%20](https://www.wathi.org/the-joint-africa-eu-strategy-european-parliament-2017/#:~:text=The%20Joint%20Africa%20DEU%20Strategy%20(JAES)%20adopted%20at%20the,visited%20over%20the%20last%20decade%20).

²⁵ WATHI, "The Joint Africa-EU Strategy, European Parliament, 2017."

²⁶ African Union, "External partnerships between the AU and organisations, regions or countries."

²⁷ The Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations, "About Us," *The Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations*, 2022, accessed March 29, 2024, <https://www.africanunion-un.org/aboutus>.

²⁸ United Nations General Assembly. *Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation; Framework for the ten-year capacity building programme for the African Union*, A/61/630, December 11, 2006, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/ro-a61-630.php>.

²⁹ United Nations General Assembly. *Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation; Framework for the ten-year capacity building programme for the African Union*.

³⁰ United Nations General Assembly resolution 288, *Financing of the United Nations Office to the African Union*, A/RES/64/288, August 31, 2010, https://unoau.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/resolution_64_288.pdf.

³¹ African Union, "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want," *African Union*, January 1, 2019, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>.

³² African Union, "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want."

³³ African Union, "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want."

³⁴ African Union, "Flagship Projects of Agenda 2063," *African Union*, 2024, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/agenda2063/flagship-projects>.

³⁵ The African Continental Free Trade Area, "About the AfCFTA," *AfCFTA*, 2024, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/agenda2063/flagship-projects>.

³⁶ NEPAD, "Flagship Projects," African Union Development Agency, 2024, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://www.nepad.org/agenda-2063/flagship-projects>.

³⁷ African Union, "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want," *African Union*, January 1, 2019, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>.

I. Addressing the Strength of Institutions and Rule of Law to Promote Good Governance

Introduction

In the last decade, commitments by African Member States to respect the rule of law have seemed to weaken as the continent has experienced a series of constitutional and military coups and a resurgence of authoritarianism.³⁸ Many of the emerging authoritarian regimes have silenced protests, violated human rights, and practiced bad governance.³⁹ Nearly two-thirds of African Member States have experienced a deterioration of the rule of law and political participation.⁴⁰ The deterioration and absence of the rule of law are key to Africa's development challenges, including political instability, corruption, and economic decline.⁴¹ Weak political institutions negatively affect sustainable development in most African Member States.⁴² Good governance is essential for achieving sustainable development and ensuring government accountability to citizens.⁴³ It is imperative African Union (AU) Member States implement mechanisms that support constitutionalism, democracy, and good governance to drive Africa towards its development objectives.⁴⁴ Unless institutions are strengthened to uphold good governance, the continent is unlikely to successfully achieve Agenda 2063 or the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.⁴⁵

History

The rule of law is a principle of governance that requires adherence to accountability, fairness, separation of powers, and legal transparency.⁴⁶ The maintenance of the rule of law is essential because it is the bedrock of democracy and democratic principles.⁴⁷ Democracy is a universally recognized ideal and ever-evolving model of government based on the will of the people, which serves as the basis of authority.⁴⁸ Democracy relies on robust institutions to uphold the rule of law, ensure citizen participation, and protect human rights.⁴⁹

During the pre-colonial period, many African societies had various democratic forms of government.⁵⁰ Some societies exercised limits on the absolute power of their leaders by electing and removing African kings as a form of

³⁸ Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," *African Human Rights Journal* 18, no. 1 (July 2018): 213-243, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/ahrj/v18n1/12.pdf>.

³⁹ Tope Shola Akinyetun, "Democratic Backsliding in Africa: Understanding the Current Challenges," *Social Science Research Council*, September 20, 2022, accessed June 10, 2024, <https://kuijenga-amani.ssrc.org/2022/09/20/democratic-backsliding-in-africa-understanding-the-current-challenges/>.

⁴⁰ Muna Ndulo and Mamoudou Gazibo, "Introduction," in *Growing Democracy in Africa: Elections, Accountable, Governance, and Political Economy* (United Kingdom: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), 5, https://books.google.com.gh/books/about/Growing_Democracy_in_Africa.html?id=yH5DAAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y.

⁴¹ Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," 214.

⁴² William Deiyen Towah, "The Impact of Good Governance and Stability on Sustainable Development in Ghana," *Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection* (February 2019), accessed June 20, 2024, 178, <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7563&context=dissertations>.

⁴³ Jennifer Schoeberlein, "National Strategies for Advancing Good Governance in Africa," *Transparency International*, May 27, 2020, accessed June 10, 2024, 1, https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/kproducts/TI-Helpdesk-2020_National-Governance-Strategies-Africa-final.pdf.

⁴⁴ John Mukum Mbaku, "Good and Inclusive Governance is Imperative for Africa's Future," *The Brookings Institution*, January 8, 2020, accessed June 24, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/good-and-inclusive-governance-is-imperative-for-africas-future/>.

⁴⁵ John Mukum Mbaku, "Good and Inclusive Governance is Imperative for Africa's Future."

⁴⁶ United Nations, Secretary General. *The Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict and Post-Conflict*. New York, NY: UN Headquarters, 2004.

⁴⁷ Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," 214.

⁴⁸ United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A, *International Bill of Human Right: Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, A/RES/217(III)[A], (December 10, 1948), <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/666853?v=pdf>.

⁴⁹ Tope Shola Akinyetun, "Democratic Backsliding in Africa: Understanding the Current Challenges."

⁵⁰ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, "The Movement Toward Democracy" in Africa in *Democratization in Africa: African Views, African Voices* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 1992), 5, <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/2041/democratization-in-africa-african-views-african-voices>.

checks and balances.⁵¹ Popular participation was encouraged, and rulers consulted the community and its leaders to make vital decisions.⁵² In the late nineteenth century, most African states were colonized by European powers, whose governments deterred popular participation.⁵³ Political elites made all governance decisions with little or no input from the African population.⁵⁴ By the 1960s, most European African colonies had achieved independence.⁵⁵

In the first decade after gaining independence, only a few African states adopted a democratic system of government.⁵⁶ The systems of government adopted by African states were mostly modeled after the systems of government of their European colonizers.⁵⁷ Former British colonies featured parliamentary systems of government, and former French colonies featured semi-presidential systems, neither of which placed term limits on the executive office.⁵⁸ Additionally, African states that adopted presidential systems did not generally place term limits.⁵⁹ The lack of term limits allowed many African leaders to retain power for decades without opposition.⁶⁰ Over time, the post-colonial governments of many African states evolved into one-party state governments, undermining the establishment of critical institutions for democracy.⁶¹ By 1960, nine out of 26 sub-Saharan states that had gained independence established one-party regimes.⁶² A decade later, seven more African states had imposed single-party rule.⁶³ Many African states transitioned to authoritarian rule due to the belief that Africa required a unique governance approach focused on national unity and development.⁶⁴

During the post-Cold War era, several African Member States, in response to popular demands for change, began embracing multi-party democratic rule.⁶⁵ By the early 1990s, new constitutions were drafted, multi-party elections increased, and the rule of law was fortified.⁶⁶ For example, in 1991, Benin and Zambia became the first former dictatorships to hold multi-party elections.⁶⁷ After the end of 25 years of authoritarian rule, Zambia became a multi-party state with 35 official political parties.⁶⁸ The emergence of such a great number of political parties symbolized the liberalization of a pluralistic political system.⁶⁹ By the mid-2000s, many African Member States observed peaceful transitions of power, with almost every African state having conducted some form of election.⁷⁰ The

⁵¹ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, “The Movement Toward Democracy in Africa” in *Democratization in Africa: African Views, African Voices*, (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 1992), 5, <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/2041/democratization-in-africa-african-views-african-voices>.

⁵² National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, “The Movement Toward Democracy in Africa.”

⁵³ Robert H. Bates, “Democracy in Africa: A Very Short History,” *Social Research* 77, no. 4, (2010): 1133-1148, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23347122>.

⁵⁴ Robert H. Bates, “Democracy in Africa: A Very Short History,” 1134-1135.

⁵⁵ Robert H. Bates, “Democracy in Africa: A Very Short History,” 1134-1135.

⁵⁶ Tope Shola Akinyetun, “Democratic Backsliding in Africa: Understanding the Current Challenges,” *Social Science Research Council*, September 20, 2022, accessed June 10, 2024, <https://kujenga-amani.ssrc.org/2022/09/20/democratic-backsliding-in-africa-understanding-the-current-challenges/>.

⁵⁷ Kristin McKie, “The Politics of Institutional Choice Across Sub-Saharan Africa: Presidential Term Limits.” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 52, no.4 (August 2017): 436–456, accessed April 8, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12116-017-9252-z>.

⁵⁸ Kristin McKie, “The Politics of Institutional Choice Across Sub-Saharan Africa: Presidential Term Limits,” 439.

⁵⁹ Kristin McKie, “The Politics of Institutional Choice Across Sub-Saharan Africa: Presidential Term Limits,” 439.

⁶⁰ Kristin McKie, “The Politics of Institutional Choice Across Sub-Saharan Africa: Presidential Term Limits,” 439.

⁶¹ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, “The Movement Toward Democracy” in Africa in *Democratization in Africa: African Views, African Voices*, 13.

⁶² Robert H. Bates, “Democracy in Africa: A Very Short History,” 1136.

⁶³ Robert H. Bates, “Democracy in Africa: A Very Short History,” 1136.

⁶⁴ Tope Shola Akinyetun, “Democratic Backsliding in Africa: Understanding the Current Challenges.”

⁶⁵ Tope Shola Akinyetun, “Democratic Backsliding in Africa: Understanding the Current Challenges.”

⁶⁶ Phil Mtinkulu, “Democracy in Africa: the Ebbs and Flows Over Six Decades.” *The Conversation*, June 12, 2015, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://theconversation.com/democracy-in-africa-the-ebbs-and-flows-over-six-decades-42011>.

⁶⁷ Nic Cheeseman and Jeffrey Smith, “The Retreat of African Democracy: The Autocratic Threat Is Growing,” *African Leadership Institute*, January 17, 2019, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://alinstitute.org/images/Library/RetreatOfAfricanDemocracy.pdf>.

⁶⁸ Darnell Donahue, “Democracy in Africa: After the Cold War,” *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 23, no. 2 (1995): 54-68, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7vf7g2dw>.

⁶⁹ Darnell Donahue, “Democracy in Africa: After the Cold War,” 64.

⁷⁰ James Guseh and Emmanuel Oritsejafa, “Democracy and Governance in Africa,” in *Governance and Democracy in Africa: Regional and Continental Perspectives*. (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2019), 98.

overall trends of democratic progress remained positive, with sporadic instances of non-democratic practices.⁷¹

Current Situation

Despite Africa's significant democratic gains, progress in most Member States has remained stagnant or declined due to poor governance, extension of term limits, and constitutional manipulation.⁷² Democratic progress has also been uneven across the continent.⁷³ West Africa, previously praised for its democratic reforms, is experiencing significant setbacks as more Member States in the region are experiencing military coups.⁷⁴ Likewise, Central Africa, home to the world's three longest-serving presidents (Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, and the Republic of the Congo), observes a high prevalence of authoritarian regimes and coups.⁷⁵ In Southern and East Africa, persecution of political opposition has greatly affected citizen participation in politics.⁷⁶

Many African Member States are experiencing democratic backsliding, the weakening of political institutions necessary to sustain democracy.⁷⁷ The prevalence of democratic backsliding stems from weak political institutions, lack of control over the military, and poor economic performance.⁷⁸ These factors can lead to instability, decreased public support for democracy, and an increased risk of authoritarianism.⁷⁹ Democratic backsliding can be categorized into two forms: electoral and liberal backsliding.⁸⁰ The former involves undermining electoral institutions by disrupting free and fair elections and constraining opposition, while the latter targets parliamentary and judicial institutions.⁸¹ The quality of elections in Africa has been declining, often characterized by violence and intimidation.⁸² Incumbents often use their power to arrest opposition leaders and stifle public dissent.⁸³ The West African region had been recognized for conducting open elections and peaceful transitions of power.⁸⁴ However, flawed elections significantly impacted the region in the past few years.⁸⁵ For example, Nigeria's national and state-level elections faced significant challenges in 2019.⁸⁶ There were reports of widespread irregularities, and the election commission even postponed the first round of voting.⁸⁷ Similarly, in 2019, opposition parties in Benin were effectively sidelined from participating in parliamentary elections, and violent state suppression of protests tainted election results.⁸⁸ Intimidation of opposition, high risk of violence, and lack of strong independent institutions to oversee elections continue to undermine electoral integrity in Africa.⁸⁹

Authoritarian leaders in various African Member States have attempted to curb efforts toward democratization by

⁷¹ James Guseh and Emmanuel Oritsejafa, "Democracy and Governance in Africa," in *Governance and Democracy in Africa: Regional and Continental Perspectives*, 98.

⁷² Mike Omilusi, "Democratic Rollback in West Africa: Coup Contagion, Sit tight Tyrants and Best Options for Regional Organizations," *Lectio Socialis* 8, no. 2 (2022): 102, <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/3830812>.

⁷³ Ionel Zamfir, "State of Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa: Democratic progress at risk," *European Parliamentary Research Service*, June 2021, accessed June 20, 2024, 2, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/690647/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)690647_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/690647/EPRS_BRI(2021)690647_EN.pdf).

⁷⁴ Christopher Fomunyoh, "Facing Democratic Backsliding in Africa & Reversing the Trend," *National Democratic Institute*, September 30, 2020, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Chris%20Fomunyoh%20HFAC%20Testimony%20September%202020.pdf>.

⁷⁵ Christopher Fomunyoh, "Facing Democratic Backsliding in Africa & Reversing the Trend."

⁷⁶ Christopher Fomunyoh, "Facing Democratic Backsliding in Africa & Reversing the Trend."

⁷⁷ Nancy Bermeo, "On Democratic Backsliding," *Journal of Democracy* 27, no. 1 (January 2016): 6, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://journalofdemocracy.org/articles/on-democratic-backsliding/>.

⁷⁸ Tope Shola Akinyetun, "The State of Democracy in Africa: Democratic Decline or Autocracy?," *Političke Perspektive* 12, no. 2 (2022): 89-115, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.20901/pp.12.2.04>.

⁷⁹ Tope Shola Akinyetun, "The State of Democracy in Africa: Democratic Decline or Autocracy?," 99.

⁸⁰ Tope Shola Akinyetun, "The State of Democracy in Africa: Democratic Decline or Autocracy?," 93-94.

⁸¹ Tope Shola Akinyetun, "The State of Democracy in Africa: Democratic Decline or Autocracy?," 93-94.

⁸² Tope Shola Akinyetun, "The State of Democracy in Africa: Democratic Decline or Autocracy?," 103.

⁸³ Tope Shola Akinyetun, "The State of Democracy in Africa: Democratic Decline or Autocracy?," 103.

⁸⁴ Isabel Linzer, "West Africa's Democratic Progress is Slipping Away, Even as Region's Significance Grows," *Freedom House*, March 19, 2020, accessed June 20 2024, <https://freedomhouse.org/article/west-africas-democratic-progress-slipping-away-even-regions-significance-grows-0>.

⁸⁵ Isabel Linzer, "West Africa's Democratic Progress is Slipping Away, Even as Region's Significance Grows."

⁸⁶ Isabel Linzer, "West Africa's Democratic Progress is Slipping Away, Even as Region's Significance Grows."

⁸⁷ Isabel Linzer, "West Africa's Democratic Progress is Slipping Away, Even as Region's Significance Grows."

⁸⁸ Isabel Linzer, "West Africa's Democratic Progress is Slipping Away, Even as Region's Significance Grows."

⁸⁹ Ionel Zamfir, "State of Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa: Democratic progress at risk," 6-7.

utilizing legal measures to extend the power of the executive and restrict civil liberties.⁹⁰ This suppression is done strategically using constitutional provisions and the judiciary to increase executive authority in ways that undermine democratic institutions.⁹¹ This “rule-by-law” approach enables leaders to bend the legal institutions to their advantage while sidestepping the negative press often associated with state brutality.⁹² For example, despite making progress toward democracy, Tunisia faced setbacks when its President suspended the parliament, dismissed parts of the constitution, and assumed greater authority by decree.⁹³ Leaders in several African Member States have also modified the law to stay in power indefinitely through constitutional coups.⁹⁴ This democratic subversion has resulted in term limits being overturned in several Member States.⁹⁵ The increased prevalence of African regimes coming into power through unconstitutional means is alarming, as such regimes do not adhere to the rule of law and are harder to remove peacefully.⁹⁶ Since 2000, at least 30 African leaders have tried to prolong their rule, and 18 have succeeded.⁹⁷ In 2018 alone, executives in Burundi, Uganda, Sudan, and Togo attempted to evade term limits and extend their rule.⁹⁸ The phenomenon of term limit evasion in Africa varies by region, with Central Africa being historically the most vulnerable.⁹⁹ Regional political and economic blocs in Africa play a significant role in promoting good governance and adherence to term limits.¹⁰⁰ West and Southern Africa lead in upholding term limits.¹⁰¹ The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has effectively dealt with governance crises in West Africa due to its robust frameworks, imposing sanctions and military action in cases of coups and human rights violations.¹⁰² Conversely, Central Africa lacks strong frameworks for intervening in political crises.¹⁰³

Since 2020, there has been a significant increase in coups and resurgence of authoritarian governments on the African continent.¹⁰⁴ The trend toward authoritarianism increased during the COVID-19 pandemic as leaders exploited the outbreak to tighten control.¹⁰⁵ Some governments leveraged COVID-19 regulations as a pretext to violate civil rights, introduce repressive legislation, and suppress opposition parties.¹⁰⁶ For example, in Uganda,

⁹⁰ Leonardo Arriola, Lise Rakner, and Nicolas van de Walle, “Introduction” in *Democratic Backsliding in Africa? Autocratization, Resilience, and Contention* (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press), 1. <https://academic.oup.com/book/45327>.

⁹¹ Leonardo Arriola, Lise Rakner, and Nicolas van de Walle, “Introduction” in *Democratic Backsliding in Africa? Autocratization, Resilience, and Contention*

⁹² Nic Cheeseman and Jeffrey Smith, “The Retreat of African Democracy: The Autocratic Threat Is Growing,” *African Leadership Institute*, January 17, 2019, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://alinstitute.org/images/Library/RetreatOfAfricanDemocracy.pdf>.

⁹³ Tope Shola Akinyetun, “The State of Democracy in Africa: Democratic Decline or Autocracy?” *Politické Perspektíve* 12, no. 2 (2022): 104, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.20901/pp.12.2.04>.

⁹⁴ James Guseh and Emmanuel Oritsejafo, “Democracy and Governance in Africa,” in *Governance and Democracy in Africa: Regional and Continental Perspectives*. (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2019), 98.

⁹⁵ James Guseh and Emmanuel Oritsejafo, “Democracy and Governance in Africa,” in *Governance and Democracy in Africa: Regional and Continental Perspectives*, 98.

⁹⁶ Nneka Okechukwu, “The Fragility of the African Governance Agenda: A Crisis of Legitimacy,” *European Centre for Development Policy Management*, October 2023, accessed June 24, 2024, 10, <https://ecdpm.org/application/files/6816/9892/3447/Fragility-African-Governance-Agenda-Crisis-Legitimacy-ECDPM-Briefing-Note-171-2023.pdf>.

⁹⁷ Nic Cheeseman and Jeffrey Smith, “The Retreat of African Democracy: The Autocratic Threat Is Growing.”

⁹⁸ Nic Cheeseman and Jeffrey Smith, “The Retreat of African Democracy: The Autocratic Threat Is Growing.”

⁹⁹ Africa Center for Strategic Studies, “Term Limit Evasions and Coups in Africa: Two Sides of the Same Coin,” *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, October 24, 2023, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/term-limit-evasions-coups-africa-same-coin/>.

¹⁰⁰ Ionel Zamfir, “State of Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa: Democratic progress at risk,” *European Parliamentary Research Service*, June 2021, accessed June 20, 2024, 2-3, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/690647/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)690647_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/690647/EPRS_BRI(2021)690647_EN.pdf).

¹⁰¹ Africa Center for Strategic Studies, “Term Limit Evasions and Coups in Africa: Two Sides of the Same Coin.”

¹⁰² Ionel Zamfir, “State of Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa: Democratic progress at risk,” 3.

¹⁰³ Ionel Zamfir, “State of Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa: Democratic progress at risk,” 2.

¹⁰⁴ Louisa Brooke-Holland, “Coups and Political Stability in West Africa,” *Commons Library Research Briefing*, September, 18 2023, accessed July 10, 2024, 14, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9861/>.

¹⁰⁵ Charles A. Ray, “Is Democracy in Retreat in Africa?,” *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, March 10, 2022, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/03/is-democracy-in-retreat-in-africa/>.

¹⁰⁶ Human Rights Watch, “Uganda: Authorities Weaponize Covid-19 for Repression,” *Human Rights Watch*, November 20, 2020, accessed July 7, 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/11/20/uganda-authorities-weaponize-covid-19-repression>.

authorities arrested opposition party leaders and journalists at campaign rallies for allegedly violating COVID-19 guidelines despite allowing the ruling party to host rallies.¹⁰⁷ There have been recorded coup attempts in various Member States in Africa.¹⁰⁸ Notably, in West Africa, progress towards democracy has been significantly disrupted by military coups.¹⁰⁹ Over the last three years, the military has forcibly removed the elected presidents of Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Niger.¹¹⁰ Additionally, there have been attempted coups in The Gambia and Guinea Bissau.¹¹¹ In response to each coup, ECOWAS implemented sanctions and suspended Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Niger.¹¹² The regional body encouraged the suspended Member States to transition to an elected civilian government; however, none have yet returned to civilian rule.¹¹³ The increase in military coups in the region has been mainly due to state abuse, governance failures, and political insecurity.¹¹⁴ The frequency of military coups in Africa has implications for the future of democratic governance and development on the continent.¹¹⁵

Actions Taken by the United Nations and African Union

The United Nations (UN) has supported democracy by promoting human rights, good governance, and monitoring elections.¹¹⁶ The UN has assisted in drafting new constitutions in post-conflict states and supported civil society to strengthen democratic institutions.¹¹⁷ These actions are carried out through various UN subsidiaries, such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), among others.¹¹⁸ The OHCHR and UNDP assist Member States with challenges posed by democratic retreat and poor governance by helping governments strengthen their public institutions, fight corruption, and support inclusive participation.¹¹⁹ In transitional democracies and post-conflict Member States, the OHCHR collaborates with national governments to restore peace and the rule of law.¹²⁰

In April 2018, the OHCHR and Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs signed a Host Country Agreement to establish the OHCHR Regional Office for Eastern Africa.¹²¹ Subsequently, the OHCHR initiated monitoring of the human rights situation in areas affected by mass displacement or violence and provided support to the government of Ethiopia in the areas of judicial and legal review.¹²² In February 2022, the OHCHR, in partnership with the European Union and the African Union, initiated a project to support the implementation of the African Union Compliance and Accountability Framework (AUCF).¹²³ This framework aims to ensure that peace support operations led and authorized by the African Union are planned and conducted in compliance with international

¹⁰⁷ Human Rights Watch, "Uganda: Authorities Weaponize Covid-19 for Repression."

¹⁰⁸ Jennifer Schoeberlein, "National Strategies for Advancing Good Governance in Africa," *Transparency International*, May 27, 2020, accessed June 10, 2024, 5, https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/kproducts/TI-Helpdesk-2020_National-Governance-Strategies-Africa-final.pdf.

¹⁰⁹ Tope Shola Akinyetun, "The State of Democracy in Africa: Democratic Decline or Autocracy?," *Političke Perspektive* 12, no. 2 (2022): 89-115, accessed June 20, 2024 <https://doi.org/10.20901/pp.12.2.04>.

¹¹⁰ Louisa Brooke-Holland, "Coups and Political Stability in West Africa," *Commons Library Research Briefing*, September, 18 2023, accessed July 10, 2024, 4, <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9861/>.

¹¹¹ Louisa Brooke-Holland, "Coups and political stability in West Africa," 14.

¹¹² Louisa Brooke-Holland, "Coups and political stability in West Africa," 29.

¹¹³ Louisa Brooke-Holland, "Coups and political stability in West Africa," 29.

¹¹⁴ Louisa Brooke-Holland, "Coups and political stability in West Africa," 17.

¹¹⁵ Louisa Brooke-Holland, "Coups and political stability in West Africa," 4.

¹¹⁶ United Nations, "Global Issues: Democracy," *United Nations*, accessed May 11, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/democracy#:~:text=These%20values%20are%20embodied%20in,of%20the%20authority%20of%20government%E2%80%9D>.

¹¹⁷ United Nations, "Global Issues: Democracy."

¹¹⁸ United Nations, "Global Issues: Democracy."

¹¹⁹ United Nations, "Global Issues: Democracy."

¹²⁰ United Nations, "Global Issues: Democracy."

¹²¹ The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "UN Human Rights in East Africa," *The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights*, accessed June 23, 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries-and-territories/africa-region/un-human-rights-east-africa>.

¹²² The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "UN Human Rights in East Africa."

¹²³ United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*. New York, NY: UN Headquarters, 2022, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3985602?v=pdf#files>

human rights law and discipline standards, with a core focus on protecting civilians.¹²⁴

Good governance is an important part of the African Union's legal frameworks and is a key aspiration in the AU's transformation strategy, Agenda 2063.¹²⁵ Notably, three important AU frameworks reference the need for rule of law and good governance: the Lomé Declaration on Unconstitutional Change of Government (The Lomé Declaration), the Constitutive Act of the African Union, and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (The African Democracy Charter).¹²⁶ The Lomé Declaration is significant because it outlines common principles for democratic governance and defines Unconstitutional Changes of Government (UCGs).¹²⁷ The declaration also outlines four instances of UCGs and specifies measures the AU can implement to respond to each instance of UCGs.¹²⁸ The Constitutive Act is a foundational instrument of the AU that similarly addresses UCGs and upholds the principles outlined in the Lomé Declaration.¹²⁹ The Preamble to the Constitutive Act of the AU notes that the Union shall function with respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law, and good governance.¹³⁰ Articles 5 and 20 of the Constitutive Act established the AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) and gave the council the power to monitor Member States' compliance with the rule of law.¹³¹ The PSC serves as a collective security and early-warning body that utilizes the AU's Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) to anticipate and prevent conflicts.¹³² The CEWS gathers and analyzes information about possible conflicts or threats to the peace and security of African Member States.¹³³ The system provides policy advice and supports political, civilian, and military missions.¹³⁴

The African Democracy Charter is a comprehensive legal instrument that promotes good governance, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.¹³⁵ The charter introduced an expanded definition for UCGs, strengthening the normative framework on UCGs.¹³⁶ It aims to prevent unconstitutional changes of government in Africa and the resulting violations of the rule of law through a system of sanctions.¹³⁷ The charter includes "constitutional amendments in infringement of the principles of democratic change" as a fifth definition of UCGs.¹³⁸ The charter places the responsibility of ensuring the restoration of constitutional order on the AU's Peace and Security Council, prevents perpetrators of UCGs from taking part in elections to restore the constitutional order, and extends the application of sanctions to other Member States that support or instigate a coup in another.¹³⁹ In 2019, the AU Peace and Security Council, recalling the Constitutive Act of the AU and the African Democracy Charter, emphasized the urgent need for a resolution to the current crisis in Sudan and establishing a civilian-led democratic transition.¹⁴⁰ The Heads of State and Government of the African Union previously noted that the potential for peace, democracy, and

¹²⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*, New York, NY: UN Headquarters, 2022, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3985602?v=pdf#files>.

¹²⁵ Jennifer Schoeberlein, "National Strategies for Advancing Good Governance in Africa," *Transparency International*, (May 2019): 1, accessed June 10, 2024, 3, <https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/kproducts/TI-Helpdesk-2020-National-Governance-Strategies-Africa-final.pdf>.

¹²⁶ Nneka Okechukwu, "The Fragility of the African Governance Agenda: A Crisis of Legitimacy," *European Centre for Development Policy Management*, October 2023, accessed June 24, 2024, 3, <https://ecdpm.org/application/files/6816/9892/3447/Fragility-African-Governance-Agenda-Crisis-Legitimacy-ECDPM-Briefing-Note-171-2023.pdf>.

¹²⁷ Nneka Okechukwu, "The Fragility of the African Governance Agenda: A Crisis of Legitimacy," 3.

¹²⁸ Nneka Okechukwu, "The Fragility of the African Governance Agenda: A Crisis of Legitimacy," 4.

¹²⁹ Nneka Okechukwu, "The Fragility of the African Governance Agenda: A Crisis of Legitimacy," 4.

¹³⁰ "The Constitutive Act of the African Union," open for signature on July 11, 2000, *African Union*, <https://au.int/en/constitutive-act>.

¹³¹ Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," *African Human Rights Journal*, no. 18, (2018): 230, <https://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/ahrj/v18n1/12.pdf>.

¹³² Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," 231.

¹³³ Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," 231.

¹³⁴ Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," 231.

¹³⁵ Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," 236.

¹³⁶ Nneka Okechukwu, "The Fragility of the African Governance Agenda: A Crisis of Legitimacy," 4.

¹³⁷ Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," 236.

¹³⁸ Nneka Okechukwu, "The Fragility of the African Governance Agenda: A Crisis of Legitimacy," 4.

¹³⁹ Nneka Okechukwu, "The Fragility of the African Governance Agenda: A Crisis of Legitimacy," 4.

¹⁴⁰ African Union Peace and Security Council, *Communique: The 852nd Meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council on the Situation in the Sudan*, PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCCXLII), (May 27, 2019), <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/psc.852.comm.sudan.27.05.2019III.pdf>.

development in Sudan can positively impact the entire continent and demonstrate Africa's capacity to resolve conflicts and achieve common goals.¹⁴¹ Notably, the African Democracy Charter does not explicitly prohibit constitutional manipulation to amend or end term limits as long as democratic procedures are followed.¹⁴² This has enabled and legitimized the evasion of term limits in many African Member States.¹⁴³ Despite considerable efforts to ensure the adoption of the African Democracy Charter, more than 30 percent of African leaders have been in power for more than ten years and exhibit a disregard for the rule of law.¹⁴⁴

In 2013, the AU's Heads of State and Government commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the OAU.¹⁴⁵ During this celebration, the AU renewed its dedication to continental unity and outlined a new strategic framework for Africa's future success.¹⁴⁶ The new framework was named Agenda 2063 and presented as a strategic framework that delivers the AU's inclusive and sustainable development goals.¹⁴⁷ The AU officially adopted the agenda in January 2015 at the 24th Ordinary Assembly.¹⁴⁸ The framework was developed to help shift the AU's agenda from achieving political independence to prioritizing inclusive social and economic development, continental and regional integration, democratic governance, and security.¹⁴⁹ The agenda listed seven aspirations that aligned with the AU's Vision and priorities of the Solemn Declaration of the 50th OAU/AU Anniversary.¹⁵⁰ One of the aspirations was "an Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law."¹⁵¹ The aspiration envisions that by 2063, Africa will be a continent where democratic values, human rights, justice, and the rule of law are entrenched, and institutions capable of empowering transformative leadership will be fully established.¹⁵²

The United Nations has supported Agenda 2063 through a variety of initiatives, including encouraging cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), among others.¹⁵³ The UN has endorsed Agenda 2063 in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and emphasized its support for sustainable development within African Member States.¹⁵⁴ While Agenda 2063 focuses primarily on sustainable economic development, the AU and the UN have noted the realization that democracy and sustainable development are intertwined.¹⁵⁵

Conclusion

While many African Member States have taken progressive strides to sustain democracy since gaining independence, significant challenges persist in consolidating and maintaining democratic governance across the

¹⁴¹ African Union, *Solemn Declaration of the Assembly of the Union on Sudan*, Assembly/AU/Decl.3(XVI), (January 2011), <https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/317>.

¹⁴² Nneka Okechukwu, "The Fragility of the African Governance Agenda: A Crisis of Legitimacy," *European Centre for Development Policy Management*, October 2023, accessed June 24, 2024, 6, <https://ecdpm.org/application/files/6816/9892/3447/Fragility-African-Governance-Agenda-Crisis-Legitimacy-ECDPM-Briefing-Note-171-2023.pdf>

¹⁴³ Nneka Okechukwu, "The Fragility of the African Governance Agenda: A Crisis of Legitimacy," 6.

¹⁴⁴ Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," *African Human Rights Journal*, no. 18, (2018): 230, <https://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/ahrj/v18n1/12.pdf>, 241.

¹⁴⁵ African Union, "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want," *African Union*, January 1, 2019, accessed February 14, 2024, <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>.

¹⁴⁶ African Union, "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want."

¹⁴⁷ African Union, "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want."

¹⁴⁸ "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want Framework document," *African Union*, September 2015, accessed May 11, 2024, 5, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/33126-doc-framework_document_book.pdf.

¹⁴⁹ African Union, "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want."

¹⁵⁰ "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want Framework document," 12.

¹⁵¹ "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want Framework document," 12.

¹⁵² "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want Framework document," 37.

¹⁵³ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *United Nations System Support for Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*. New York, NY: UN Headquarters, 2023, <https://www.un.org/osaa/reports-and-publications/secretary-generals-reports/un-system-support-agenda-2063/united-nations>.

¹⁵⁴ United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *United Nations system support for Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*.

¹⁵⁵ Sarah Lister, "The Role of Democracy in Sustainable Development," *United Nations Development Programme Blog*, September 14, 2023, accessed June 23, 2024, <https://www.undp.org/blog/role-democracy-sustainable-development>.

continent.¹⁵⁶ Subsequent efforts to embrace multi-party systems and strengthen the rule of law brought promising democratic reforms, marked by increased electoral processes and constitutional advancements.¹⁵⁷ However, the erosion of the rule of law across African Member States over the past decade has caused a concerning trend towards authoritarianism and unconstitutional changes of government.¹⁵⁸ Several challenges, including political instability, constitutional and military coups, and suppression of civil liberties, threaten the peace, progress, and development of African Member States.¹⁵⁹ These challenges shed light on the continent's fragile rule of law and lack of politically responsive institutions to maintain government.¹⁶⁰ African Member States must uphold democratic principles by fortifying democratic institutions to be resilient against pressure from authoritarian leaders in Africa.¹⁶¹ It is critical that Member States of the African Union strengthen existing rule of law frameworks and institutions to curb authoritarianism and promote good governance.¹⁶²

Committee Directive

While in committee, delegates should be mindful of challenges their Member State faces with adhering to the rule of law and how such challenges can be addressed through existing institutions. Delegates should be prepared to discuss: What social, political, and economic issues prevent African Member States from strengthening institutions and promoting good governance? How can African Member States further implement existing AU initiatives to strengthen institutions and the rule of law? Delegates should develop holistic solutions that address these questions, promote good governance, and protect democratic institutions in African Member States. Overall, delegates should seek common ground to achieve the goals of Agenda 2063 and build upon initiatives the African Union has already established. Delegates should focus on the topic as a whole and not specific situations.

¹⁵⁶ Charles Manga Fombad, "An Overview of the Crisis of the Rule of Law in Africa," *African Human Rights Journal*, no. 18, (2018): 230, <https://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/ahrj/v18n1/12.pdf>, 213-214.

¹⁵⁷ Tope Shola Akinyetun, "Democratic Backsliding in Africa: Understanding the Current Challenges," *Social Science Research Council*, September 20, 2022, accessed June 10, 2024, <https://kujenga-amani.ssrc.org/2022/09/20/democratic-backsliding-in-africa-understanding-the-current-challenges/>.

¹⁵⁸ Jennifer Schoeberlein, "National Strategies for Advancing Good Governance in Africa," *Transparency International*, May 27, 2020, accessed June 10, 2024, 5, <https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/assets/uploads/kproducts/TI-Helpdesk-2020-National-Governance-Strategies-Africa-final.pdf>.

¹⁵⁹ Jennifer Schoeberlein, "National Strategies for Advancing Good Governance in Africa," 4-6.

¹⁶⁰ "Good Governance and the Sustainable Development Goals." *Good Governance Improvement*, April 22, 2021, accessed June 7, 2024, <https://www.good-governance.org.uk/publications/insights/good-governance-and-the-sustainable-development-goals>.

¹⁶¹ "Democratic Reversals and The Crisis of Governance in West Africa," *Daily Trust*, June 27, 2024, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://dailytrust.com/democratic-reversals-and-the-crisis-of-governance-in-west-africa/>.

¹⁶² Charles A. Ray, "Is Democracy in Retreat in Africa?," *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, March 10, 2022, accessed June 20, 2024, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/03/is-democracy-in-retreat-in-africa/>.

II. Improving Access to Electricity in the African States and Building a Sustainable Electricity Market

Introduction

Electricity has reshaped society and is essential in the modern age.¹⁶³ It is a critical resource that aids economic advancement, technological development, and quality of life.¹⁶⁴ Consequently, inadequate access to electricity is a salient obstacle to the development of Member States.¹⁶⁵ Despite significant electrification progress in recent decades, 733 million people still lack access to electricity globally.¹⁶⁶ Compared to other continents, Africa lacks sufficient electricity access, furthering sociopolitical issues in the region.¹⁶⁷ Four in five people who lack access to electricity live in Sub-Saharan Africa,¹⁶⁸ and more than half a billion people in the region will still be without electricity by 2030.¹⁶⁹ Despite achieving high levels of electricity access, Northern Africa's access is expensive for Member States to maintain and faces challenges.¹⁷⁰ Improving access to electricity in African Member States is critical for reaching targets like Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 by 2030: Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.¹⁷¹ Attaining widespread access to electricity and developing a sustainable electricity market could transform Africa socially, politically, and economically.¹⁷²

History

Africa's access to electricity has a unique history, considering the political and economic background of the continent.¹⁷³ European colonial powers drove African electricity proliferation in the late 19th and 20th centuries, industrializing equipment and facilities in African colonies to bolster their economic aims.¹⁷⁴ Although electricity reached Africa in the colonial era, it was primarily for use by private industry and unavailable to many Africans.¹⁷⁵ By the late 1890s, Portugal used small-scale electric generators for farming, industrial, and municipal use in modern-day Angola and Mozambique.¹⁷⁶ Portugal expanded their electricity agenda in the mid-20th century after it

¹⁶³ MET Group, "Importance of Electricity: Powering Modern Life," *MET Group*, January 31, 2024, accessed June 16, 2024, <https://group.met.com/en/media/energy-insight/importance-of-electricity#:~:text=Modern%20societies%20utilize%20electricity%20in,systems%20function%20because%20of%20it>.

¹⁶⁴ Hannah Ritchie, "Definition: Access to Electricity," *Our World in Data*, November 8, 2021, accessed March 31, 2024, <https://ourworldindata.org/definition-electricity-access>.

¹⁶⁵ Hannah Ritchie, "Definition: Access to Electricity."

¹⁶⁶ United Nations, "Goal 7: Ensure Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable, and Modern Energy for All," *Sustainable Development Goals Partnerships Platform*, accessed May 11, 2024, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal7>.

¹⁶⁷ Jeanine Mabunda Lioko, "Addressing Africa's Dual Challenges: Climate Change and Electricity Access," *Brookings*, January 25, 2022, accessed July 13, 2024, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/addressing-africas-dual-challenges-climate-change-and-electricity-access/>.

¹⁶⁸ IEA, "Africa Energy Outlook 2022– Key Findings," *International Energy Agency*, accessed May 11, 2024, <https://www.iea.org/reports/africa-energy-outlook-2022/key-findings>.

¹⁶⁹ "World Bank Group Announces Major Initiative to Electrify Sub-Saharan Africa with Distributed Renewable Energy," *The World Bank Group*, accessed May 11, 2024, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/11/09/world-bank-group-announces-major-initiative-to-electrify-sub-saharan-africa-with-distributed-renewable-energy>.

¹⁷⁰ IEA, "Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa," *IEA*, September, 2020, accessed June 15, 2024, <https://www.iea.org/reports/clean-energy-transitions-in-north-africa>.

¹⁷¹ United Nations, "Goal 7: Ensure Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable, and Modern Energy for All."

¹⁷² IEA, "Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa."

¹⁷³ Ivan Cuesta-Fernandez, "The History of Electricity Production in Africa," *Electric Territorialities*, February 1, 2013, accessed March 31, 2024, <https://electricterritorialities.wordpress.com/2013/02/01/the-history-of-electricity-production-in-africa/>.

¹⁷⁴ Ivan Cuesta-Fernandez, "The History of Electricity Production in Africa."

¹⁷⁵ Ivan Cuesta-Fernandez, "The History of Electricity Production in Africa."

¹⁷⁶ Ana Paula Silva, "Electrifying Colonial Africa: Portuguese Developments," *EHNE*, accessed March 31, 2024, <https://ehne.fr/en/encyclopedia/themes/material-civilization/major-technological-networks-and-sovereignty/electrifying-colonial-africa-portuguese-developments>.

estimated significant hydroelectric potential in its colonies.¹⁷⁷ In December 1974, Portugal completed Mozambique’s Cahora Bassa Dam, a hydroelectric megaproject along the Zambezi River.¹⁷⁸ France, Belgium, Italy, and the United Kingdom also developed hydroelectric power schemes in their colonies, primarily serving colonial industries.¹⁷⁹ After decolonization in the mid-20th century, newly-formed African states continued their electrification, constructing 54 hydroelectric dams across the continent in the 1970s and 1980s.¹⁸⁰ However, ambitious electricity initiatives partially contributed to the African Debt Crisis beginning in the 1980s.¹⁸¹ During this Crisis, Africa endured a “lost decade,” defined by low economic growth, worsening poverty, and political fragility.¹⁸² As a result, Africa experienced electrification stagnation until debt relief ended the Crisis in the 2000s.¹⁸³

Although some Member States were entirely electrified by 2000, approximately 22.6 percent of people globally lacked electricity access.¹⁸⁴ Millions had insufficient access across Africa, and providing electricity to populations proved a considerable challenge for many African Member States.¹⁸⁵ However, 20 million Northern Africans obtained access to electricity between 2000 and 2020, resulting in near-universal electrification.¹⁸⁶ Notably, rural areas gained access to electricity more quickly in Northern Africa than in other African regions.¹⁸⁷ Policy furthering major grid extensions, programs bolstering rural access, and gas network expansion made widespread electrification possible in Northern Africa.¹⁸⁸ Sub-Saharan Africa, however, experienced electrification stagnation, witnessing much less progress.¹⁸⁹ Compared to Northern Africa, private investment in the Sub-Saharan African electricity industry remained limited, hindering electrification opportunities in the region.¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, political instability, corruption, and conflict left Sub-Saharan Africa underdeveloped through the 21st century.¹⁹¹ This widespread underdevelopment did not allow Sub-Saharan Africa to electrify.¹⁹² The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated

¹⁷⁷ Ana Paula Silva, “Electrifying colonial Africa: Portuguese Developments,” *EHNE*, accessed March 31, 2024, <https://ehne.fr/en/encyclopedia/themes/material-civilization/major-technological-networks-and-sovereignty/electrifying-colonial-africa-portuguese-developments>.

¹⁷⁸ Allen Isaacman, “Cahora Bassa Dam & the Delusion of Development,” *Daedalus* 150, no. 4 (2021): 103–123. 2021, accessed March 31, 2021, <https://direct.mit.edu/daed/article/150/4/103/107374/Cahora-Bassa-Dam-amp-the-Delusion-of-Development>.

¹⁷⁹ Ana Paula Silva, “Electrifying colonial Africa: Portuguese Developments.”

¹⁸⁰ Electric Territorialities, “The History of Electricity Production in Africa,” *Electric Territorialities*, February 1, 2013, accessed May 5, 2024, <https://electricterritorialities.wordpress.com/2013/02/01/the-history-of-electricity-production-in-africa/>.

¹⁸¹ Electric Territorialities, “The History of Electricity Production in Africa.”

¹⁸² Otaviano Canuto, et al., “Addressing Africa’s Persistent Debt Problem,” *Policy Center*, November 30, 2023, accessed May 5, 2024, <https://www.policycenter.ma/publications/addressing-africas-persistent-debt-problem>.

¹⁸³ Gregory Smith, “African Debt Crises of the 1980s and 1990s,” in *Where Credit is Due: How Africa’s Debt Can Be a Benefit, Not a Burden* (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2021), <https://academic.oup.com/book/38922/chapter-abstract/338097539?redirectedFrom=fulltext>.

¹⁸⁴ World Bank, “Access to electricity, (% of population),” *World Bank*, accessed May 5, 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS?view=chart>.

¹⁸⁵ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Commodities at a Glance: Special Issue on Access to Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa*. New York, NY: UN Headquarters, 2023.

¹⁸⁶ IEA, “Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa,” *IEA*, September, 2020, accessed June 15, 2024, <https://www.iea.org/reports/clean-energy-transitions-in-north-africa>.

¹⁸⁷ IEA, “Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa.”

¹⁸⁸ IEA, “Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa.”

¹⁸⁹ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Commodities at a Glance: Special Issue on Access to Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

¹⁹⁰ Olumide Onitekun and Oluremi Ogun, “Investment Uncertainties and Economic Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa.” *Global Studies Quarterly* 4, no. 1, (January 2024), accessed March 8, 2024, <https://academic.oup.com/isagsq/article/4/1/ksae005/7624578>.

¹⁹¹ Emmanuel Oladipo Ojo, “Underdevelopment in Africa: Theories and Facts,” *The Journal of Social, Political, and Economic Studies* 41, no. 1 (2016): 89–103, https://jspes.org/samples/JSPES41_1_ojo.pdf.

¹⁹² World Bank Group, “Making Power Affordable for Africa and Viable for Its Utilities,” *World Bank Group*, accessed June 14, 2024, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/energy/publication/making-power-work-for-africa>.

inadequate electricity access, increasing unemployment and slowing electricity proliferation.¹⁹³ In 2020, Sub-Saharan Africa's portion of the global population without electricity grew by three percent due to COVID-19.¹⁹⁴

Current Situation

As of 2023, 43 percent of Africans lack electricity access,¹⁹⁵ comprising 600 million people without access to electricity globally.¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, Africa's population is anticipated to grow from 1.4 billion to 2.5 billion by 2050.¹⁹⁷ Thus, electricity demands will rise, and population growth may outpace electricity spread.¹⁹⁸ Northern Africa continues to have near-universal access but faces challenges sustaining electricity availability.¹⁹⁹ COVID-19 greatly affected Northern Africa, increasing poverty and making electricity less affordable for many in the region.²⁰⁰ Although Northern Africa has increased investment in alternative electricity sources, including wind and solar power, the region still relies heavily on natural gas for electricity.²⁰¹ This advances the effects of human-induced climate change, which disproportionately affects Africa.²⁰²

More Member States lack sustainable electricity access in Sub-Saharan Africa and face considerable obstacles.²⁰³ While some Member States have witnessed success in recent years, others have untapped potential.²⁰⁴ Underutilized deepwater oil and natural gas reserves in many Sub-Saharan Africa Member States could address regional electricity deficits.²⁰⁵ Member States along the East African Rift System (EARS), a region in Eastern Africa diverging due to plate tectonics, have significant geothermal potential.²⁰⁶ Considering Member States without resources to extract and refine oil and gas are affected by volatile market prices, geothermal energy is a possible alternative.²⁰⁷ Kenya and

¹⁹³ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Commodities at a Glance: Special Issue on Access to Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa*. New York, NY: UN Headquarters, 2023.

¹⁹⁴ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Commodities at a Glance: Special Issue on Access to Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

¹⁹⁵ Mogomotsi Magome, "What Can We Do?: Millions in African Countries Need Power," *AP News*, March 25, 2023, accessed June 14, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/electricity-africa-just-energy-transition-d20d1ba86e90c3b9c81f0fc76979acfc>.

¹⁹⁶ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Commodities at a Glance: Special Issue on Access to Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

¹⁹⁷ Andrew Stanley, "African Century," *Finance and Development Magazine*, September 2023, 16-17, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2023/09/PT-african-century>.

¹⁹⁸ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Commodities at a Glance: Special Issue on Access to Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

¹⁹⁹ IEA, "Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa," *IEA*, September, 2020, accessed June 15, 2024, <https://www.iea.org/reports/clean-energy-transitions-in-north-africa>.

²⁰⁰ IEA, "Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa."

²⁰¹ IEA, "Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa."

²⁰² UN Environment Programme, "Responding to Climate Change," *UN Environment Programme*, accessed May 5, 2024, <https://www.unep.org/regions/africa/regional-initiatives/responding-climate-change>.

²⁰³ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Commodities at a Glance: Special Issue on Access to Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

²⁰⁴ IEA, "Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa."

²⁰⁵ David Bamford and Mikki Hall, "Unlocking Energy Potential: Oil and Gas in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Future Energy Partners*, June 10, 2024, accessed June 17, 2024, <https://future-energy-partners.com/unlocking-energy-potential-oil-and-gas-in-sub-saharan-africa/>.

²⁰⁶ StellaeEnergy, "Geothermal Energy in the East Africa Rift System," *StellaeEnergy*, August 9, 2021, accessed June 17, 2024, <https://stellaeenergy.com/geothermal-energy-in-the-east-africa-rift-system#:~:text=The%20East%20African%20Rift%20System,main%20branches%20%E2%80%93%20Eastern%20and%20Western>.

²⁰⁷ Thomas Gillett, et al., "Africa's Electricity Challenge: Rising Oil, Gas prices to Weigh on Growth and Fiscal Outlooks," *Scope Ratings*, April 13, 2022, accessed June 17, 2024, <https://www.scoperatings.com/ratings-and-research/research/EN/170861>.

Ethiopia are notable producers of geothermal energy along the EARS,²⁰⁸ and Kenyan officials aim to electrify Kenya with 100 percent clean energy by 2030.²⁰⁹

Despite success in some Sub-Saharan African Member States, sustainable electricity development faces various political and economic challenges.²¹⁰ Member States with these challenges are affected by the “fragility trap,” a phenomenon where geopolitical fragility hinders development while inadequate development produces structural conditions that create fragility and conflict.²¹¹ Cycles of civil war and violence weaken local energy sectors, preventing substantial electrification progress.²¹² High construction costs, project delays, and project abandonments also limit electricity infrastructure development in conflict regions.²¹³ Unstable economies and currencies in Sub-Saharan Africa further weaken independent electrification efforts and deter foreign investment in electricity projects.²¹⁴ Some regions with potential for electricity generation through alternative means are severely limited by systems that cannot reach most people.²¹⁵

Energy terrorism, defined as “criminal activity aimed at energy facilities that causes significant losses,” also poses a challenge.²¹⁶ Terrorist action threatens both electrified and electric-deficient Africa, destabilizing Member States and limiting the ability to provide stable electricity supply across populations.²¹⁷ Terrorist organizations also indiscriminately destroy infrastructure and displace people, slowing the development of natural gas fields.²¹⁸ The Islamic State, a transnational extremist terrorist group, has conducted energy-related violence in Northern Africa since 2014.²¹⁹ The group aims to destabilize oil and gas industries and take control of the regional energy sector.²²⁰

Actions Taken by the United Nations and African Union

The UN acknowledges a well-managed energy system is critical for business, medicine, education, and other

²⁰⁸ StellaeEnergy, “Geothermal Energy in the East Africa Rift System,” *StellaeEnergy*, August 9, 2021, accessed June 17, 2024, <https://stellaeenergy.com/geothermal-energy-in-the-east-africa-rift-system#:~:text=The%20East%20African%20Rift%20System,main%20branches%20E2%80%93%20Eastern%20and%20Western.>

²⁰⁹ Will Brown, “Kenya Taps the Earth’s Heat,” *Finance and Development Magazine*, December 2022, 46-47, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2022/12/country-case-kenya-taps-the-earth-heat>.

²¹⁰ IEA, “Africa Energy Outlook 2022– Key Findings,” *International Energy Agency*, accessed May 11, 2024, <https://www.iea.org/reports/africa-energy-outlook-2022/key-findings>.”

²¹¹ Louise Mathu, “Electricity Access in Fragile and Conflict Areas: Challenges & Opportunities,” *LinkedIn*, August 19, 2021, accessed May 5, 2024, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/electricity-access-fragile-conflict-areas-challenges-louise-mathu/>.

²¹² Eugene Chen, Flora McCrone, and David Mozersky, “Renewable Energy & the United Nations: A Green Spark for Peace in South Sudan,” *Stimson Center*, March 18, 2024, accessed May 5, 2024, <https://www.stimson.org/2023/renewable-energy-and-the-united-nations-a-green-spark-for-peace-in-south-sudan/#:~:text=Despite%20being%20an%20oil%2Dproducing,the%20government%27s%20limited%20cash%20reserves.>

²¹³ Louise Mathu, “Electricity Access in Fragile and Conflict Areas: Challenges & Opportunities.”

²¹⁴ Eugene Chen, Flora McCrone, and David Mozersky, “Renewable Energy & the United Nations: A Green Spark for Peace in South Sudan.”

²¹⁵ International Trade Administration, “Democratic Republic of the Congo – Energy,” *International Trade Administration*, March 14, 2024, accessed May 5, 2024, <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/democratic-republic-congo-energy#:~:text=Lack%20of%20access%20to%20modern,seeking%20to%20power%20their%20facilities.>

²¹⁶ Lukáš Tichý, “The Islamic State Oil and Gas Strategy in North Africa,” *Energy Strategy Reviews* 24 (April 2019): 254–60, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esr.2019.04.001>.

²¹⁷ Lukáš Tichý, “The Islamic State Oil and Gas Strategy in North Africa,” 254–60.

²¹⁸ United States Agency for International Development, *Examining U.S. Foreign Assistance to Address the Root Causes of Instability and Conflict in Africa: Before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Global Human Rights*, Washington, DC: USAID, 2022, <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/congressional-testimony/nov-15-2022-testimony-robert-w-jenkins-assistant-administrator-bureau-conflict-prevention-stabilization>.

²¹⁹ Lukáš Tichý, “The Islamic State Oil and Gas Strategy in North Africa,” 254–60.

²²⁰ Lukáš Tichý, “The Islamic State Oil and Gas Strategy in North Africa,” 254–60.

societal issues.²²¹ The UN has particular concern for Sub-Saharan Africa, noting electrification stagnation and lack of clean cooking facilities as specific energy-related problems in the region.²²² In 2015, the UN universally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, containing several goals related to energy.²²³ The UN outlines Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7, which emphasizes ensuring “access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.”²²⁴ Target 7.1 of SDG7 focuses on the widespread availability of energy sources, noting access to electricity as a key indicator of progress.²²⁵ Since 2015, UN Member States have invested in electricity proliferation, aiding SDG7 and other interconnected SDGs.²²⁶

In 2009, the UN launched the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) to foster sustainable energy adoption.²²⁷ One hundred sixty-eight Member States, including African Member States and the European Union (EU), all ratified the IRENA.²²⁸ IRENA has worked closely with African Member States since its inception and developed results-oriented partnerships with regional NGOs.²²⁹ Noting growing electricity demand in Sub-Saharan Africa, IRENA promotes untapped renewable sources, including solar, wind, geothermal, hydroelectric, and biomass energies, as key to fostering a sustainable electricity market.²³⁰ The Africa Clean Energy Corridor (ACEC) is a regional initiative of IRENA that aims to accelerate the spread of renewable energy and foster renewable source trade between East and Southern Africa.²³¹ Since its endorsement by African Member States in 2014, the ACEC has acquired support and engagement, drawing together governments, regional organizations, and investors.²³²

The AU is committed to ensuring all African regions meet their electricity needs.²³³ In 2021, the AU’s Heads of State and Government adopted the African Single Electricity Market (AfSEM).²³⁴ AfSEM aims to foster sustainable energy development in Africa through an integrated electricity market, allowing exchange of electricity among

²²¹ United Nations, “Energy – United Nations Sustainable Development,” *United Nations*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/>.

²²² United Nations, “Affordable and Clean Energy - SDG Indicators,” *United Nations*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/Goal-07/>.

²²³ United Nations, “The Sustainable Development Agenda,” *United Nations*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda-retired/#:~:text=On%201%20January%202016%2C%20the,Summit%20%E2%80%94%20officially%20came%20into%20force.>

²²⁴ United Nations, “Goal 7: Department of Economic and Social Affairs,” *United Nations*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal7>.

²²⁵ United Nations, “Goal 7: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.”

²²⁶ United Nations, “SDGs in Focus: SDG 7 and Interlinkages with Other SDGs – Affordable and Clean Energy | High-Level Political Forum 2023,” *United Nations*, July, 2023, accessed May 5, 2024, <https://hlpf.un.org/2023/programme/sdgs-in-focus-sdg-7-and-interlinkages-with-other-sdgs-affordable-and-clean-energy>.

²²⁷ IRENA, “Creation of IRENA,” *IRENA*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://www.irena.org/About/History/Creation-of-IRENA>.

²²⁸ IRENA, “Towards 100% Renewable Energy: Utilities in Transition,” *IRENA*, January 2020, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://www.irena.org/publications/2020/Jan/Towards-100-percent-renewable-energy-Utilities-in-transition>.

²²⁹ IRENA, “Africa,” *IRENA*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://www.irena.org/How-we-work/Africa#IRENA-work-in-the-region>.

²³⁰ IRENA, “Planning and Prospects for Renewable Power Eastern and Southern Africa,” *IRENA*, April 1, 2021, accessed May 5, 2024, <https://www.irena.org/Publications/2021/Apr/Planning-and-prospects-for-renewable-power-Eastern-and-Southern-Africa>.

²³¹ IRENA, “Africa Clean Energy Corridor,” *IRENA*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://www.irena.org/Energy-Transition/Country-engagement/Regional-Initiatives/Africa-Clean-Energy-Corridor>.

²³² IRENA, “Africa Clean Energy Corridor.”

²³³ African Union, “AfSEM,” *African Union*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://au.int/en/afsem>.

²³⁴ African Union, “AfSEM.”

African Member States.²³⁵²³⁶ AfSEM will be completed in three phases and fully operational by 2040.²³⁷ Serving 55 Member States and 1.4 billion people, AfSEM would be the largest electricity market in the world if completed.²³⁸ AfSEM will allow Africa to satisfy the growing energy demands spurred by population growth.²³⁹ AfSEM intends to provide sustainable, reliable, and affordable electricity to households, businesses, and industries.²⁴⁰ Like IRENA, AfSEM prioritizes renewable energy sources to ensure that 100 percent of Africans have sustainable access to electricity.²⁴¹

Additionally, the AU Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) established the Continental Power System Masterplan (CMP) to support AfSEM's mission.²⁴² The CMP is a blueprint for developing a unified electricity market from Africa's "power pools," regional electricity markets where national electricity companies coordinate.²⁴³ The CMP yields a strategic roadmap for connecting Africa's five power pools: the Central African Power Pool (CAPP), the Maghreb Electricity Committee (COMELEC), the Eastern African Power Pool (EAPP), the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), and the Western African Power Pool (WAPP).²⁴⁴ Interconnections fostered by the CMP will allow streamlined African electricity infrastructure.²⁴⁵ IRENA and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) endorsed the CMP and have launched programs to aid its growth.²⁴⁶ IRENA has assisted with model development, knowledge transport, and data distribution.²⁴⁷ Furthermore, IRENA and IAEA have trained modeling experts from AUDA-NEPAD, the African Union Commission (AUC), and other agencies to bolster CMP development.²⁴⁸ The CMP also upholds the Africa-EU Energy Initiative, as creating regional electricity interconnections is a pillar.²⁴⁹

Agenda 2063, the AU's blueprint for unity, progress, and prosperity, has a flagship project to increase access to electricity.²⁵⁰ The Grand Inga Dam is an Agenda 2063 project and the world's largest hydroelectric power proposal.²⁵¹ Three Inga dams already exist in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), but the Grand Inga Dam would channel far more water than the pre-existing dams.²⁵² The Grand Inga Dam would double the energy generated by the current largest dam in the world.²⁵³ The Grand Inga Dam is estimated to cost 80 billion USD to construct but would simultaneously foster access to electricity and cultivate the African sustainable energy market.²⁵⁴ The Grand Inga Dam's projected location in the DRC is also significant, considering only one percent of

²³⁵ African Union, "AfSEM."

²³⁶ Sarah Krieger, "Power Markets 101: What They Are and Why They Matter," *Electric Power Supply Association*, June 12, 2020, accessed June 15, 2024, <https://epsa.org/power-markets-101-what-they-are-why-they-matter/>.

²³⁷ Africa-EU Energy Partnership, "African Single Electricity Market (AfSEM) Launched," *Africa-EU Energy Partnership*, June 28, 2021, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://africa-eu-energy-partnership.org/african-single-electricity-market-afsem-launched/>.

²³⁸ African Union, "AfSEM."

²³⁹ African Union, "AfSEM."

²⁴⁰ African Union, "AfSEM."

²⁴¹ African Union, "AfSEM."

²⁴² African Union Development Agency, "The African Continental Master Plan," *African Union Development Agency*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://nepad.org/continental-master-plan>.

²⁴³ African Union Development Agency, "The African Continental Master Plan."

²⁴⁴ African Union Development Agency, "The African Continental Master Plan."

²⁴⁵ African Union Development Agency, "The African Continental Master Plan."

²⁴⁶ IRENA, "Continental Power System Masterplan," *IRENA*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://www.irena.org/Energy-Transition/Planning/Africa-Continental-Power-System-Masterplan>.

²⁴⁷ IRENA, "Continental Power System Masterplan."

²⁴⁸ IRENA, "Continental Power System Masterplan."

²⁴⁹ African Union Development Agency, "The African Continental Master Plan."

²⁵⁰ African Union, "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want," *African Union*, accessed July 17, 2024, <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>.

²⁵¹ International Rivers, "Grand Inga Hydroelectric Project: An Overview," *International Rivers*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://archive.internationalrivers.org/resources/grand-inga-hydroelectric-project-an-overview-3356>.

²⁵² International Rivers, "Grand Inga Hydroelectric Project: An Overview."

²⁵³ International Rivers, "Grand Inga Hydroelectric Project: An Overview."

²⁵⁴ International Rivers, "Grand Inga Hydroelectric Project: An Overview."

the DRC’s rural population has access to electricity.²⁵⁵ In February 2023, the AU reaffirmed the project, stating, “accelerating the implementation of Agenda 2063 flagship projects such as the Grand Inga Dam Hydro project...is critical in enhancing energy access, regional integration, fostering economic transformation, and climate resilience.”²⁵⁶

Case Study

Ghana and the Strategic National Energy Plan

Inadequate access to electricity was a considerable barrier to sustainable development in Ghana.²⁵⁷ Only 45 percent of Ghana’s population had sufficient electricity access in 2000,²⁵⁸ and rural communities were particularly electricity deficient, with an eight percent access rate.²⁵⁹ Ghana committed to universal access to electricity by developing the *Strategic National Energy Plan* (SNEP) in 2006, setting new electrification goals.²⁶⁰ The SNEP aimed to achieve 100 percent electrification by 2020 and to power 30 percent of rural households with off-grid renewables.²⁶¹ Since Ghana was endowed with a considerable supply of natural resources, renewables were an economically viable option for electrifying communities.²⁶² Decentralized, off-grid electrification was also deemed the most affordable option for many rural communities due to the costs of grid extension.²⁶³

Ghana’s electrification efforts had mixed results in practice.²⁶⁴ Ghana’s access to electricity increased to 85 percent,²⁶⁵ and 73 percent in rural areas by 2020.²⁶⁶ Furthermore, Ghana’s electricity access stood out in Sub-Saharan Africa, which achieved 49 percent access in the same year.²⁶⁷ However, while an improvement, an 85 percent electrification rate did not satisfy Ghana’s goal of universal access by 2020.²⁶⁸ Renewables remained underutilized, as these sources provided only one percent of rural electricity.²⁶⁹ This discrepancy between its goal of 30 percent off-grid rural electrification through renewables and the results is potentially explained by reluctance

²⁵⁵ International Rivers, “Grand Inga Hydroelectric Project: An Overview.”

²⁵⁶ African Union, “Push for Universal Energy Access: Joining Hands to Accelerate the Pace of Electrification in Africa,” *African Union*, February 22, 2023, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20230222/push-universal-energy-access-joining-hands-accelerate-pace-electrification>.

²⁵⁷ Nana Asare Obeng-Darko, “Policy Trends on Renewable Energy for Decentralised Electrification as a Catalyst for Achieving Goal Seven of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case for Ghana,” *Renewable Energy Law and Policy Review* 8, no. 4 (2018): 12-24, accessed March 22, 2024, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26638282>.

²⁵⁸ World Bank, “Access to Electricity, (% of population) – Ghana,” *World Bank*, accessed March 22, 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS?locations=GH>.

²⁵⁹ World Bank, “Access to Electricity, Rural (% of rural population) – Ghana.”

²⁶⁰ Nana Asare Obeng-Darko, “Policy Trends on Renewable Energy for Decentralised Electrification as a Catalyst for Achieving Goal Seven of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case for Ghana.”

²⁶¹ Nana Asare Obeng-Darko, “Policy Trends on Renewable Energy for Decentralised Electrification as a Catalyst for Achieving Goal Seven of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case for Ghana.”

²⁶² Nana Asare Obeng-Darko, “Policy Trends on Renewable Energy for Decentralised Electrification as a Catalyst for Achieving Goal Seven of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case for Ghana.”

²⁶³ Nana Asare Obeng-Darko, “Policy Trends on Renewable Energy for Decentralised Electrification as a Catalyst for Achieving Goal Seven of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case for Ghana.”

²⁶⁴ Nana Asare Obeng-Darko, “Policy Trends on Renewable Energy for Decentralised Electrification as a Catalyst for Achieving Goal Seven of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case for Ghana.”

²⁶⁵ World Bank, “Access to Electricity, (% of population) – Ghana.”

²⁶⁶ World Bank, “Access to Electricity, rural (% of rural population) – Ghana,” *World Bank*, accessed March 22, 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCS.RU.ZS?locations=GH>.

²⁶⁷ World Bank, “Access to Electricity, (% of population) – Sub-Saharan Africa,” *World Bank*, accessed March 22, 2024, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS?locations=ZG>.

²⁶⁸ Nana Asare Obeng-Darko, “Policy Trends on Renewable Energy for Decentralised Electrification as a Catalyst for Achieving Goal Seven of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case for Ghana.”

²⁶⁹ Nana Asare Obeng-Darko, “Policy Trends on Renewable Energy for Decentralised Electrification as a Catalyst for Achieving Goal Seven of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case for Ghana.”

from undereducated rural populations.²⁷⁰ There were no policies in the SNEP that outlined educating rural communities on the benefits of off-grid electrification through renewables, so demand remained low in rural communities.²⁷¹

Conclusion

The AU faces a challenge in ensuring access to electricity and developing a sustainable electricity market.²⁷² Although Northern Africa has made significant progress, the entire continent faces obstacles.²⁷³ A significant proportion of Sub-Saharan Africa lacks access to electricity, threatening the health, safety, and financial stability of over 600 million people in the region.²⁷⁴ Although certain Member States have seen electricity proliferation, others continue to struggle.²⁷⁵ Actions taken by the UN, including the development of SDG 7 and IRENA, demonstrate the global multilateral commitment to bolster electrification.²⁷⁶ Furthermore, the AU's plans for the Grand Inga Dam and AfSEM display their initiative to provide access to electricity.²⁷⁸ Despite this, Africa's electricity access issues remain, and its limited capacity to develop a sustainable electricity market will continue to be at the expense of African citizens.²⁸⁰

Committee Directive

The AU calls on Member States to address the multidimensional challenges of obtaining universal access to electricity and developing a sustainable electricity market. Delegates must take note of electrification successes and failures on the African continent, as well as circumstances that contributed to those results. Questions to consider include: What role should the AU and UN play in regional electrification and building a sustainable electricity market? How can Member States connect with transnational corporations and regional organizations to obtain widespread access to electricity? What economic barriers are associated with electrification, and how can Member States address these challenges? What is the environmental impact of electrifying Member States? How can Member States embrace regional integration while maintaining sovereignty over their domestic electricity market? Delegates should focus on building upon established multilateral programs and AU initiatives. Delegates should also focus on the issue as a whole and not specific situations.

²⁷⁰ Nana Asare Obeng-Darko, "Policy Trends on Renewable Energy for Decentralised Electrification as a Catalyst for Achieving Goal Seven of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case for Ghana."

²⁷¹ Nana Asare Obeng-Darko, "Policy Trends on Renewable Energy for Decentralised Electrification as a Catalyst for Achieving Goal Seven of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case for Ghana."

²⁷² IEA, "Africa Energy Outlook 2022– Key Findings," *International Energy Agency*, accessed May 11, 2024, <https://www.iea.org/reports/africa-energy-outlook-2022/key-findings>.

²⁷³ IEA, "Africa Energy Outlook 2022 – Key Findings."

²⁷⁴ IEA, "Africa Energy Outlook 2022 – Key Findings."

²⁷⁵ IEA, "Africa Energy Outlook 2022 – Key Findings."

²⁷⁶ United Nations, "Goal 7: Department of Economic and Social Affairs," *United Nations*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal7>.

²⁷⁷ IRENA, "Africa," *IRENA*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://www.irena.org/How-we-work/Africa#IRENA-work-in-the-region>.

²⁷⁸ International Rivers, "Grand Inga Hydroelectric Project: An Overview," *International Rivers*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://archive.internationalrivers.org/resources/grand-inga-hydroelectric-project-an-overview-3356>.

²⁷⁹ African Union, "AfSEM," *African Union*, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://au.int/en/afsem>.

²⁸⁰ IEA, "Africa Energy Outlook 2022 – Key Findings."

Annotated Bibliography

I. Addressing the Strength of Institutions and Rule of Law to Promote Good Governance

Freedom House. “Freedom in the World 2023.” March 2023. https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/FIW_World_2023_DigitalPDF.pdf.

Freedom House is an American non-profit organization founded in 1941 that focuses on supporting the establishment and development of democracy worldwide. The 2023 edition of the “Freedom in the World” report examines the state of democracy internationally and focuses on critical issues threatening political rights and civil liberties. Corruption, misgovernance, military coups, and other challenges threaten democracy in African states; however, Africa has great potential to democratize further and reinforce democratic institutions. Freedom House issues recommendations in its “Freedom in the World” series to assist Member States in creating policies that will prevent the further deterioration of democracy in the region.

Taylor, Ian. “Chapter 4: The Primacy of Patronage Politics.” In *African Politics: A Very Short Introduction*, 44–55. Oxford University Press, 2018. <https://academic.oup.com/book/682>.

African Politics: A Very Short Introduction analyzes the government structures and politics of African Member States. Chapter 4, “The Primacy of Patronage Politics,” examines the concepts of neo-patrimonialism and patronage and their role in influencing the structure of African states. Neo-patrimonialism and patronage politics divide politics into a public sphere where the visible elements of the state are at work and a more private sphere where deal-making and networking structures begin to take shape. Patronage politics rely on the access to and distribution of state resources. This translates economic resources into political power, often to empower one’s kin or ethnic group over another – which may prioritize short-term gain over long-term progress for the Member State. This chapter discusses how patronage politics can negatively impact the development of democratic institutions in African Member States. This chapter highlights information about the impact of patronage politics on democratization in Africa, allowing for more targeted solutions that further the rule of law in African Member States.

United Nations Development Programme. *Soldiers and Citizens: Military Coups and the Need for Democratic Renewal in Africa*. 2023. <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-07/undp-africa-soldiers-citizens-2023-en.pdf>.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the lead United Nations agency in international development. “Soldiers and Citizens: Military Coups and the Need for Democratic Renewal in Africa” is a special report examining the recent rise of military and constitutional coups in Africa, particularly in Western Africa, since 2020. Between 2020 and 2022, African Member States experienced six successful military coups and three attempted coups in Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Mali, and Sudan. The UNDP found that stagnancy in economic development, inequality, and poverty are correlated with coup risk alongside the manipulation of constitutional term limits and high military expenditures. This report analyses the historical and economic factors influencing the rise of coups in Africa and suggests ways to strengthen democracy in African Member States to prevent future occurrences of coups.

Wiebusch, Micha, and Christina Murray. “Presidential Term Limits and the African Union.” *Journal of African Law* 63, no. S1 (2019): 131–160. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021855319000056>.

The *Journal of African Law* is a biannual law review examining contemporary legal issues and policies of significance in Africa. “Presidential Term Limits and the African Union” investigates the response of the African Union (AU) to legislation altering presidential term limits in AU Member States. The AU prioritizes constitutionalism and the maintenance of democratic standards. The AU argues that Member States must establish and uphold presidential term limits. Approximately half of the 47 changes to presidential term limits in 18 Member States between 2000 and 2018 resulted in removing or loosening restrictions on holding presidential office. The article analyzes presidential term limit changes in many AU Member States and lists democratic guidelines for constitutional change in African Member States.

II. Improving Access to Electricity in the African States and Building a Sustainable Electricity Market

Bilotta, Nicola, and Lorenzo Colantoni. "Financing Energy Access in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Istituto Affari Internazionali*, 2018. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19690>.

The Istituto Affari Internazionali is an Italian think tank and non-profit organization that publishes studies and reports on issues in international politics to promote understanding and global progress. "Financing Energy Access in Sub-Saharan Africa" examines the challenges faced by the energy sector in sub-Saharan Africa. Significant foreign investment and capital are necessary to develop universal energy access within the region. However, the industry has yet to obtain those necessary funds. The energy sector also faces the fact that many consumers in the region may be unable to afford electricity. The costs associated with the electrification of Sub-Saharan Africa are steep and require careful consideration to ensure adequate funding for the region's electrification. The report provides potential economic solutions for Member States seeking to finance the region's electrification.

Dinkelman, Taryn. "The Effects of Rural Electrification on Employment: New Evidence from South Africa." *The American Economic Review* 101, no. 7 (2011): 3078–3108. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41408731>.

The American Economic Review is an academic journal published focusing on a broad range of economic topics. "The Effects of Rural Electrification on Employment: New Evidence from South Africa" examines the effects of electrification in rural areas on key areas of economic development, including job creation and employment. Results show increased market employment, productivity, and decreased hours needed for work in the home, such as food preparation. Hours of work increased for male and female workers, wages rose for male workers, and female participation in the labor force increased by 9 to 9.5 percent. The expansion of electrification yielded immediate benefits, including creating 2 million jobs following the completion of South Africa's Electrification Project. This paper explores a case study of the benefits of electrification in rural areas in South Africa, providing Member States with information about how electrification projects will improve their economies.

International Energy Agency. "Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa," October 2020. https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/b9c395df-97f1-4982-8839-79f0fdc8c1c3/Clean_Energy_Transitions_in_North_Africa.pdf.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) is an intergovernmental organization (IGO) that makes policy recommendations for developing the global energy sector. The report "Clean Energy Transitions in North Africa" provides pathways and recommendations on clean energy transitions for African Member States. This report prioritizes clean, affordable, and efficient energy sources. The report finds that North African Member States have already established near-universal access to electricity, which is in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7.1. Progress on improving energy efficiency and the adoption of renewable energy sources has been relatively stagnant. It issues policy recommendations and expert insights that may benefit all Member States wishing to address energy efficiency and increase investment within the energy sector.

Niyibizi, Alphonse. "SWOT Analysis for Renewable Energy in Africa: Challenges and Prospects." *Renewable Energy Law and Policy Review* 6, no. 4 (2015): 276–93. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26256470>.

The Renewable Energy Law and Policy Review is an academic journal reviewing international legal and policy proposals involving renewable energy. The article "SWOT Analysis for Renewable Energy in Africa: Challenges and Prospects" examines the renewable energy potential of Africa and discusses the prospects for renewable energy development. Each African region possesses a significant renewable energy source that could satisfy most of its energy needs, but the underdevelopment of renewable energy infrastructure presents challenges to harnessing them. Renewable energy technologies come with a high upfront cost but present massive gains in sustainability, job creation, and energy independence. This article carefully weighs the challenges and potential benefits of renewable energy development. It offers suggestions for how Member States may harness renewable energy to address the region's lack of overall energy access.