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“Elections in Africa”

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Chairwoman Bass, Ranking Member Smith, honorable members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to address election integrity in Africa. Given that democracy and good governance underpin any achievements in economic growth and human development in Africa, we dedicate a chapter in our flagship report, *Foresight Africa*, each year to these issues. Moreover, as my colleague, Witney Schneidman, wrote in his *Foresight Africa* contribution this year, “A desire for democratic governance is part of the connective tissue between Americans and Africans: Afrobarometer finds that 7 of 10 Africans aspire to live under democratic governments.”¹ Thus, I am encouraged that the U.S. is taking a closer look at the issue of elections and good governance in Africa given recent controversial practices and trends.

First, permit me to share with you some winds of change in Africa, exemplifying a new-found solidarity among the countries in the region.

Winds of change in Africa: New-found continental solidarity

It is particularly noteworthy that at a time when globalization is under threat and with geopolitical tensions (U.S. and China; the EU and Brexit) on the rise, African nations have been intentional in pursuing collaboration. There is, indeed, a new-found solidarity on the continent that is different from anything we have ever known in the past.

Examples of African integration, unity, and collaboration abound, including a new “open skies” air-transportation agreement, the creation of an “African Passport” to enhance the free movement of persons, the prescient establishment in 2017 of the Africa CDC as an African-owned and -led institution, and, perhaps most consequential, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), formally launched on January 1, 2021. These efforts, and especially the AfCFTA, are manifestations of Africa’s long-held aspirations articulated in the African Union’s Agenda 2063 – the “*Africa We Want*” – the quest for a strong, united and globally influential Africa.

The building blocks of the AfCFTA are the eight overlapping regional economic communities (RECs),² which is not limited to the establishment of a trade and/or monetary union. In fact, many of these RECs wield regional influence when it comes to political or security challenges within their neighborhoods. With a view towards “African solutions to African problems,” these RECs, along with the levers of the African Union, are establishing regional mechanisms to support peacebuilding and political transitions. The African

¹ Witney Schneidman, “Biden, democracy, and Africa,” *Foresight Africa: Top Priorities for the Continent in 2021*, Africa Growth Initiative, The Brookings Institution.

² The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU/UMA) in the north, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the west, the East African Community (EAC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the east, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in the south, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) in the southeast, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in the center, and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CENSAD) (which includes countries to the north of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Comoros, and São Tomé and Príncipe, but excludes Algeria and Ethiopia).

Union regularly sends election observers to monitor elections on the continent and aims to support states in improving future elections.³

Of late, RECs like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in East Africa, have played particularly important roles in preserving democracy in Africa, as these intergovernmental organizations not only provide external and independent reporting on and observation of elections, but also play important roles in mediating electoral and political disputes within member countries.

These RECs have already developed a successful track record in supporting democratic processes, as ECOWAS made substantial contributions to ushering peaceful transitions of power in Ghana (2008), Guinea (2010), Benin (2011) and Liberia (2011).⁴ Most recently, after the 2020 coup that overthrew President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, ECOWAS played a major role in ushering in a transition to civilian rule through negotiations and sanctions.⁵

Despite this success, the RECs remain limited in this arena. For example, despite IGAD's monitoring of the Ugandan election and the body's statement concluding the election was in "an orderly and peaceful manner,"⁶ the legitimacy of Uganda's presidential election was still subject to significant criticism and speculation by the public. This contrast between the IGAD's independent verification of the election and the public's protracted skepticism of the integrity of Uganda's election signifies the need for RECs to improve capacity building and impart trust within the public's perception of their function in certifying elections.

The state of Africa's elections

Before we look forward to Africa's elections slated for 2021, we should first glean lessons from recent events and reforms threatening democracy in Africa.

First, a worrying trend is the spread of third termism in the region. As my colleague, John Mukum Mbaku, wrote last year in a piece on the "constitutional coup," "weak institutions and the absence of a democratic culture have facilitated the ability of incumbents to manipulate constitutions in the countries," allowing leaders to remain in power long after their terms have expired. Indeed, Africa has faced a growing pattern of term limit evasion in recent years. Among African countries with a two-term constitutional limit for presidents, 21 have attempted to modify or eliminate presidential term limits since 2000, and 14 countries have succeeded in their attempts (see Exhibit 1). This pattern has accelerated since 2015, with 16 attempted term limit modifications between 2015-2020, of which 15 were successful.

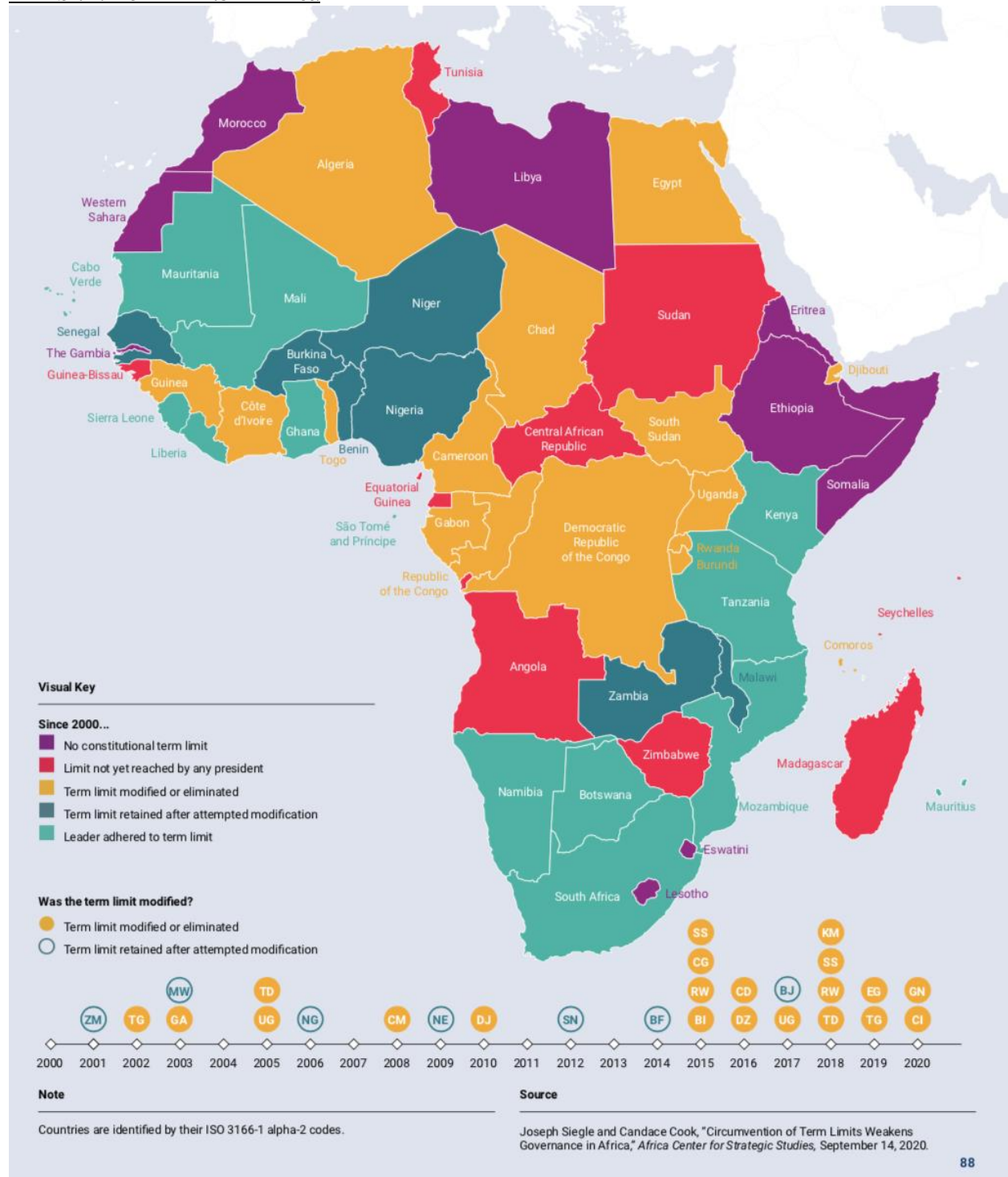
³ "Election observation in Africa," African Union, 2019. Available at: <https://au.int/en/articles/election-observation-africa>

⁴ Kehinde A. Bolaji, "Development cooperation and electoral integrity in West Africa: Issues and prospects," *International Institute For Democracy And Electoral Assistance*, 2020.

⁵ "West African leaders lift post-coup sanctions on Mali," Al-Jazeera, 2020.

⁶ "IGAD Short-Term Election Observation Mission to the General Elections In the Republic of Uganda," *Intergovernmental Authority on Development*, 2021.

Exhibit 1: Term limits in Africa



As seen in Foresight Africa 2021.

While these incumbent heads-of-state may have entrenched themselves through constitutional channels, this manipulation and similar tactics have not gone unnoticed by citizens. In fact, the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (2020) reports public perception of elections and freedom, an indicator within their survey, has declined more than any other public opinion survey variable over the past decade and five-year

period. These citizens subsequently perceive elections as less free and fair and feel they are less free to express themselves than a decade ago.⁷

Related, a second worrisome trend—that of the curtailing of freedom of speech and freedom of the press through attacks on journalists as well as media and internet blackouts before and after elections—also hints at the deterioration of democracy in the region. These restrictive policies were very evident in the recent elections in Guinea and Tanzania, which I discuss in more detail below.

Voting in a pandemic

The threat to election integrity in Africa due to the COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented: It has spurred some countries to postpone elections,⁸ reduced campaigning and voter turnout, diminished government, and election transparency, and created mistrust among the electorate—all of which are serious risks to preserving democracy in Africa.

Logistical details around holding elections in Africa during such unprecedented times have tested African electoral systems, as many lack the resources to provide early voting and in-person voting alternatives. However, some countries have left a playbook of innovations and adaptations to the electoral process for African nations. Some of these adaptations have accelerated the implementation of digital platforms, technology, and social media to distribute election information and voter registration, which occurred in Burkina Faso and Malawi. Poll workers must be wary, though: As elections come under increasing scrutiny by voters, the way in which authorities enforce pandemic rules for election campaigns, such as wearing masks during campaign rallies and regulating crowd sizes, will affect voters' perceptions of an election's outcome. As we saw in Uganda (and which I discuss below), although these modernizing adaptations improve voting credibility, mechanisms, and accessibility, gaps in technology and state-imposed restrictions on and policing of social media limit the potential for technology to improve election processes for the entirety of the African populace.⁹

COVID-19 has also created obstacles to free and fair elections, as many observers have stayed away, citing the pandemic, and opposition voters already wary of results have boycotted.¹⁰ Fourteen African countries have postponed their national or local elections in response to the pandemic,¹¹ while others have abused the shifting election schedule. For instance, Uganda postponed its national election, then abruptly moved it forward three months, a move that limited opposition candidates and parties from mobilizing their supporters.¹² Tanzania, conversely, has taken a staunch approach to denying the existence of the pandemic and held the election as planned. The enforcement of their denialism has manifested in restricting publications and access to information on the virus, which has conveniently provided the state with the pretext to revoke licenses for opposition-aligned journalists and news media according to Human Rights Watch.¹³

⁷ 2020 Ibrahim Index of African Governance, *Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2020*

⁸ Gabon, the Gambia, and Liberia postponed their national elections, but still held them in 2020. Ethiopia and Somalia have postponed their elections until 2021. Notably, not all countries postponed their national elections, as Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Burundi, Malawi, Guinea, Seychelles, Tanzania, Ghana, the Central African Republic, Niger, and Uganda have moved forward, albeit with obstacles.

⁹ Rushdi Nackerdien, "Voting in a pandemic: Lessons for elections in Africa in 2021," *Foresight Africa 2021, Africa Growth Initiative, The Brookings Institution*

¹⁰ "Covid-19 helps ballot-dodgers in Africa," *The Economist*, 2020.

¹¹ "Global overview of COVID-19: Impact on elections," *Institute For Democracy And Electoral Assistance*, 2021.

¹² "Untangling Post-Election Uganda," *Africa Center For Strategic Studies*, 2021.

¹³ "Tanzania: Freedoms Threatened Ahead of Elections," *Human Rights Watch*, 2020. Available at <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/09/02/tanzania-freedoms-threatened-ahead-elections>

Election turmoil in Uganda

One of the most glaring examples of democratic backsliding is Uganda. Indeed, the presidential election on January 14, 2021 in Uganda was marred by voter intimidation, voter suppression, internet blackouts, rejection of election observers, and harassment of opposition candidates. These blatant violations of Ugandans' human rights have garnered extensive international attention and media coverage, as the crackdown on democratic processes have been both violent and oppressive.

As mentioned above, Ugandan officials weaponized the COVID-19 pandemic as a pretext to restrict campaigning and arrest journalists, opposition party leaders, and citizens participating in opposition campaign rallies. The repeated arrests and detention of presidential opposition candidates and their supporters, most notably Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu ("Bobi Wine"), have quashed the potential for a vibrant democracy and threatened human rights in the country. For example, on November 18, 2020, police fired tear gas and live bullets in response to public demonstrations reacting to the arrest of Bobi Wine, injuring 46 and killing 16.¹⁴

The attack on Uganda's election integrity culminated in the house arrest of Bobi Wine, enforced by a contingent of armed soldiers, immediately following the election.¹⁵ This event highlights both the importance and fragility of African democratic institutions: The country's High Court ruled the detention was an unlawful infringement of Wine's personal liberties and ordered his release. Wine subsequently filed a Supreme Court challenge of the presidential election but withdrew his case on February 22, 2021, citing the Supreme Court's bias and lack of independence.¹⁶ That court has dismissed similar challenges to the election results of the past four elections—all of which Museveni has won. Nonetheless, independent analysis by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies finds that the election results are remarkably implausible, as Wine's political party, the National Unity Party, won a significant majority of local and parliamentary elections by a lopsided margin.¹⁷

The use of social media for political purposes has been on the rise in the region and has grown even faster in response to pandemic-related restrictions on public gatherings around the region. In Uganda, where social media shutdowns have been characteristic of previous presidential elections (2011 and 2016), authorities once again restricted social media and imposed a substantial internet blackout prior to and during the election.¹⁸ While the Ugandan government claims these internet blackouts were vital to tempering tensions in a deeply divided country during an election, critics suspect the government's desire to disable documentation of security force's crackdown on the media, political opponents, demonstrators, and civil society.¹⁹

Systematic voter intimidation and repression was prevalent throughout the election. During the period of voter registration, the Uganda National Electoral Commission refused to register over 1 million newly eligible voters, citing a lack of resources and time in the face of preparation to roll out voting infrastructure.²⁰ Ugandan election experts believe that the high propensity of young people to vote for Bobi Wine's National Unity Party (NUP) relative to other age groups,²¹ likely influenced this voter suppression strategy.. Moreover,

¹⁴ "Uganda: In wake of elections, activists, journalists, and political opposition deserve justice," *International Federation For Human Rights*, 2021.

¹⁵ "Uganda ordered to end Bobi Wine's house arrest," *BBC*, 2021.

¹⁶ "Ugandan opposition leader Bobi Wine withdraws poll result challenge," *Al-Jazeera*, 2021.

¹⁷ "Untangling Post-Election Uganda," *Africa Center For Strategic Studies*, 2021.

¹⁸ "Social media and messaging restricted, internet shut down for Uganda elections," *Netblocks*, 2021.

¹⁹ Innocent Anguyo, "Internet and social media shutdowns in Uganda cannot stop growing political resistance," *The London School of Economics and Political Science*, 2021.

²⁰ "Uganda: In wake of elections, activists, journalists, and political opposition deserve justice," *International Federation For Human Rights*, 2021.

²¹ Ronald Makanga Kakumba, "Elections in Uganda: A better mechanism for accountability than for representation?," *AfroBarometer*, 2020.

Wine's party supporters and polling agents have also been publicly targeted, enduring systematic intimidation, assault, brutalization, and kidnapping during and after election day.²²

The overt use of military and security forces has been markedly symbolic of the impediments to holding a free and fair election in Uganda. Evidence of soldiers commandeering the administration of polling stations,²³ along with the arbitrary arrest of independent civil society election observers²⁴ and the Electoral Commission of Uganda's rejection of more than 75 percent of U.S. election accreditation observer requests²⁵ and an outright denial of EU offers to send electoral observers²⁶ are red flags for the status of democracy in Uganda.

The result of these events has been 76-year-old President Yoweri Museveni's sixth term in office, extending his 35 years in power, and demonstrating the democratic backsliding plaguing the continent.

The case of Tanzania

Also, in East Africa, Tanzania, which was once viewed as a budding democracy respected for its civil liberties,²⁷ has experienced substantial contraction in its democracy since the election of President John Magufuli in 2015. Under Magufuli, the subversion of democracy by the state has culminated in crackdowns on opposition parties, human rights defenders, and independent media.²⁸ In recent years, Tanzania has passed legislation banning rallies, demonstrations, and public meetings organized by opposition parties as well as manipulate institutional and the judiciary into upholding this corrupted system.^{29,30} As a result, the 2020 elections last fall were tainted with irregularities and met with protests and boycotts from the opposition—leading to Magufuli winning a second term with an astounding 84 percent of the vote.³¹

In another example of internet blackouts, on election day, users reported that sites like WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, and even Google were blocked.³² Regional and international voices have backed the opposition's claim: The United States embassy in Tanzania even released a statement saying, "Irregularities and the overwhelming margins of victory raise serious doubts about the credibility of the results." Regional whistleblower Tanzania Elections Watch decried the results, stating that this election "marked the most significant backsliding in Tanzania's democratic credentials."

Problems in Guinea

In October of last year, in Guinea, 81-year-old President Alpha Condé extended his time in power. In a clear and controversial example of third termism, Condé exploited the pandemic³³ and the constitutional amendment process to legitimize his run for a third term. In response to these abrupt changes to the country's constitution and election laws, Guinea's civil society organized large protests that were met with

²² "Uganda: In wake of elections, activists, journalists, and political opposition deserve justice," *International Federation For Human Rights*, 2021.

²³ "Untangling Post-Election Uganda," *Africa Center For Strategic Studies*, 2021.

²⁴ "Uganda: In wake of elections, activists, journalists, and political opposition deserve justice," *International Federation For Human Rights*, 2021.

²⁵ "Statement by U.S. Ambassador Natalie E. Brown on Cancellation of U.S. Diplomatic Observer Mission of Uganda's Elections," U.S. Embassy in Uganda, 2021.

²⁶ "European Parliament resolution of 11 February 2021 on the political situation in Uganda," European Parliament, 2021.

²⁷ "Tanzania Was East Africa's Strongest Democracy. Then Came 'The Bulldozer,'" *The Atlantic*, 2019.

²⁸ "Subverting Democracy in Tanzania and Zambia," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 2019.

²⁹ Joseph Siegle & Candace Cook, "Assessing Africa's 2020 Elections," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 2020.

³⁰ "Subverting Democracy in Tanzania and Zambia," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 2019.

³¹ "Tanzania's Magufuli Wins Landslide Re-election," *Voice of America*, 2020.

³² "As Tanzania votes, government forces telecom companies to escalate censorship," *Access Now*, 2020.

³³ "Covid-19 helps ballot-dodgers in Africa," *The Economist*, 2020.

fierce police brutality.³⁴ In the days before, during, and after the election, in another controversial move, the federal government closed borders and restricted internet and phone use.³⁵

Encouraging lessons from Malawi

Despite these warning signs, there are promising trends for elections and the rule of law in Africa: Following an election in May 2019 marked by irregularities, Malawi's constitutional court issued a landmark ruling that annulled the election, ordered a new one, and replaced the country's "first-past-the-post" electoral process with an outright majority system. Malawi is the second African country in which the judicial branch annulled a presidential election (after Kenya in 2017), and the first nation where the opposition won the re-run.³⁶

The resilience of Malawi's independent judiciary exemplifies the adeptness of separation of powers to check the overreach of the president and uphold democracy. In years prior to the election, the independence of the judiciary was tested and twice blocked then-President Bakili Muluzi from dissolving term limits. The continued success of the Malawian constitutional court's impartiality to protect democracy and the rule of law must be replicated by other African nations in which a corrupted judiciary enables autocratic abuses of power and threaten to dissolve the functionality of democracy.

Moreover, the rerun in Malawi demonstrates an important lesson for the international community and its role in leveraging influence and diplomacy to facilitate a peaceful transition of power and protect democracy.

According to Chatham House, by inviting President Mutharika to the U.K.-Africa Investment Summit in January 2020, U.K. diplomats were able to encourage the incumbent to consent to the judicial review that overturned the election.³⁷ In the same Chatham House analysis, the author argues that U.K. also helped promote early dialogue among opposition parties, encouraging a well-functioning democracy and paved the way for opposition parties to find common ground, consolidate, and democratically defeat President Mutharika.

Election impasse in Somalia in 2021

Originally planned to be held in December 2020, Somalia's delayed elections have been symptomatic of a political impasse between the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), led by incumbent President Mohamed Abdullah Mohamed (commonly known by the moniker Farmajo), and the Federal Member States (FMS), a coalition of the five states of Somalia. Historically, tensions between the bifurcated political entities have revolved around the vision of the Somali state, such that the FGS favors strong centralization and the FMS envisions a decentralized state that maintains the clan-based, non-hierarchical structure of Somali society.³⁸ Indeed, disputes concerning the election oversight process, specifically the selection of members to a jointly appointed Election Commission and Dispute Resolution Committee, have been a significant reason for the delay.³⁹

³⁴ Joseph Siegle & Candace Cook, "Assessing Africa's 2020 Elections," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 2020.

³⁵ "A tense calm in Guinea – but trouble is on the horizon," Al-Jazeera, 2020.

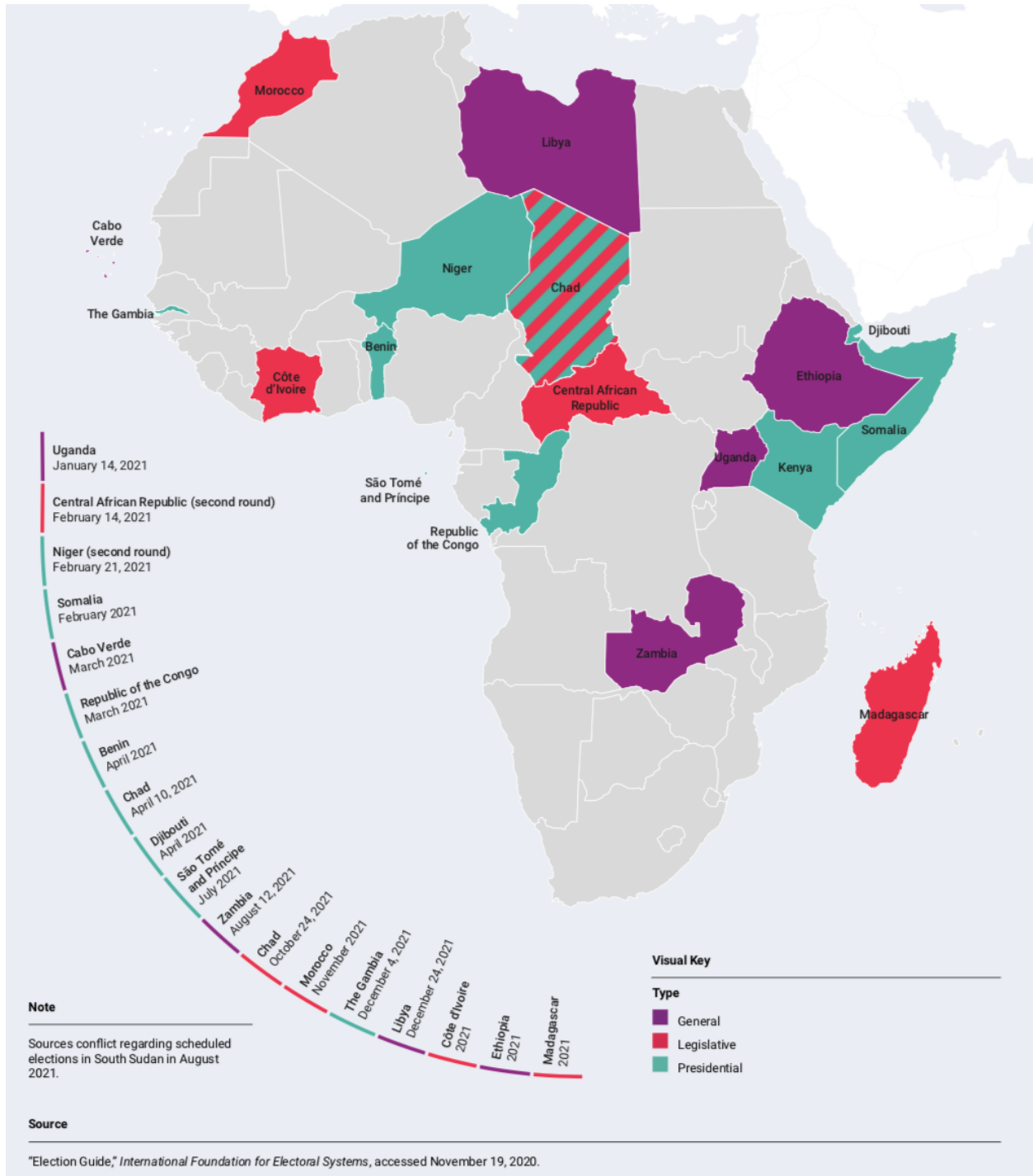
³⁶ Fergus Kell, "Malawi's Re-Run Election is Lesson for African Opposition," *Chatham House*, 2020.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Siegle & Cook, "Assessing Africa's 2021 Elections," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 2021.

³⁹ "Averting Electoral Violence in Somalia," *The Heritage Institute*, 2021.

Exhibit 2: Elections scheduled for 2021



As seen in *Foresight Africa 2021*.

Note: Of the 18 elections slated for 2021, elections in Uganda, the Central African Republic, and Niger have already taken place. Fifteen more elections are set to take place this year.

Right now, the Somali electoral process is characterized by an indirect democracy, whereby 275 parliamentarians are elected by 101 delegates nominated by clan elders. The members of parliament, along with 59 senators elected by state assemblies, then select the president. This electoral system is conducive to corruption, as delegates can be bribed for their votes and clan leaders may be subject to the influence of

outside actors, most notably the terrorist group al-Shabaab.⁴⁰ Somalia had planned for this next election to be the first direct democratic election since the civil war in 1991, but planning delays and attacks by al-Shabaab caused Somali officials to hold another indirect vote.⁴¹

A resolution between the FGS and FMS that enables a fair and free election is critical to maintaining the stability of Somalia. As of this writing, the federal government is in talks with the opposition leaders to postpone mass anti-government protests and reschedule the delayed elections.⁴² If a partisan, one-sided election is held by the FGS, the potential exists for instability and violence to erupt. Therefore, ensuring the legitimacy of this election will strengthen public perception of a fair and free election, which, in turn, will promote cohesion and reduce the risk of internal conflict. Furthermore, the potential political conflagration stemming from this electoral impasse demonstrates the importance of universal suffrage.

Implications for US-Africa Relations

We recognize that expectations are high in Africa and around the world that the new Biden-Harris Administration will usher in a new dispensation—build and sustain strong alliances, favor well-established institutional norms and give globalization a chance, especially at a time of unprecedented global pandemic.

Africans see the US as the richest and most powerful nation on the planet; an agenda setter on the global scene; a strong advocate of multilateralism; a beacon of hope, democratic and good governance; and indeed, the US represents “a land of opportunity.” It is not surprising that in every opinion survey taken by Afrobarometer, a majority of Africans express a preference for the “American way” of life *vis-à-vis* all the other alternatives. Indeed, U.S. programs, like the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the President’s Malaria Initiative, the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Power Africa, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), among others, align with the aspirations and values of African publics, and are, at the same time, consistent with American values.⁴³

And, on foreign policy, Africans have noticed the nuanced approach to U.S. relations with Africa reflected in recent appointments, and a return to multilateralism toward trust and genuine partnerships with the people of Africa. Clearly, support to the World Health Organization and the Paris Climate Accord have been welcomed in Africa. The recent financial commitment to the COVAX facility to fight Covid-19 is particularly noteworthy. US support to Dr. Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, Former Managing Director of the World Bank & Former Finance Minister of Nigeria, first woman and Africa’s first-ever Director General of the World Trade Organization has reverberated positively across the African continent. Moreover, the appointment of former Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield to be the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations has been an encouraging signal that Africa will be higher on the U.S. list of priorities.

President Biden’s proposed “Summit for Democracy” during his first term is a step in the right direction. In the Brookings flagship report, *Foresight Africa 2021*, AGI Nonresident Fellow Witney Schneidman suggests some possible agenda items for such a summit, including the need to tackle the cancer of corruption; to fight authoritarianism in all its forms; and to scale up advocacy on human rights at all levels.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Siegle & Cook, “Assessing Africa’s 2021 Elections,” *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 2021.

⁴¹ Somalia’s opposition cease recognizing president as election row escalates, 2021. Reuters.

⁴² “Somalia’s politicians strike a last-minute deal, but fears of conflict remain high” *Washington Post*. February 26, 2021.

⁴³ E. Gyimah-Boadi, Landry Signe, & Josephine Appiah-Nyamekye Sanny, “US foreign policy toward Africa: An African citizen perspective,” Africa Growth Initiative, Brookings Institution. October 23, 2021.

⁴⁴ Witney Schneidman, “Biden, democracy, and Africa,” *Foresight Africa: Top Priorities for the Continent in 2021*, Africa Growth Initiative, Brookings Institution. January 17, 2021.

Congress should take note of the overarching trends in US-Africa relations, that of a partnership focused on trade and investment not just aid and security. In closing, here are actionable suggestions for consideration by the US Congress and the new Administration:

- Continued support for the renewal of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) which provides tariff-free access to the US market for African manufacturers.
- Strong support for continental integration, e.g., the AfCFTA, over bilateral trade deals. Support for continental entities such as the Africa CDC and the AU should also remain priorities.
- Continued financing for the African Development Fund (ADF) and the World Bank's IDA. These institutions focus on low-income Africa where COVID-19 is compounding pre-existing conditions of weak health systems, insecurity, fragility, and the ravages of climate change. In responding quickly to the pandemic, the ADF and IDA have used up a considerable part of their "*fire power*" for fighting poverty. These institutions merit support to replenish their "war chest" for continuing their fight against poverty.
- Improved listening to African goals, which often match U.S. priorities. Most salient are creating jobs for Africa's burgeoning population of youths and increased investment in infrastructure, notably health, energy, railways, highways, broadband technology, among others.
- It's worth remembering that it is far better to create jobs for African youths on the continent, as it reduces fragility in the region, increases incomes for African citizens, improves livelihoods, and expands markets for U.S. goods.
- The U.S. already has the tools to do this, and Congress should support any initiatives to make sure these efforts are well-coordinated. The US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), Prosper Africa, Power Africa, and the Millennium Challenge Corporation are excellent building blocks with which to unleash, U.S. commercial goals, including investment and trade for improved relations with Africa.
- Continued close collaboration with the African Union and its member states on security and climate change remains important. Hotspots such as the Sahel, Libya, North East Nigeria (Boko Haram), the Central African Republic, the Horn of Africa, and Northern Mozambique are unlikely to fade away soon. U.S. engagement is a key part of the solution in these global hotspots.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.