

The Power of Political Labeling

Political Fallout

Political polarization, parliamentary confrontations, and racial tensions:



The Political Fallout Of Labeling Malema's Party A Rebel Group:

A Strategic Misstep In South African Politics

By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande

Introduction

Political discourse is a delicate balance between ideological opposition and strategic diplomacy. In South Africa, where historical tensions and racial divisions remain deeply embedded in political narratives, the choice of words in political debates can have far-reaching consequences. The recent statement by the Democratic Alliance (DA) leader, John Steenhuisen, in the Oval Office, referring to Julius Malema and his party as a "rebel group," has ignited controversy, raising concerns about political polarization, parliamentary confrontations, and racial tensions.

This article critically examines



Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) Leader Julius Malema

why this rhetorical misstep could escalate political hostilities, disrupt parliamentary debates, and fuel radical mobilization among Malema's supporters. It also explores the historical context of political labeling, the implications for governance, and the strategic errors made in this diplomatic exchange.

Historical Context: The Power of Political Labeling Throughout history, political figures have used labels to delegitimize opponents, often with unintended consequences. In South Africa, terms such as "terrorist," "radical," and "rebel" have been weaponized in politi-

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Diplomatic Submissiveness In The Oval Office:

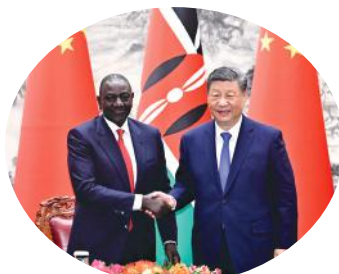
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News Backpage EU calls for 'respect' after Trump threatens 50% tariffs



Sovereignty Under Assault: Trump's Reckless Meddling in South Africa's Land Question

The recent, deeply troubling spectacle of Donald Trump ambushing South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in the Oval Office, playing unverified videos and brandishing news clippings to accuse the South African government of presiding over a 'genocide' of white farmers,

represents a profound and dangerous breach of international diplomatic norms and an unacceptable interference in the sovereign affairs of a democratic nation. This calculated act of aggression, fueled by misinformation and a deliberate disregard for the complex realities of

South Africa, not only undermines the delicate balance of international relations but also actively endangers the fragile peace and reconciliation efforts within the rainbow nation. To understand the gravity of Trump's actions, one must delve into the historical wounds of South Africa, the

nuanced discussions surrounding land reform, and the stark statistical realities that stand in stark contrast to the sensationalist, racially charged

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Ugandan activist alleges she was raped while in Tanzanian detention

By: BBC
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

- “The pain was too much,” said Atuhaire, showing the BBC a scar from where she said she had been handcuffed.
- She added that she was “screaming so hard” that they had to cover her mouth.
- Atuhaire told the BBC about her alleged rape in graphic detail.
- She said she also heard screams from Mwangi, and that those holding him had threatened to circumcise him.
- The pair had gone to Tanzania to show solidarity with opposition leader Tundu Lissu, who appeared in court on Monday after being charged with treason
- Mwangi recounted his alleged experience in a post on X: “We had been tortured, and we were told to strip naked and to go bathe. We couldn’t walk and were told to crawl and go wash off the blood.”



Tanzanian authorities are not commenting on Agather Atuhaire’s allegations

Warning: This story contains details of sexual assault

A Ugandan activist who was arrested and held for days in Tanzania and later found at the border between the two countries has told the BBC that she was raped while in detention.

Expanding on the earlier remarks of her rights group, who said she showed “indications of torture”, Agather Atuhaire alleged that people dressed in plain clothes “blindfolded” her, after which she was hit, “violently” stripped, and sexually assaulted.

Atuhaire had been held incommunicado in Tanzania alongside fellow Kenyan activist Boniface Mwangi, who was on Thursday found at the border with his home country.

The Tanzanian authorities

have not commented. “The pain was too much,” said Atuhaire, showing the BBC a scar from where she said she had been handcuffed. She added that she was “screaming so hard” that they had to cover her mouth.

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The pair had gone to Tanzania to show solidarity with opposition leader Tundu Lissu, who appeared in court on Monday after being charged with treason. Mwangi recounted his alleged experience in a post on X: “We had been tortured, and we were told to

strip naked and to go bathe. We couldn’t walk and were told to crawl and go wash off the blood.”

Despite being allowed into the country, Mwangi and Atuhaire were not permitted to attend the hearing and were arrested.

On Monday, President Samia Suluhu Hassan had warned that she would not allow activists from neighbouring countries to “meddle” in her country’s affairs and cause “chaos”.

Atuhaire was found abandoned at the border on Thursday night after being held in custody since Monday, Agora Centre for Research, the Uganda-based rights group that she leads, posted on X.

Uganda’s high commissioner to Tanzania Fred Mwesi-gye said Atuhaire had “safely returned home” and had

been “warmly received by her family”.

Mwangi, who was earlier found abandoned on a roadside in northern Tanzania near the Kenyan border, said he had heard Atuhaire “groaning in pain” when they were held together on Tuesday.

“Any attempt to speak to each other during the night we were tortured was met with kicks and insults. We were removed from the torture location in different vehicles,” Mwangi added.

He said those who were holding them were getting orders from a “state security” official, who directed the activist to be given a “Tanzanian treatment”.

Mwangi’s disappearance had sparked widespread concern across Kenya, with his family, civil society, and human rights groups stag-

ing protests and demanding his release.

On Wednesday, the Kenyan government formally protested against his detention, accusing the Tanzanian authorities of denying consular access despite repeated requests.

Earlier on Thursday, Kenya’s foreign affairs ministry issued a statement saying it had not been able to access the activist.

Regional rights groups have called for an investigation into the alleged mistreatment of the activists by the Tanzanian authorities and urged all East African countries to uphold rights treaties.

Additional reporting by Basillioh Rukanga in Nairobi

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Health

Prevention And Treatment Measures For Yod Deficiency Disorders



By: Munisa Rakhmatova Ormon
xxxxxxxxxxxx



a)

a) Antistrumin tablet

What are iodine deficiency disorders?

Why are these diseases increasing?

What are the preventive measures for iodine deficiency?

Nowadays, yodine deficiency is becoming a common issue affecting people worldwide. Iodine deficiency disorders refer to the enlargement of the thyroid gland in individuals living in endemic regions where iodine is lacking in the environment. A region is considered endemic if thyroid enlargement of grade I or higher is observed in more than 5% of children and adolescents or in more than 30% of adults. In healthy adults, the daily requirement for iodine is about 180–280 micrograms. If less than 100 micrograms of iodine is consumed per day, the thyroid gland grad-

ually enlarges in a compensatory manner.

The main consequence of environmental yodine deficiency is the development of goiter. For a long time, it was believed that iodine deficiency in certain regions only led to goiter. However, recent studies show that yodine deficiency can lead to several other health-threatening conditions beyond goiter.

Why are these diseases increasing?

The main reason is the lack of iodine in the environment (soil, water, and food). If soil and water contain sufficient iodine, endemic goiter does not occur.

Other factors contributing to iodine deficiency disorders include long-term consumption of foods poor in proteins and vitamins,

infections, intoxications, and deteriorating socio-economic conditions. Modern science has confirmed the importance of these goitrogenic factors in the development of endemic goiter.

Recent studies have shown that insufficient intake of some essential microelements (such as bromine, zinc, cobalt, and copper) and excessive intake of elements like fluoride, chromium, calcium, and manganese can also significantly contribute to the development of endemic goiter.

Certain goitrogenic substances (e.g., perchlorate, thiourea, and thiouracil) in some foods inhibit the conversion of iodide into organic yodine, playing an important role in this condition.

Hereditary factors also play a role, as families with a his-

tory of goiter or congenital defects show a higher incidence, according to many researchers.

Preventive Measures for Iodine Deficiency:

Prevention includes a comprehensive set of health measures aimed at improving the social, household, and hygienic conditions of the population. People living in endemic goiter regions – in fact, the entire population of Uzbekistan regardless of the season – should be provided with iodized salt and encouraged to consume foods prepared with iodized salt. Children, pregnant women, and breastfeeding mothers should take yodine supplements, such as Antistrumin tablets containing 1 mg potassium iodide once or twice a week, or iodine preparations like Iodide-100 to

200 micrograms per dose. Although other iodine-rich foods exist, they are not consumed daily (e.g., one cannot eat 1 kg of dates every day). Therefore, adding inexpensive iodized salt to daily meals is the most optimal solution.

Some people promote bizarre advice like drinking iodine – never do this, as it can disrupt thyroid function and trigger autoimmune processes. Applying yodine to the skin is also not recommended, as it may cause burns, given the individual sensitivity of each person's skin.

*Munisa Rakhmatova Ormon
Student of the Medical Treatment program at Alfraganus University*



b)

b) Yodized table salt

Worth Noting:

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Israel

As Israel faces diplomatic 'tsunami', Trump is staying quiet

By BBC

Worth Noting:

- Evidence that Gaza was closer to mass starvation than at any time since the war began, following Hamas's attack in October 2023, was sending ripples of horror across the world.

- Israel's military offensive, and the rhetoric surrounding it, suggested that conditions in the stricken territory were about to deteriorate once more.

- Addressing MPs on Tuesday, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy singled out the words of Israel's hardline Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who had spoken of "cleansing" Gaza, "destroying what's left" and relocating the civilian population to third countries.

- "We must call this what it is," Lammy said. "It's extremism. It is dangerous. It is repellent. It is monstrous. And I condemn it in the strongest possible terms."

- Smotrich is not a decision-maker when it comes to conduct of the war in Gaza. Before now, his incendiary remarks might have been set to one side.



Palestinians walk at the site of Israeli strikes that hit a residential building and destroyed shops at Gaza's Old City market, amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, in Gaza City on July 4. [Photo/Agencies]

A headline in Israel's liberal daily Ha'aretz this week put it starkly: "Diplomatic tsunami nears," it warned, "as Europe begins to act against Israel's 'complete madness' in Gaza."

This week's diplomatic assault has taken many forms, not all of them foreseen.

From concerted international condemnation of Israel's actions in Gaza, to the shocking murder of two young Israeli embassy staff members in Washington, this has been, to put it mildly, a tumultuous week for the Jewish state.

The waves started crashing on Israel's shores on Monday evening, when Britain, France and Canada issued a joint statement condemning its "egregious" actions in Gaza.

All three warned of the possibility of "further concrete actions" if Israel continued its renewed military offensive and failed to lift restrictions on humanitarian aid. They also threatened "targeted sanctions" in response to Israel's settlement activity in the occupied West Bank. A statement from 24 donor nations followed, condemning a new, Israeli-backed aid delivery model for Gaza. But that was just the start.

On Tuesday, Britain sus-

pending trade talks with Israel and said a 2023 road map for future cooperation was being reviewed.

A fresh round of sanctions was imposed on Jewish settlers, including Daniela Weiss, a prominent figure who featured in Louis Theroux's recent documentary, *The Settlers*.

Israel's ambassador in London, Tzipi Hotovely, was summoned to the Foreign Office, a move generally reserved for the representatives of countries like Russia and Iran.

To make matters worse for Israel, the EU's foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said a "strong majority" of the bloc's members favoured reviewing the 25-year-old Association Agreement with Israel.

'Enough is enough'

The reasons for this flurry of diplomatic condemnation seemed clear enough.

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"We must call this what it is," Lammy said. "It's extremism. It is dangerous. It is repellent. It is monstrous. And I condemn it in the strongest possible terms."

Smotrich is not a decision-maker when it comes to conduct of the war in Gaza. Before now, his incendiary remarks might have been set to one side.

But those days appear to be over. Rightly or wrongly, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is seen as in thrall to his far-right colleagues. Critics accuse him of relentlessly pursuing a war, without regard for the lives of Palestinian civilians or the remaining Israeli hostages still being held in Gaza.

Countries that have long supported Israel's right to defend itself are beginning to say "enough is enough."

This week was clearly a significant moment for Brit-

ain's Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, a staunch defender of Israel (he once said "I support Zionism without qualification") who faced strong criticism from within the Labour Party for his reluctance last year to call for a ceasefire in Gaza.

On Tuesday, Sir Keir said the suffering of innocent children in Gaza was "utterly intolerable".

In the face of this unusually concerted action from some of his country's strongest allies, Netanyahu reacted furiously, suggesting Britain, France and Canada were guilty of supporting Hamas.

"When mass murderers, rapists, baby killers and kidnappers thank you, you're on the wrong side of justice," he posted on X.

"You're on the wrong side of humanity and you're on the wrong side of history."

Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar went further, suggesting there was a "direct line" between Israel's critics, including Starmer, and Wednesday night's killing of Yaron Lischinsky and Sarah Lynn Milgrim, the two Israeli embassy employees gunned down outside the Jewish Museum in Washington.

But despite the outpourings of sympathy following the

shooting, the Israeli government seems increasingly isolated, with western allies and prominent members of the Jewish diaspora all voicing anger – and anguish – over the war in Gaza.

Lord Levy, former Middle East envoy and advisor to Tony Blair, said he endorsed the current government's criticisms, even suggesting they might have come "a little late".

"There has to be a stand, not just from us in this country but internationally, against what is going on in Gaza," he told BBC Radio 4's *The World at One*, describing himself as "a very proud Jew... who passionately cares for Israel".

But silent, throughout all this, is the one man who could, if he wanted, stop the war.

At the end of his recent tour of the Gulf, Donald Trump said "a lot of people are starving".

White House officials indicated the US president was frustrated with the war and wanted the Israeli government to "wrap it up".

But while other western leaders release expressions of outrage, Trump is saying almost nothing.

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Health

Options for the Treatment of Uterine Fibroids

By Dr Joan Okemo
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Dr Joan Okemo is a Consultant Obstetrician Gynaecologist at Aga Khan University Hospital Nairobi and Senior Instructor, Aga Khan University's Medical College

Worth Noting:

- **Age:** Most common between ages 30 and 40, with risk increasing as women approach menopause.
- **Genetics:** A family history of fibroids increases your chances—particularly if your mother or sister had them.
- **Ethnicity:** Black women are more likely to develop fibroids earlier, and often experience more severe symptoms.
- **Hormonal Factors:** Oestrogen and progesterone—hormones that regulate the menstrual cycle—can promote fibroid growth.
- **Obesity:** Higher body fat can increase oestrogen levels, contributing to fibroid development.
- **Diet:** High consumption of red meat and low intake of fruits and vegetables may increase risk.
- **Reproductive History:** Women who have not had children or delay childbirth may be at greater risk. Pregnancy appears to reduce the risk due to hormonal changes.
- **Vitamin D Deficiency:** Studies suggest that low vitamin D levels may increase fibroid risk.
- **Hypertension:** High blood pressure has been linked to a higher likelihood of fibroids.

If you are a woman in your reproductive years or older, there is an 80 percent chance that you may develop uterine fibroids at some point in your life—though not everyone will experience symptoms.

Below is a comprehensive overview of uterine fibroids, including their risk factors, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment options, to empower you to monitor your health and seek timely, appropriate care.

What Are Uterine Fibroids? Uterine fibroids are common, non-cancerous growths that develop within the muscular wall of the uterus. While generally benign, they can cause a variety of symptoms depending on their size, number, and location.

Many women may have fibroids without knowing it, especially when they are small. However, in others, fibroids can lead to considerable discomfort and complications.

What Are the Risk Factors? Several factors can increase your likelihood of developing uterine fibroids:

- **Age:** Most common between ages 30 and 40, with risk increasing as women approach menopause.

- **Genetics:** A family history of fibroids increases your chances—particularly if your mother or sister had them.

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- **Vitamin D Deficiency:** Studies suggest that low vitamin D levels may increase fibroid risk.

- **Hypertension:** High blood pressure has been linked to a higher likelihood of fibroids.

What Are the Symptoms? Fibroids vary in size—from tiny nodules to large masses—and some women may remain asymptomatic.

However, larger or multiple fibroids can cause significant discomfort.

Common symptoms include:

- **Heavy menstrual bleeding:** Prolonged or heavy periods, sometimes leading to anaemia and fatigue.

- **Pelvic pain and pressure:** A feeling of fullness or bloating in the lower abdomen, sometimes mistaken for pregnancy.

- **Bladder and bowel issues:** Frequent urination or constipation due to fibroid pressure on adjacent organs.

- **Fertility challenges:** Fibroids that distort the uterus can affect conception or increase the risk of miscarriage and pregnancy complications, such as improper baby positioning, the need for C-section, or postpartum haemorrhage.

How Are Fibroids Diagnosed?

If fibroids are suspected, your doctor will likely perform a physical examination and order imaging tests. A pelvic ultrasound, including a transvaginal scan (TVS), is the most common method. These tests use sound waves to produce images of the uterus and identify any fibroids.

What Are the Treatment Options?

Treatment depends on your symptoms, the size and location of the fibroids, your age, and whether you wish to have children.

If your fibroids are not causing symptoms, no treatment may be necessary. However, if they are affecting your quality of life, various options are available:

1. Medication:

Medications can help manage symptoms like heavy bleeding and pain, but they do not shrink or eliminate fibroids.

2. Myomectomy:

Surgical removal of fibroids while preserving the uterus. This option is ideal for women who want to maintain fertility. The method used—abdominal, laparoscopic, or hysteroscopic—depends on fibroid size and location.

3. Uterine Fibroid Embolization (UFE):

A minimally invasive procedure that blocks blood supply to the fibroids, causing them to shrink.

UFE is not recommended for women planning future pregnancies, as it may affect fertility.

4. Endometrial Ablation:

Destroys the uterine lining

to reduce bleeding. While effective for symptom control, it does not remove fibroids and is not suitable for women planning to conceive.

5. Hysterectomy:

Complete removal of the uterus—a permanent solution that eliminates the possibility of recurrence or pregnancy. Recommended when other treatments are ineffective or when fibroids severely affect quality of life. While fibroid surgery is common—particularly among African women who tend to experience more severe symptoms—many still have concerns about undergoing a procedure. It's important to understand that untreated fibroids can lead to serious complications, such as severe anaemia or blood clots.

Discussing your symptoms and treatment goals with a qualified healthcare provider is key to making the best decision for your health and well-being.

The author is a Consultant Obstetrician Gynaecologist at Aga Khan University Hospital Nairobi and Senior Instructor, Aga Khan University's Medical College.

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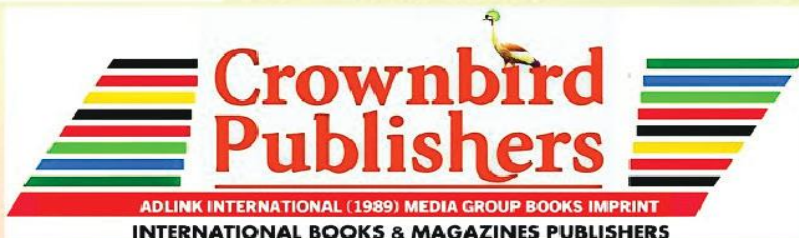
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African News

The Political Fallout Of Labeling Malema's Party A Rebel Group: A Strategic Misstep In South African Politics



By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande
@themtkenyatimes

Contd from Page 1

Worth Noting:

- The DA leader, John Steenhuisen, must recognize that political rhetoric, especially in a global diplomatic setting like the Oval Office, carries immense weight and has far-reaching consequences beyond the moment of its delivery. Words are not simply statements; they are instruments of influence that shape public perception, political alliances, and institutional stability.
- Labeling Julius Malema and his party as a "rebel group" was an irresponsible strategic misstep, one that risks escalating tensions within South Africa's political sphere, fueling racial divisions, and reinforcing Malema's own narrative of being oppressed by the political establishment. Such language can easily be weaponized by Malema and his supporters to rally public sentiment against the DA, potentially deepening political polarization and making parliamentary collaboration more difficult.

cal discourse, particularly during the apartheid era.

- Apartheid-Era Labeling - Anti-apartheid activists, including Nelson Mandela, were labeled terrorists by the apartheid government, a term later rejected by the international community.

- Post-Apartheid Political Rhetoric - The ANC, DA, and EFF have all engaged in strategic labeling to frame opponents as threats to democracy or economic stability.

- Global Parallels - Similar tactics have been used in the U.S., where political opponents are branded as extremists to justify policy decisions.

By calling Malema's party a "rebel group" in the Oval Office, Steenhuisen inadvertently reinforced a narrative that could be exploited by Malema to mobilize his base, portraying himself as a revolutionary figure fighting against political suppression.

The Political Consequences in South Africa's Parliament South Africa's parliamentary debates are often heated and confrontational, with Malema's Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) known for disruptive tactics. Steenhuisen's statement could have several consequences in parliamentary proceedings:

- Escalation of Hostilities Malema and his supporters are known for their aggressive political style, often engaging in direct confrontations with opposition parties. Labeling them as a "rebel group" could:

- Fuel retaliatory rhetoric - Malema may respond by intensifying his attacks on the DA, and Steenhuisen in particular, accusing them of racist political suppression.

- Disrupt parliamentary proceedings - The EFF could use this statement as justification for boycotts, protests, or walkouts.

- Increase racial tensions - Given Malema's stance on white economic dominance, this statement could be framed as an attempt to delegitimize black political movements.

- Strengthening Malema's Political Narrative

Malema has mastered the art of political mobilization, often portraying himself as a revolutionary leader fighting against economic inequality and white privilege.



Democratic Alliance (DA) leader, John Steenhuisen

Steenhuisen's statement inadvertently reinforces Malema's narrative, allowing him to:

- Position himself as a victim of political suppression - Malema could argue that the DA is attempting to silence radical voices.

- Mobilize his supporters - The EFF thrives on anti-establishment rhetoric, and this statement could be used to energize grassroots movements.

- Frame the DA as an elitist party - By labeling Malema's party as a "rebel group," the DA risks being seen as disconnected from black South Africans.

- Undermining Diplomatic Relations

The Oval Office is a global diplomatic stage, and statements made in this setting carry international weight. Steenhuisen's remarks could:

- Damage South Africa's political image - International observers may view this statement as evidence of deep political divisions.

- Affect U.S.-South Africa relations - The U.S. may reconsider its diplomatic approach toward South African political factions.

- Create internal instability - Political labeling can lead to internal party conflicts, weakening governance structures.

Malema's Radicalism: A Dangerous Political Gamble Julius Malema is notoriously

radical, advocating for land expropriation without compensation and economic redistribution. His rhetoric often includes anti-white sentiments, which have sparked controversy.

Why Steenhuisen's Statement Was a Strategic Error

- It underestimated Malema's ability to weaponize rhetoric - Malema thrives on political confrontation and will likely use this statement to strengthen his movement.

- It alienated potential voters - Many black South Africans may view this statement as an attempt to delegitimize black political activism.

- It escalated racial tensions - Given South Africa's historical racial divisions, such statements can fuel hostility rather than encourage dialogue.

Lessons for Political Leaders: Avoiding Rhetorical Pitfalls

To prevent similar diplomatic missteps, political leaders must adopt strategic communication tactics:

- Use Neutral Political Language

- Avoid labels that can be weaponized by opponents.

- Focus on policy critiques rather than personal attacks.

- Anticipate Political Reactions

- Understand how

opponents will respond to statements.

- Prepare counter-narratives to prevent political exploitation.

- Strengthen Parliamentary Diplomacy

- Encourage constructive debates rather than hostile confrontations.

- Promote cross-party dialogue to reduce political polarization.

Conclusion: The Need for Strategic Political Engagement

The DA leader's misstep in the Oval Office serves as a critical lesson in political communication. Labeling Malema's party as a "rebel group" was not only factually inaccurate but also politically reckless, fueling tensions that could disrupt parliamentary proceedings and strengthen Malema's radical movement.

Future political leaders must exercise caution in their rhetoric, ensuring that political discourse remains constructive rather than divisive. South Africa's political landscape is already volatile, and careless statements can exacerbate existing tensions, making governance more challenging.

By adopting strategic communication, anticipating political reactions, and promoting diplomatic engagement, leaders can navigate political debates effectively without unintended consequences.

Advice to DA Leader: John Steenhuisen

The DA leader, John Steenhuisen, must recognize that political rhetoric, especially in a global diplomatic setting like the Oval Office, carries immense weight and has far-reaching consequences beyond the moment of its delivery. Words are not simply statements; they are instruments of influence that shape public perception, political alliances, and institutional stability. Labeling Julius Malema and his party as a "rebel group" was an irresponsible strategic misstep, one that risks escalating tensions within South Africa's political sphere, fueling racial divisions, and reinforcing Malema's own narrative of being oppressed by the political establishment. Such language can easily be weaponized by Malema and his supporters to rally public sentiment against the DA, potentially deepening political polarization and making parliamentary collaboration more difficult. Moving forward, the DA leader must exercise greater precision in political communication, ensuring that statements are factual, measured, and diplomatically sound, rather than incendiary remarks that could undermine con-

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African News

The Political Fallout Of Labeling Malema's Party A Rebel Group: A Strategic Misstep In South African Politics

By:
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Worth Noting:

• It is good for Mr Steenhuisen to understand that the Government of National Unity (GNU) formed between the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the African National Congress (ANC) is founded on the principle of political collaboration and stability in a deeply polarized South Africa. At its core, this coalition seeks to bridge ideological divides, ensuring that governance remains effective despite historical tensions between parties with fundamentally different voter bases and policy priorities. However, reckless political rhetoric - such as Steenhuisen, as a leader of DA, labeling Julius Malema and his supporters a "rebel group" - poses a serious threat to the very foundation of this unity government.

• Steenhuisen must know that he is white and his party is a minority party with a history of white electorates and general whiteness in the whole party, DA. The ANC, as the dominant party in the GNU, represents a black majority electorate that has endured decades of political struggle against systemic oppression.



Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) Leader Julius Malema

structive discourse. The leader must also anticipate political backlash, recognizing how opponents will interpret and capitalize on such misjudgments. Instead of engaging in adversarial labeling, the DA should focus on critiquing policies and presenting alternative governance strategies that resonate with the electorate. South Africa's democracy depends on robust yet responsible political engagement, and leaders must rise above reactionary rhetoric to ensure that debates remain progressive and solutions-oriented, rather than divisive and counterproductive.

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Steenhuisen must know that he is white and his party is a minority party with a history of white electorates and general whiteness in the whole party, DA. The ANC, as the dominant party in the GNU, represents a black majority electorate that has endured decades of political struggle against systemic oppression. Within this demographic, terms like "rebel" carry historical weight, evoking memories of liberation movements that fought against apartheid. To casually apply this label to Malema and his supporters - who, despite their radical stance, still represent a significant portion of black South Africans - is not only insensitive but politically self-destructive for the DA. It risks alienating black constituents, many of whom might sympathize with Malema's rhetoric, even if they do not align with his policies.

For John Steenhuisen, to

label Julius Malema and his supporters as "rebels" is not just an attack on Malema - it is an affront to the collective consciousness of black South Africans, many of whom have endured historical struggles against systemic oppression. Even those who do not align with Malema or the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) carry a deep-seated sensitivity to political narratives that frame black activism as rebellious or illegitimate. The term "rebel" is loaded with historical weight, evoking memories of the liberation struggle, where black South Africans fought against apartheid-era forces that once dismissed them as insurgents rather than freedom fighters. Such rhetoric does not merely hit Malema - it courses through the veins and resonates within the bloodstream of black South Africans, reminding them of past attempts to delegitimize black political agency. Many may feel instinctively defensive, insulted, and provoked, even if they oppose Malema's policies. This statement, therefore, risks alienating not just the EFF but also ordinary black citizens who value po-

litical dignity, making unity governance more fragile.

Moreover, Steenhuisen should know that the stability of the GNU depends on mutual trust and respect among all political factions, including opposition voices like the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). By using divisive language, the DA leader creates avoidable hostility, making it difficult for ANC members to maintain cooperative relationships within the unity government. The ANC, though ideologically opposed to the EFF on governance matters, cannot afford to be seen as complicit in language that disrespects black political movements. The DA leader's statement might force ANC members to publicly distance themselves from such rhetoric, thereby weakening inter-party trust within the GNU.

Beyond the immediate consequences, such a misstep emboldens Malema. The EFF thrives on conflict-driven political engagement, and this labeling provides Malema with the perfect opportunity to rally his supporters, framing the DA as an extension of white dominance seeking to dele-

gitimize black activism. Instead of silencing Malema, such rhetoric amplifies his influence, creating greater parliamentary chaos, more aggressive confrontations, and a deeper divide between the ruling coalition and opposition factions.

For the DA leader, John Steenhuisen, the lesson is clear: words shape political realities, and in a fragile unity government, every statement must be weighed carefully. If the DA hopes to maintain productive governance and avoid internal fractures, it must abandon inflammatory language and engage in policy-driven discourse rather than personality-based attacks. The future of the GNU hinges on the ability of its leaders to balance ideological differences without resorting to rhetoric that incites division. The DA leader must course-correct immediately, ensuring that political engagement remains strategic, respectful, and focused on national progress - not reckless confrontation.

Education

Shaping Kenya's Future: Empowering Communities Through Education

By Rose Muasya
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

• Wairimu comes from a family of educationists, following in the footsteps of her parents, who founded the Rusinga Schools 50 years ago. Rusinga is a leading international school in Kenya. In 2012, Wairimu stepped in as a school director to help run it. In this role, she seamlessly integrates the corporate lens and multicultural perspectives in her leadership style.

• “We prepare students for a world that is constantly changing. I have seen the transformative power of education from when a child joins us as a toddler to when they leave us and join university after discovering their talents and career paths,” she says.

• Her influence also extends far beyond Rusinga Schools she wears as the Chairperson of the Kenya Association of International Schools and Vice Chairperson of the KEPSA education board, where she is active in shaping policies and conversations about Kenya's education sector and implementing education policies with the government and stakeholders to elevate standards.

Driven by a deep passion for education and an unwavering commitment to community service, she stands out as a beacon of dedication and leadership.

She wears many hats, but one of her most influential roles is that of an administrator who has devoted her life to nurturing and mentoring children, guiding them toward becoming well-rounded individuals. Her work goes beyond academics, shaping young minds and instilling values that empower them to thrive in all aspects of life.

Every day, she wakes up with an agenda: to run a school and help shape the minds of young learners so they can become problem-solvers and compassionate global citizens.

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With each lesson, project, and conversation, her time is spent with other leaders, comparing notes on how to shape young minds further and bridge cultures. Wairimu believes that policy is the backbone of a strong education system, and she is actively involved in formulating it.

In addition to education, Wairimu is passionate about addressing the challenges of climate change. With UNICEF reports highlight-



ing the devastating impact of climate crises on children's education, Wairimu understands the urgency of action. (Reports for reference in the article: The Kenya Sub-National Children's Climate and Disaster Risk Model (CCRI-DRM) and Global Snapshot of Climate-Related School Disruptions in 2024) The analysis shows that over two million learners in Kenya were affected by school closures in 2024 due to damaged school infrastructures, loss of teaching and learning materials caused by heavy rains, and flooding during the long rainy season.

As an active participant in school management boards and associations, Wairimu says this has given her central involvement in key education policies. She has also learned that the tough times in the education sector have given her valuable lessons for managing Rotary volunteers.

Later this year, on July 1st, Wairimu will become a District Governor of Rotary clubs in Kenya, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Eritrea. Rotary is a voluntary organization with over 1.2 million members in 36,000 Rotary clubs worldwide. Rotary focuses on seven areas: basic education and literacy, polio eradication, Peace and conflict prevention/resolution, and disease prevention and treatment.

Wairimu hopes to increase the impact of humanitarian work in volunteer organi-

zations and strengthen the capacity of communities to support basic education and literacy, reduce gender disparity in education, and increase adult literacy.

She is committed to supporting education for all children and adults as she prepares to take over as the second woman District Governor of District 9212.

Through her involvement with Rotary, Wairimu champions projects that provide essential support to vulnerable communities. She is confident that serving as the Director Governor for District 9212 will foster meaningful engagement in community service and international collaborations, a chance to spread a smile, share love, and create impact.

In April 2024, Rotary clubs in Kenya rallied to provide food and other donations that supported the children affected by the loss of their facilities to ensure continuity of learning.

From rebuilding infrastructure in flood-prone areas to implementing WASH programs that ensure access to clean water and menstrual hygiene, Wairimu prioritizes the dignity and well-being of children.

“The WASH projects also include menstrual hygiene for the girls,” she emphasizes, demonstrating her commitment to empowering girls through education. She explains that Rotary's vision extends to addressing food

security through school feeding programs and promoting environmental sustainability through tree-planting initiatives.

Wairimu explains that the school feeding programs, either short-term or long-term, help retain children; a child will go to school because they know there will be a meal.

As Rotary celebrates 100 years of service in Africa, she is also actively involved in this environmental initiative to plant trees to conserve Nature.

Wairimu notes that the current campaign encourages members to create a digital map to track where the trees are and monitor their growth easily.

“This project involved school children learning how to take care of trees. We also have been focusing on the mangrove reforestation, which several clubs have been involved in,” says Wairimu.

Rotary strongly advocates for digital literacy, supporting the implementation of modular digital laboratories in schools. Furthermore, Wairimu recognizes the importance of mentorship and scholarships, empowering students to reach their full potential.

Looking ahead to her term as District Governor, Wairimu plans to continue supporting education projects, focusing on climate resilience and accessibility for students with special needs.

“We look forward to partnering with other institutions and organizations or individuals who can help us implement the projects,” she said, adding this collaborative approach is a golden chance to impact communities forever.

Away from the education space, she unwinds with a good book and watching law and crime series. She also deeply values personal growth and nurturing relationships. She encourages women to “focus on themselves and others, nurturing important relationships by being present for others.”

Her commitment to empowering communities and shaping a brighter future for Kenya highlights women's leadership's profound and lasting impact.

“As a powerful advocate for education and a mentor, I am passionate about holding a sister's hand and walking with her through the maze of education, management, volunteers and life,” she concluded.

NEWS PAPER



IN BUSINESS

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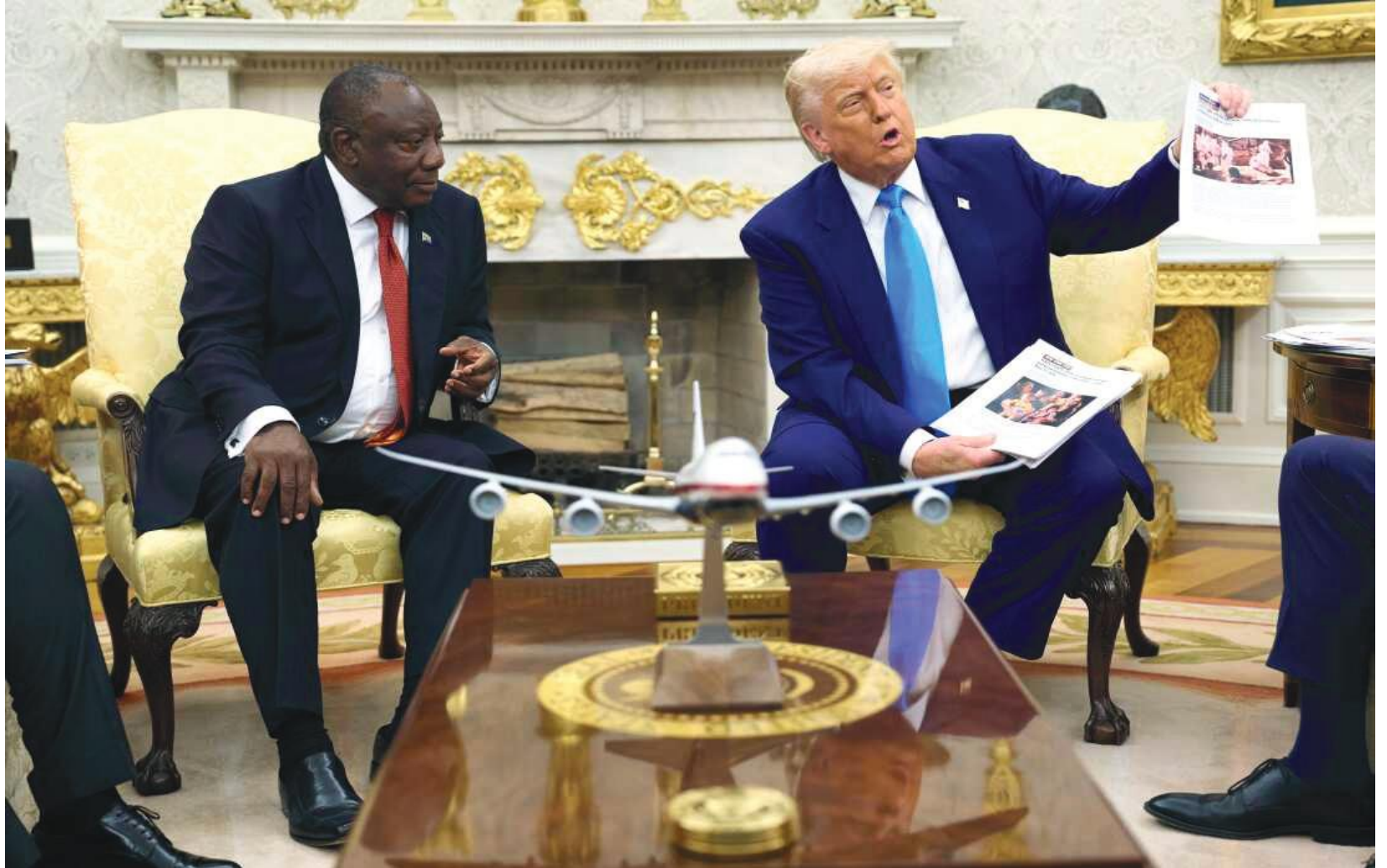
WORLD

Sovereignty Under Assault: Trump's Reckless Meddling in South Africa's Land Question



By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande
@themtkenyatimes

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Donald Trump ambushing South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in the Oval Office

Worth Noting:

- To grasp the complexities of South Africa's land discourse, one must journey back through centuries of colonial conquest and apartheid-era injustices. The 1913 Natives Land Act, a foundational pillar of racial segregation, legally stripped the Black majority of their ancestral lands, limiting their ownership to a mere 7% of the country's territory.
- This was further entrenched by the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act, which expanded this to a meager 13%. Millions were forcibly removed from their homes, dispossessed of their livelihoods, and relegated to impoverished 'reserves' or 'homelands.' This systemic dispossession created the deep-seated economic inequality that continues to plague South Africa today.
- The democratic transition in 1994, while a monumental achievement, did not immediately rectify these historical injustices.

narratives propagated by certain right-wing elements globally.

The Specter of Interference: A Violation of International Law

At the heart of the international order lies the principle of state sovereignty, a cornerstone of the Westphalian system. This principle, enshrined in the UN Charter, dictates that each state has exclusive authority over its internal affairs and that other states should refrain from intervening in them. Trump's theatrical display was not merely an ill-informed gaffe; it was a deliberate and public attempt to dictate domestic policy to a sovereign nation, based on demonstrably false pretenses.

The United States, as a signatory to numerous international conventions and a vocal proponent of democracy, should uphold, not undermine, these foundational principles. Yet, Trump's actions, including the alleged offering of refuge to white South African farmers based on 'racial discrimination claims' which Pretoria deems baseless, and even the reported cutting of US assistance, clearly indicate a coercive intent. This goes beyond legitimate diplo-

matic discourse and crosses into the realm of prohibited intervention under international law. Such unilateral pronouncements, especially when driven by a domestic political agenda and devoid of factual grounding, set a dangerous precedent for international relations, threatening to destabilize global cooperation and foster resentment.

Unpacking the Land Question: A Legacy of Dispossession

To grasp the complexities of South Africa's land discourse, one must journey back through centuries of colonial conquest and apartheid-era injustices. The 1913 Natives Land Act, a foundational pillar of racial segregation, legally stripped the Black majority of their ancestral lands, limiting their ownership to a mere 7% of the country's territory. This was further entrenched by the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act, which expanded this to a meager 13%. Millions were forcibly removed from their homes, dispossessed of their livelihoods, and relegated to impoverished 'reserves' or 'homelands.' This systemic dispossession created the deep-seated economic inequality that continues to

plague South Africa today. The democratic transition in 1994, while a monumental achievement, did not immediately rectify these historical injustices. The land question remains a deeply emotional and politically charged issue, central to the ongoing struggle for true social and economic justice. Land reform in South Africa is not about targeting a specific racial group; it is a long-overdue attempt to address the historical imbalances of land ownership and ensure a more equitable distribution of resources for all citizens, irrespective of race. The South African government's current policy on land expropriation without compensation is a nuanced and contentious issue, debated within the country's democratic institutions. It is not, as Trump falsely claimed, a policy of seizing land and then orchestrating the murder of its owners.

The Misinformation Machine: Debunking the 'White Genocide' Myth

The narrative of 'white genocide' in South Africa, amplified by Trump and various right-wing media outlets, is a dangerous fabrication. It is a carefully constructed disinformation campaign designed to stoke racial fear

and undermine legitimate efforts at land reform. While farm attacks and murders are a tragic reality in South Africa, as they are in any country with high crime rates, the assertion that white farmers are being systematically targeted for extermination is patently false and deeply irresponsible.

Let us examine the statistical realities, which paint a very different picture from the one Trump presented:

Overall Crime Rates: South Africa has a disturbingly high overall crime rate, and violence affects all communities, regardless of race. The majority of murder victims in South Africa are Black, reflecting the demographic composition of the country and the disproportionate impact of crime on marginalized communities.

Farm Murders in Context: While every life lost is a tragedy, the number of farm murders, when viewed against the national murder rate, is not indicative of a genocide. Reliable data from organizations like AgriSA and the South African Police Service (SAPS) consistently show that while farm attacks are a serious concern, the numbers fluctuate and do not support claims of a tar-

geted, systematic extermination. For instance, in the period between 2017 and 2018, AgriSA reported 47 farm murders, which translates to roughly one every eight days. This figure, while tragic, pales in comparison to the average of nearly 50 murders per day across the entire country.

Motive: Investigations into farm attacks have consistently found that the primary motive is robbery, not racial hatred. While racial slurs or discriminatory acts may occur in isolated incidents, they do not constitute the overarching motivation for the vast majority of these crimes. A 2001 committee of inquiry, for example, found that robbery was the motive for the vast majority of the 2,700 attacks studied, with racial motives accounting for a mere two percent.

Disproportionate Impact: Furthermore, it is crucial to recognize that farm attacks affect farmers of all races, as well as farmworkers. The narrative of 'white genocide' conveniently ignores the suffering of Black farmworkers who are also victims of vio-

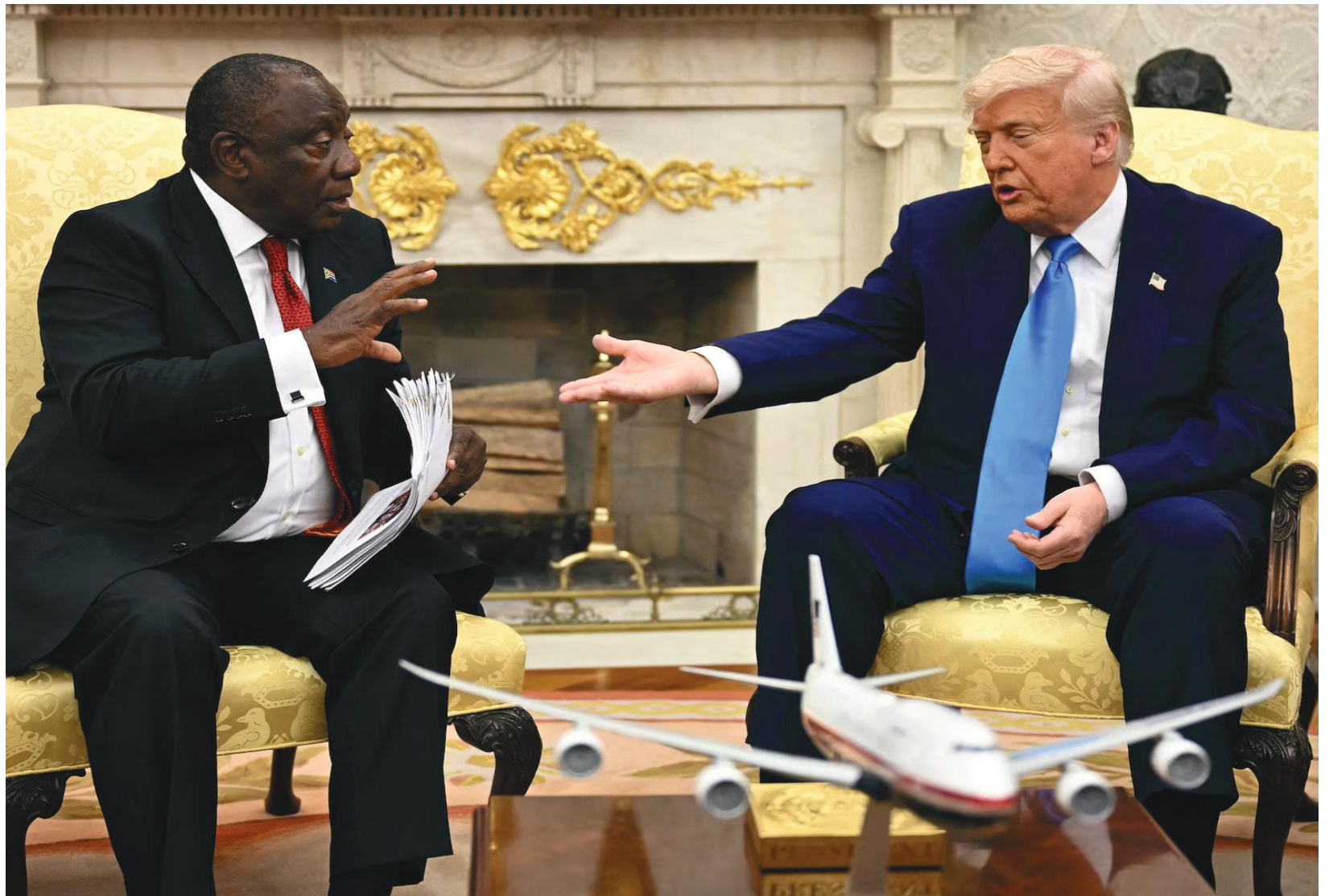
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WORLD

Sovereignty Under Assault: Trump's Reckless Meddling in South Africa's Land Question

By:
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Donald Trump ambushing South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in the Oval Office

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lence, often at higher rates, and who have historically faced significant abuse and exploitation on farms. The selective presentation of data and the deliberate misrepresentation of isolated incidents as evidence of a widespread genocide serve only to inflame racial tensions and distract from the very real challenges of crime and inequality that South Africa grapples with. This exaggeration, peddled by figures like Trump, actively deteriorates South African peace by fostering divisions and undermining trust between communities. It fuels a dangerous sense of victimhood among a minority group, while simultaneously ignoring the historical injustices faced by the majority.

The Incendiary Rhetoric of Julius Malema: A Separate, Though Related, Issue
Trump's decision to play a video of Julius Malema, leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), reportedly saying South Africans have to 'occupy land by force and even kill for the land,' further illustrates his intent to sensationalize and misrepresent. While Malema's rhetoric is undeniably provocative and has been condemned by many within South Africa for its inflam-

matory nature, it is crucial to understand its context and avoid conflating it with the official policy or intent of the South African government. Malema's pronouncements are often delivered in the context of political rallies and reflect a radical viewpoint on land redistribution. His party, the EFF, advocates for a more aggressive approach to land expropriation. However, Malema's words, while concerning, do not represent the policy of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) government, nor do they reflect the overall sentiment of the South African population. President Ramaphosa himself has consistently distanced his government from such calls for violence, emphasizing a commitment to constitutional processes and peaceful land reform. The South African government has repeatedly stated that it is 'completely opposed' to the behavior alleged by Trump and that such actions are "not government policy." To equate Malema's rhetoric with a government-sanctioned genocide is a malicious distortion. It is akin to taking the extreme views of a fringe political figure in any democratic country and presenting them as the

official policy of that nation. This tactic is designed to create fear and justify external interference, rather than engage with the complexities of democratic discourse.

The Real Cost of Reckless Intervention
Trump's actions have far-reaching negative consequences:

Undermining South African Democracy: By casting doubt on the legitimacy of South Africa's democratic processes and its handling of internal affairs, Trump undermines the very institutions that are striving to address historical injustices and build a more equitable society.

Exacerbating Racial Tensions: The 'white genocide' narrative, amplified by a figure of Trump's stature, inflames racial tensions within South Africa and plays into the hands of those who seek to divide rather than unite. It risks reigniting old wounds and hindering genuine reconciliation efforts.

Damaging Diplomatic Relations: Such a public and disrespectful confrontation damages the vital diplomatic relationship between the United States and South Af-

rica, a key African democracy. This could have negative implications for cooperation on critical issues, from trade and investment to regional security.

Emboldening Extremist Elements: By legitimizing unsubstantiated claims, Trump inadvertently emboldens extremist elements both within South Africa and internationally who subscribe to racist ideologies and seek to destabilize the country.

Distorting Global Perceptions: The spread of misinformation about South Africa's land issue distorts global perceptions, potentially deterring investment and tourism, and isolating a nation that is striving for progress.

A Call for Respect and Responsibility
The United States, under any administration, has a moral and diplomatic obligation to engage with sovereign nations like South Africa with respect, understanding, and a commitment to factual accuracy. This means recognizing the historical context of challenges, supporting democratic processes, and refraining from propagating divisive and baseless narratives.

Instead of playing into sensationalist fears, international actors should support South Africa's efforts to address the deeply rooted inequalities stemming from apartheid. This means understanding the complexities of land reform as a constitutional and democratic process, rather than demonizing it as a racially motivated campaign. It means acknowledging the genuine efforts of the South African government to ensure justice and reconciliation for all its citizens. The international community must unequivocally condemn such blatant disregard for state sovereignty and the dissemination of dangerous misinformation. The peace and stability of South Africa, and indeed the integrity of the international system, depend on it. Donald Trump's theatrical performance in the Oval Office was not an act of concern; it was an act of reckless interference that threatens to destabilize a nation striving for justice and reconciliation. It is a stark reminder that responsible international engagement demands respect for sovereignty, adherence to facts, and a commitment to fostering, not fracturing, peace.

America

Diplomatic Submissiveness In The Oval Office: Lessons For Future African Leaders



By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande
@themtkenyatimes

Worth Noting:

- When Volodymyr Zelensky assumed office in Ukraine, he faced significant pressure to maintain strong ties with the United States, which had provided military support to counter Russian aggression. His visit to the Oval Office in February 2025 was expected to focus on strengthening Ukraine's security position, but instead, he was subjected to unexpected criticism and coercion by Trump and Vice President J.D. Vance.
- Trump's diplomatic strategy in this meeting was blunt and unforgiving, demanding that Zelensky express gratitude more explicitly for U.S. support while subtly pressuring him to align Ukraine's foreign policy decisions with American interests. The meeting quickly became a political spectacle, televised and widely discussed, with Zelensky struggling to navigate the moment without provoking Trump's ire.

Introduction

The Oval Office has long been regarded as a symbolic arena where world leaders engage in diplomatic negotiations that shape global geopolitics. However, under Donald Trump's presidency, the nature of these meetings shifted from diplomatic exchange to political confrontation, often leaving leaders from smaller nations in a precarious position. Rather than fostering mutual respect, interactions with Trump frequently devolved into spectacles where leaders found themselves pressured, undermined, or publicly scrutinized. This article examines two significant instances of perceived submissiveness:

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's encounter with President Donald Trump, and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa's tense diplomatic meeting. Their responses - or lack thereof - raise important questions about the negotiation strategies of weaker nations when engaging with dominant global powers.

Moving forward, future African leaders must learn from these examples and develop a diplomatic stance that upholds national dignity while maintaining strategic engagement. By understanding the political mechanics behind Trump's confrontational approach and analyzing pathways for stronger leadership, African nations can avoid being subjected to humiliation and submission in global political discussions.

The Zelensky Precedent: A Lesson in Political Vulnerability

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Why Zelensky's Approach Was Considered Submissive

1. **Failure to Redirect the Narrative** - Zelensky did not proactively reshape the conversation to emphasize Ukraine's independent sovereignty or strategic role in global security.

2. **Visible Discomfort** - His restrained responses suggested hesitation and uncertainty, reinforcing perceptions of submissiveness.

3. **No Counter-Leverage** - Ukraine's dependence on U.S. military aid weakened Zelensky's ability to assert his country's interests forcefully.

Ultimately, the meeting served as a cautionary tale for weaker nations: entering negotiations with dominant countries without clear leverage often results in a power imbalance that favors the stronger party.

Ramaphosa's Oval Office Ambush: A Test of African Diplomacy

Unlike Zelensky, Cyril Ramaphosa visited the White House with different expectations - his meeting was primarily intended to discuss U.S.-Africa trade relations. However, Trump shifted the agenda towards racial tensions in South Africa, introducing a narrative that aligned with far-right claims of 'white genocide.' Trump's calculated media performance included dimming the lights and presenting a video compilation filled with extremist rhetoric, designed to provoke Ramaphosa and place him in a defensive position. His response, though diplomatically cautious, was perceived as weak, failing to challenge the misinformation directly or reposition the discussion towards economic development.

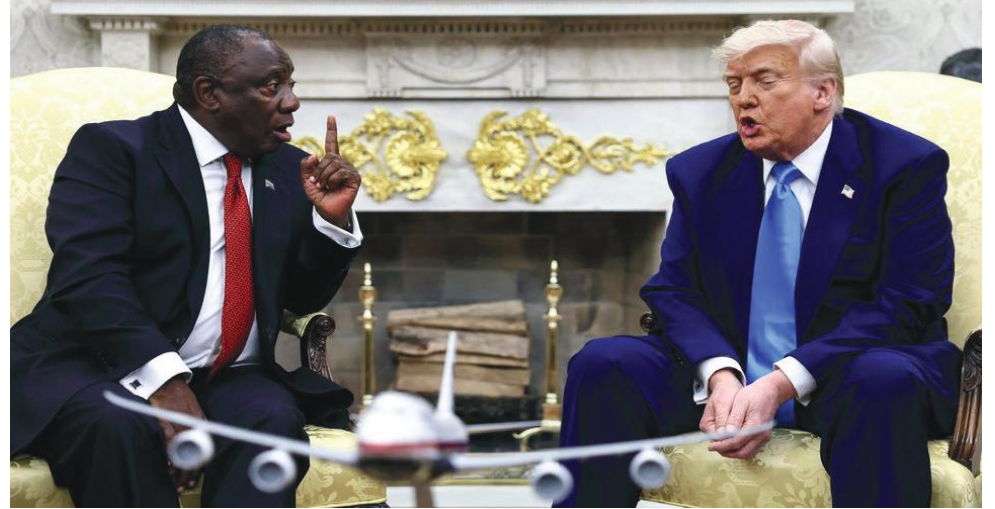
How Ramaphosa Could Have Managed the Situation Differently

- **Confront the Misinformation** - A direct refutation, backed by statistical evidence and policy records, could have neutralized the false narrative.
- **Redirect the Focus** - Steering the discussion toward bilateral trade agreements would have prevented the meeting from becoming a racialized controversy.
- **Assert African Sovereignty** - By clearly stating that South Africa would not entertain externally driven ideological debates, Ramaphosa could have demonstrated stronger diplomatic control.

His reaction, while strategic in avoiding confrontation, reinforced the perception that African leaders struggle to push back against global narratives imposed upon them - a lesson for future diplomatic engagements.

The Anatomy of Diplomatic Submissiveness
Examining both incidents reveals common factors that contribute to diplomatic submissiveness:

- **Power Imbalance** - Nations that rely on foreign aid or security assistance often have fewer options for resistance in high-stakes negotiations.



Donald Trump ambushing South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in the Oval Office

- **Media Manipulation** - Leaders who enter televised negotiations risk being exposed to public scrutiny, limiting their ability to respond assertively.
- **Economic Leverage** - The U.S. frequently uses economic dependency to pressure leaders into compliance.
- **Political Optics** - Diplomats must balance internal political stability with external diplomatic engagements, often choosing restraint over confrontation.

Recognizing these dynamics is essential for African leaders preparing for future encounters in global forums.

Lessons for Future African Leaders
African leaders must develop a proactive diplomatic strategy that ensures national dignity, economic independence, and policy clarity when engaging with dominant political figures. Key strategies include:

1. **Establish Clear Diplomatic Boundaries**
2. **Strengthen Regional Solidarity**
3. **Diversify Economic Partnerships**
4. **Master Strategic Communication**
5. **Demand Mutual Respect in Diplomatic Engagements**

- **Enter negotiations with defined objectives** - refuse to engage in discussions that deviate into political ambushes.
- **Insist on agenda-setting privileges**, ensuring that diplomatic engagements remain focused on constructive dialogue.

- **Training in media management and crisis response** equips African diplomats with tools to counter manipulative discussions.
- **African leaders must assert their sovereignty** in global negotiations.

- **Reject unequal diplomatic protocols** that perpetuate power imbalances - insist on equal dialogue structures.

Conclusion: Redefining African Diplomacy
The encounters of Zelensky and Ramaphosa underscore the need for African leaders to rethink their diplomatic strategies. The next African leader to visit the Oval Office must prepare to counter political theatrics, refuse submission, and uphold national dignity without fear.

By establishing clear diplomatic boundaries, strengthening regional solidarity, diversifying economic partnerships, mastering communication, and demanding mutual respect, African nations can ensure sovereign representation in global affairs.

Future African leadership must be bold, strategic, and unwavering, refusing to entertain manipulative power dynamics disguised as diplomacy. The next visit to the Oval Office must not be an act of submission, but an assertion of African strength and independence.

• **Dependence on U.S. trade agreements** weakens Africa's negotiation stance - leaders must diversify economic alliances with China, the EU, and intra-African markets.

• **Strengthening regional economies** ensures greater financial autonomy, limiting external pressure.

• **Leaders must control the narrative** - using strong, fact-based arguments prevents misrepresentation in political engagements.

2. **Strengthen Regional Solidarity**

- A unified African stance on key global issues enhances collective bargaining power.

- The African Union (AU) should play a more assertive diplomatic role, reducing individual nations' vulnerability.

3. **Diversify Economic Partnerships**

- Dependence on U.S. trade agreements weakens Africa's negotiation stance - leaders must diversify economic alliances with China, the EU, and intra-African markets.

- Strengthening regional economies ensures greater financial autonomy, limiting external pressure.

4. **Master Strategic Communication**

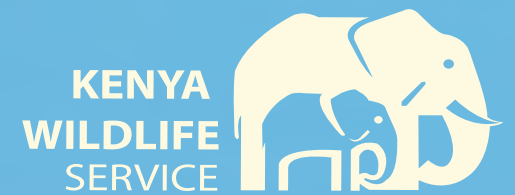
- Leaders must control the narrative - using strong, fact-based arguments prevents misrepresentation in political engagements.
- Training in media management and crisis response equips African diplomats with tools to counter manipulative discussions.

- Demand Mutual Respect in Diplomatic Engagements

- African leaders



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's encounter with President Donald Trump



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Diaspora

Beyond the tariff wars: Why the Global South must rethink trade alliances

By: ONYANGO K'ONYANGO
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

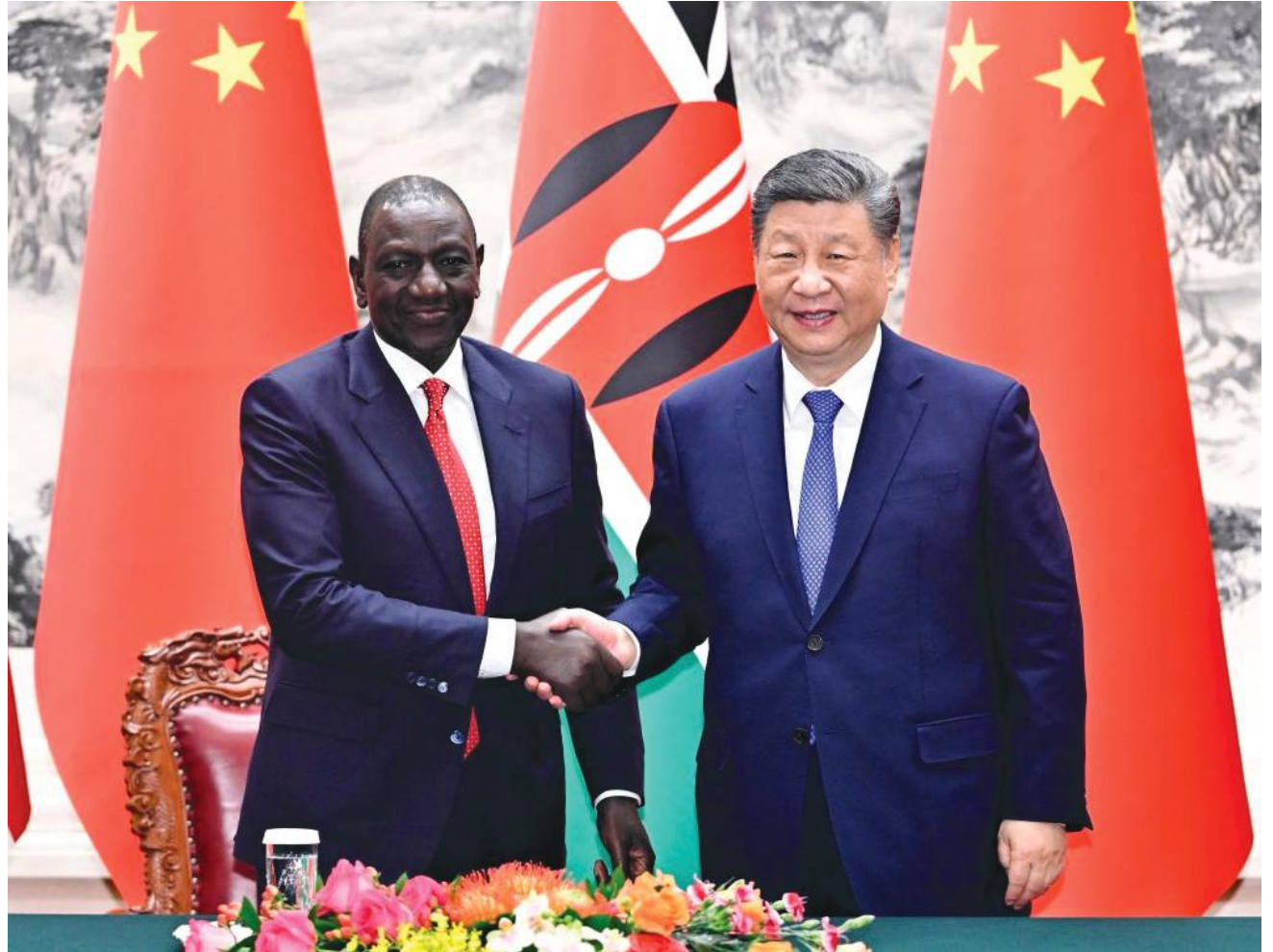
Worth Noting:

President Trump described the move as a “strategic recalibration” to give U.S. businesses room to adjust, while Chinese officials emphasized the mutual benefits of a “balanced and fair” trade relationship. The initial reductions—set to begin within 60 days—will primarily target industrial goods and critical supply chain components. This softening of Trump’s previously uncompromising stance suggests a rare convergence of interest in global economic stability.

The Geneva talks—held under the auspices of the World Trade Organization (WTO)—offered a faint glimmer of hope amid rising tensions. Though no binding agreement was reached, both sides committed to keeping diplomatic channels open and advancing de-escalation through technical negotiations and sector-specific discussions. China expressed concern about the disproportionate nature of U.S. tariffs and their global spillover effects, while the U.S. reiterated that its measures are essential for national economic security. The outcome may not have delivered concrete policy shifts, but it marked a shift in tone—from confrontation to guarded pragmatism.

Since returning to the White House for his second term, President Donald Trump has revived his hallmark “America First” economic doctrine—this time with even greater intensity. Central to this approach was a bold tariff plan: a proposed 10% universal tariff on all imports and a staggering 145% levy on Chinese goods. Proponents argued these measures would revitalize American industry and reduce reliance on foreign manufacturing. However, the global response—especially from the Global South—has been one of deep concern, as such policies risk unraveling supply chains, increasing costs, and exposing vulnerable economies to severe shocks. In a significant turn of events, the recent Geneva talks between the United States and China yielded an unexpected breakthrough. After months of escalating rhetoric and retaliatory tariffs—reciprocal rates had surged past 125%—both nations agreed to a phased reduction of select tariffs, aimed at stabilizing global markets and restoring some degree of predictability to international trade. While broader structural issues remain unresolved, and both sides stopped short of a full rollback, the Geneva agreement marked a tentative de-escalation that analysts hope will prevent a full-blown trade crisis.

President Trump described the move as a “strategic recalibration” to give U.S. businesses room to adjust, while Chinese officials emphasized the mutual benefits of a “balanced and fair” trade relationship. The initial reductions—set to begin within 60 days—will primarily target industrial goods and critical supply chain components. This softening of Trump’s previously uncompromising stance suggests a rare convergence of interest in global economic stability. The Geneva talks—held under the auspices of the World Trade Organization (WTO)—offered a faint glimmer of hope amid rising tensions. Though no binding agreement was reached, both sides committed to keeping diplomatic channels open and advancing de-escalation through technical negotiations and sector-specific discussions. China expressed concern about the disproportionate nature of U.S. tariffs and their global spillover effects, while the U.S. reiterated that



Chinese President Xi Jinping shakes hands with Kenyan President William Ruto at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, April 24, 2025.

its measures are essential for national economic security. The outcome may not have delivered concrete policy shifts, but it marked a shift in tone—from confrontation to guarded pragmatism. Yet, these discussions underscored another unsettling reality: the marginalization of developing countries in major trade negotiations. African nations, in particular, remain on the sidelines, despite being disproportionately affected by the economic volatility such disputes generate. More troubling is Africa’s increasing absence from U.S. economic diplomacy under Trump’s renewed administration. While leaders from Europe, Asia, and the Americas feature prominently in high-level discussions, Africa’s representation remains minimal. This is especially alarming given that the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)—a key pillar of U.S.-Africa trade—is set to expire in less than four months. If AGOA lapses without renewal or replacement, it would deal a severe blow to African exports, stripping them of preferential market access.

Against this backdrop, African countries and the broader Global South must reconsider the architecture of their trade relations. The answer is not disengagement from the U.S. or any one partner, but diversifi-

cation—broadening trade relationships to enhance resilience and reduce vulnerability to external shocks. If the U.S. continues to turn inward, the Global South must increasingly turn to each other—and to global partners committed to multilateral cooperation.

The contrast with other regions is striking. Within the European Union, intra-regional trade accounts for more than 50% of total trade—and exceeds 75% in countries like Luxembourg and Czechia. ASEAN, though less integrated, maintains intra-regional trade at around 21.5%. In comparison, intra-African trade remains at a paltry 16%. This disparity reflects a fundamental structural weakness: Africa trades far more with external partners than within its own borders, making it particularly vulnerable to global crises, tariff shocks, and geopolitical tensions.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), launched in 2021, offers a critical path forward. If fully implemented, it could significantly increase intra-African trade, support industrialization, and create a single continental market for goods and services. However, this will require investment in infrastructure, harmonization of regulations, and political will to dismantle non-tariff bar-

riers.

China has already stepped forward with initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), aiming to help close Africa’s \$100 billion annual infrastructure gap. While these partnerships come with their own challenges, they reflect the kind of long-term, multilateral commitments that many African countries seek. Europe, too, is reassessing its alliances and expanding beyond traditional partners in response to U.S.-China tensions. The Geneva talks only reinforce the urgency for global actors to engage more meaningfully with the Global South—ideally through partnerships that prioritize sustainable development, not just geopolitical maneuvering.

Trump’s tariff-first strategy should serve as a wake-up call. Trade policy driven by nationalism and isolationism may appear attractive in the short term but often triggers global ripple effects, particularly in export-dependent regions like Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Tariffs may seem to bolster domestic industries, but they function as a tax on consumption—raising costs for businesses and consumers alike, and potentially fueling inflation.

Moreover, international trade is never a one-way

street. Sweeping U.S. tariffs have already provoked retaliation. The EU, China, and other global powers have signaled or implemented countermeasures. These tit-for-tat spiral echoes the disastrous trade wars of the 1930s, which deepened the Great Depression and choked off global commerce. In today’s interconnected world, such a scenario would be even more destructive—especially for nations on the periphery of global trade.

In the end, Africa and other Global South nations must seize this moment to recalibrate. They must deepen regional integration, expand intra-regional trade, and seek out partners that prioritize cooperation over confrontation. The current crisis is both a warning and an opportunity: to build a more self-reliant, diversified, and resilient trade ecosystem capable of weathering the storms of great-power rivalry.

The future of global trade will not be determined solely in Washington or Beijing—but also in how decisively Africa and its Global South partners choose to shape their own economic destinies.

The writer is a Journalist and Communication consultant

YOUR OPINION IS INVALUABLE

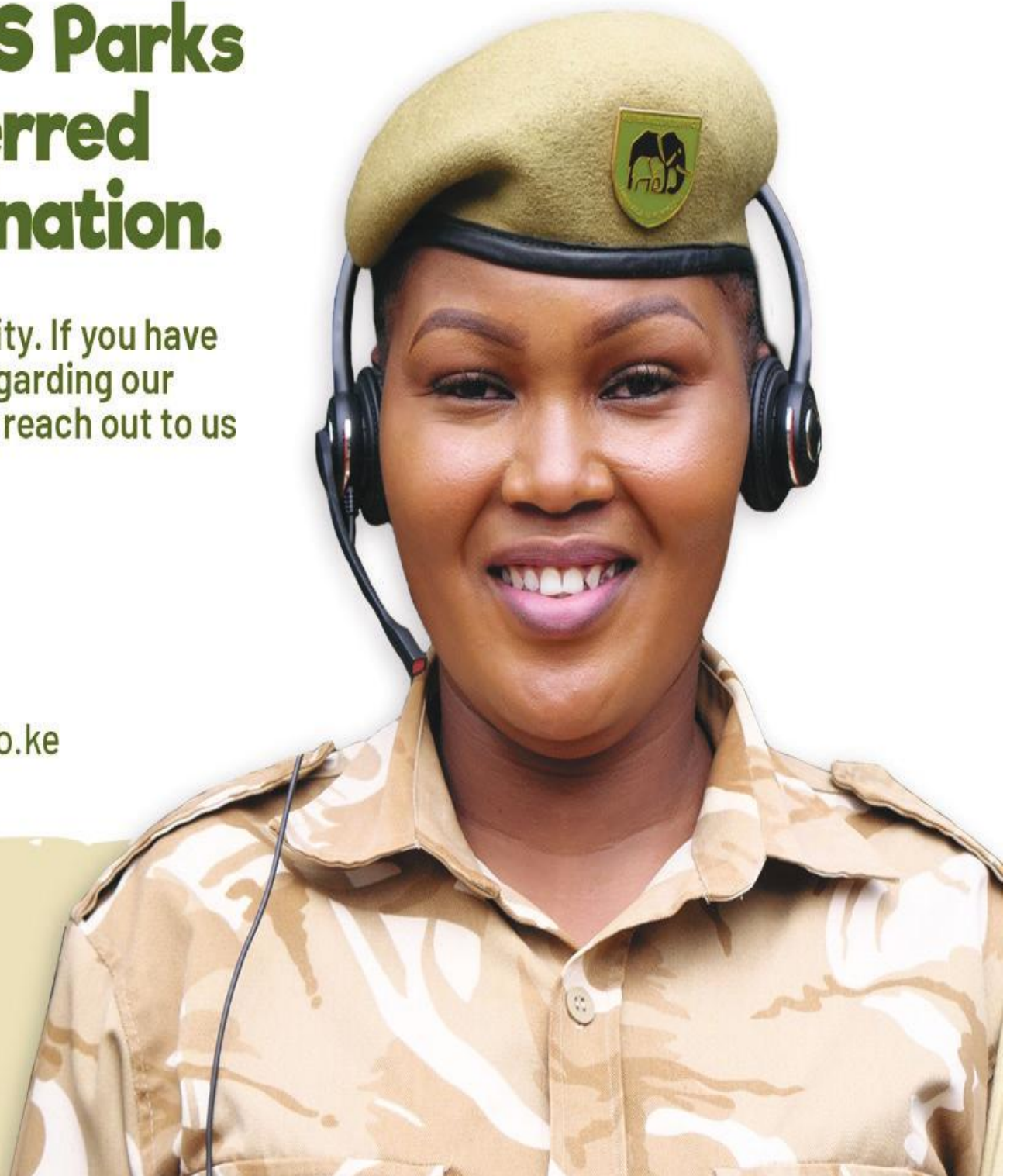
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For Kenya's prosperity, counties must be industry-centric

What makes it worse is that the same keeps on being increased frequently with exorbitant percentage rates of even up to 300%.

By Tobias Alando
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Worth Noting:

On the converse, businesses are facing a myriad of challenges such as low levels of public participation, insufficient allocation of resources to facilitate critical county functions, subsequently impacting effective and efficient service delivery, good governance and economic development. Let us look at where we are, starting with county industrial competitiveness. One of the top key issues businesses have overwhelmingly identified that has led to increased costs is costs related to movement of goods now famously known as 'county movement taxes. Article 209 (4)(5) of the Constitution mandates that Counties' revenue raising powers should not jeopardize national economic policies or activities across counties. Unfortunately, counties continue to impose exorbitant inter county fees, levies and charges in addition to business service permits. This has resulted to increased cost of doing business in counties and across counties and disrupts the flow of goods to consumers across counties and country.

Twelve years since Kenya ushered in the devolved system of government, the fruits have been bittersweet for businesses. Today, we need to pause and take stock from 2013, Where are we now? Have we fulfilled that promise? What does success truly look like and how do we translate the dream of devolution into a lived reality for our citizens, our industries and Kenya's prosperity?

On the positive side, devolution has brought services closer to the people and enhanced citizens' participation in governance. For Kenya's manufacturing sector, devolution came with hope. Hope for enhanced access to resources. Hope for a surge in economic opportunities at the county level. Hope for increased focus on developing local industries and enhanced value chain linkages as well as streamlined operations driven by efficient governance.

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Let us look at where we are, starting with county industrial competitiveness. One of the top key issues businesses have overwhelmingly identified that has led to increased costs is costs related to movement of goods now famously known as 'county movement taxes. Article 209 (4)(5) of the Constitution mandates that Counties' revenue raising powers should not jeopardize national economic policies or activities across counties. Unfortunately, counties continue to impose exorbitant inter county fees, levies and charges in addition to business service permits. This has resulted to increased cost of doing business in counties and across counties and disrupts the flow of goods to consumers across counties and country. The most affected being micro and small businesses who are unable to pay each county such fees.

Such fees take the form of offloading fees in market and non-market areas including private facilities or depots in other counties,

annual registration fees for vehicles (all lorries, can- ters, and pickups), cess fees, branding fees, advertise- ment fees, among a long list of other fees and charges. Another example is trans- port cess which costs up to Ksh. 2,000 per truck, charged on containers trans- porting raw materials from the Inland Container De- pot (ICD) or the Container Freight Stations (CFS) to industries and imports that have already been subject- ed to statutory customs du- ties. Thereafter, the finished goods are then subjected to an additional cess fee upon exit – this constitutes double taxation.

What makes it worse is that the same keeps on being in- creased frequently with ex- orbitant percentage rates of even up to 300%. This has affected operational plan- ning predictability of manu- facturers in the country. For businesses to thrive predict- ability is critical.

However, the move by Senate to pass the County Licens- ing (Uniform Procedures) Act, 2024, has given hope to businesses that Government is making an effort to tack- le the county fees challenge through the law assented by the President on 28th June 2024. The main purpose of the Act is to establish stan- dard uniform procedures for licensing by county gov- ernments. The Act will go a long way in ensuring unifor- mity and consistency in the imposition of fees and levies at the county level. To make the Act fully operational, government is in the pro- cess of enacting Regulations to guide the implementa- tion of the Act. Further, the Council of Governors is also developing strategies and guidelines for the Counties for the harmonization of licensing regulations, pro- cedures, requirements and fee structures to ensure free- dom of transit of goods and provision of services across various counties.

Another challenge facing businesses in the counties is investment uncertainty due to frequent changes in taxes, particularly through the County Finance Acts, which create an unpredict- able business environment, leading to instability for in- vestors. Subsequently, our competitiveness as a coun- try is eroded, placing Kenya at a disadvantaged point, compared to East African



Tobias Alando is the Chief Executive of Kenya Association of Manufacturers.

Community (EAC) partner states, which collectively implement a more stream- lined tariff structure under the EAC Common External Tariff (EAC CET).

With this picture in mind, what does successful devo- lution look like for Kenya's manufacturing sector?

The devolved system of government, if correctly implemented, is a powerful economic tool that can spur industrial growth and trans- form Kenya into an indus- try-led economy. However, realizing this vision requires deliberate action. First, we need a harmonised regula- tory and tax framework. This will enable businesses to operate under a consistent, stable and predictable envi- ronment across countries, reducing the heavy compli- ance burden and facilitat- ing smooth cross-country operations. Secondly, are predictable and transparent county processes. It is criti- cal for county governments to provide clear, timely, and publicly available adminis- trative processes, decisions, and timelines. This will help to build trust with business- es and citizens.

Thirdly, streamlined and simplified licensing. This will enable businesses to easily access and complete licensing through simple, uniform, and digitalized systems. Fourth is a sup- portive physical and digital infrastructure. Counties need to provide reliable in- frastructure such as roads, water, and sewerage systems that meet industrial needs,

enabling manufacturers to produce and distribute effi- ciently. Fifth, strong local supply chains and domestic value addition are crucial. Counties, in collaboration with the relevant nation- al government ministries, ought to create conditions where manufacturers can source inputs locally, reduc- ing import dependence, in- creasing local content, and stimulating county-level production ecosystems.

Lastly, we need effective county-industry part- nerships, where manufacturers and county governments collaborate regularly to shape policies, investments, and initiatives that support industrial growth and local economic development.

Creating manufactur- ing-centric counties is within reach, it is doable with goodwill from all relevant stakeholders. It can be achieved by mak- ing intentional decisions to fast-tracking alignment between the national and county governments on regulations, taxes, and lev- ies, establishing national guidelines for county-level manufacturing policies and creating a one-stop regula- tory and tax portal that is ac- cessible to businesses across all counties. Additionally, fi- nalisation of the regulations to implement the County Licensing (Uniform Proce- dures) Act, 2024 and digita- lization of county licensing systems that are integrated into national platforms and offer centralized online pay- ment and renewal processes.

Industrial development is predicated on the availabil- ity of public goods. County governments need to prior- itize county infrastructure investments aligned with industrial needs, expand industrial parks, special eco- nomic zones, and digital in- frastructure and encourage public-private partnerships (PPPs) to close infrastruc- ture gaps. It is also import- ant to develop and imple- ment local content targets through County Aggrega- tion and Industrial Parks (CAIPs), promote local supplier development pro- grams, provide incentives for manufacturers using lo- cal inputs and align county procurement rules with the Buy Kenya, Build Kenya ini- tiative.

To realize the benefits of devolution calls for close collaboration between the National and County Gov- ernments. This calls for structured engagements with the citizens, including manufacturers, and the cre- ation of joint action plans for industrial development. Only then, will Kenya be able to enjoy the fruits of devolution and achieve her socio-economic develop- ment goals.

The writer is the Chief Ex- ecutive of Kenya Association of Manufacturers and can be reached at ceo@kam.co.ke

Diaspora

The US will impose new sanctions on Sudan after finding it used chemical weapons last year in the ongoing civil war against the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the state department has said.

By: BBC
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Worth Noting:

- No detail was provided about which chemical weapons the US said it found, but the New York Times reported in January that Sudan used chlorine gas on two occasions, which causes a range of painful and damaging effects and can be fatal.
- “The United States calls on the government of Sudan to cease all chemical weapons use and uphold its obligations under the CWC,” the statement read, referring to the Chemical Weapons Convention under which signatories have committed to destroy their stockpiles of the weapons.
- Nearly every country in the world – including Sudan – has agreed to the CWC, apart from Egypt, North Korea and South Sudan according to the Arms Control Association, a US-based non-partisan membership organisation. Israel has signed the agreement but not ratified its signature, meaning it has not legally confirmed its involvement in the treaty, the ACA adds.



The US will impose new sanctions on Sudan after finding it used chemical weapons last year in the ongoing civil war against the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the state department has said.

US exports to the country will be restricted and financial borrowing limits put in place from 6 June, a statement from spokesperson Tammy Bruce read.

Both the Sudanese military and the paramilitary group the RSF have previously been accused of war crimes during the conflict.

The BBC has contacted Sudan for a response to the US's latest actions. Sudanese officials say they do not yet have a statement.

More than 150,000 people have been killed during the conflict, which began two years ago when Sudan's army and the RSF began a vicious struggle for power.

In recent months, Sudan's military has recaptured the capital of Khartoum, but fighting continues elsewhere.

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dan according to the Arms Control Association, a US-based non-partisan membership organisation. Israel has signed the agreement but not ratified its signature, meaning it has not legally confirmed its involvement in the treaty, the ACA adds.

“The United States remains fully committed to hold to account those responsible for contributing to chemical weapons proliferation,” Bruce added.

This is not the first time the US has imposed sanctions in Sudan. In January, they were issued against leaders of both parties embroiled in the conflict.

Sudan's military leader Abdel Fattah al-Burhan was accused of “destabilising Sudan and undermining the goal of a democratic transition” by the US, which the country's foreign ministry condemned as “strange and troubling”.

Meanwhile, the head of the RSF Mohammed Hamdan Daglo, also known as Hemedti, was determined to have perpetrated genocide in the country by former secretary of state Antony Blinken. The RSF has denied these charges.

The rival forces have been struggling for power for the past two years, displacing around 12 million people and leaving 25 million needing food aid, more than double the population of London.

New sanctions will have little effect on the country as a result of these prior measures, according to the AFP news agency.

This latest US move comes amid tensions over the alleged involvement of the United Arab Emirates in the conflict. The UAE and Sudan had maintained diplomatic ties until earlier this month when the Sudanese

government alleged the UAE provided arms to the RSF, an allegation the UAE denies.

Following US President Donald Trump's warm reception in the Gulf state last week, Democrats in Congress sought to block the sale of arms from the US to the UAE in part due to its alleged involvement in the conflict.

A Sudanese diplomatic source told news agency Reuters that the US had imposed the new sanctions “to distract from the recent campaign in Congress against the UAE”.

Earlier this month, a top UN court rejected Sudan's bid to sue the UAE for genocide.

Congo votes to lift immunity of former president Kabila

By: Reuters

Congo's senate voted overwhelmingly in favour of lifting former President Joseph Kabila's immunity from prosecution in a late-night vote on Thursday over his alleged links to the M23 rebel group.

Kabila is wanted in Congo for alleged crimes against humanity for supporting the insurgency in the east, including a role in the massacre of civilians and personnel. Congo has also moved to suspend its political party and seize the assets of its leaders.

Kabila, who denies any ties to the rebel group, stepped down after almost 20 years in power in 2018, yielding to protests. He has been out of the Central African country since late 2023, mostly in South Africa.

The Senate backed lifting his immunity by 88 votes to 5 in a secret ballot.

Kabila has been threatening to return to Congo for weeks to help find a solution to the crisis in the east, where Rwandan-backed M23 rebels now control large swathes of territory.

A return to Congo by Kabila could complicate the bid to end the rebellion in eastern Congo, which contains vast supplies of critical min-

erals that President Donald Trump's

administrati
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told Reuters
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Democratic Republic of Congo's former President Joseph Kabila leaves after briefing members of the media, following talks with South Africa's former President Thabo Mbeki at the Thabo Mbeki Foundation in Johannesburg, South Africa, March 18, 2025. REUTERS/Siphiwe Sibeko/File Photo

USA

US deports South Asian migrants to South Sudan

AFP

US immigration officials have begun deporting about 12 South Asian migrants to South Sudan, according to a Tuesday court filing and media reports.

Immigration lawyers learned from a detention officer's email that a Burmese national, identified as "N.M." was "removed...to South Sudan," they wrote in a filing seeking the court's intervention and the return of the migrants.

A second migrant, a Vietnamese national identified as T.T.P. in the filing, "appears to have suffered the same fate" along with at least 10 others.

The removal violates an earlier order, the lawyers said, noting they had last filed an emergency motion on May 7, after media reports indicated immigration officials were seeking to deport N.M. and others to Libya and Saudi Arabia.

The court had sided with plaintiffs and "the men were ultimately transported back to an immigration detention center after remaining on a bus on the base's tarmac for three or four hours," the filing said.

The filing also noted that a flawed peace deal in South Sudan collapsed

this week, and N.M. is being flown "into a country that is now returning to full-blown and catastrophic civil war."

The Department of Homeland Security did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In early April, the Trump administration banned visas for South Sudanese nationals, as part of President Donald Trump's ever-broadening anti-immigration platform.

The Republican president has said the United States faces an "invasion" by "foreign criminals."

In February, Trump invoked rarely used wartime legislation to fly some 250 Venezuelan migrants to El Salvador without any court hearings, alleging they belonged to the Tren de Aragua gang, a charge that their families and lawyers deny.



US President Donald Trump speaks to reporters as he arrives for a House Republican meeting at the US Capitol in Washington, DC on May 20, 2025. (Photo by AFP)

Finance Bill 2025: KRA Commissioner General questioned about data privacy clause

By: Seth Olale

Both new and existing users will be required to verify their ages using their national Identification Cards before accessing social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn if a new bill is passed into law.

The Kenya Information and Communications (Amendment) Bill, 2025, sponsored by Aldai Member of Parliament (MP) Marianne Kitany, seeks to prevent children from accessing harmful sites and subsequently provide the right ecosystem. "The society as a whole, including all participants of the Internet eco-system, are responsible for safeguarding the rights of children in their access and use of information, communication and technological (ICT) products and services", read a part of the bill.

If approved, Content Service Providers (CSPs) and Application Service Providers (ASPs) will be required to implement age verification measures on all users.

For that to be achieved, mobile service providers will be required to take specific steps to ensure users of specific SIM cards are fully registered.

The lawmaker argued that the measures put in place by specific platforms requiring users to input their age are often bypassed by keying in false dates and pseudonyms, making the measures ineffective.

If implemented, Kenya will join other nations that restrict social media access to underage users.

While a universal system is not in place, some nations have initiated reforms to enhance age-appropriate content.



KRA Commissioner General Humphrey Wattanga speaks when he appeared before a Parliamentary committee session on September 17, 2024. PHOTO | COURTESY

USA

Musk says he'll resume working '24/7' at his companies, X outage mostly restored

By Reuters

Elon Musk's social media platform X was largely restored for most users after an outage that impacted tens of thousands of users in the United States on Saturday, according to outage tracking website Downtdetector.com, following which he said that he is "back to spending 24/7" at his companies.

At its peak around 8:51 a.m. ET (1251 GMT), there were more than 25,800 incidents of people reporting issues with the social media platform, according to Downtdetector, which tracks outages by collating status reports from a number of sources including users. The number of outages has since gone below 650, as of 12:09 p.m. ET.

"Back to spending 24/7 at work and sleeping in conference/server/factory rooms. I must be super focused on X/xAI and Tesla (plus Starship launch next week), as we have critical technologies rolling out," Musk, said in an X post.

Thousands of users in other countries, such as Germany, Spain, France, India, Canada, Australia, and Britain, also experienced issues with accessing the social media platform at the height of the outage, ac-

ording to Downtdetector data.

X did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment on the outage.

Musk, who spent nearly \$300 million to back U.S. President Donald Trump's presidential campaign and other Republicans last year, said on Tuesday he will cut his political spending substantially, signalling that he is shifting his attention back to his business empire amid growing investor concerns.

He led the so-called Department of Government Efficiency, which sought to eliminate tens of thousands of jobs and cancel billions of dollars in contracts and grants.

However, his political views triggered waves of protests against Tesla in the U.S. and Europe, leading to a slump in sales, with the automaker reporting its first drop in annual deliveries last year.

The amount of time Musk has spent at Tesla has concerned some investors. Looking to ease those worries, Musk told investors last month he would reduce his time with DOGE to a day or two a week from May.



Elon Musk speaks during the first cabinet meeting hosted by U.S. President Donald Trump, at the White House in Washington, DC, U.S., February 26, 2025.

EU calls for 'respect' after Trump threatens 50% tariffs

The European Union's trade chief said the 27-member bloc is committed to securing a trade deal with the US based on "respect" not "threats".

By:
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EU Trade Commissioner Maros Sefcovic.

Worth Noting:

- Writing on social media, Trump said: "Our discussions with [the EU] are going nowhere," adding that there would be no tariffs for products built or manufactured in the US.
- "I'm not looking for a deal - we've set the deal," he told reporters later, before immediately adding that a big investment in the US by a European company might make him open to a delay.
- The EU is one of the Washington's largest trading partners, sending more than \$600bn (€528bn; £443bn) in goods last year and buying \$370bn worth, US government figures show.
- Reacting to Trump's threats, European governments warned that higher tariffs would be damaging to both sides.
- "We do not need to go down this road," said Ireland's Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Micheál Martin. "Negotiations are the best and only sustainable way forward."

The European Union's trade chief said the 27-member bloc is committed to securing a trade deal with the US based on "respect" not "threats".

It comes after US President Donald Trump threatened to slap a 50% tariff on all goods sent to the US from the EU.

"The EU's fully engaged, committed to securing a deal that works for both," EU Trade Commissioner Maros Sefcovic said after a call with US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer and Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick.

"EU-US trade is unmatched & must be guided by mutual respect, not threats. We stand ready to defend our interests."

Earlier on Friday, Trump expressed impatience with the pace of ongoing EU-US trade negotiations, saying his plan to raise tariffs on 1 June was set.

Writing on social media,

Trump said: "Our discussions with [the EU] are going nowhere," adding that there would be no tariffs for products built or manufactured in the US.

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"We do not need to go down this road," said Ireland's Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Micheál Martin. "Negotiations are the best and only sustainable way forward."

France's Foreign Minister

Laurent Saint-Martin, said: "We are maintaining the same line: de-escalation, but we are ready to respond."

German Economy Minister Katherina Reiche said the bloc "must do everything" to reach a solution with the US. While Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof told reporters that he backed the EU's strategy in trade talks and "we have seen before that tariffs can go up and down in talks with the US".

The EU is negotiating with the US as a bloc, though Stephen Moore, a former economic advisor to Trump, told the BBC: "What may happen in Europe... is that we may try to negotiate individually with countries in Europe."

He added that in his opinion Trump's "ultimate aim is really to decouple not just the US but the whole world from Chinese influence which would be a very good thing if he could pull that off".

In early April, Trump announced tariffs against a long list of countries, including a 20% tax on most EU goods being sold into the US.

Soon afterwards, the president paused the higher tariffs for three months, until 8 July, to allow for more negotiations, but kept a 10% baseline tax in place against the US's trade partners.

Higher US tariffs also remained in place against China though they were substantially lowered.

Despite the climbdown from Trump, the US kept a 25% tariff against EU steel and aluminium imports in place.

The EU has threatened - and paused - its own measures against the US. It said it would introduce a 25% tariff on €18bn (\$20bn; £15bn) worth of US goods coming into Europe but this has been put on hold.

It is also currently consulting on additional measures

against US imports into the US valued at €95bn.

Trump's complaints about Europe have focused on what he claims is an uneven trade relationship - the EU sells more goods to the US than it buys from America. Trump blames a trade deficit on policies that he claims are unfair to American companies, and he has specifically raised concerns about policies related to cars and agricultural products.

Trump also warned Apple that he would impose a 25% import tax "at least" on iPhones not manufactured in America, later widening the threat to any smartphone.

Shares in the US and EU fell on Friday after the latest threats, with America's S&P 500 down about 0.7% and Germany's Dax and France's Cac 40 ending the day down more than 1.5%.