



AROUND Africa

Jan-March 2011

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1 Africa, it is said, is a continent always gripped by paradox. On the one hand, its people are resilient and hopeful while on the other, its leaders are self-serving and do not readily respect the will and aspirations of their people. Recent events on the continent appear to underline this perspective.

2 After its election, Ivory Coast saw the incumbent, Laurent Gbagbo, nullify about 400,000 votes in order to declare himself the winner. The United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Commission of West Africa States (ECOWAS), a regional body, as well as the United States and European Union have all endorsed Mr. Alassane Outtarra, who was declared the winner by the Elections Commission, as the duly elected President of the country. Yet, Mr. Gbagbo has refused to cede power and step down.

4 As a result the country is gripped by a political impasse occasioned by violence which has resulted in hundreds of deaths. Gbagbo's supporters including state security forces have been accused of committing most of the violence. The country appears to be on a precipice of returning to war. Numerous international efforts aimed at resolving the impasse have so far proven unsuccessful.

6 Meanwhile, in Tunisia, the people took to the street in protest against the military dictatorship of President Ben Ali, who came to power in 1987 following a bloodless coup d'état. He remained in power for more than 23 years through successive elections. All this time, he was supported by the European Union and the United States, which saw him as an ally in the war against terrorism. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) portrayed Tunisia as one of the most successful African countries given its obeisance to their policies like removing tariffs and subsidies to the poor, so the rich got richer and poor got poorer.

It was within this context in the town of Sidi Bouzid that a young university graduate, Mohammed Bouzazi, an unemployed street peddler, found himself. Mr. Bouzazi's produce had been confiscated by the police. Frustrated, forlorn and with no prospects in sight, he set himself ablaze in protest. This ignited what has been labeled the "Jasmine Revolution." Word spread, people came into the streets and the President abdicated and fled to Saudi Arabia. The Tunisia story has brought hope and reaffirmed the power of the people against dictatorial regimes, not only in Africa but elsewhere in the Middle East. The contagion has spread to Egypt resulting in the end of the three decade reign of President Mubarak. The people's movement to end dictatorial regimes continues with the violence in Libya.

It is against this background that we analyze the presidential elections in Africa in 2011. It is commonly said that for every two steps Africa makes along the path to democratic governance one giant step is taken backwards. Though this may be true, it is not because Africans do not want control of their lives, but because of the prevailing circumstances with the body polity

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online survey
about *Justice in the
World*

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"Political Fever" Continued on page 7

Mining Ban and US law: Cause for Economic Crisis in Eastern Congo?

By Babati Jacques, Policy Analyst

Since President Barack Obama signed into law the Conflict Mineral Act on July 21, 2010 (section 1502, of US public law N0 111-203), non-profit organizations and electronics companies have been working to influence the Department of State and the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) as they implement the law. Although the US Conflict Mineral law is a major step toward regulating the illegal trade of conflict minerals from the Congo, it will not create meaningful results on the ground until the root causes of the conflict are addressed.

Voices from the ground, including those of Congolese mineral dealers, see the law as an embargo on Congolese natural resources instead of a helping hand. The Congolese government has yet to realize that the US law is an empowerment tool to regionally and internationally stop the illegal mineral trade from war-torn eastern Congo.

There is no doubt that the road to conflict-free mineral trade will be the result of a well-governed Congo. On September 11, 2010, the Congolese president put a ban on artisanal mining in the North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema provinces. After realizing that the ban was more of a problem than a solution, President Kabila has ordered the ban to be lifted beginning March 10, 2011. The government believed that a moratorium on mining was a better way to reduce or stop illegal mining and the violence associated with it. It also saw this as the first step towards setting up a formal mining strategy that would allow it to control the revenues and generate income for the state and stimulate the local economy.

However, as predicted, the moratorium has had a negative impact on many people, some of whom depended on artisanal mining even before the conflict. The South Kivu based organization, *Groupe Chrétien d'Appui aux Orphelins et Vulnérables pour la Paix* (Christian Group for Peace, Assistance to Orphans and the Vulnerable) and other independent observers confirm that since the president suspended artisanal mining, the Congolese army is actively involved in black market mining and sales of the minerals from the sites affected by the moratorium. The irony is that the army was deployed to the mineral-rich areas in eastern Congo in order to secure and protect the mining sites from illegal access and exploitation by foreign or local rebel groups.

On a positive note, the *Groupe Chrétien d'Appui aux Orphelins et Vulnérables pour la Paix* reported that some civilians who could no longer work in the mines have returned to farming. This may bring about an increase in food production.

According to mining business owners, the passage of the US law is believed to have triggered President Kabila's decision to ban artisanal mining. Consequently, many people have lost jobs, cash flow has decreased and other business sectors have

been adversely affected. Furthermore, the newly unemployed may see joining rebel groups which control certain mines as their only option. The fact is whether they join the armed groups or continue working in the mines in the current conditions, they are still actively participating in the illicit conflict mineral network responsible for maintaining the insecurity in these areas.

The challenge at hand in this case is whether it is easier to deal with armed members of the conflict mineral network or unarmed and innocently complicit members of the same network who are in it only because they need to make ends meet for themselves and their families. The enemy of peace is the armed groups, not the food vendors at the mining sites or the victims of modern slavery forced by people with guns to work for little to no money to save their lives. Some of these people have been displaced multiple times during the fight for control of the mining area. After surviving displacement, they have no other choice than to live with and work for whoever is in control of their land.

Can the Congolese government, which has failed to stop the embezzlement of millions of dollars per year in border transactions, really solve the conflict mineral problem in eastern Congo? It is doubtful. Members of the government are part of the same mafia-like network which it claims it would like to stop. What king can wage a war against himself? Evidence shows that whoever is appointed as border agent or law enforcer in rich mineral areas must kick back money to the person who appointed him. This is the nature of institutionalized corruption.

Even if the mining industry was formalized and taxes were collected, people have no confidence in the government because the funds collected through taxes would disappear into the pockets of the elite. However, there is no doubt that if Congo was well governed by an effective leader, it would be able to pay its debts, pay government employees fairly and attend to other needs of its citizens.

If applied, the US conflict mineral law could significantly help reduce the plundering of Congolese resources. But, the Congolese government itself must do more, not only in terms of regulation and enforcing mining industry laws, but exhibiting good governance, protecting human rights, implementing security reform, strengthening regional political structures and respecting the rule of law. ■



Photo: Rocco Puopolo

The Softer Side of AFRICOM

By Melaura Homan-Smith, Program and Development, AFJN

In 1961, just three days before John F Kennedy was inaugurated, President Eisenhower gave his historic farewell speech where he said: "We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex." Fifty years later this poignant phrase has more than fulfilled his prediction. The effects of this complex military behemoth are being felt at home and abroad.

AFRICOM, the US Africa military command, embodies the evolution of the armed forces' mandate to secure American interests in Africa. AFRICOM is not good for Africa. Its detrimental effects, on many levels of society, may not be immediately apparent because AFRICOM has redoubled its public relations and communications efforts. While there is a real need for security, what kind of security and provided by whom?

The outcry in Africa among civil society voices was so negative that AFRICOM relocated its planned Headquarters from Africa to Stuttgart, Germany. Rather than acknowledging that AFRICOM's stated mission might be the cause of dissatisfaction, the Department of Defense blamed lack of understanding resulting from poor public relations. In a paper titled "US Engagement in Africa: A Case Study in AFRICOM Strategic Communications," three US Army officers "recommend methods for successful application of US messages" convincing various audiences that AFRICOM is beneficial to the US and Africa.

Considering that many regimes in Africa took power by means of military might at the expense of democratic process, AFRICOM's partnership with them may make them complicit in atrocities and oppression they commit in the name of security. This is consistent with the US's tendency to ignore the indiscretions of dictatorial regimes while they serve US interests. For example, US forces and hired contractors were involved in training and arming Ugandan and Rwandan soldiers who participated in the brutal invasion war of the Democratic Republic of Congo from 1996-2003. Had US forces or other agencies been tracking where these armed troops end up, perhaps the devastating war could have been mitigated. The lack of accountability and nationality of transnational contracting companies involved in such trainings is a huge problem. They pledge allegiance to the bottom line.

As if direct military involvement wasn't enough, AFRICOM also has a broader "soft power and capacity building of allies" mandate. For example, AFRICOM's Humanitarian Assis-

tance team recently completed an \$84,000 construction project for a special-needs school in Kano, northern Nigeria. Anthony Holmes, AFRICOM's deputy to the commander for civil-military activities, remarked at the school's dedication: "Education is not a primary function of a U.S. military command or indeed any military, but in our approach to providing security in Africa we have adopted a broad spectrum that

"Considering that many regimes in Africa took power by means of military might at the expense of democratic process, AFRICOM's partnership with them may make it complicit in atrocities and oppression they commit in the name of security."

includes development and diplomacy." "We have adopted" this development and diplomacy, whereas international civilian organizations have conceived and done the best parenting research on strategies for

strengthening civil societies.

So, why shouldn't we support the military expressing its softer side? First, because this is not a role for the military: US Ambassadors and the US Agency for International Development exist to handle development. AFRICOM has been advising on Operation Enduring Freedom Trans Sahara (an "initiative to assist traditionally moderate Muslim governments . . . to combat the spread of extremist ideology and terrorism") by sharing information and training ground soldiers in countering extremist ideology. AFRICOM funds this "train, advise and assist" initiative in ten African countries. Operation Objective Voice is the army's foray into influencing the media against extremism, including starting a civilian-style blog. This attempt to spread the premier American objective of preempting terrorism could serve to radicalize moderates by maintaining such an invasive military presence. They are clearly just as guilty of spreading an ideology as any other group.

The presence of military personnel and war affects more than just security issues. Language and customs are changed. Military terms are now adopted into common speech. For example, in Sierra Leone it used to be that only trucks were "off-loaded" (first meant in the sense of being emptied, later to mean searched) at a security checkpoint. Now people, too, are off-loaded (frisked) at checkpoints or while being robbed on the street. Even in our US English we have targets to aim at, bullet-points in presentations, and being missing in action, among thousands of other military words and phrases. Steps to militarize culture and education in Africa will be, or perhaps already are, the next front for the "strategic communications" which will create an environment that makes Africans more comfortable with a continued military presence, be it of the US or their own.

"AFRICOM" Continued on page 5

Justice in the World, 40 years later

By Fr. Rocco Puopolo, s.x. Executive Director

"If you want peace, work for justice." This pithy saying can still be found today as a bumper sticker on a number of cars in Church parking lots. It has been a long serving indicator of our desire to reconcile the brokenness of our world, a theme found in the restoration prayer of the psalmist as imagined in a dream scene of a renewed community in psalm 85, personifying characters of kindness, truth, justice and peace coming together as if long lost friends. In the words of the preface to the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, we read, "(T)he joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ."

This novel intuition of solidarity with the joys and sufferings of humanity was further developed in 1971 as Bishop delegates came back to Rome for the first of many Synod meetings. At this Synod they looked at practical ways to implement Vatican II and gave particular attention on how to articulate this concern for justice.

The document *Justice in the World*, released in November of that year, is the product of the bishops' reflection and has become the reason why our church today has such a variety of justice

and peace commissions on all levels, from Roman offices to local parish committees.

Justice in the World brought the Church's social ministry from the "fringe" (a common thought that it was up to religious communities to do these ministries) to the very center of what it means to be Christian as part of the renewal of Vatican II. A wide variety of justice and peace reflection centers as well as advocacy offices were formed to attend to the many issues that were raised by the Synod.

Our very own Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN) is one of these responses to this intuition by three missionary religious communities in 1983. Many Catholic high schools established a Service Week that is obligatory for seniors before they graduate. Parish Youth programs have summer work camps in Appalachia and central cities and beyond. Colleges have alternative spring breaks or practical hands-on courses where the method used is participatory action research. All of these encourage empowerment, sense of personal and communal rights, relationship building, mutual trust and respect. It was the basis for our own US Bishops' Social Pastoral Letters reflecting on War and Peace (1983), the Economy (1986) and Mission (1986). All these can find their roots in this Synod and document.

Furthermore, the 1971 Synod fathers state that "(A)ction on

behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation" *Justice in the World* (no.6). This phrase alone electrified those who were already engaged in justice work at the time. Another line from the document continues to ring true today and challenges the current world order as we know it. "(E)conomic injustice and lack of social participation keep people from attaining their basic human and civil rights." (9) A third aspect of the document underlined a more integrated approach to what we understand human development to mean, leading to liberation for the oppressed and the oppressor.

At a recent AFJN staff retreat, we identified several positive developments in the strategic formation of pastoral centers and programming that support the integral human development intuition that *Justice in the World* speaks about. For

example, the publication of *Training for Transformation* by Ann Hope and Sally Timmel served as the guide for a vast number of DELTA

(Development Education Literacy Training for Adults) training sessions that empowered the

people in Africa. Many dioceses on the continent have Justice and Peace (JP) commissions at the parish level and in small Christian communities in the outstations. In the diocese I served in Sierra Leone all JP local committees, initiated by the Catholic parish, are open for full participation by Traditional Religion members, other Christian Churches and Muslim communities as they search and work together for justice.

Over the years, especially in the 1990's, conflict resolution and restoration studies, programs and training were a priority to insure that post conflict reconstruction would lead to sustained peace, justice and progress for the development of African communities. Also, the Church in many countries contributed to general civic education leading up to elections, HIV/AIDS outreach and the like. In some countries, the Church is the only reputable agent of civil society. In 2009 at the Second African Synod, the bishops reviewed the progress as well as the continuing challenges regarding justice and peace in Africa. A lot of progress has been made, but our US and international press don't pay much attention or acknowledge these good news stories.

It is a historical fact that since 1971 some of the most devastating wars have been played out on the continent, most as proxy wars between the world's super powers, US and USSR,

"Justice in the World brought the Church's social ministry from the "fringe" to the very center of what it means to be Christian"

(Continued from page 4)

over the control of resources. Not much as changed. The arms and drug trades flourish. The number of victims of human trafficking and the movement of refugees both internally and externally has never been higher. Countries such as Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Uganda and Angola have had long protracted wars. Conflicts in Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Zimbabwe and Mauritania/Western Sahara were shorter but just as brutal. Now the proxy tensions are between US/Europe and China. Journalistic freedom, literacy and movements for a more participatory and democratic governance are threatened today in Africa. Government criticism of Christian Radio for being political is on the rise.

Justice in the World deserves a read once more, not because of this anniversary, but because we need to stir the baptismal flames of grace that move us to act with justice, challenging this generation of Christians to put word into action. As a way of shedding needed light on the outcomes of this document and the contributions of many Church agents over these 40 years, this year, in our newsletter, AFJN will research, reflect and report on the many initiatives that continue to be sparked by this Synod of 1971. We may offer a webinar on these findings each year for the next three years, leading up to our 2013

Conference which will celebrate AFJN's 30th anniversary. There will also be initiatives encouraging local Africa Summits to happen in various cities throughout the US bringing these findings closer to your home.

Our corpus of Catholic social thought is rich, but much of it remains a dead letter. As many of us know, justice and peace offices are the first to merge with others, be downsized or terminated on congregational, diocesan and parish levels. I pray that the day may come when we do not need justice and peace committees, reflections centers and advocacy offices, not because of financial restraints due to the present economic crisis but because we have implemented the ways of the Reign of God and renewed relationships one with the other in true and strong solidarity. ■

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AFJN ON CAPITOL HILL

On March 2nd AFJN, as part of the African Great Lakes Advocacy Coalition, participated in a congressional briefing for members of the House and their staff in order to raise the profile of the **UN Mapping Report Exercise** released on October 1, 2010. AFJN's own Bahati Jacques spoke on the panel: "The goal was to rally U.S. support for justice for the crimes committed during the war against Congo from 1996 to 2003 by the Rwandan, Ugandan, and Burundian armies, their Congolese collaborators and others named in the report." The briefing offered some solid background witness and research that would help Congress take a clear stance on this issue particularly to support the UN Mapping Report recommendation to set up an in-depth investigation to determine whether the targeted and massive killing of Congolese, Burundian, and Rwandan Hutu were a genocide.

Representative Ann Marie Buerkle of the 25th Congressional District of New York and a member of the Subcommittee on Africa, addressed the panel and audience. She declared herself willing to work towards a hearing to further urge the US government to act for justice.

"AFRICOM" Continued from page 3

AFRICOM is not what Africa needs. So how could the US move forward with more helpful solutions?

- Strengthening communications with African civil society organizations and listening to what they have to say.
- Furthering the capacities of Africa's regional organizations such as the African Union (AU), the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) for West Africa, Southern African Development Community (SADEC) and others with genuine partnership.
- Addressing the need for security with more local police forces, be they chiefdom police services or other local police agencies.
- But most of all, America can start by guaranteeing and directing more funds to humanitarian development organizations and recognizing that a stabilized, healthy Africa which encourages accountable governments is good for everyone, even international business.

Speak up, speak out, break the silence! Because, as Eisenhower said: "To strive for less would be unworthy of a free and religious people." ■

2011, a Year of Transition for AFJN

Dear friends,

Like the sankofa bird on our Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN) logo which looks back to where it has been as it moves forward, I would like to offer a few thoughts and words of appreciation as we begin this year of transition. By the end of this summer we should have a new executive director in place. I am moving back to ministry with my Xaverian Community in Massachusetts. Melaura Homan-Smith joined Bahati and me on staff in January, replacing Allison Burket. Fr. Bob Dowd and Sr. Ann Oestreich are leaving the Board and we will have a few new Board members joining us at our June meeting.

These five years have been filled with challenge and growth both for each of us on staff as well as for AFJN itself. In spite of our recent financial challenges, we have been able to establish some creative programming that expanded our service beyond our annual conferences, research and newsletters. We initiated the annual Dyer Lecture Series, showcasing an aspect of Africa through the very voices of Africans studying here in Washington DC. We have held African Summits in three US cities with interest in another four to be planned in the near future. We have held one "Congo Voices" day event here in DC and hope to do more for other countries of Africa. We have expanded presence on college campuses, parishes and other centers where information and advocacy for Africa was welcomed through college chapter at Notre Dame University and St. Mary's University in Indiana, parish and colleges partnerships, conferences and the like.

We are strengthening partnerships with Pax Christi USA, JubileeUSA and JustFaith in order to be a resource for their membership on advocacy and education on behalf of Africa. We are forming links with many Africa Diaspora groups throughout the country, welcoming them into our programming, outreach and networks. We continue to have leadership roles in the many collaborative efforts here in Washington where advocates come together on Africa issues, whether it is with the Catholic Task Force for Africa, The Advocacy Network for Africa, Ecumenical Advocacy Days, The African Great Lakes Advocacy Coalition and more.

Our staff of three work hard, but there are many more who have been part of the efforts mentioned above. Thirty three university students have been interns since I have been director. Their names, pictures and work can be found on our website. Presently we have Mariama Jalloh, Sebastian Porter, Leo Tamakloe, and Fr. Joe Phiri, OMI in the office. Since I became AFJN director, I had the privilege to work with the following staff members who have now moved on to other services or further studies are: Michael Poffenberger, Phil Reed, Beth Tuckey and Allison Burket. I thank them all for sharing their interest and passion for Africa with us.

And guiding our work and clarifying our vision is our Board whose names and which institution they belong to is found on our website. We have others who serve on Board committees but are not board members: Ms. Anne Marie Hanson, Ms. Frances Michalkewicz, Br. Dave Andrews CSC, Fr. Norm Brockman SM, Fr. Clarence Williams CPPS, Mr. Myles McCabe, Sr. Ruth Emke and Br. Robert Metzger. Past Board members are Fr. Bob Dowd CSC, Sr. Ann Oestreich IHM, Fr. Luigi Zanotto MCCJ, Sr. Madeline Therese Wilhoit CSC, Dr. Michael Gable, Sr. Connie Krautkremer MM, Sr. Pat Gallogoly and Fr. Norm Brockman SM.

And there are more. There is YOU. There is still a lot of work towards educating and advocating for Africa that is to be done. As I mentioned in my keynote at our 1999 annual meeting, "Becoming Respectfully Insistent for the Love of God and Africa," the issues, the people and the politics of Africa are still very much an unknown here in the US. Our voices, our experience, our perspective needs to be put out there. Isn't that what AFJN is all about? We need to make the call for solidarity with Africa real. The cumulative experience of all of us who served in Africa is needed to strengthen AFJN. We as individuals, AFJN as a network, as well as the people we advocate for, all gain. So, continue to be an active part of AFJN, responding to our e-blasts, attending our events, supporting our network in any way you can. Thank you so very much for being there with and for us and enjoy the blessing that this new year brings.

—Fr. Rocco Puopolo, s.x. Executive Director



AROUND AFRICA IS NOW ISSUED QUARTERLY

Around Africa will now only be published quarterly beginning in 2011.

"Political Fever" continued from page 1

within the African continent – a result of history, greed, corruption as well as geo-politics, neocolonialism and the doctrine of the free market.

As of March, in 2011 African nations scheduled for presidential elections include: Djibouti, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Benin, Cape Verde, Gambia, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, the Seychelles, Madagascar, Zambia, Zimbabwe and maybe Egypt given the current situation.

Leading African commentators, activists, politicians and scholars continue to debate what form or forms should democracy in Africa take. There are those who contend that Western Democracy is an imposition upon Africa. This view holds that given Africa's history and the condition of state formation on the continent, western democracy is not the appropriate framework for governance. This view questions the relevance and efficacy of this form of democracy by pointing out a number of factors including the absence of class formation within which a given class interest is formed and then canvassed among the electorates by way of political party formations. It is furthered that in the absence of class formation, ethnicity becomes the vehicle for political mobilization resulting in conflicts, violence and civil war. This view also points to the slim number of African middle class to lead the democracy project. It is suggested that because the vast majority of Africans are illiterate, live in rural areas with very little or no contact with big centers, and are deprived of all kinds of development opportunities, western democracy will hardly work.

Another point of view suggests that popular participation, sometimes referred to as participatory democracy, is the preferred paradigm best suited to African conditions. In the minds of its proponents, Africans cherish consensus over voting and that democracy, as is manifested in voting, is a zero sum game, where the will and interests of the minority or marginalized groups are vanquished. This view contends that community should be at the core of decision making simply because they are the ones most impacted by such decisions particularly when it comes to war, justice and peace.

Africans have struggled against oppression to win their right to self-determination, independence, and justice. Therefore, it would appear most improbable for them to be unable to fashion a system that would guarantee a dignified livelihood which they so valiantly desire and deserve.

Therefore the debates about the nature, form and character of democratic processes in Africa have to, as a matter of moral imperative, be informed by a number of values and principles

found almost anywhere else in the world and especially in Africa. These values and principles can be categorized as follows:

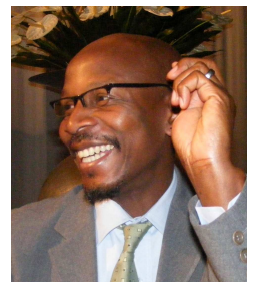
"What is clear is that the possibility for improving the material conditions of African people can only come about once they are able to choose their own leaders, freely and fairly."

- A constitutional framework which guarantees and protect the basic rights of citizens including the rights to assemble, association, free speech and right to information,
- A political system with checks and balances, transparent and accountable, with institutions that ensures that rights are enjoyed by all and all are equal before the law,
- An economic justice system that assures affordable access to health, housing, education and opportunities to be productive,
- A secure environment that ensures the dignity of the human person, the right to a dignified livelihood, security and
- A developmental framework that takes into cognizance the protection of the environment or environmental justice and people-centered sustainable development.

Yet, as things now stand in Africa, these principles and values are either being paid lip-service, pursued haphazardly, if at all, or are ridden roughshod over by the powers that be. This is the case of Rwanda, Ivory Coast, the DRC and Sierra Leone to name a few. However, there may be some African leaders who are attempting to pursue these objectives tirelessly, but possibly unsuccessfully, given the global imperative that suggests the absence of an alternative to the free market paradigm, among other obstacles.

The process of entrenching democratic practices in a country certainly has its pros and cons. What is clear is that the possibility for improving the material conditions of African people can only come about once they are able to choose their own leaders, freely and fairly. The chosen leaders must be responsive to the real needs of the people in concrete ways by improving their living conditions and creating a conducive environment in which their children can grow with the hope that a certain and prosperous future awaits them. ■

(This is an edited article. See the complete article at AFJN.org. It includes an appraisal and analysis of some of the recently held elections and upcoming ones. For more of Ezekiel's work, see his blog: www.ezekielpajibo.wordpress.com)



AROUND AFRICA HAS GONE DIGITAL!

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Africa Faith and Justice Network, inspired by the Gospel and informed by Catholic Social Teaching, educates and advocates for just relations with Africa.

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