



Elizabeth II Dies at 96

Queen Elizabeth II: Longest-Reigning Female Monarch In History

Elizabeth Alexandra Mary was born on April 21, 1926, in London, England. She was the longest-reigning monarch in Britain, the second longest-reigning monarch in the world, and the longest-reigning female monarch in history. Her parents were King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, the last emperor and empress of India. She was named Elizabeth after her mother, Alexandra after her paternal great-grandmother, who had died six months earlier, and Mary after her paternal grandmother. She was proclaimed queen after the death of her father King George VI, on the morning of 6 February 1952. She kept Elizabeth as her regnal name and became known officially as, Elizabeth II, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of her other realms and territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.



On the 20 of November 1947, she married Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten (born Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark), who at the time served in the British Royal Navy and was a distant cousin of hers. On that same evening, Prince Philip was created Duke of Edinburgh, Baron Greenwich, Earl of Merioneth, and a Knight of the Garter. They had four children, Prince (now King) Charles, Prince of Wales, Princess Anne, Princess Royal, Prince Andrew Duke of York, and Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex and Viscount Severn. On her accession to the throne, her eldest son, Prince Charles became heir apparent.

Read P3

#Enough: A Look At Sexual Assault In Mauritania

P.7

US Embassy assists people affected by heavy rains and severe flooding in Kaedi, Dar el Baida and Dar Naim



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Read P3

Nouakchott Threatened by Flooding

P.6

Sahel Foundation, in Cooperation with Princeton University, Publishes Findings of the Arab Barometer Survey

هيئة الساحل بالتعاون مع جامعة برينستون الامريكية ندوة صحفية لنشر نتائج استبيان الباروميتر العربي حول التنمية في موريتانيا
 WITH PRINCETON UNIVERSITY, SAHEL FOUNDATION ORGANIZES CONFERENCE TO PUBLISH THE RESULTS OF THE ARAB BAROMETER SURVEY ON DEVELOPMENT IN MAURITANIA.



On the night of September 15th, 2022, at a conference center in Nouakchott, the Sahel Authority organized a press conference to announce the results of the Arab Barometer survey on development. The survey was completed in cooperation with Princeton University in a number of Arab countries, including Mauritania.

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Read P3

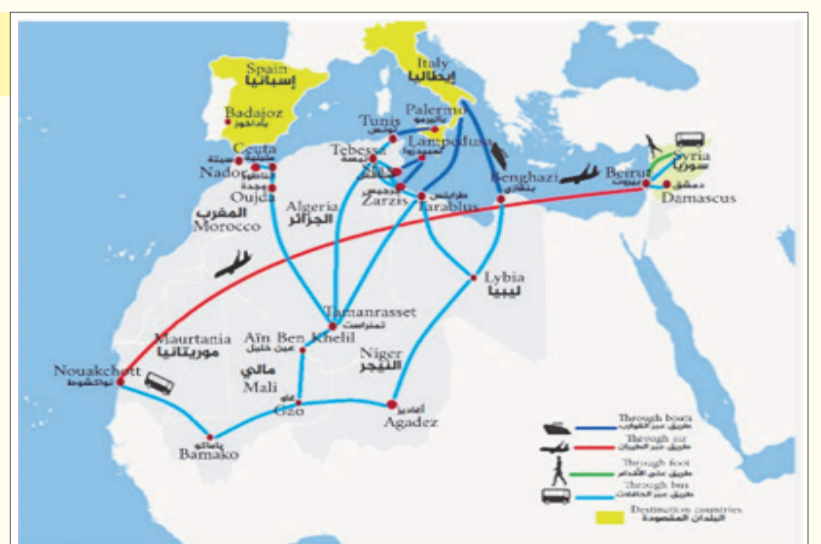
The Sahel:

Control for Clandestine Migration Routes... An Important Russian Goal?

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opposition from political elites in Bamako and the numerous armed groups operating in the country. The Russian presence in the Sahel has not been relegated to the military sphere. There is another aspect of the non-military dimension of Russia's activities in the region that has received little consideration.

P. 4-5



Irregular migration routes to Europe departing from the Sahel.



Ask an American :

To what extent have American Muslims contributed to building America?

Although Muslim Americans have always formed a small minority of the US population, they have punched above their weight in their contribution to American history and every aspect of modern life. Muslims are different from many other religions in the United States in that they are not exclusively from one ethnic group. Indeed, Arabs makeup neither a majority nor a plurality of Muslim Americans. Let's look at three famous Muslim Americans.

First is Yusuf Islam. If you ask most Americans who this is, they are unlikely to know the name. They would instead know him as Cat Stevens. Islam is a famous American folk singer who converted to Islam in his 20s. Although he was most popular in the 1970s, many young Americans can still recognize his music. I remember, for example, being taught to sing his song "Moonshadow" as a young child in elementary school.

Malcolm X is another famous Muslim American. Although controversial in his stances and his relationship with Islam, Malcolm X was a key leader in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. A contemporary of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X advocated for a more confrontational stance toward racism in the United States. Besides pushing forward the fight for civil rights, he was a prominent advocate for the spread of Islam among African Americans, beginning a conversion movement that continues to this day.

Last is arguably the most famous Muslim American: Muhammad Ali. Born Cassius Clay, Ali converted to Islam as a young

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 paper21@gmail.com

man. He would go on to be the greatest heavyweight boxer of all time and one of the greatest athletes of the 20th century. He placed great emphasis on his faith and served as a spokesman for Muslim Americans throughout his life. Most Americans, when asked to name a famous Muslim American, will point to Muhammad Ali.

Why do Americans like to use sarcasm?

I suspect that many readers of this column may not be familiar with sarcasm. Sarcasm is, very simply put, saying the opposite of how you actually feel to express a certain feeling. If for example, on a cold day I were to say, "nice and balmy today!" I would be using

sarcasm. The key to this example, which I cannot demonstrate in writing, is the use of tone. Nevertheless, sarcasm is a frequent part of daily speech among Americans, though some use it more than others. I, for example, am sarcastic constantly, often to the chagrin of those around me.

There is no definite reason why Americans use sarcasm. It is more often used by men and in the North of the country, but these are not firm rules. Sarcasm is simply a way that Americans express how they are feeling.

It is important to be aware of your audience if you learn more about sarcasm and decide to start using it. Sarcasm has caused me problems when I have traveled to Mauritania and the rest of North Africa because, as far as I can tell, most people are not familiar with

sarcasm. Instead of the grins that my sarcasm would normally elicit in the United States, I am instead met with odd looks and puzzlement.

Why doesn't America use the metric system?

Simply put, there is no significant desire to use the metric system. Some industries, such as science, medicine, and the military use the metric system, but every other aspect of American life is measured in units. One factor in the continued use of the metric system is the lack of short-distance and small-scale trade between the United States and other countries. The United States is such a large market on its own that the cost of producing and measuring units in the imperial system is negligible.

Why are college sports so popular in the US?

Money and tradition are the two main reasons for the popularity of college sports in the United States. At the economic level, college athletic events – especially football and basketball – can be hugely profitable for universities and their surrounding towns and cities. At the level of tradition, college sports serve as a cohesive for a college community. Universities in the United States differ from those in the rest of the world in their attention to community-building. Athletics are a key part of the formation of a university's identity.

By Alex DiCenso

The More She Weighs, The More Men Gaze

Being morbidly obese was never considered out of key with the norms for female beauty.

Being so was and perhaps still is, the most crucial benchmark for femal good looks in the thick of Mauritanian society. It was once unsurprising and quite typical of Mauritanian girls to bow to a coercive fattening diet to get the body for whom their mothers craved as a prelude to marriage. To them, an obese bride is a token of affluence and a progeny of an ancient lineage, while a lean one is that of destitution, hideousness, and hardship.

Strikingly, in the countryside, Mauritanians would quite cling to the practice of fattening their girls. Girls are strictly instructed to consume more than five liters of milk each day and are forbidden from going outside in the heat as part of this tradition, which is usually overseen by elder women.

Coercive fattening, also known as «blouh» locally, has recently become less common and has only been practiced in rural and outlying areas



as awareness of the hazard to girls' health spread to large towns.

Girls who are coerced to gain weight face psychological intimidation and, in some cases, beatings with «Azaiar,» a piece of wood designed specifically for this purpose. They are not allowed to try out to shed the weight they gained over the fattening stage.

Women's rights groups in Maurita-

nia state that coercive fattening has a devastating effect on society because it makes people more susceptible to catching various ailments that spread at the speed of light.

The leader of the Association of Housewives of Families, Amina Bint Al-Mukhtar, states, «We shifted from natural fattening used in past customs to a new form of fattening using some grains used for animals.»

Bint Al-Mukhtar asserts that the majority of Mauritanian women «believe that having a large figure is the key to a woman's physical appeal».

Women's health advocacy groups in Mauritania have been working tirelessly to put an end to the fattening of girls in isolated and rural areas since some families began using veterinary drugs to speed up the process while posing serious health risks.

Albeit the fact that there has been a high-key substantial change in mindset and significant shift in thinking, Mauritanian women still bitterly recall the historical link and profoundly lament the past association between obesity and their yearning for beauty.

Written by
 Sid Ahmed Mheiham (also known as Uncle Sam)



Queen Elizabeth II: Longest-Reigning Female Monarch In History



She reigned over 32 sovereign states during her lifetime and 14 at the time of her death. Her reign saw the decolonization of Africa, the United Kingdom's accession to the European Communities and its withdrawal from the European Union (BREXIT), and many other significant historical events. Queen Elizabeth II called the year 1992 'Annus Horribilis', Latin for "a horrible year", after the separation of Prince Charles and Princess Diana, the separation of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson, and Princess Anne divorcing her husband Mark Phillips. A fire also broke out in Windsor Castle that same year. On September 8th, 2022, Queen Elizabeth II passed away in Baltimore Castle, Aberdeenshire, the United Kingdom at the age of 96. Prince Charles, became the King of the United Kingdom, alongside 14 other Commonwealth realms,

and the oldest person to assume the throne at the age of 73. Her death has reignited the discussion around monarchy and colonization. Elizabeth represented Britain, but it was also during her reign that the decolonization of many countries that were under British rule. It also restarted debates in countries that are still under the British monarchy.

Liz Truss Becomes UK Prime Minister



Official portrait of Liz Truss

Liz Truss, 47, became the UK's 56th prime minister after meeting with the Queen at Balmoral Castle on September 6, where she had been asked to form a new government. On her second day in office, and only after a few hours after her first big announcement of allocating more than 100 billion pounds as an energy package, she paid tribute to the queen. At the time of writing this piece, the new prime minister had attended a service of reflection in Scotland and is planning to attend the services, in Northern Ireland, England, and Wales later next week.

US Embassy assists people affected by heavy rains and severe flooding in Kaedi, Dar el Baida and Dar Naim



Development (USAID), will provide \$100,000 in immediate assistance to support the people affected by heavy rains and severe flooding in Kaedi, and the Dar el Baida and Dar Naim neighborhoods in Nouakchott. This initial rapid assistance will provide cash and non-food items to 3,540

people in 590 households to cover lost basic food and clothing, and access services such as water pumping or purchase of sandbags to prevent further damage to households. The assistance will also reduce the risk of infection, disease and further damage from flooding. The Embassy will continue to as-

sess and coordinate humanitarian efforts with the Government of Mauritania and other stakeholders. The United States stands with the Mauritanian people as they continue to face these severe floods and as they begin to recover.

Mauritania To Start Energy Production From Gas Field in 2023

The minister of Petrol, Energy, and Mines, Mr. Abdessalam Ould Mohamed Saleh, has stated while attending the MSGBC Oil, Gas & Power 2022, held in Dakar, that the government's main goal is to secure energy and guarantee every citizen's right of getting cheap electricity by the year 2030. The minister has expressed the government's plan to make the country a leader in producing and



exporting green energy and mining. He also announced that the work on the Greater Tortue Ahmeyim has reached 52% and is expected to start production next year. It is worth noting that Nouakchott has been selected to host the third edition of the MSGBC Oil, Gas & Power conference in 2023.

The Sahel Authority, in Cooperation with Princeton University, Publishes Findings of the Arab Barometer Survey

On the night of September 15th, 2022, at a conference center in Nouakchott, the Sahel Authority organized a press conference to announce the results of the Arab Barometer survey on development. The survey was completed in cooperation with Princeton University in a number of Arab countries, including Mauritania. In his opening speech, the head of the Sahel Authority, Ibrahim Ramdane, praised the choice of the Sahel Authority to publish the results of the questionnaire to the Mauritanian public, and stated that educational issues were a priority for most of the participants. The questionnaire showed that those polled sought educational reform in Mauritania and considered it one of the most important means to overcoming the many problems that the



country suffers from. Researcher Muhammad Abu Falgha, attending virtually, summarized the results of the questionnaire for the audience, which consisted of doctors, researchers, human rights activists, and media professionals representing a wide spectrum of Mauritanian society.

After the presentation of the questionnaire's findings, discussion was opened to the attendees. Participants focused on the questions asked in the questionnaire, as well as on the topics touched upon, such as girls' education, human rights violations, and societal satisfaction with the government.

The Sahel: Control for Clandestine Migration Routes... An Important Russian Goal?

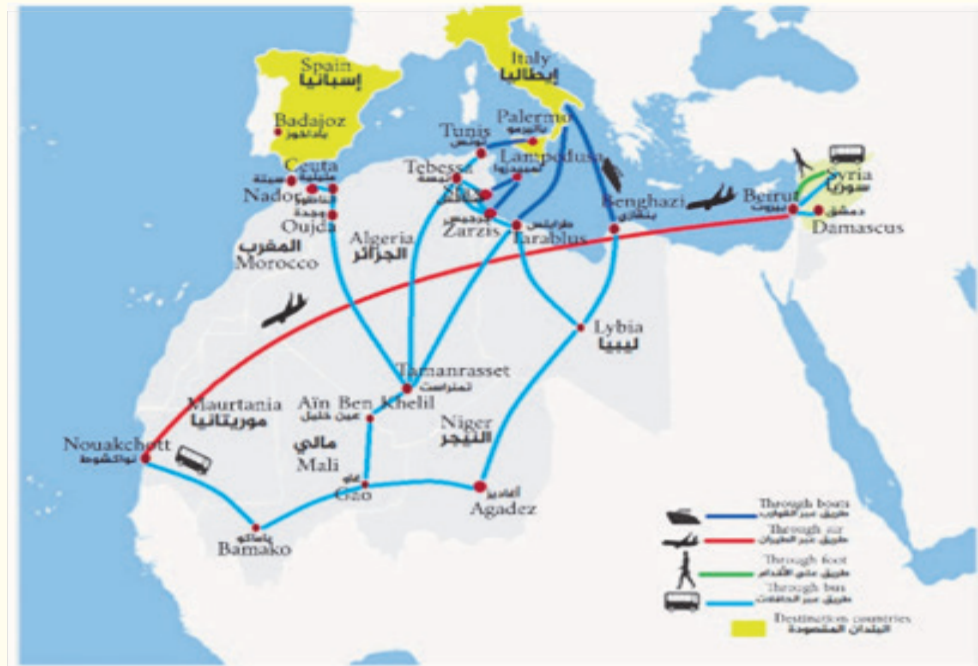
The Malian government's reliance on the Wagner Group has allowed for a strengthened Russian presence in the Sahel, as the group fills the security vacuum left by departing French forces. The Wagner Group has also been able to consolidate its presence in the country due to a lack of concerted opposition from political elites in Bamako and the numerous armed groups operating in the country.

The Russian presence in the Sahel has not been relegated to the military sphere. There is another aspect of the non-military dimension of Russia's activities in the region that has received little consideration. As Russia consolidates its influence in Mali, Moscow could seek to take advantage of the EU's inability to stanch irregular immigration across the Mediterranean by controlling the key nodes of the migration route that passes through Mali before heading north through Algeria or Libya. Europe-bound migration from sub-Saharan Africa remains a divisive issue among the members of the European Union, a fact which Russia could exploit in order to sow division among member states. Russia took careful note of the impact that the 2015 Migrant Crisis had on European policy and now likely seeks to exert its influence in key Sahelian "source states" such as Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, and Niger. This could also include transit states such as Algeria – with which Russia has a close historical relationship, Mauritania – whose relationship Russia has invested in more deeply in recent years, and Libya – where the Wagner group has maintained a presence since as early as 2015.

It is of course important to note that the Wagner Group – despite being a de facto arm of the Russian foreign policy apparatus – is still a private, profit-seeking company. Funneling migrants toward Europe in support of Russian foreign policy goals will not net the Wagner Group any financial gains. Controlling, or at least having a hand in the movement of drugs through the Sahel from West Africa to Europe, on the other hand, would net the Wagner Group the profits it needs to continue its work in the region. It is not a stretch of the imagination to see Wagner mercenaries – who are already strapped for cash on account of the Malian government's struggle to pay the group – moving into other, more profitable industries. This has already been seen in the group entrance in the mining sector in Mali and Sudan.

Russia in the Sahel

The states that make up the G5 Sahel group – Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger – make up a region fertile in commercial opportunities, precious minerals, and fossil fuels. Despite being an area presenting numerous challenges, Russia has focused its attention on exploiting the French withdrawal from the region and Moscow has concluded military cooperation agreements with various Sahelian countries, most recently Mauritania in June 2021. The Russian Deputy Minister of Defense, Colonel Alexander Fomin, and head of Mauritania's military, Hanana Ould Sidi, signed the "Agreement on Military Cooperation" between the two countries during the ninth Moscow Conference on International Security.



Irregular migration routes to Europe departing from the Sahel.

curity. Russia also signed similar military agreements with Mali in 2015 and Niger in 2017. Russia continues to expand its influence along the Sahelian band. Local media outlets recently reported that the Russian Wagner Group participated in fierce confrontations alongside the Front pour la Changement opposition group against the Chadian army that led to the death of former President Idriss Déby.

The Central African Republic (CAR)

In July 2021, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that it had sent an additional 600 troops to supplement its forces in CAR to train the army, police and national guard. With the new surge, the number of Russian soldiers in Central Africa will rise to 1,135. This surge came as Moscow is vying for influence in the troubled African country with France, which in its turn deploying some 300 troops there.

The members of the Wagner Group are active in CAR to train the army, guard VIPs, combat insurgents and terrorist groups, and protect gold, diamond, and uranium facilities in conflict zones. Indicators of Russia's Growing Influence on the African Continent

There are a number of indications of the extent to which Russian influence is expanding in Africa. This is evident in a number of notable events in several African States, most notably:

Russia has surpassed France in CAR and appears to be close to doing the same in Mali and Chad (need more evidence on Chad). France has already announced the suspension of its joint military operations in Mali, reasoning that France was unlikely to succeed under the current situation in Mali. Assimi Goïta, the head of the Malian transition government has decried the role of France in the country, and the Malian public – seeing what it believes to be the positive results of Wagner's presence in CAR – frequently demonstrates in the streets of Bamako waving Russian flags and portraits of Vladimir Putin. The deep ties Russia has cultivated on the continent have enabled Moscow to assume sensitive positions in a number of African

States. In May 2018, for example, the President of the Central African Republic appointed Valery Zakharov as National Security Adviser. In 2019, Russia signed a bilateral agreement with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), facilitating the deployment of Russian military advisers among the Congolese Armed Forces.

Another indicator of Russia's growing influence concerns arms sales. Since 2010, Russia has become the main supplier of military technology to a number of African states and has subsequently become the largest supplier of arms on the entire African continent, surpassing even the United States. The largest percentage of Russian arms sales are to Algeria (58.64%), Egypt (25.96%), Uganda (5.17%), Sudan (2.63%) and Angola (2.11%). Of Africa's four largest arms suppliers in 2017, Russia ranked first with 37.6%, followed by the US 16.3%, France 14.6% and then China 9.2%. The key to Russia's success on the African market is Moscow's lack of conditions requiring adherence to human rights laws, political reforms, party pluralism, or other human rights commitments.

Another example of successful Russian influence in Africa can be seen in Sudan. There, Russia appears to have maintained its influence among military leaders who eventually ousted President Omar al-Bashir, including preserving agreements on the mining sector negotiated under Bashir's regime. The presence of a Russian military base in Sudan is another important development, indicating Moscow's success in returning to Port Sudan after four decades of absence from the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea.

Russia has achieved military and security successes in Africa by occupying the top spot as a superpower pulling threads in central and southern Libya on the peripheries of French influence in Niger and Chad. Moscow also nominally stabilized CAR and now provides security and political support to President Faustin-Archange Touadéra's regime. This was followed by the devolution of the political and security situation in the Republic of Mali and the military coup d'état that shook the French presence in this western African country. This has gradually led to the emergence of Malian voices demanding that Rus-



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sia, rather than France, come to their country to restore security. France is perceived as having failed to achieve security in the country, to the extent that the African Union even commended Russia's effective role in stabilizing Africa and its desire to cooperate in security matters.

All these events point to Russia's success in extending its influence on the African continent, as well as several other strategic factors in Moscow that enable it to take advantage of African states, including public perceptions that Russia:

- Is committed to decolonization in Africa;
- Has no desire to subjugate Africa politically or economically.
- Does not see Africa as a risk in terms of migration and has always been supportive of African states' aspirations for independent development and growth.

Russia has pursued a commercial and investment strategy that imposes none of the conditions or restrictions imposed by comparable project by Western countries or even China. The United States and the European Union consistently impose conditions related to human rights, freedom of expression, and other political development issues. China has flooded the targets of its investments with considerable debt. In the face of these two options, many countries now see Russia as a prime alternative for trade and investment.

When it comes to voting in international institutions and in the United Nations, African countries count for nearly a quarter of the General Assembly's votes. Many of them have supported Russia in recent votes. This includes both on Ukraine and other issues that concern Russia, such as Syria. Africa also stood by Moscow on the December 2018 resolution condemning Russia's militarization of Crimea, the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, and Russia has actively worked to cultivate regimes in Africa as potential allies in blocking Western efforts against its interests through United Nations organizations and agencies.

Russia views Africa as a means by which to weaken the West's dominance, find partners in its objectives and interests, and create economic opportunities for Russian companies, especially after the closure of Western markets to Moscow because of sanctions imposed on it by the annexation of Crimea and the war in Ukraine.



Western Countries and Growing Russian Influence in Africa

Today's competition for influence in Africa reflects in many ways the competition that took place during the Cold War, and even foreshadows a coming period of increased conflict. In this struggle, some states will seek to maintain their spheres of influence, such as the United States and the European Union, while other countries will seek to regain influence, such as Russia.

Russia's influence in Africa has expanded, a fact many find worrying. Washington maintains 34 military bases in Africa and manages several hundred billion dollars on the continent, while China's trade with Africa has reached US \$170 billion, forcing Russia to search for sectors of the African market that have not already been occupied. Accelerating developments in the growth of Russian influence in Africa have created alarm in both the European Union and the United States. U.S. policymakers often emphasize the need to counter Russian influence on the continent and the West often accuses Moscow of using corrupt and clandestine means to try to influence sovereign States, including through security and economic partnerships. Western countries consider Russia, like China, to be a major challenge for the development of West Africa.

Although Russia is working to expand its influence in Africa at a steady pace, its actual tangible impact, excluding the military and security sphere, is questionable. Moscow clearly lacks the financial power to replicate the Soviet Union's success.

Western States are well aware of the significant distortion Russia's image in Africa. Russia's policy prioritizes the interests of authoritarians and their stability, regardless of human rights issues, political reform, or democratic pluralism. Russia has no interest in these concerns as it leans on and supports authoritarian governments who act in contempt of their constitutions. This policy leaves a bitter taste in the mouth of Africans who wish to achieve democracy in their countries.

Russia's current strategy of providing loans and investment contracts without conditions that are linked to democratic foundations and human rights may be feasible and successful in the near term, because that policy is consistent with the wishes of most governments in Africa. In the long term, however, the possibility of Moscow's strategy failing is highly likely. Once the American interest in the continent returns and the weight of Western media helps to uncover the methods of Russian exploitation, Moscow's schemes in Africa may begin to wobble. Young, educated Africans will increasingly see the cracks in and downsides to Russian activity in their countries.

The Machinery of Russo-African Cooperation

Based on what has been described above, Russo-African cooperation will likely follow these paths:

Military Cooperation

This is the most prominent aspect of cooperation, in which Russia significantly outperforms its Western peers, as demon-

strated by the conclusion of military cooperation agreements with a number of African countries. Military cooperation with Russia is also one of the most visible areas of Russian activity, which perpetuates a perception of Russian omnipresence on the continent, both in forces on the ground and in military dealings with states on the continent.

Diplomatic Cooperation

Africa is of strategic importance to Russia in terms of geopolitical support. African countries constitute the largest geographical voting bloc within many of the world's diplomatic, security, and economic institutions, in particular the United Nations Security Council. Africa's support is therefore highly attractive to Russia by way of extending the latter's perceived importance and dominance in world affairs. There is no doubt that Russia, by virtue of its European and Middle Eastern policy, is ahead of the curve on many potential upcoming diplomatic disputes at the United Nations, in which African continent's voices will play a significant role.

Cultural Cooperation

In this regard, Russian cultural centers for science and culture are present in a number of African countries such as the DRC, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Zambia. Russia provides scholarships, training, and professional crafts to African students in African and Russian educational institutions. In recent years, scholarships have been awarded by the Russian government to more than a third of the young Africans studying in Russia. Given the intrinsic place of science in the formulation of state policies, the Russian bet on this area will be a cornerstone of Moscow's relations with the African continent for years to come.

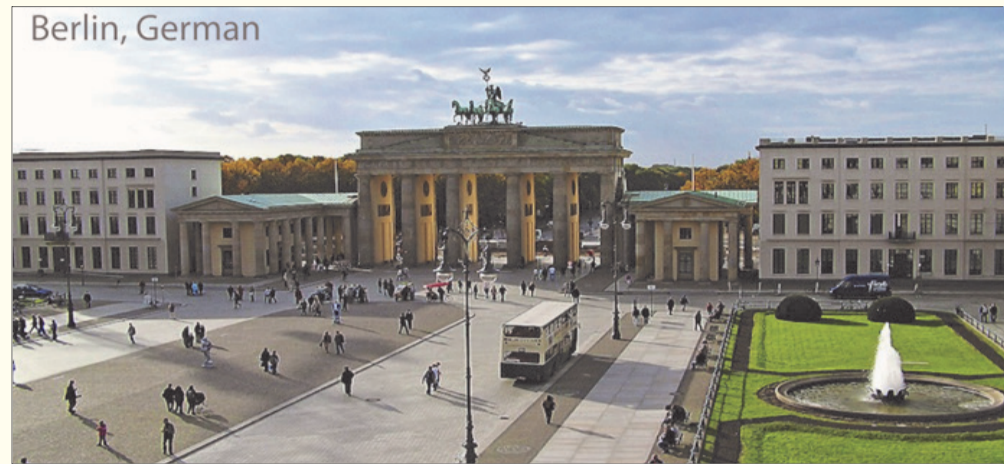
Economic Cooperation

The volume of trade between Russia and the African continent is \$20 billion, very small figure compared to the volume of trade with its counterparts from the rival powers. An important obstacle to the development of mutual economic relations is the lack of objective information about Russia in Africa and about Africa in Russia, and we can only realize the potential of relations when the parties abandon stereotypes imposed from abroad and develop mutually beneficial cooperation based on reality.

In sum, Russia is pursuing a strategy that seeks to demonstrate a positive image of winning the affection of Africans. This includes declaring support for African solutions to conflicts within the continent and a strategy of incursion into the African continent for mutual benefit. The unofficial policy, which can be described as «mercenary diplomacy», involves the Wagner Group and other military groups, as well as the dissemination of misinformation technology. Ruling parties are often the direct beneficiaries of Russian disinformation campaigns, particularly in elections. This is in addition to the benefits derived and arms sales in exchange for natural resource extraction. Russia's strategy can be summarized as not considering stability in Africa as a priority for it, much as it seeks its interests.

My Journey to Germany:

People, life and Culture



By: Makha Korera
Senior Correspondent & Analyst
of The Key

I recently traveled as a tourist to the Federal Republic of Germany, known as in German as Deutschland. It is a very clean country with greenery, attractions, monuments, rivers, avenues, boulevards, tramways, highest buildings, hotels or restaurants. People are friendly and welcome you with smiles. Broadly, it is a safe country.

“Germans are stoic people who strive for perfectionism and precision in all aspects of their lives. They do not admit faults, even jokingly, and rarely hand out compliments. At first their attitude may seem unfriendly, but there is a keen sense of community and social conscience and a desire to belong”, people confess.

Germany was founded in 1871 from a loose of affiliation states. With Berlin as its capital city, Germany, consisting of 16 states, has a population of about 82 million inhabitants. It is located in the center of Western Europe and has a total area of 357,021 square kilometers. 23% of the population lives in cities. Germany has the largest population of the European Union states. The political system of Germany is quite remarkable: the Chancellor's job is similar to that of a Prime Minister's. There is a president, but he or she deals mainly with formal occasions; the country is run through a parliamentary system.

Historically, Germany was the center of the world after World War II. The Potsdam Conference was held in the summer of 1945 amid disagreements opposing Stalin and Truman. It was decided that Germany would be demilitarized, disarmed and occupied by the British in the Northwest, the French in the Southwest, the Americans in the South and the Soviets in the East. In 1962, Berlin, the capital, was split into two parts until October 3, 1989, when “the Wall” was taken down. On that day, people danced where others had before been killed for trying to cross.

Despite the dark aftermath of World War II, Germany began a slow but continuous improvement of its standard of living based on the export of local products, a reduction in unemployment, an increase in food production, and reduction of the black market.

Today, Germany is the world's fourth largest economy, and the largest economic power amongst the EU states. Berlin is known for having a rich historical background. Frankfurt is a large trade center for Germany and Europe and the home of the EU Bank. Munich is known for its pubs, clubs, and being

the largest place to celebrate Oktoberfest, the world's largest fair with about 6 million visitors per year. Germany sells around 6 million cars each year and is one of the largest car producers in the world, producing some of the world's top rated cars, such as Volkswagen, BMW, Audi, and Porsche.

Germany is a Tourist Attraction. Surveys have found that the top three reasons for tourists to come to Germany are German culture, outdoor activities, countryside, and German cities. Germany recorded a total of 12 million tourists in 2020, ranking 20th in the world. Much of Germany is composed of mesmerizing landscapes, whether it's the white chalk cliffs on Rügen Island or the massive peaks of the Alps near Berchtesgaden.

Germans dress casually but with modesty. In public, Germans often greet, smile, and help tourists locate addresses, taxi stations, bus stations, and subways. Germans' favorite meals include sauerbraten, cheese, spaetzle-noodles, schnitzel, and pan-fried meat. Above all, Germans like bread.

Before eating, it is polite to say “Guten Appetit” (bon appétit). You can also say “zum Wohl” (good health) or “Mahlzeit” (mealtime), particularly at lunch. Another mandatory German saying is “Prost!” when you clink glasses.

When dining with Germans, be especially mindful of proper manners. They eat continentally, with the fork in the left hand (tines down) and knife in the right hand throughout. Do not pass the fork back and forth between hands. Do not set down your knife to use the fork alone. It is also considered impolite to leave food on your plate. If you aren't sure what to do, watch what others are doing.

As greeting style, “hello” is pronounced as “Hallo,” followed by a firm handshake. Shouting is considered rude, and is only done to get someone's attention. Germans may appear reserved and unfriendly until you get to know them better. Never put your hands in your pockets when talking with someone.

In Germany, intense eye contact is a daily occurrence – to such an extent that expats and visitors have dubbed it the “Germanic Stare Down.” German pedestrians also use it to communicate, and the right amount of eye contact at the right time can mean “I am walking here, and it's not my fault if you don't move over.”

The best tip is as follows: as a stranger in a strange land, feel free to ask your host discreetly about what is appropriate.

Vielen Dank für eure Aufmerksamkeit
(Thank you for your attention)

Nouakchott Threatened by Flooding



As the rainy season begins, Nouakchott continues to suffer from the lack of a sewage system in the city, which has an estimated population of 1 million.

Many of the capital's neighborhoods are experiencing the spread of flooding and wastewater runoff, leaving some neighborhoods abandoned. This is the case in Baghdad, one of the oldest and most important neighborhoods in Nouakchott, which has been slowly abandoned by its inhabitants over the years due to high levels of water pollution. Much of the pollution has resulted from the lack of a sanitary system, which has led to the spread of diseases such as malaria, foot and mouth fever, and other diseases associated with mosquitoes and pollution.

Environmental experts have warned about the inundation of the capital as a whole, owing to rising sea levels. Authorities have repeatedly stated that a modern sanitation system is not possible in Nouakchott because of its inadequate location.

Since the first development of Mauritania's capital in the 1960s, attempts to establish a sewage system have been started but were limited and failed, owing to the capital's constant geographical and human expansion. In a recently-published study, researcher Mohamed Laghdaf Ahmed notes that the drought that struck Mauritania during the 1970s and 1980s, in addition to the capital's expansion, incentivized the Mauritanian authorities to defund initial attempts at a sanitation system. They sought to establish another network in 1981, which was also not completed due to a lack of sufficient planning and funding. In the 1990s, a Chinese company was contracted to lay 2.3km of pipes.

In 2016, the government established the «National Sewage Office.» The project began with the erection of water pumping systems in the capital's important centers, as well as the completion of studies on the sewage system. As the «Aftout Coastal Program» came into service and a huge amount of treated river water flowed into the water system in the capital, the flooding crisis was exacerbated by the system's degradation, spilling water into the city.

According to a previous statement by the Minister of Water and Sanitation, on the margins of the launch of the water suction project, «The Aftout coastal installations doubled the quantity of water in the dilapidated distribution network, which contributed to the com-

plexity of the sanitation problem, mainly due to rapid urbanization in the capital and the lack of sewage facilities, making most of the city's low-lying neighborhoods vulnerable to floods every autumn despite efforts to back-fill ponds, swamps, and pumping with pipes and tanks.»

The Mauritanian government, having canceled several studies to establish a viable sewage system due to cost constraints, finally initiated the construction of a sewage network by contracting a Chinese company, but the project needs years to be completed. According to information published at its launch, the project consists of a rainwater harvesting system in low-lying areas across an area of more than 15km², in addition to the completion of 4 pumping stations at Ksar and Tevragh Zeina, the port, and Sabkha.»

According to some experts, the project is not a sewage network, but a temporary solution until plans for a new capital can be completed. Sources close to the government say that it is not possible to complete a sewerage system in the current capital for technical and environmental reasons.

Nouakchott at Risk of Inundation from the Sea by 2050

In 2011, the Mauritanian Government commissioned a Dutch company to prepare a study on the environmental impacts of flooding on the capital. The latter concluded that a number of neighborhoods would be permanently inundated by 2022.

The study warned that the capital would be completely overwhelmed by 2050 if the government did not take action to reduce the rise in the water table around the capital and build a barrier between it and the Atlantic Ocean. The World Bank ranks Nouakchott among the ten global cities that will be most significantly affected by global warming. The capital's residents look to the near future with fear and concern for their city, which faces environmental risks to the point of drowning in a few years.

Some of the neighborhoods of Nouakchott have turned into huge swamps, forcing the displacement of their inhabitants, such as in Dar Naim, Sebkhah, and the port.

«Nouakchott is one of the 10 cities in the world affected by global warming.»

-The World Bank

When the cornerstone for what would become

Nouakchott was laid by then-President-designate Ould Daddah to be the country's capital, it was only a small village on the Atlantic coast. The city's planners could not foresee the painful environmental reality it would face after becoming home to nearly one-third of the country's population over the next five decades.

Technical and environmental studies have articulated various scenarios for the sinking of the Mauritanian capital. According to studies commissioned by the Mauritanian authorities, about 80% of the total area of Nouakchott will be flooded in at least 15 years. The worst scenario is the disappearance of the entire city by 2050 according to a study prepared by the Regional Center for Remote Sensing of North African States.

The main reason for the threat of inundation is that «the capital is about 50 centimeters below sea level, and that erosion washes away the shoreline at a rate of 25 meters per year,» says Ould Lafadal, assigned to the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Mauritania.

Other reasons contribute to the sinking of Nouakchott, international environmental expert Ahmed Ould points out. Al-Sinhouiri mentioned, «rainwater playing a prominent role in reducing Nouakchott's chances of survival, as extreme rainfalls will become more common due to climate change.»

Groundwater has also erupted in several neighborhoods in Nouakchott. «The city lies above a salty underground lake, whose size continues to grow. The absence of a sewerage system and the groundwater's salinity degrades the viability of the land for construction, explained Sinhouiri, director of the Regional Partnership for the Protection of the West African Coastal and Marine Region. The erosion of the natural sand berm between the shore and the city is another factor, fueled by its continuous depletion over the past twenty years. It has been the only source of sand used in the city's construction works, but the barrier also represented a form of natural protection for the city from seawater. This protection has been compromised, however, by the opening of 18 breaches in the berm.

Avoiding the Worst: Government Action

The Mauritanian government has pursued the horizontal expansion of the capital, planning new neighborhoods away from the south and

west that are more threatened by sinking. The Government has also put forward a project to build and reconfigure the berm between the city and the Atlantic Ocean.

Preventive measures to protect Nouakchott are currently centered around the strengthening of the berm within the framework of the «Project on Adaptation of Coastal Cities to Climate Change,» which aims to protect the shore by limiting the negative effects of the irresponsible draining of its sand, according to the former secretary-general of Mauritania's Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Mohamed Abdullah Salem Ould Ahmadou.

The project is a partnership between Mauritania's Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and the German Technical Cooperation Agency, which began in 2012, at a cost of \$6.5 million.

«The city lies above a salty underground lake, which continues to grow in size.»

-Ahmed Ould El Sinhouiri, Director of the Regional Partnership for the Protection of the West African Beach and Marine Region

As part of the project, eight hundred planters of roses and concrete benches were laid out in an effort to protect the beach from the movement of 4x4 cars, which destroy dirt berms, and a 200-meter driveway was built to access the beach.

Ould Ahmadou added, «We have published flyers in an awareness campaign that urges the conservation of the beach and clarifies the penalties for deliberate tampering with it, which the state has approved within its preventive strategy for the protection of the beach.»

This is not enough, in Sinhouiri's view. He believes the most effective strategy is to prevent the city from sinking, to stop the construction of buildings in low-lying neighborhoods threatened by inundation, to move coastal and threatened neighborhoods to safer places, to build a sewage system that fits the rate of rain and water used by the population, and to develop a plan to monitor the level of the underground lake.

Despite the government's intention to establish a sewage network with the signing of a 2010 agreement with a Chinese company, the Mauritanian side canceled the project due to its \$200 million price tag.



#Enough: A Look At Sexual Assault In Mauritania

By Varha Abd Selam
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"My father treated me like his wife. I never told anyone, but I wanted to flee. [...] When I spoke about it with my mother, she told me not to tell anyone. My father threatened to kill me. He does the same thing to my [toddler] sister."

This is what 17-year-old Rouhya had told Human Rights Watch in an interview. She had been frequently raped by her father. She would meet a young man on the street once and he would promise to marry her. Rouhya believed she would finally be saved from her father. One day in July 2016, Rouhya would decide to run away from her home and join the young man in his house. He would lock up, drug, and rape her repeatedly for two weeks with three other men.

The police would raid the young man's house after her parents had notified them, and find Rouhya in a state of shock. Her father would take her to the police station to press charges. The four men who raped Rouhya would be held in pre-trial detention. However, Rouhya would find herself under arrest and facing charges of engaging in sexual relations outside marriage (zina). She would spend a few weeks in a juvenile detention center, before being sent to the women's national prison in Nouakchott.

"Why [are you arresting me]? What did I do?" Rouhya asked the police officers. "keep quiet and don't ask questions," they replied.

Rouhya's story is one of the hundreds of untold stories. Stories of sexual assault and violence affect hundreds of women and children across the country.

Last year, the Mauritanian Association for the Health of the Mother and the Child (AMSME) counted a total of 1046 gender-based violence cases, 336 of which were of sexual violence (including 16 rape cases) against 266 minors (249 girls and 17 boys), and 70 adult women.

These numbers represent only the reported cases, according to research, the majority of sexual violence cases go unreported. The reasons behind this are various and complex. For instance, The victims and their families may fear societal persecution. The victims usually know the perpetrator personally and may fear the retaliation of the perpetrator, or simply fear being disbelieved.

It is estimated that 86% of all victims of child sexual abuse were abused by someone they knew. The American National Coalition Against Domestic Violence estimates that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men will experience a type of domestic violence in their lifetime. However, in 2018, a survey by the American Bureau of Justice Statistics, only 47% of domestic or interpersonal violence cases are reported to the police.

Keep in mind that these statistics come from the United States, where women have more rights and freedom than anywhere else in the world, and yet, only 47% of the cases are reported. That number is significantly lower in third-world countries such as Mauritania, where the victims are stigmatized and shunned by society. And in some cases, the victims may be accused and charged with zina, like Rouhya.

"When I was eight months pregnant, my mother realized it and asked me how it happened. That's when I told her about

the rape. My father got very angry, he took me to the police station and told the policemen that his daughter should be locked up because she had slept with a man, that he didn't want her anymore in his house. I spent a night in police custody."

– Mariama, a rape victim.

Not only do the victims have to deal with the psychological effects of the sexual assault trauma (which they must deal with on their own), they have to deal with the social stigma and pressure. In most instances, the victims choose not to file sexual assault reports for fear of bringing shame to their families. In many cases, the victim confesses to being sexually assaulted only when she no longer could hide her pregnancy.

The Human Rights Watch report of 2018 "They Told Me To Keep Quiet" (where Rouhya's story was reported) states that four out of five women whom they had interviewed who had been raped, did not tell anyone of their rape until their pregnancies were noticeable. To save the family's honor after a sexual assault, the entire family might move to a new neighborhood and even a new country. If the victim's family can afford it, she could deliver the baby, or even abort it in a neighboring country.

Moreover, when the victims file a report about the assault to the police, they face a great chance that their case could be rejected if they had previously had a relationship with the assaulter. Or worse, they could be prosecuted for zina. It appears as though the police officers would rather not investigate these sorts of cases. In some of which, according to victims, the officers had asked them to seek help from the NGOs.

The officers usually take the victims' accounts while members of their families, the perpetrators, and other male police officers are present. In the majority of victim recounts, there were no women officers present when they were giving police their accounts. Sometimes, a social worker might be present at the police station, especially if the victim was a minor. As a part of their job, the social workers advise the victims whom they believe might be prosecuted for zina not to press charges. Sometimes, even minors can face being charged with zina if pregnant. Some judges, despite a minor being defined by law as anyone under the age of 18, seem to find it difficult to see a pregnant teenager as such. Some police officers seem to instantly judge if a victim is innocent or guilty from her story alone and based on their moral judgment, may or may not decide to investigate her case.

The officers themselves face many challenges during their investigations of sexual assaults. For instance, there is no precise definition of rape and other types of sexual assault in Mauritanian law, despite the Penal Code criminalizing it. All forms of sexual violence and abuse are also criminalized by law, however, there is no clear definition of sexual violence or abuse. This makes it difficult for judges to distinguish between rape and zina.

There is only one practicing forensic in Mauritania (according to the Humans Rights Watch 2018 report). There are also no established protocols for investigating these types of cases. Usually, the forensic examination is done by obstetrician-gynecologists, who are mostly males. NGOs have been calling for the government to allow midwives to perform these examinations since they are

mostly women.

Oftentimes, medical professionals do not wish to be involved with these types of cases. They fear being called to testify in court, especially if the perpetrators would be imprisoned. They fear retaliation from the perpetrators and their relatives.

If the victim had had a relationship with the perpetrator or had trusted him and went to his place or a place of his choosing, or if she had been raped when she was out in the streets late at night, or if she had put herself in a risky situation that allowed for the assault to happen, then she must have deserved it, or she must at least be responsible for her assault to some extent. This way of thinking is quite common, and it is what pushed activists such as Melika Mohamed Lemine to start the #enough (written in all main local languages: #yonii, #ke wosse, #doy-na, #عيفالك) online campaign.

A post from the #enough online campaign featuring the campaign's log of Hayat Barka's lifeless body. The hashtag demands of the imprisonment of rapists. Malika and her group of activists chose a drawing of the 4-year-old Hayat Barka, who had been raped and murdered as their campaign's logo. The drawing shows the 4-year-old's body as she had been found behind the building of the Ministry of Justice, lying on her side in a fetal position, her hands tied up in front of her. The campaign aimed at raising awareness about sexual assault and gender-based violence. It shed light on the shortcomings of the legal system and the fact that in most cases, the perpetrators escape incarceration.

The campaign interviewed human and women's rights activists and provided statistics and victim accounts. The campaign was purely online and according to Malika, it was pretty successful. However, when I asked her about the online reach and how many views, likes, and shares they got, she fell silent. "None of the volunteers did what they were supposed to do," she explained, "those who were supposed to share the content on Kramez Attavilat (a very popular Facebook group that almost every Mauritanian girl is on) did not share it, those who were supposed to make TikToks and Snapchat stories about it did not."

The campaign was not a total flop though. The fact that it is being written about in at least one local newspaper must count as something. Nonetheless, I would not have ever heard about it if it weren't for a friend of mine who is also an activist. The problems with the campaign seemed to be internal more than anything else. Initially, the number that would have participated in the campaign was much bigger, however, there had been a conflict of interest amongst the members. One party seemed to focus more on using their activism as a gateway to push a political and ideological agenda, according to one source, whereas the other seemed to focus first on the topic at hand, sexual assaulters getting away with their crimes.

NGOs play an enormous role in the lives of the victims of sexual violence. The Mauritanian Association for the Health of the Mother and the Child (AMSME), and the Association of Women Heads of Family offer essential care and help to the victims. They fill in the void left by the government and offer comfort, consolation, medical assistance, and short-term shelter, and help them when they decide to take legal action. They



also offer crucial information and data about the crimes and the victims. Gender-based violence and sexual violence and assault are never talked about. The activists who raise the defense flag for the victims are usually targeted and defamed. Most of these activists do hold opposing views of society and its conventions. And in some cases, they are not afraid to voice them. Some of them hold strong opinions that oppose religion (Islam in particular). NGOs also have a bad reputation. People more than often accuse them of benefitting and profiting off of the sufferings of those they claim to help. It is not uncommon to see someone suddenly going from rags to riches once they have successfully started an NGO and managed to

get funding from abroad.

The weak legal system that allows perpetrators to get away with their crimes, the lack of governmental support, the social stigma, the lack of emotional and psychological support, and the deliberate ignoring of the prevalence and severity of the issue by both the media and the government, are all factors that add to the suffering and pain of the victims. It is sad to see that only very few local NGOs are concerned with this issue, and they have very few resources, both professional and financial. The first step to fixing the problem is to acknowledge its existence, talk about it, stop victim blaming, incarcerate the criminals, and admit that we as a society are failing the victims.

THE KEY NEWSPAPER

www.thekeymauritania.com

Monthly English Newspaper

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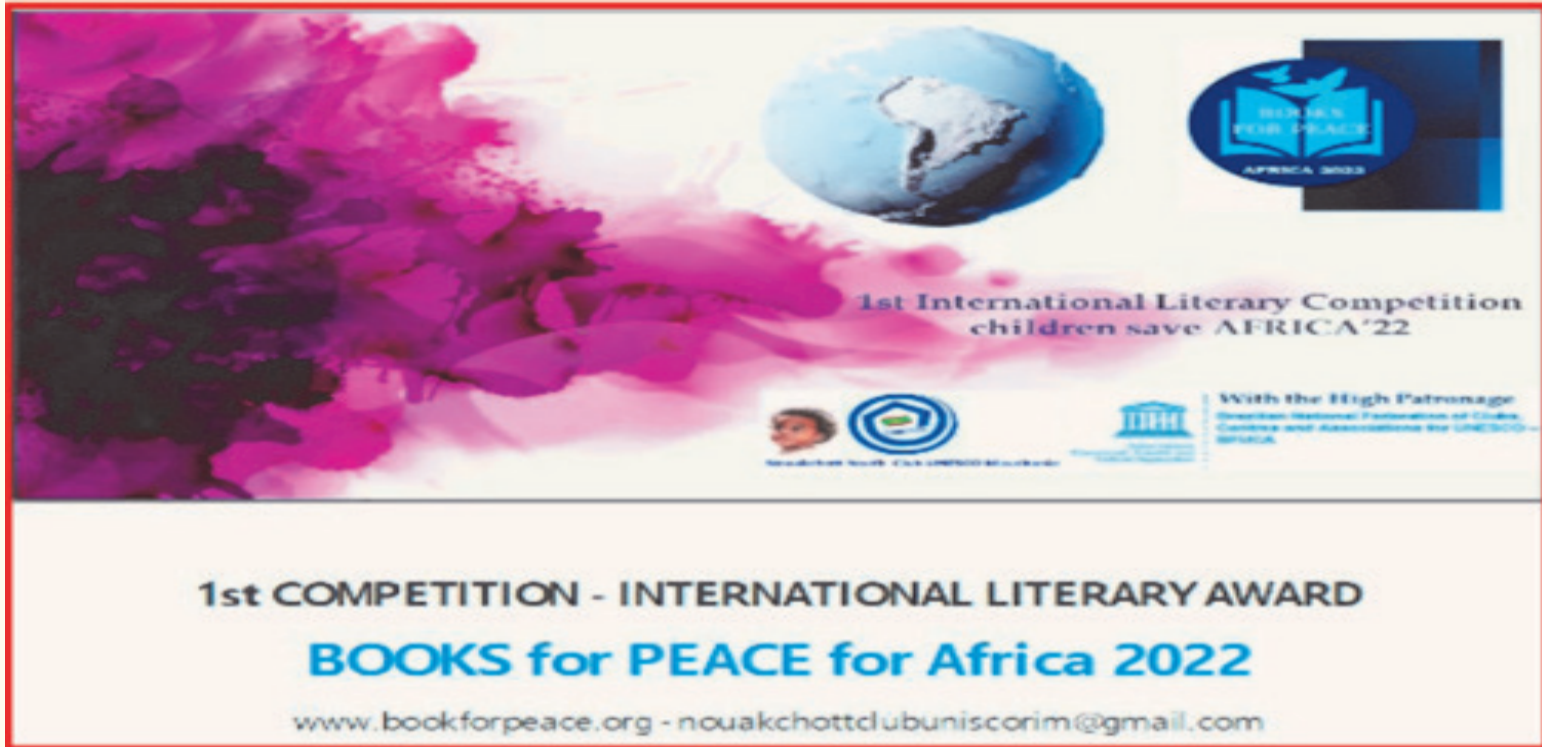
Marketing:
 N'Demba Fall Baye Fall

Printing:
 The National Printing Press

B P : 6917
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The Location: Nouakchott- Tavragh Zeina

Books For Peace International Award Results 2022



UNESCO club announced the results of the first edition of the Books For Peace international award in Africa.

I. Arabic poetry:

- Earth Our Mother, Mohamed Lemine Mohamed Ahmed Nana.
- Untitled, Mohamed Lemine Bekat.

• Death Drugs and Disrepair, Abd Elbaghi Mohamed.

II. Long and short story:

- Medal of Honor, Mohamed Hayba Ahmed Cheikh.
- When Regret Will Be To No Avail, Maleinine Ahmedou.
- The Road To Drugs, Mohamed Chagrane
- Tears of Sorrow, Mohamed Mokhtar Abdellah

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