

# AFRICA ELECTIONS 2022



## **Introduction**

It's now a year since the promise by the African Union to silence guns elapsed. When the African Union made an ambitious objective to silence guns by 2020 to pave the way for trade, peace and economic development. Hope and optimism were restored in the hearts of many Africans but that belief has since gone south. Instead, the guns have become louder and have raised questions on the AU strategy before making the declaration. To date, Africa is still caught up in bad politics of conflicts and hate. This bad politics has created a dent in democracy across the continent. According to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2019), there are fifteen active armed conflicts across Africa notably; Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.

These conflicts continue to impede Africa's growth at a time when there is optimism and belief among Africans about the future. Many Western media and global scholars have labeled the "*Africa Rising*" narrative. More efforts are now geared towards democratic rule, although some African leaders are still drawing on an authoritarian mentality. However, a futuristic glance suggests that African countries need to do much more to reverse trends in conflicts if they are to redirect their orbit towards a sustainable democracy. Therefore, African Union, regional bodies and international pro-democracy actors urgently help drawing countries to readjust their path to democracy.

In 2022, many African countries will hold their elections. It is predicted that elections will raise tensions and shall result into political violence. As the continent continues to find its path to stability after 50-60 years of independence, we continue to call for hygiene in African politics and elections. We also call on the different electoral commissions to protect the integrity of the elections. The core principle of democracy is anchored on holding credible free and fair election.

## **A review of selected countries**

### **Guinea's elections**

One of the most recent military coups happened in Guinea. In September 2021, Colonel Mamady Doumbouya led 300 Special Forces Units to overthrow President Alpha Condé government disposed. Condé was serving his controversial third term he acquired after breaching a constitutional provision of two terms. Civil society organizations had accused him of using the military and excessive power against the protestors. However, a presidential election is now scheduled within the 6-month timetable established by ECOWAS following the military coup.

Since the coup, the military junta has not returned power over to a civilian caretaker government. Instead, he has facilitated the process of installing himself as the interim President of Guinea. The West African regional blocs have since mounted pressure on the Junta to organize the elections, prompting him to take a few steps towards organizing an election and forming a transition government. However, he has since positioned his cronies to allow him to maintain a power grip. Therefore, the regional blocks and the international community ought to realign their response to the Guinea coup leader and clearly state that

his government will not be recognized. They ought to sanction him to hinder his effective operation. A strong position from regional blocs and international communities will make coup a risky way of acquiring power in the 21st century.

Coup has hindered economic growth and development in Guinea. The country is among the poorest countries in Africa. The coups have made it difficult to have an organized leadership in the country since independence. It must be noted that Guinea is one of the most recent democracies, having held its first elections in 2010. The military has for years mismanaged the affairs of the West African country and subjected the country to authoritarian rule for years. A study by the Afro-Barometer indicates that 77 per cent of Guineans are strongly supportive of democracy and don't want any form of authoritarian rule. A restoration of a constitutional order and return to civilian rule is critical for the economic growth and development of Guinea.

### **Kenya's elections**

We consider Kenya's election as a high-stakes election because of its historical context and prevailing circumstances. Over the past, Kenya's elections have raised high tensions and volatility among the political players stemming from ideologies that are fronted during the campaigns. This election is so critical to the progress of Kenya and the East African Community. Unfortunately, Kenya's election always rides on the ethos of ethnicity and populism. These approaches tend to create unnecessary tensions and conflicts. For instance, during the 2007 post-election violence, an estimated 1,100 fatalities and 660,000 displaced were registered. We urge Kenyans to observe the new constitutional order restored by the 2010 constitution. Violence has no place in the new Africa focused on intra-trade, economic development and poverty eradication.

With the Incumbent hands tied to the two-term presidency as provided by the constitution, President Kenyatta cannot now run for the position. This prompted him to change political dynamics by building new alliances through the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI). An initiative that is headed by four-time presidential candidate, Raila Odinga. The BBI offered a constitutional amendment to create new positions, including; the prime minister, deputy ministers, to make ministers members of parliament and allocate a position for the opposition leader. However, this has been rendered null and void in courts of law. The decision by the high court has leveled the playing field for a hot contest between deputy President Dr William Ruto (PhD) and Raila Odinga as he makes his fifth attempt at the presidency. As usual, Kenya's elections are normally characterized by coalition along tribal lines and that we will continue to be witnessed throughout the election process.

Notably, there is a growing discontent among the locals on the political elites over corruption and embezzlement of public funds. This has significantly led to mistrust of political leaders and has ensured a decline in public enthusiasm for the elections. Nonetheless, it's only right that Kenyans respect the new constitutional order and have a peaceful election. This is not only good for Kenya, but for all East African nations.

## Angola's elections

The fall of José Eduardo Dos Santos after four decades of rule in Angola has set a new dawn on the country's political trajectory. We are also certain that the incumbent, João Manuel Lourenço will seek a second term after he took over in 2017. This is after he (Lourenço's) ran a successful People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) succession plan that saw him establish himself as leader of the ruling party. Despite irregularities during the process that cast doubt on his legitimacy, it is now predicted that he is stable and moving in the right direction.

Lourenço has since distinguished himself as a reformist and a pro-democracy leader. He has positioned himself to be fighting corruption, and being a tolerant leader. He has also severally made statements that signify protection of human rights. However, several protagonists in Angola have argued that he has also used constitutional reforms as a tool to entrench his agenda and tighten his grip on power. For instance, he faulted on holding local elections citing covid-19 impediments. This failure has denied the opposition a chance to galvanize support from the grassroots. He has also tightened control over the courts and the judicial system in Angola. Currently, Angola is stirring in the right direction of poverty reduction, reducing income disparity and controlling inflation. The coming election is being projected as a referendum for assessing Lourenço's first term in office. It will also be a litmus test of the country's political maturity and democracy after 40 years under an authoritarian leader. But it is expected that the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) will continue to maintain its grip on the presidency. This is particularly true because spearheading constitutional revisions through the MPLA-dominated legislature that allowed vote counting for the 2022 polls to be done centrally and not at the local level contradicts the international best practice of vote tallying and will allow for easy manipulation of the result.

It must be said that Angola's stability in the post-election period will be determined by independence in the election process. How the electoral commission will conduct the election and protect the integrity of the election will be critical in shaping the future of democracy in Angola.

To recapitulate, Africa needs to adjust its political system, define its democratic ideology and strengthen regional blocks.

## Elections schedules in 2022

No.	Country	Election Type	Period
1	Angola	Presidential, National Assembly and local	August 2022
2	Chad	National Assembly	2022
3	Comoros	Island assemblies	2022
4	Djibouti	Presidential, regional assemblies and communal	2022
5	Equatorial Guinea	House of Representatives, Senate and local	2022
6	The Gambia	National Assembly and local	2022
7	Kenya	President, National Assembly, Senate, county assemblies and local	August 2022
8	Lesotho	National Assembly and local	End-2022
9	Libya	Parliamentary	2022
10	Mali	Presidential, National Assembly (first round)	2022
11	Mauritius	Rodrigues Regional Assembly	2022
12	Republic of the Congo	National Assembly	July 2022
13	São Tomé and Príncipe	National Assembly	January 2022
14	Senegal	Local, National Assembly	January 2022 July 2022
15	Sierra Leone	Local	2022
17	Sudan	Presidential, National Assembly, state legislatures, state governors, local	2022
18	Tunisia	Municipal	2022

