

Independence is at the heart of our party's struggle

It means freedom in every field, such as politics, economics, judiciary, military and culture. Insufficiency in one of these fields means the total loss of independence of the nation, writes Socialist Party president **Fred M'membe**

I COME from families – both on my mother and father's sides – that sacrificed a lot for the liberation of this country from colonial domination, subjugation and humiliation.

Therefore, complete independence of our country is basic to the spirit of the struggles I am involved in with the Socialist Party and our current mission of building a more just, fair and humane Zambia.

Whatever the expediency of the moment, we should never forget that our first coloniser was a foreign investor, capitalist businessman Cecil John Rhodes who, together with his companies, ruled us for 33 years (from 1891 to 1924) as his possession. Thereafter the British colonial office took over and colonised us until October 24, 1964.

We are a nation that wants to live in dignity and honour. This is the point upon which our independence is founded.

Complete independence means independence and freedom in every field, such as politics, economics, judiciary, military, culture, etc. Insufficiency in one of these fields means the total loss of independence of the nation.

The basic and immortal principle of nations that have reached consciousness of the real contents, large meaning and high value of independence and freedom, is not to let anyone damage their independence and freedom at any price, to protect them with all their might and, if necessary, shed the blood of the last person, thus glorifying human history with such an example.



The UK's Princess Royal, representing Queen Elizabeth II, hands over the Instruments of Independence to President Kenneth Kaunda during the Zambia independence ceremony in Lusaka on October 24, 1964

The societies that are always ready to sacrifice everything for this purpose are the only nations that are thought worthy of the continuous respect of humanity.

A nation that risks death for its independence, consoles by making every sacrifice that humanity, dignity and honour requires of it. And naturally, its place according to friends and foes will be different than another nation's place which has accepted slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

What is important, is the Zambian nation's leading a life in dignity and honour. This principle can only be provided by complete independence. No matter how wealthy and prosperous a nation is, if it is deprived of its independence it no longer deserves to be regarded otherwise than as a slave in the eyes of the civilised world.

To accept to be a neo-colony of those transnational corpora-



Socialist Party president Fred M'membe: independence is the greatest heritage of my ancestors

tions and nations that once ruled us is to admit to a lack of all human qualities, to weakness and incapacity on our part.

It is not at all thinkable that those who fought for their independence and liberated them-

selves from such a humiliating state will surrender themselves to neo-colonialism out of their own desire.

I have no doubt many Zambians, if mobilised, would prefer to perish rather than subject themselves to the life of a 21st century slave.

We are seeing very dangerous signs of a blind attempt to move us politically, economically and otherwise in the direction of a neo-colonial state.

Therefore, our desire is to protect external independence and unconditional national sovereignty. I am sure you will destruct the heads of those who mean to damage even a portion of our national sovereignty.

Everyone must know that when we say we want peace and economic prosperity then we mean that we aspire to complete independence.

We have the right and power to warrant this aspiration. We must prefer to die in an hon-

oured and dignified manner than to be degraded.

In order to live, I certainly must remain a son of an independent nation. For this reason, national independence is a matter of vitality for me. If it is required for the sake of the nation and the country, I appreciate with great sensitivity the friendship and political relations that are needed for civilisation with each of the nations forming humanity. But I am the bitter enemy of the nations that want to captivate my nation, and don't give up these desires.

No matter how wealthy and prosperous a nation is, if it is deprived of its independence it no longer deserves to be regarded otherwise than as a slave in the eyes of civilised world.

Our people resisted colonialism and were massacred refusing to be colonised.

Our Ngoni ancestors were in

● Turn to Page 3



Day of the girl child

Page 2



Outcry over poll attacks

Page 3



In memory of heroes

Page 4



Secret deals, hidden assets

Pages 6/7

THE SOCIALIST PARTY stands for #realchange with policies based on justice, equity and peace. Manifesto/policies download details and information about how to join the party are on our back page

Page 12

Girls bring urgency to the world's struggles

We must support youth activism, fight for rights

Fred M'membe
Socialist Party president

ON THE occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child, we applaud the energy and sense of urgency, as well as courage and intellect, that girls and young women have brought to recognising and confronting many of today's struggles, from climate change and gender equality to poverty and violence.

Adolescent girls need to be supported by everyone who cares about human rights and a sustainable future.

Youth activism, spearheaded by girls, has brought fresh energy and a renewed sense of urgency to tackling issues fought by generations before them. They have shown that no one is too young to act for human rights, and no one is too small to make a difference.

These young human rights defenders are initiating, joining and spearheading movements with insistence and courage, confronting backlashes and attacks.

These girls and young women are increasingly being recognised. Malala Yousafzai became the youngest Nobel Prize laureate at the age of 17 in recognition of her fight for girls' right to education and, at 16 years old, Greta Thunberg was invited to address world leaders at the global climate summit.

Sustainable

There are many who are actively engaged in the fight for social justice. They should be supported by everyone who cares for human rights and a sustainable future. Different generations need to join forces in pursuit of social justice.

It is deeply troubling that some of these brave girls and young women have been subjected to harassment and abuse, and sometimes hateful attacks on social media. Attacks on young human rights defenders should not be tolerated.

States have obligations to ensure enjoyment of rights by girls and boys, including their right to privacy, freedom of thought, expression and association.

Fifteen years after the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 27 years after the Beijing World Conference on Women, and after 42 years of implementing the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, we are starting to see notable progress in the area of the rights of the girl child. However, the cycle of girls' disadvantaged situations proves difficult to break in many places, where many girls continue to be considered inferior, neglected and subjected to harm-



ful stereotypes, forced into marriages and contemporary forms of slavery, subjected to violence in the family and schools, deprived of educational opportunities and their sexual and reproductive rights.

And yet, despite their generally disadvantaged position, girls and young women are at the forefront of critical struggles of our time, characterised by political, socio-economic and environmental crises. They are engaged in a range of issues, demanding an end to gender-based violence, gun violence, and fundamentalism and extremism, and insist on implementation of the right to education, sexual and reproductive rights, and economic and political empowerment. They fight for environmental justice, the rights to water and sanitation, among other things. They are not only standing up against the backlash, but also demanding accountability and proposing new solutions for a different world, often employing innovative and creative methods. They are acting as agents of change in public life.

As the international community commemorates this international day for the ninth year, we celebrate girls for their achievements and their social activism.

Adolescent girls, standing at the forefront of many of today's struggles, have demonstrated their unique power to mobilise and to lead. They are demanding full protection of their human rights to a safe and sustainable planet and their voices to be heard. We call upon states to take every step to fulfil their human rights obligations, and national and international policymakers to hear their voices loud and clear.

Issued on behalf of the Politburo of the Socialist Party



Give me five! Socialist Party president Fred M'membe shares a fun moment with a young resident of Kanyama compound in Lusaka

Valued to log on to the Digital Generation. Our Generation

Barbra Chekuda Maramwidze

TODAY, we join the rest of the World in celebrating the United Nations International Day of a Girl Child under the theme "Digital Generation. Our Generation". What a wonderful privilege to celebrate the heroines of our societies, nations, and world at large.

The best way to celebrate a girl child is truly to socialise domestic work and to provide an enabling environment for the girl child to flourish and not be left behind.

We say this because being a girl child, at least in our Zambian context, is never that easy. Being a girl child comes with multiple struggles from a tender age where socialisation in the home space and in public spaces has placed many limitations compared with a boy child. While we value our culture as it gives us an identity, it has equally been used to "discipline" the girl child to levels that make them less valued compared with a boy child.

From an early age, a girl child is "disciplined" to take domestic duties religiously, and modelled to be "a good wife". Failing to perform domestic duties thus is viewed as a big omission in the girl child's upbringing.

This is not to say that a girl child should not be taught house chores, they should. The issue here is the emphasis, the burden placed on the girl child to learn and perform unproductive house chores as the benchmark of their acceptability to society and to a future husband. Instead, more



Barbra Chekuda Maramwidze: Everyone has a responsibility to protect the girl child

emphasis in the homes should be placed on socialising domestic work and ensuring that both the girl and boy child are given an equal opportunity in life, at school, and in the home. Empowering a girl child means socialising domestic work. You will agree that the COVID-19 pandemic exposed many countries, not only in terms of the resilience of our health sector, but also the limitation to move to digital platforms for our education. What this period also revealed in our country is the disproportionate burden of domestic work on a girl child affecting their performance at school.

What the COVID-19 pandemic has also uncovered are challenges in terms of access to gadgets and data to allow disadvantaged groups and communities to access education with less difficulty. In our country, with

an average rural poverty level of 76.6 percent, and where the majority are women and girls, it is urgent that the Zambian government should pay particular attention to digital literacy and extend it to schools across the country.

In line with the UN theme "Leaving No One Behind" it will be important for governments across the world to pay particular attention to the girl child's needs for digital literacy as failure to do so will result in many of our women and girl children being left behind.

Everyone has a responsibility to protect the girl child and allow them to be a part of an evolving digital world in a much more productive way. The cases of child marriages in Zambia, for example, limit a girl child's possibilities as this excludes them from realising their dreams. We need to say no to child marriages collectively and label them as great injustices against our girl child.

Our girl children should know that they are loved and valued in our homes, schools, and society at large.

We need to transform the way we perceive the girl child and make it a priority to elevate their voices and needs. Loving and valuing them means inculcating in them a sense that they matter, that they need to know their rights. It means teaching them and reminding them from a tender age that they can achieve anything they set their mind to, that they are the world's leaders.

Barbra Chekuda Maramwidze is a Socialist Party Central Committee and Women's League member

We need to repeal the Public Order Act

WE SHOULD strike while the iron is hot over the Public Order Act, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe says.

"The saying means we should do something immediately while there is still a good chance to do it," he said.

Dr M'membe said there were "some very timely calls" to repeal the Public Order Act. "Outgoing United States Charge d'Affaires to Zambia David Young says the Public Order Act in its current form strongly undermines democracy and should be done away with."

"In the run-up to the August 12 elections, the Socialist Party promised to repeal the Act if elected."

"The first law the Socialist Party in government will pass is the repeal of the Public Order Act, we said at the time."

"And there's no going back on this. There will be no but ... it will not be replaced by any other Act. There will simply be no Public Order Act or any such other laws."

"The Constitution has enough protections for public order. We don't need any other additional laws," Dr M'membe said.

"We have seen how from the colonial authorities, successive governments of this country have abused the Public Order Act. We believe that the freedom of peaceful assembly enables individuals to express themselves as part of a collective, including by engaging in public marches, protests, pickets and demonstrations."

"Assemblies can be platforms to advocate for change and for people to raise awareness about the issues that matter to them, whether it relates to human rights or otherwise."

"Assemblies often also have symbolic importance, such as commemorating particular events or marking significant anniversaries."

"The Public Order Act is thorny issue we have severally encountered. It is a repressive, tyrannical, intolerant and brutal piece of colonial legislation that we must immediately do away with."

"The Public Order Act has consistently been used by those in power to curtail political activity that undermines their hold on power," Dr M'membe said.

Follow your dreams, make an impact

Socialist Party Central Committee and Youth League member Natasha Faith Mfuné writes:

ON October 11 we joined the rest of the world in celebrating the International Day of the Girl Child under the theme "Digital Generation. Our Generation".

Every girl child counts and it is for this reason that I encourage girls around the world to aspire, follow their dreams, and become positive thinkers who make an impact on society.

On this special day we join our voices with others to raise awareness and spread the message about the importance of granting the girl children opportunities to be who they want to be without limiting their possibilities.

We call for equal access to the internet and digital services. We say NO to the economic and social barriers to internet and device access due to gender. Together we can make this generation of girls a generation of technologists and achieve the core objective, which is to make girls an active part of the world's progress.



Faith Mfuné: We call for equal access to the internet and digital services

Freedom in every field is our mission

● From Page 1

1897 attacked by the colonialist army of Rhodes and his companies. They died resisting Rhodes' capitalist subjugation. The Socialist Party is continuing in a new way and in a new time that resistance.

This nation can't live and won't live without independence.

Freedom and independence are a part of my character and I am a man who is full of love of independence, which is the greatest and worthiest heritage of my ancestors.

Dignity, honesty and humanity are formed in a nation only by having independence and freedom.

Personally, I place great importance on the characteristics I have mentioned. In order to claim that I possess these characteristics, my nation must possess them also. I must remain a son of an independent nation in order to live. For this reason, national independence is a vital issue.

For the freedom and independence-loving nations, moments of suffering, and their perpetrators, must always be remembered in order to take warning and to stand ready. The vital and basic principle of nations that have reached consciousness of the real contents, large meaning and high value of the independence and freedom, is not to let anyone to damage their independence and freedom at any price, to protect them with all their might and if necessary to shed the blood of the last person, thus to colourise human history with such a glorious example.

How can a country that is subordinate to another country or transnational corporations be independent? How can a country that is dependent be democratic? That must disappear before democracy can exist.

We cannot always decorate our tomorrows with others' yesterdays.

Opportunities are always for those who are independent-minded, aspiring and persevering.

The case for a politics based on principles

WE urgently need a new type of politics based on moral principles and common aims, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe says.

"Today we live in a highly contaminated moral environment," he said. "We have lost our values, principles, standards and common aims. We have learned to ignore each other, to care only for ourselves. In Zambia today, love, friendship, compassion, equity, justice, solidarity, fairness and humility have lost their depth and dimensions.

"Our country used to rank so low on the corruption scale, but we have now all become used to a corrupt system and accepted it as an unalterable fact of life, and thus we help to perpetuate it.

"Politics should be an expression of the desire to contribute to the happiness of the community rather than of a need to cheat or rape the community," Dr M'membe said.

"Let us teach ourselves and others that politics can be not only the art of the possible, especially if 'the possible' includes speculation, calculation, intrigue, secret deals, and pragmatic maneuvering, but also the art of the possible, the art of improving ourselves and the country."

ECZ and TI-Z condemn poll attacks on SP's members

Organisations 'appalled' by violence in run-up to elections

Socialist staff reporter

TRANSPARENCY International and the Electoral Commission of Zambia have condemned the violence in the run-up to October's by-elections that left five Socialist Party members injured and a motor vehicle smashed.

The violence, said to have been carried out by UPND cadres, took place in the afternoon of October 17 at Katotoma, Lufubu ward, Mwansabombwe, Luapula Province, and in the early hours of October 18 in Kaumbwe constituency, Eastern Province. The second attack resulted in three SP members being admitted to Petauke District Hospital.

Transparency International Zambia (TI-Z) executive director Maurice Nyambe said in a statement that the association was "appalled" by the violence.

"We have repeatedly stated that political violence of any sort and by any entity should have no place in our electoral processes, as it undermines the credibility of those processes.

Intolerance

"It is disheartening to note that the political violence that became the hallmark of the last five years or so – perpetrated largely by the UPND and PF – appears to have continued even after the August 12 elections. We therefore wish to condemn in the strongest terms the violence that has been taking place in Petauke."

The statement went on to challenge UPND "to demonstrate that it will not continue with the sort of lawlessness and intolerance that was common prior to August 12".

"Zambians have had enough of such lawlessness and intolerance, and expect the new dawn regime to create and preside over a better political atmosphere even during elections."

The Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) threatened to invoke the Electoral Powers Act if there was any further violence.

Patricia Luhanga, ECZ corporate affairs manager said in a statement on behalf of the chief electoral officer, that the commission encouraged "all political players to be tolerant and promote co-existence as these are some of the key ingredients of a maturing democracy and the conduct of peaceful elections".



Clockwise from the top: Socialist Party president Fred M'membe visits injured party members at Petauke District Hospital; party members being treated for their injuries; damage to a Socialist Party vehicle used for the election campaign in Kaumbwe constituency

"The commission has been consistent that it will not allow the country to degenerate into lawlessness during any election period and further calls on the electorates and political party supporters to desist from engaging in violence."

The commission said the three instances where Socialist Party, Democratic Party and Patriotic Front supporters had been attacked was suspected to have been carried out by UPND cadres.

"Additionally, the commission is aware that all the cases of violence have been reported to the Zambia Police Service and therefore calls on the police to expeditiously arrest and present for prosecution all those who will be found in breach of the law," the statement said. "The commission is calling upon the police to perform their duties in an impartial and professional manner."

Socialist Party president Fred

M'membe called upon UPND to "reign in on the violence" by its cadres. "Please let's do everything possible as leaders to put an end to political violence," he said.

"We repeat, compatriots, this country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless it's a good place for all of us to live in. The by-election we are entering should not be confused with a battlefield where the aim is to destroy the other.

"This is simply a competition to

serve and not the annihilation of one another. To have peaceful, free and fair elections, certain conditions have to prevail in our country and in our hearts.

"The fundamental value we must have is a respect for diversity and acceptance of pluralism. Gone are the days when everyone was supposed to think the same way, belong to the same political party, and support the same programme," Dr M'membe said.

Many poorer countries are at risk of debt distress

UNDER current terms and conditions the debts of our countries are irrepayable, says Socialist Party president Fred M'membe.

"Simple arithmetic shows that the debts of the world's poorest countries are, under the current terms and conditions, irrepayable," he said.

"Half of the world's poorest countries are today in external debt distress or at high risk of it.

"As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic there was a significant 12 per cent rise in the debt burden of the world's low-income countries to a record US\$860 billion in 2020, and this calls for urgent efforts to reduce these debt levels.

"This is a dramatic increase in the debt vulnerabilities facing low- and middle-income countries.

"We need a comprehensive approach to this poor countries' debt problem, including debt reduction, swifter restructuring and improved transparency," he said.

"Sustainable debt levels are needed to help these countries achieve economic recovery and reduce poverty."

Dr M'membe said the external debt stocks of low- and middle-income countries combined rose 5.3 per cent in 2020 to US\$8.7 trillion, affecting countries in all regions. "This rise in external debt outpaced gross national income (GNI) and

export growth, with the external debt-to-GNI ratio, excluding China, rising five percentage points to 42 per cent in 2020, while their debt-to-export ratio surged to 154 per cent in 2020 from 126 per cent in 2019.

"Debt restructuring efforts are urgently needed given the expiration at the end of this year of the Group of 20 major economies' Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), which has so far offered some temporary deferral of debt payments.

"The G20 and Paris Club of official creditors launched a Common Framework for Debt Treatments last year to restructure unsustainable debt situations and

protracted financing gaps in DSSI-eligible countries, but only three countries – Ethiopia, Chad and Zambia – have applied thus far.

"Further debt payment freezes could be included as part of Common Framework debt restructurings, but more work is also needed to increase the participation of private sector creditors, who have thus far been reluctant to get involved."

Dr M'membe said that if reasonable measures were not urgently taken, the challenges facing highly indebted poor countries could get worse as interest rates rose.

Comrade Simon Zukas: veteran leader with a legacy to emulate

Fred M'membe
Socialist Party president

WE MOURN the passing of a leader, revolutionary, patriot, father, fighter, internationalist, theoretician and organiser. Indeed, it is the combination of all these qualities so splendidly in one individual, which made Comrade Simon Zukas the great African revolutionary that he was.

Men and women of rare qualities are few and hard to come by. And when they depart, the sense of loss is made the more profound and the more difficult to manage. Yet we do draw comfort, Comrade Simon: from the knowledge that you left a legacy which we shall all strive to emulate; from the knowledge, Comrade Simon, that you continue to live in each one of us through your force of example, vitality of spirit and passion for justice, fairness and humaneness.

Today, as the nation starts to mourn your death, we are at the same time starting to celebrate a life lived to the full; the richness of which touched the hearts of millions and made an indelible mark on the history of our country.

One day when our people start enjoying a rising standard of living in a more just, fair and humane Zambia, they will be right to say, Comrade Simon was a chief architect, who helped lay the foundation for a better life.

Comrade Simon was one of those who taught us that individuals do not make history. Yet, in each generation there are a few individuals who are endowed with the acumen and personal bearing that enable them to direct the course of events.

Honour

Comrade Simon, the first recipient of the Socialist Party's highest honour – the Nsingu award – belonged in that category. In that sense he was a rare species, an institution. To reflect on Simon's contribution is, therefore, to retrace the evolution of Zambian politics in the past six or seven decades. Such is the life we have started celebrating today: a life not so much of white generosity to the black people of our country, for Comrade Simon did not see himself as a white Zambian, but as a Zambian. He was a full part of our people, his people, acting together with them for a more just, fair and humane order.

Comrade Simon lived the life not merely of a theoretician, confined to the boardroom and library. He was at all stages of struggle there at the forefront, generating ideas, and there too, in their implementation.

Comrade Simon was a full human being at heart, and he possessed the passion and natural intellect to see reality for what it was. He had, at an early age joined the Communist Party of South Africa. He had decided that in his life there was only one target, and that target was to remove the racist regime in South Africa and colonialism



Socialist Party president Fred M'membe with Simon and Cynthia Zukas

in Africa and obtain power for the people.

Those of us who had the honour to be closely associated with Comrade Simon, know that he lived true to the dedication. He knew fully well that he would walk again and again through the valley of the shadow of death to reach the mountain tops of his desires. I was fortunate to be close to him and to be with him in many struggles. With his wife, Cynthia, we would debate many issues. His sharp intellect and incisive mind would always light the way.

Comrade Simon was a well-rounded human being. Up to his

last days, he lived life to the full. It is this passion for happiness in his life and the lives of others that we saw in his contribution to the campaigns of the working people and the poor. It is precisely because of his seminal contribution to the liberation struggle that Comrade Simon was loved by those struggling for freedom.

Though the defenders of apartheid and colonialism sought to obliterate his memory, the struggling people knew that he was an effective and skilful freedom fighter.

The most central factor in his approach to struggle on any front

was the understanding of the political situation, the balance of forces and the approaches necessary to advance that struggle. Thus he was able to appreciate changes in the objective conditions and initiate discussions on changes to the tactics to be applied. He knew when to compromise. Yet he never compromised his principles.

He was a revolutionary, yet a revolutionary who knew how to plan, assess concrete situations and emerge with rational solutions to problems.

The advocates of racial superiority could not understand how Comrade Simon could be part of

the liberation struggle and operate under the leadership of the hapless inferiors they despised. But Comrade Simon took part in struggle as an equal, as part of the people.

The defenders of colonial exploitation and subjugation could not understand why Comrade Simon would seek to end the dominance of his racial kith and kin. But Comrade Simon's kin was all humanity, especially the very poor. The champions of privilege and concentration of wealth could not fathom why Comrade Simon identified with the wretched of the Earth, but Comrade Simon knew that these were the creators of

wealth and they deserved their fair share.

Let it be said loud and clear today, that the qualities Comrade Simon demonstrated in abundance in the past few decades were the same attributes that spurred him to struggle, the qualities that drove him to join the Communist Party of South Africa, the independence struggle in Zambia, and the qualities that he helped engender in these struggles.

We in the Socialist Party know intimately what vacuum Comrade Simon's departure has left in our midst. We shall miss not only his incisiveness, experience and verve. We are conscious that it is given to a few to so ably combine theory and practice, as Comrade Simon demonstrated in our struggles.

But we know too that he has left us a legacy which will continue to guide our approach, and that is to mobilise all the role-players in any area of work for joint efforts to build a better life for all.

If we have taken liberty to claim Comrade Simon as ours today, this merely underlines that there are those to whom he was more than just a revolutionary and a friend.

We know, dear dear Comrade Cynthia and your family that you feel this pain more deeply. We cannot fully grasp the magnitude of your grief. Please be comforted by the fact that the nation shares your grief, and we shall always be at your side. Like you, our sorrow is made the more intense because we have lost not just one of our leaders, we have lost a veteran whose qualities are in many respects unequalled. He is irreplaceable.

Comrade Simon, if you see tears welling in our eyes, it is because we cannot bear saying: farewell dear comrade, dear brother, dear friend.

The fateful day Che Guevara was captured

THE SOCIALIST Party commemorates the day Cuban revolutionary hero Che Guevara was captured along with his comrades by US-backed Bolivian forces just over 54 years ago on October 8, 1967.

Soon after his capture, the populist Bolivian President, René Barrientos, wasted no time in ordering his execution the following day.

There was just too much risk. Barrientos knew very well that if Che was allowed trial he would reveal in open court the social ills perpetrated by the government.

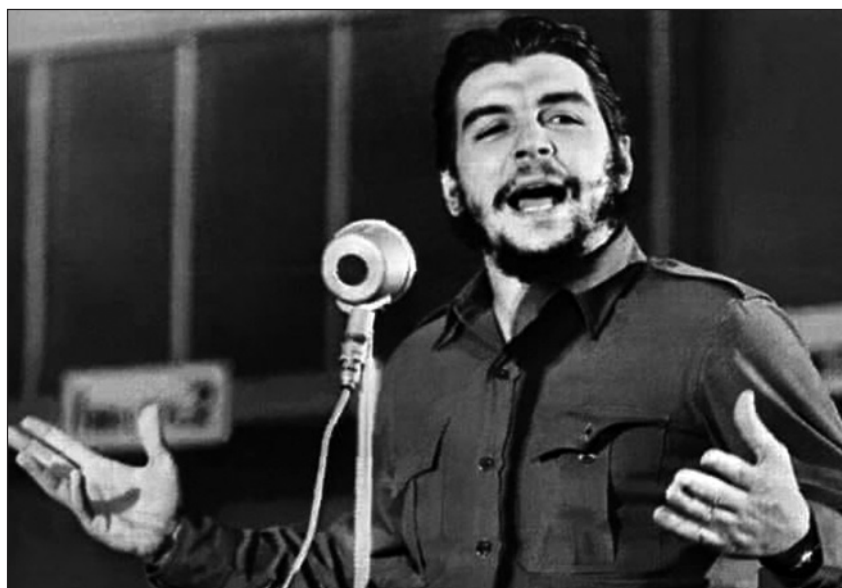
After his execution, Che's body was put on display in the laundry of the hospital in Vallegrande, Bolivia.

Declassified CIA documents reveal that: On October 8, 1967, Bolivian troops received information that there was a band of 17 guerrillas in the Churro Ravine. They entered the area and encountered a group of six to eight guerrillas, opened fire, and killed two Cubans, "Antonio" and "Orturo".

"Ramon" (Guevara) and "Willy" tried to break out in the direction of the mortar section, where Guevara was wounded in the lower calf (Department of Defence Intelligence Information Report on November 28, 1967).

On the same day, a peasant woman alerted the army that she had heard voices along the banks of the Yuro close to the spot where it runs along the San Antonio River.

By morning, several companies of Bolivian rangers were deployed through the area that Guevara's guerrillas were in and took up positions in the same ravine



Che Guevara was executed and his body put on display in a hospital laundry

as the guerrillas in Quebrada del Yuro. At about 12pm a unit from General Prado's company, all recent graduates of the US Army Special Forces training camp, confronted the guerrillas, killing two soldiers and wounding many others.

At 1.30pm Che's final battle commenced in Quebrada del Yuro. Simon Cuba (Willy) Sarabia, a Bolivian miner, led the rebel group. Che was behind him and was shot in the leg several times. Sarabia picked up Che and tried to carry him away from the line of fire.

The firing started again and Che's beret was knocked off. Sarabia sat Che on the ground so he could return fire. Encircled at

less than ten yards distance, the rangers concentrated their fire on him, riddling him with bullets.

Che attempted to keep firing but could not keep his gun up with only one arm. He was hit again in his right leg, his gun was knocked out of his hand and his right forearm was pierced.

As soldiers approached Che, he shouted, "Do not shoot. I am Che Guevara and worth more to you alive than dead." The battle ended at approximately 3.30pm and Che was taken prisoner.

Other sources claim that Sarabia was captured alive and that at about 4pm he and Che were taken before Captain Prado.

Captain Prado ordered his radio operator to signal the divisional headquarters in Vallegrande informing them that Che had been captured.

The coded message sent was, "Hello Saturno, we have Papá". Saturno was the code name for Colonel Joaquín Zenteno, commandant of the Eighth Bolivian Army Division, and Papá was code for Che. In disbelief, Colonel Zenteno asked Captain Prado to confirm the message.

With confirmation, "general euphoria" erupted among the divisional headquarters staff. Colonel Zenteno radioed Prado and told him to transfer Che and any other prisoners to La Higuera immediately.

In Vallegrande, Félix Rodríguez received the message over the radio, "Papá cansado", which means "Dad is tired". Papá was the code word for foreigner, implying Che, and tired signified captured or wounded.

Stretched out on a blanket, Che was carried by four soldiers to La Higuera, seven kilometres away. Sarabia was forced to walk behind with his hands tied behind his back.

Just after dark the group arrived in La Higuera where both Che and Sarabia were locked up in a one-room schoolhouse. Later that night, five more guerrillas were brought in.

Official army dispatches falsely reported that Che was killed in the clash in south-eastern Bolivia.

Other official reports confirmed the killing of Che and said the Bolivian army had his body. However, the army high command did not confirm the report.

New York Times, 1967



Socialist Party president Fred M'membe: we need a new plateau of compassion

A lack of tolerance leads to violence and destruction

THE WORD tolerance means the willingness to accept or to tolerate opinions or behaviour you may not agree with, or to behave sensibly with those who are not like you.

Tolerance is needed in all spheres of life, and on every level and in every stage because it plays a vital role in establishing peace and love in all the units of society, from the smallest up to the highest.

Tolerance does not mean that only one person or party shows tolerance and others do not. When some people disagree on a certain issue they must advocate and express their opinion in a respectful manner. Hateful and provocative words should not be used. Tolerance must be shown from both sides on issues in order for it to be effective.

Tolerance can be shown in many ways, on different occasions, and at different times. A person might fully disagree with others on any issue while at the same time honouring and respecting those with different ideas and opinions and treating them with full dignity and honour.

In an age where social media has drawn us much closer together, its benefits will only be felt when mutual goodness prevails, when mutual respect and understanding prevail.

In this age, where people of different backgrounds, cultures and religions live together, establishing tolerance and harmony has become crucial, and fostering mutual love and affection has become vital.

Without tolerance and harmony, the lasting peace of the country cannot be maintained, and loyalty for each other cannot be established.

Loyalty is born from feelings of love and affection. At a personal level the feelings of love strengthens the feelings of loyalty. When citizens love their country, they exhibit loyalty and devotion and make sacrifices for the sake of the nation.

If sentiments of love do not exist, then the spirit of sacrifice will not be formed. Unless a person loves another they can never have good feelings in their heart towards the other, and cannot faithfully fulfil the rights due to that person.

Lack of tolerance leads to violence, and finally it destroys the peace and security of society. When people fail in their arguments they become intolerant, and then they use force and aggression to support their point of view.

Vandalism: a grave sign of where society is heading

IT IS difficult to understand how a normal person can go to a graveyard and vandalise the graves of the relatives of someone they detest or hate.

UPND cadres have the right to detest or even hate former Inspector General of Police Kakoma Kanganja. Truly, he didn't treat them fairly. But they have no right to vandalise the graves of his relatives. This is extreme barbarism, inhumanity.

These are very dangerous signs of where our country is heading under the UPND hegemony. This type of violence, which extends even to the dead, shouldn't be tolerated at all. We seem to have a very intolerant group in power.

The dead must be respected. Graveyards deserve the respect of all – friends and foes.

In many civilisations, traditions and religions – both ancient and modern – death is a mere transitional phase between one stage of life and another. Burying the dead is one way to ensure that the dead are accorded dignity and respect and that the feelings of their living loved ones are considered.

Throughout history, religions, traditions and cultural practices have influenced the ways in which the dead are managed, both in times of peace and conflict. Today, they continue to do so. Human dignity is a right given by God to all humans, who are referred to as God's vicegerents on Earth.

Whether dead or alive, the human body – created by God in the perfect shape – must be given dignity and respect. This importance of the human body is illustrated in the story of Cain. When Cain was unsure of how to deal with the body of

his brother Abel, whom he had murdered, God sent a message in the form of a raven. God used the raven to dig into the ground to bury another raven, thus indirectly showing Cain how to bury his brother's body.

Like the early Christians who visited the tomb of Jesus, we visit the graves of our beloved dead. Their graves are a place of prayer for the happy repose of their souls and a sacred place to thank God for the gift of their lives.

The empty tomb of Jesus assures us that, "life is changed, not ended. When the body of our earthly dwelling lies in death, we gain an everlasting dwelling place in heaven". Our burial practices truly respect our beloved departed, body and soul, in the sure hope of the resurrection.

We face this task together

IT CANNOT be denied that we are today a struggling people with no time to lose.

Our tomorrow has become our today. And as they say, we are confronted with the fierce urgency of now, in the unfolding of life and history.

We must struggle without respite, we must work ceaselessly to lift the downtrodden masses of our people to the higher destiny – a more just, fair and humane society, full of honesty, equity, humility and solidarity; a new plateau of compassion.

Care is the essence of power, of strength, but strength without care is savage, brutal and selfish. Strength with care is compassion – the strength needed to help our poor people lift themselves out of poverty and to their full stature.

But where do we get that strength to provide that care? From some Macgyver, some 21st century Moses? No.

We cooperate, we collect, we coordinate so that everyone has responsibility, and everyone has rights. That is how we make the weak strong, that is how we lift the poor out of poverty, that is how we cure the sick, that is how we give talent a chance to flourish. We do it together.

This is the true meaning of revolutionary democracy – people deciding together, building together, to transform their country and thus transform themselves; it's a growth in fraternal love.

We are people, not parties

I THOUGHT that with the election of a new government the political tensions in our country would disappear or ease considerably, and it would be time for every last Zambian to listen with less anger, argue with more grace and find the way to higher ground.

No matter our individual politics, every citizen can surely agree that Zambia is pretty far from political and social tranquility. The talking heads are braying. The online commentariat is spewing hatred in caps and lock.

But despite the vitriol, we residents of Zambia still have one area of common ground – the piece of land we call home, where we have to figure out how to coexist. For how long can we continue to be enemies? And should we really be enemies? It's understandable, passion may have strained, but it shouldn't break our bonds of affection.

What if we refrained from quarrelling for a second so we could actually hear each other? Even if we didn't change our minds, we could change our mindset and remember we are people first, not political parties.

Our political party affiliation shouldn't affect our ability to get along. If we are willing to drop by with a casserole, surely we should be able to have a civil conversation.

Free education the solution

THE WORLD and the region that we live in is changing more rapidly than at any time in human history.

So much is different, so much is uncertain, but one truth is guaranteed. The best investment we can make is in the potential of individuals. And the future of our economy is education. Only free and socialised education will liberate the talents of our people and uplift their horizons.

When you think about the importance of making education free and socialised, it is not only important, my word, it's urgent.



Many of our young people are in precarious or informal work. And most of them are living in poverty

Employment and education vital to nation's stability

We must address youth aspirations

Socialist staff reporter

THE ACTIVE engagement of youth in sustainable development efforts is central to achieving an inclusive and stable nation, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe says.

"It is central to averting the worst threats and challenges to sustainable development, including the impacts of climate change, unemployment, poverty, gender inequality, conflict, and migration," he said.

"While all other areas of human endeavour are important, if we don't prioritise education and employment very little will be achieved in improving the conditions of our young people. Education and employment are fundamental to overall youth development.

"Today, there are 3,491,404 people (1,744,843 males and 1,746,561 females) aged between 15 and 24, accounting for 20.03 percent of Zambia's population.

Precarious

"Unacceptably high numbers of young Zambians are experiencing poor education and employment outcomes. In education, many youths of upper secondary age are out of school, and upper secondary enrolment rates are low. Moreover, many of the poorest 12- to 14-year-olds have never attended school, and many of the youths of the future are still unable to obtain an acceptable primary education.

"In most of our rural areas, young women face particular challenges in terms of securing and completing an education. Youth employment has worsened in recent years. Unemployment among youths aged 15 to 24 stands at 24 percent (male: 23.6 percent/female: 24.4 percent). Many of our young people are in precarious or informal work. And most of them are living in poverty even though they are employed."

Dr M'membe said the challenges of securing and retaining decent

work were even more serious and complex for vulnerable and marginalised youths, including young women and youths with disabilities.

"While entrepreneurship offers opportunities for some youths, a diverse and robust employment strategy must include options and opportunities for all our young people," he said.

"We need to start building successful programmes that address the individual and socio-economic contexts in which our young people actually live, rather than simply repeating the skills-for-employability rhetoric which supposes that there are formal sector jobs available if only young people were not so unprepared.

"Equally, such programmes view entrepreneurship practically, as a part of livelihood strategy,

rather than through an ideological lens. They believe young people can succeed in business but need support and face risks.

"It is important to recognise that the human rights and flourishing of youths are about more than successful transitions to employment. Young people have aspirations that are far broader and that need to be valued and supported.

"Approaches that focus on prioritising youth participation, respecting youth rights, and addressing youth aspirations are key.

"Rather than focusing on narrow measures of educational or employment attainment, it is crucial that sufficient attention is paid to young people's own accounts of what they value for their human development and for the sustainable development of their communities."

Taking the law into your own hands is dangerous

DANGEROUS political and social practices are taking place in the country, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe says.

"We are increasingly witnessing cadres and supporters of our country's ruling party taking the law into their own hands," he said. "The most recent example being at the High Court in Lusaka. And what is more saddening is that some ruling party leaders defended it. This is certainly a very dangerous political and social practice."

Dr M'membe said that no matter how legitimate or genuine people's grievances were, no one had the civil rights to take the law into their own hands.

"Yes, things have become chaotic in Zambia, but let's not make it worse. It is shocking that a political party which was a victim of lawlessness barely two months ago would endorse actions of people taking the law into their own hands," Dr M'membe said.

"How much violence are we going to witness if all who feel offended or aggrieved are allowed to take the law into their own hands?"

"Take the law into their own hands", I think, generally conveys the message, 'illegally do something that only the legal system and its governmental enforcers may do'.

"Of course, the law has long recognised people's rights to use deadly force when necessary to try to protect either himself/herself or a third party against a reasonably perceived imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury.

"When citizens try to stop armed criminals from killing people, they are thus complying with the law by exercising their legal rights. They are using only the rights that the law has said are already lawfully in their hands (or that, by hypothesis, the law would say are lawfully in their hands)."

Dr M'membe said the law didn't put punishments or forms of dispute resolution in private people's hands; things such as a private citizen punishing someone who was no longer a danger, or seizing someone else's property just because he thought it fair compensation for money that was owed to him.

Secret deals, hidden assets

Leaked data reveals ploys of the world's rich and powerful

THE SECRET deals and hidden assets of some of the world's richest and most powerful people have been revealed in the biggest trove of leaked offshore data in history.

Branded the Pandora Papers, the cache includes 11.9 million files from companies hired by wealthy clients to create offshore structures and trusts in tax havens such as Panama, Dubai, Monaco, Switzerland and the Cayman Islands.

They expose the secret offshore affairs of 35 world leaders, including current and former presidents, prime ministers and heads of state. They also shine a light on the secret finances of more than 300 other public officials, such as government ministers, judges, mayors and military generals in more than 90 countries.

The files include disclosures about major donors to the British Conservative party, raising difficult questions for the country's prime minister, Boris Johnson.

Incognito

More than 100 billionaires feature in the leaked data, as well as celebrities, rock stars and business leaders. Many use shell companies to hold luxury items, such as property and yachts, as well as incognito bank accounts. There is even art ranging from looted Cambodian antiquities to paintings by Picasso and murals by Banksy.

The Pandora Papers reveal the inner workings of what is a shadow financial world, providing a rare window into the hidden operations of a global offshore economy that enables some of the world's richest people to hide their wealth and in some cases pay little or no tax.

Other wealthy individuals and companies stash their assets offshore to avoid paying tax elsewhere, a legal activity estimated to cost governments billions in lost revenues.

After more than 18 months analysing the data in the public interest, the UK's *Guardian* newspaper and other media are publishing their

findings, beginning with revelations about the offshore financial affairs of some of the most powerful political leaders in the world.

They include the ruler of Jordan, King Abdullah II, who, leaked documents reveal, has amassed a secret US\$100m property empire spanning Malibu, Washington and London. The king declined to answer specific questions but said there would be nothing improper about him owning properties via offshore companies. Jordan appeared to have blocked the ICIJ website, hours before the Pandora Papers launched.

The files also show that Azerbaijan's ruling Aliyev family has traded close to £400m of UK property in recent years. One of their properties was sold to the Queen's crown estate, which is now looking into how it came to pay £67m to a company that operated as a front for the family that runs a country routinely accused of corruption. The Aliyevs declined to comment.

The Pandora Papers also threaten to cause political upsets for two European Union leaders. The prime minister of the Czech republic, Andrej Babiš is facing questions over why he used an offshore investment company to acquire a US\$22m chateau in the south of France. He too declined to comment.

And in Cyprus, itself a controversial offshore centre, the president, Nicos Anastasiades, may be asked to explain why a law firm he founded was accused of hiding the assets of a controversial Russian billionaire behind fake company owners. The firm denies any wrongdoing, while the Cypriot president says he ceased having an active role in its affairs after becoming leader of the opposition in 1997.

Not everyone named in the Pandora Papers is accused of wrongdoing. The leaked files reveals that Tony and Cherie Blair saved £312,000 in property taxes when they purchased a London building partially owned by the family of a prominent Bahraini minister.

The former prime minister and his wife bought the £6.5m office in Marylebone by acquiring a British Virgin Islands (BVI) offshore company. While the move was not illegal, and there is no evidence the Blairs proactively sought to avoid

property taxes, the deal highlights a loophole that has enabled wealthy property owners to not pay a tax that is commonplace for ordinary Britons.

The leaked records vividly illustrate the central coordinating role London plays in the murky offshore world. The UK capital is home to wealth managers, law firms, company formation agents and accountants. All exist to serve their ultra-rich clients. Many are foreign-born tycoons who enjoy "non-domicile" status, which means they pay no tax on their overseas assets.

Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, who was elected in 2019 on a pledge to clean up his country's notoriously corrupt and oligarch-influenced economy, is also named in the leak. During the campaign, Zelenskiy transferred his 25 per cent stake in an offshore company to a close friend who now works as the president's top adviser, the files

suggest. Zelenskiy declined to comment and it is unclear if he remains a beneficiary.

The Russian president, Vladimir Putin, whom the US suspects of having a secret fortune, does not appear in the files by name. But numerous close associates do, including his best friend from childhood – the late Petr Kolbin – whom critics have called a "wallet" for Putin's own wealth, and a woman the Russian leader was allegedly once romantically involved with. None responded to invitations to comment.

Spotlight

The Pandora Papers also place a revealing spotlight on the offshore system itself. In a development likely to prove embarrassing for the US president, Joe Biden, who has pledged to lead efforts internationally to bring transparency to the global financial system, the US

emerges from the leak as a leading tax haven. The files suggest the state of South Dakota, in particular, is sheltering billions of dollars in wealth linked to individuals previously accused of serious financial crimes.

The offshore trail also stretches from Africa to Latin America to Asia, and is likely to pose difficult questions for politicians across the world.

In Pakistan, Moonis Elahi, a prominent minister in prime minister Imran Khan's government, contacted an offshore provider in Singapore about investing US\$33.7m.

In Kenya, the president, Uhuru Kenyatta, has portrayed himself as an enemy of corruption.

In 2018, Kenyatta told the BBC, "Every public servant's assets must be declared publicly so that people can question and ask: what is legitimate?"

He will come under pressure to

explain how he and his close relatives amassed more than US\$30m of offshore wealth, including property in London. Kenyatta did not respond to enquiries about whether his family wealth was declared to relevant authorities in Kenya.

The Pandora Papers also reveal some of the unseen repercussions of previous offshore leaks, which spurred modest reforms in some parts of the world, such as the British Virgin Islands (BVI), which now keeps a record of the real owners of companies registered there. However, the newly leaked data shows money shifting around offshore destinations, as wealthy clients and their advisers adjust to new realities.

Some clients of Mossack Fonseca, the now defunct law firm at the heart of the 2016 Panama Papers disclosures, simply transferred their companies to rival providers, such as another global trust and corporate administrator with a major office in



This is the true face of capitalism

George Monbiot

WHENEVER there's a leak of documents from remote islands and obscure jurisdictions where rich people hide their money, such as in the Pandora Papers, we ask ourselves how such things could happen. How did we end up with a global system that enables great wealth to be transferred offshore, untaxed and hidden from public view? Politicians condemn it as "the unacceptable face of capitalism". But it's not. It is the face of capitalism.

Capitalism was arguably born on a remote island. A few decades after the Portuguese colonised Madeira in 1420, they developed a system that differed in some respects from anything that had gone before. By felling the forests after which they named the island (madeira is Portuguese for wood), they created, in this uninhabited sphere, a blank slate – a *terra nullius* – in which a new economy could be built. Financed by bank-

ers in Genoa and Flanders, they transported enslaved people from Africa to plant and process sugar. They developed an economy in which land, labour and money lost their previous social meaning and became tradable commodities.

As the geographer Jason Moore points out in the journal *Review*, a small amount of capital could be used, in these circumstances, to grab a vast amount of natural wealth. On Madeira's rich soil, using the abundant wood as fuel, slave labour achieved a previously unimaginable productivity. In the 1470s, this tiny island became the world's biggest producer of sugar.

Madeira's economy also had another characteristic that distinguished it from what had gone before; the astonishing speed at which it worked through the island's natural wealth. Sugar production peaked in 1506. By 1525 it had fallen by almost 80 per cent. The major reason, Moore

believes, was the exhaustion of accessible supplies of wood: Madeira ran out of madeira.

It took 60kg of wood to refine 1kg of sugar. As wood had to be cut from ever steeper and more remote parts of the island, more slave labour was needed to produce the same amount of sugar. In other words, the productivity of labour collapsed, falling roughly fourfold in 20 years. At about the same time, the forest clearing drove several endemic species to extinction.

In what was to become the classic boom-bust-quit cycle of capitalism, the Portuguese shifted their capital to new frontiers, establishing sugar plantations first on São Tomé, then in Brazil, then in the Caribbean, in each case depleting resources before moving on. As Moore says, the seizure, exhaustion and partial abandonment of new geographical frontiers is central to the model of accumulation that we call capitalism. Ecological and productiv-

ity crises like Madeira's are not perverse outcomes of the system. They are the system.

Madeira soon moved on to other commodities, principally wine. It should come as no surprise that the island is now accused of functioning as a tax haven, and was mentioned in the Pandora Papers. What else is an ecologically exhausted island, whose economy depended on looting, to do?

In *Jane Eyre*, published in 1847, Charlotte Brontë attempts to decontaminate Jane's unexpected fortune. She inherited the money from her uncle, "Mr Eyre of Madeira"; but, St John Rivers informs her, it is now vested in "English funds". This also has the effect of distancing her capital from Edward Rochester's, tainted by its association with another depleted sugar island, Jamaica. But what were, and are, English funds? England, in 1847, was at the centre of an empire whose capitalist endeavours had long eclipsed those of the Por-



Kenya's President
Uhuru Kenyatta

Kenyattas linked to 13 offshore companies

THE FAMILY of Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta have secretly owned a network of offshore companies for decades, according to the Pandora Papers.

Kenyatta and six members of his family have been linked to 13 offshore companies.

He said he would "respond comprehensively" adding that the investigation would "go a long way to enhance the financial transparency and openness that we require in Kenya and around the globe".

The Kenyattas' offshore investments, including a company with stocks and bonds worth US\$30m, were discovered among hundreds of thousands of pages of administrative paperwork from the archives of 14 law firms and service providers in Panama, the British Virgin Islands (BVI) and other tax havens.

The secret assets were uncovered by an investigation by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), Finance Uncovered, Africa Uncensored and other news organisations.

Documents show that a foundation called Varies was set up in 2003 in Panama, naming Kenyatta's mother, Ngina, 88, as the first benefactor, and Kenya's leader as the second benefactor, who would inherit it after her death. The purpose of the foundation and the value of its assets are unknown.

Panamanian foundations are much sought after because the true owners of the assets are only known by their lawyers and they do not have to register their names with the Panamanian government, ICIJ reports.

The assets can also be designed to be transferred tax-free to a successor.

There's no reliable estimate of the Kenyatta family's net worth but its vast business interests span transport, insurance, hotels, farming, land ownership and the media industry in Kenya.

In 2018, Kenyatta told the BBC *Hardtalk* programme that his family's wealth was known to the public, and as president he had declared his assets as required by law.

He promised to work with parliament to create a law that would oblige public officials to declare their wealth, but MPs are yet to pass the bill.

It is unclear if President Kenyatta, who retires next year after 10 years in office, knew about the Varies foundation, but the timing of its opening may be instructive.

Seven months earlier, he had lost the 2002 presidential election to opposition candidate Mwai Kibaki, who had vowed to redress historical crimes as well as launch a war against corruption.

At the time, the family of outgoing president Daniel arap Moi, a friend of the Kenyattas, allegedly moved money out of

the country, according to a 2014 leaked report by the international risk consultancy Kroll.

The Kenyatta family established its political and business interests during the rule of Kenya's first president, Uhuru's father Jomo. He has been accused of using his position to amass wealth. After his death in 1978, Ngina Kenyatta, his fourth wife, played a pivotal role in expanding the family's business interests.

In paperwork seen by the BBC, the Pandora Papers reveal that in 1999, Mrs Kenyatta and her two daughters, Kristina and Anna, set up an offshore company – Milrun International Limited – which was incorporated in the BVI.

According to the ICIJ, Mrs Kenyatta and her daughters were advised by experienced international wealth experts from the Swiss bank Union Bancaire Privée (UBP), which recruited Alcolgal, a Panamanian law firm specialising in setting up and administering offshore companies.

The consortium says invoices from Alcolgal to the bank show that the Swiss advisers referred to the Kenyattas with the code "client 13173".

Alcolgal provided a registered office for Milrun on the largest of the BVI islands, Tortola, and supplied staff members to act as the company's official directors. The result was an entirely anonymous company that could not be traced back to the Kenyatta family.

This company was used by Mrs Kenyatta and her daughters to buy an apartment in central London, which it still owns, according to filings at the UK Land Registry, seen by Finance Uncovered.

According to Finance Uncovered, the Kenyatta family has used other offshore companies to buy two more properties in the UK.

UBP private-wealth advisers also helped Kenyatta's brother, Muhoho, set up a Panamanian entity called Criselle Foundation in 2003.

The foundation was registered to the offices of Alcolgal in Panama City, and was nominally run by board members from the Panamanian law firm.

It was set up for the benefit of Muhoho Kenyatta, with his son Jomo Kamau Muhoho, as successor.

A search of public records in BVI and Panama found that most of the companies linked to the Kenyattas are now dormant, some of them as a result of non-payment of regulatory fees.

It's not illegal to run secret companies, but some have been used as a front to divert money, avoid taxes and for money laundering.

The Pandora Papers, however, show no evidence that the Kenyatta family stole or hid state assets in their offshore companies.

BBC

London, whose data is in the new trove of leaked files. Asked why he was migrating to the new company, one customer wrote bluntly: "Business decision to exit following the Panama Papers." Another agent said the industry had always "adapted" to external pressure.

Some leaked files appear to show some in the industry seeking to circumvent new privacy regulations. One Swiss lawyer refused to email the names of his high-value customers to a service provider in the BVI, following new legislation. Instead, he sent them by airmail, with strict instructions they should not be processed in any "electronic way". The identity of another beneficial owner was shared via WhatsApp.

"The purpose of this way to proceed is to enable you to comply with BVI rules," the lawyer wrote. Referring to Mossack Fonseca, the lawyer added: "You are obliged to keep secrecy for our clients and to

not make feasible at all a second 'Panama Papers' story that happened to one of your competitors."

Gerard Ryle, the director of the ICIJ, said leading politicians who organised their finances in tax havens had a stake in the status quo, and were likely to be an obstacle to reform of the offshore economy. "When you have world leaders, when you have politicians, when you have public officials, all using the secrecy and all using this world, then I don't think we're going to see an end to it."

He expected the Pandora Papers to have a greater impact than previous leaks, not least because they were arriving in the middle of a pandemic that had exacerbated inequalities and forced governments to borrow unprecedented amounts to be shouldered by ordinary taxpayers. "This is the Panama Papers on steroids," Ryle said. "It's broader, richer and has more detail."

At least US\$11.3tn in wealth is held offshore, according to a 2020 study by the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). "This is money that is being lost to treasuries around the world and money that could be used to recover from COVID," Ryle said. "We're losing out because some people are gaining. It's as simple as that. It's a very simple transaction that's going on here."

Opaque

There are emails, memos, incorporation records, share certificates, compliance reports and complex diagrams showing labyrinthine corporate structures. Often, they allow the true owners of opaque shell companies to be identified for the first time.

The files were leaked to the Inter-

national Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) in Washington. It shared access to the leaked data with select media partners including *The Guardian*, *BBC Panorama*, *Le Monde* and the *Washington Post*. More than 600 journalists have sifted through the files as part of a massive global investigation.

The Pandora Papers represent the latest – and largest in terms of data volume – in a series of major leaks of financial data that have convulsed the offshore world since 2013.

Setting up or benefiting from offshore entities is not itself illegal, and in some cases people may have legitimate reasons, such as security, for doing so. But the secrecy offered by tax havens has at times proven attractive to tax evaders, fraudsters and money launderers, some of whom are exposed in the files.

The Guardian

Capitalism and it is a global disaster

tuguese. For three centuries, it had systematically looted other nations; seizing people from Africa and forcing them to work in the Caribbean and North America, draining astonishing wealth from India, and extracting the materials it needed to power its Industrial Revolution through an indentured labour system often scarcely distinguishable from outright slavery. When *Jane Eyre* was published, Britain had recently concluded its first opium war against China.

Financing this system of world theft required new banking networks. These laid the foundations for the offshore financial system whose gruesome realities were again exposed recently. "English funds" were simply a destination for money made by the world-consuming colonial economy called capitalism.

In the onshoring of Jane's money, we see the gulf between the reality of the system and the way it presents itself. Almost from the

beginning of capitalism, attempts were made to sanitise it. Madeira's early colonists created an origin myth, which claimed that the island was consumed by a wild fire, lasting for seven years, that cleared much of the forest. But there was no such natural disaster. The fires were set by people. The fire front we call capitalism burned across Madeira before the sparks jumped and set light to other parts of the world.

Capitalism's fake history was formalised in 1689 by John Locke, in his *Second Treatise of Government*. "In the beginning all the world was America," he tells us, a blank slate without people whose wealth was just sitting there, ready to be taken. But unlike Madeira, America was inhabited, and the indigenous people had to be killed or enslaved to create his *terra nullius*. The right to the world, he claimed, was established through hard work: when a man has "mixed his labour" with natural wealth, he "thereby

makes it his property". But those who laid claim to large amounts of natural wealth did not mix their own labour with it, but that of their slaves. The justifying fairytale capitalism tells about itself – you become rich through hard work and enterprise, adding value to natural wealth – is the greatest propaganda coup in human history.

As Laleh Khalili explains in the *London Review of Books*, the extractive colonial economy never ended. It continues through commodity traders working with kleptocrats and oligarchs, grabbing poor nations' resources without payment with the help of clever instruments such as "transfer pricing". It persists through the use of offshore tax havens and secrecy regimes by corrupt elites, who drain their nation's wealth then channel it into "English funds", whose true ownership is hidden by shell companies.

The fire front still rages across the world, burning through peo-

ple and ecologies. Though the money that ignites it may be hidden, you can see it incinerating every territory that still possesses unexploited natural wealth: the Amazon, west Africa, West Papua. As capital runs out of planet to burn, it turns its attention to the deep ocean floor and starts speculating about shifting into space.

The local ecological disasters that began in Madeira are coalescing into a global one. We are recruited as both consumers and consumed, burning through our life support systems on behalf of oligarchs who keep their money and morality offshore.

When we see the same things happening in places thousands of miles apart, we should stop treating them as isolated phenomena, and recognise the pattern. All the talk of "taming" capitalism and "reforming" capitalism hinges on a mistaken idea of what it is. Capitalism is what we see in the Pandora Papers.

The Guardian

WHO endorses first malaria vaccine to save young lives

Mosquito-borne parasitic disease kills half a million people every year worldwide including around 260,000 children under the age of five in sub-Saharan Africa

THE WORLD has gained a new weapon in the war on malaria, among the oldest known and deadliest of infectious diseases: the first vaccine shown to help prevent the disease. By one estimate, it will save the lives of tens of thousands of children each year.

Mosquito-borne malaria kills about half a million people each year, nearly all in sub-Saharan Africa, including around 260,000 children under the age of five. The new vaccine, called Mosquirix, made by GlaxoSmith-Kline (GSK), rouses a child's immune system to fight *Plasmodium falciparum*, the deadliest of five malaria pathogens, and the most prevalent in Africa.

The World Health Organisation has endorsed the vaccine, the first step in a process that should lead to wide distribution in poor countries.

To have a malaria vaccine that is safe, moderately effective and ready for distribution, is "an historic event" said Dr Pedro Alonso, director of the WHO's global malaria programme.

Thomas Breuer, GSK's chief global health officer said in a statement, "This long-awaited landmark decision can reinvigorate the fight against malaria in the region at a time when progress on malaria control has stalled."

The recommendation was jointly announced in Geneva by the WHO's top advisory bodies for malaria and immunisation, the Malaria Policy Advisory Group and the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunisation.

Experts said the challenge now would be mobilising financing for production and distribution of the vaccine to some of the world's poorest countries.

GSK has to date committed to produce 15 million doses of Mosquirix annually up to 2028 at a cost of production plus no more than a 5 percent margin.

A global market study led by the WHO this year projected demand for a malaria vaccine would be 50 to 110 million doses per year by 2030 if it is deployed in areas with moderate to high transmission of the disease.

The GAVI vaccine alliance, a global public-private partnership, will consider in December whether and how to finance the vaccination programme.

"As we've seen from the COVID vaccine, where there is political will, there is funding available to ensure that vaccines are scaled to the level they are needed," said Kate O'Brien, director of WHO's Department of Immunisation, Vaccines and Biologicals.

A source familiar with planning for the vaccine's development said the price per dose was not yet set, but would be confirmed after



GAVI's funding decision and once there is a clear sense of demand.

The WHO's decision had personal meaning for Dr Rose Jalong'o, a vaccinology specialist at the Kenyan health ministry.

"I suffered from malaria as a child, and during my internship, and during my clinical years I attended to children in hospital because of severe malaria who needed blood transfusions and unfortunately some of them died," she said.

"It's a disease I have grown up with and, seeing all this in my lifetime, it's an exciting time."

Malaria is rare in the developed world. There are just 2,000 cases in the United States each year, mostly among travellers returning from countries in which the disease is endemic.

Complex

The vaccine is not just a first for malaria – it is the first developed for any parasitic disease. Parasites are much more complex than viruses or bacteria, and the quest for a malaria vaccine has been underway for 100 years.

"It's a huge jump from the science perspective to have a first-generation vaccine against a human parasite," Dr Alonso said.

In clinical trials, the vaccine had an efficacy of about 50 percent against severe malaria in the first year, but the figure dropped close to zero by the fourth year. And the trials did not directly measure the vaccine's impact on deaths, which has led some experts to question whether it is a worthwhile investment in countries with countless other intractable problems.

But severe malaria accounts for up to half of malaria deaths and is

considered "a reliable proximal indicator of mortality," said Dr Mary Hamel, who leads the WHO's malaria vaccine implementation programme. "I do expect we will see that impact."

A modelling study last year estimated that if the vaccine were rolled out to countries with the highest incidence of malaria, it could prevent 5.4 million cases and 23,000 deaths in children younger than five each year.

A recent trial of the vaccine in combination with preventive drugs given to children during high-transmission seasons found that the dual approach was much more effective at preventing severe disease, hospitalisation and death than either method alone.

Another vaccine against malaria called R21/Matrix-M that, developed by scientists at Britain's Oxford University, showed up to 77 percent efficacy in a year-long study involving 450 children in Burkina Faso, researchers said in April. It is still in the trial stages.

The malaria parasite is a particularly insidious enemy because it can strike the same person over and over. In many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, even those where most people sleep under insecticide-treated bed nets, children have on average six malaria episodes a year.

Even when the disease is not fatal, the repeated assault on their bodies can permanently alter the immune system, leaving them weak and vulnerable to other pathogens.

Malaria research is littered with vaccine candidates that never made it past clinical trials. Bed nets, the most widespread preventive measure, cut malaria deaths in children under five by only about 20 percent.

Against that backdrop, the new vaccine, even with modest efficacy,

is the best new development in the fight against the disease in decades, some experts have said.

"Progress against malaria has really stalled over the last five or six years, particularly in some of the hardest hit countries in the world," said Ashley Birkett, who heads malaria programs at PATH, a nonprofit organisation focused on global health.

With the new vaccine, "There's potential for very, very significant impact there," Dr Birkett said.

Mosquirix is given in three doses between the ages of five and 17 months, and a fourth dose roughly 18 months later. Following clinical trials, the vaccine was tried out in three countries – Kenya, Malawi and Ghana – where it was incorporated into routine immunisation programmes.

Inequities

More than 2.3 million doses have been administered in those countries, reaching more than 800,000 children. That bumped up the percentage of children protected against malaria in some way to more than 90 percent, from less than 70 percent, Dr Hamel said.

"The ability to reduce inequities in access to malaria prevention – that's important," Dr Hamel said. "It was impressive to see that this could reach children who are currently not being protected."

It took years to create an efficient system to distribute insecticide-treated bed nets to families. By contrast, including Mosquirix among routine immunisations made it surprisingly easy to distribute, Dr Hamel added, even in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, which prompted lockdowns and disrupted supply chains.

"We aren't going to have to

spend a decade trying to figure out how to get this to children," he said.

A working group of independent experts in malaria, child health epidemiology and statistics, as well as the WHO's vaccine advisory group, met recently to review data from the pilot programmes and to make their formal recommendation to Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO director-general.

"We still have a very long road to travel, but this is a long stride down that road," Dr Tedros said at a news conference.

"This is a vaccine developed in Africa by African scientists and we're very proud," he said, adding, "Using this vaccine in addition to existing tools to prevent malaria could save tens of thousands of young lives each year."

The next step is for GAVI to determine that the vaccine is a worthwhile investment. If the organisation's board approves the vaccine – not guaranteed, given the vaccine's moderate efficacy and the many competing priorities – GAVI will purchase the vaccine for countries that request it, a process that is expected to take at least a year.

But, as with COVID-19, problems with vaccine production and supply could considerably delay progress. And the pandemic has also diverted resources and attention from other diseases, said Deepali Patel, who leads malaria vaccine programmes at GAVI.

"COVID is a big unknown in the room in terms of where capacity is currently in countries, and rolling out COVID-19 vaccines is a huge effort," Ms Patel said.

"We're really going to have to see how the pandemic unfolds next year in terms of when countries will be ready to pick up all of these other priorities."

New York Times, Reuters

CHINA WATCH

INTEREST in China is growing, yet most news and analysis outside the country is produced by mainstream media from the global north. To provide access to Chinese perspectives, the *Dongsheng Collective* – researchers from various countries – offers a China digest of news. This is an edited selection.

Cuba is latest partner

CUBA has joined the Belt and Road energy partnership, seeking Chinese investments and technology in its renewable energy sector. The sector receives 40 percent of investments in the BRI, whose renewable energy share increased from 39 to 57 percent (2019-20). Cuba becomes the fourth country in the region (Venezuela, Bolivia, and Suriname) to join the partnership.

Global Times

Banks lend US\$137b

CHINA'S state banks lent US\$137 billion to Latin American governments and state-owned enterprises between 2006 and 2021. Washington promises investment in the region to regain lost influence, but its "Build Back Better World" project remains without a budget. Venezuela (US\$62.2 billion) and Brazil (US\$29.7 billion) have been the biggest beneficiaries of Chinese loans.

Financial Times

Xi's pledge on Africa

CHINA has delivered 85 percent of eight major initiatives and 70 percent of funds (US\$60 billion) committed to Africa, despite pandemic setbacks. To equalise the trade imbalance, President Xi Jinping has pledged more investment and non-commodities imports from Africa.

Nikkei Asia

Property prices fall

PROPERTY prices fell in 36 of China's 70 largest cities in September – the highest rate since 2015 – and sales plummeted 16.9 percent year-on-year. With a 0.5 percent monthly drop in national average prices, sales of the top 100 builders (US\$119 billion) fell 36.7 percent year-on-year. It shows the government's policies to curb property speculation and builders' leverage are beginning to show results.

Nikkei Asia

Carbon neutrality bid

CHINA faces challenges balancing rising coal consumption to boost the economy against its 2060 carbon neutrality goal. Nearly 70 percent of the country's electricity comes from coal, with prices rising more than 50 percent since 2020. The government's goal is to decrease coal to 11 percent of total energy production by 2050.

Nikkei Asia

Giant step for women

WANG Yaping of the Shenzhou-13 mission has become the first female taikonaut on China's Tiangong space station and the first to conduct a spacewalk. Wang is a pioneer in the male-dominated science fields, as the government pledges to prioritise funding for women.

Global Times

Foreign trade up 22%

CHINA's foreign trade grew 22.7 percent year-on-year in the first three quarters of 2021, reaching US\$4.37 trillion. Despite rising tensions with the US, bilateral trade (US\$543 billion) increased by 24.9 percent. ASEAN remains China's largest trading partner (US\$630.5 billion, +21.1 percent).

CGTN

The UN General Assembly: now a meeting place for the powerful

If the Charter ratified in 1945 was put to the vote today, would it pass?

Vijay Prashad

EACH year in September, the heads of governments gather at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City to inaugurate a new session of the General Assembly.

The area surrounding the headquarters becomes colourful, delegates from each of the 193 member states milling about the UN building and then going out to lunch in the array of restaurants in its vicinity that scraped through the pandemic.

Depending on the conflicts that abound, certain speeches are taken seriously; conflicts in this or that part of the world demand attention to the statements made by their leaders, but otherwise there is a queue of speeches that are made and then forgotten.

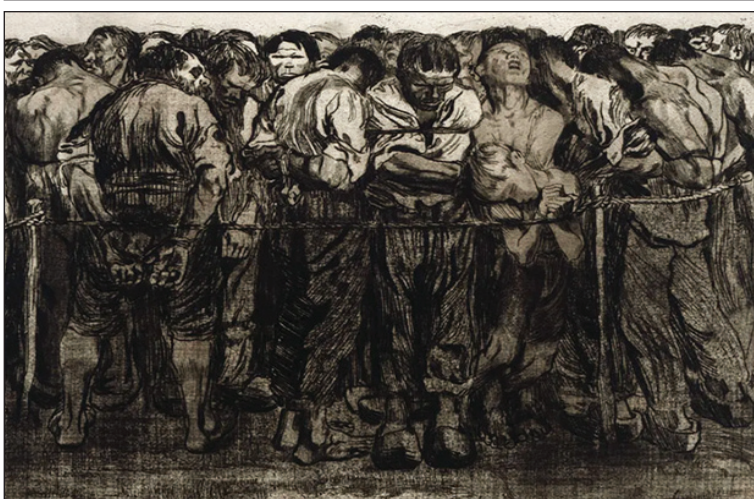
On September 25, the prime minister of Barbados, Mia Amor Mottley, took the stage in an almost empty UN General Assembly chamber. “How many more leaders must come to this podium and not be heard before they stop coming?” she asked emphatically. “How many times must we address an empty hall of officials and an institution that was intended to be made for leaders to discuss with leaders the advancement necessary to prevent another great war or any of the other great challenges of our humanity?”

Vulnerable

Prime Minister Mottley set aside her prepared remarks, since, she said, they would be “a repetition of what you have heard from others”. Instead, she offered a biting statement: “We have the means to give every child on this planet a tablet. And we have the means to give every adult a vaccine. And we have the means to invest in protecting the most vulnerable on our planet from a change in climate. But we choose not to. It is not because we do not have enough. It is because we do not have the will to distribute that which we have. If we can find the will to send people to the moon and solve male baldness, we can solve simple problems like letting our people eat at affordable prices.”

The United Nations was formed in October 1945 when 50 countries met in San Francisco to ratify the UN Charter. This is 2021, Prime Minister Mottley said, when there are “many countries that did not exist in 1945 who must face their people and answer the needs of their people”. Many of these countries were once colonies, the wellbeing of their people set aside by their colonial leaders at the UN. Now, 76 years later, the people of these countries – including Barbados – “want to know what is the relevance of an international community that only comes and does not listen to each other, that only talks and will not talk with each other”, Prime Minister Mottley said.

While the world leaders followed each other to the podium, Sacha Llorenti, secretary-general



Clockwise from above: Mahmoud Sabri (Iraq), *The Hero*, 1963; Albin Egger-Lienz (Austria), *Nordfrankreich (Northern France), 1917*; Käthe Kollwitz (Germany), *Die Gefangenen* ('The Prisoners'), 1908 (all edited)

of ALBA-TCP – an organisation of nine member states in Latin America and the Caribbean set up to further regional cooperation and development – asked a fundamental question during a No Cold War webinar on multipolarity: “If the UN Charter was put to a vote today, would it pass?” The Charter is ratified by every member state of the United Nations, and yet, clause after clause, it remains disrespected by some of its most powerful members, with the USA in the lead. If I were to catalogue the incidents of disregard shown by the United States government to the United Nations institutions and to the UN Charter, that text would be endless. This list would need to include the US refusal to:

Sign the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Ratify the 1989 Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-

boundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity, the 1998 Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Join the 2002 Treaty of Rome (which set up the International Criminal Court).

Participate in the 2016 Global Compact on Migration.

This inventory would also need to include the usage of unilateral, illegal, coercive sanctions against two dozen member states of the United Nations as well as the illegal prosecution of wars of aggression against several countries (including Iraq).

Would the United States government exercise its veto in the UN

Security Council if the UN Charter came up for a vote? Based on the historical actions of the US government, the answer is simple: certainly.

During the UN session, 18 countries – led by Venezuela – held a foreign ministers’ meeting of the Group of Friends in Defence of the UN Charter. One in four people who live in the world reside in these 18 countries, which include Algeria, China, Cuba, Palestine, and Russia. The group, led by Venezuela’s new Foreign Affairs Minister Felix Plasencia, called for “reinvigorated multilateralism”. This merely means to uphold the UN Charter, to say no to illegal wars and unilateral sanctions and to say yes to collaboration to control the COVID-19 pandemic, yes to collaboration on the climate catastrophe, yes to collaboration against hunger, illiteracy, and despair.

These countries never get to define what the “international community” thinks because that phrase is used only in reference to the United States and its Western allies, who decide what must be done and how it must be done for the rest of the world. Only then, in the solemnest of voices, do we speak of the “international community”; not when the Group of Friends – which represents 25 percent of the world’s people – nor when the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation – which represents 40 percent of the world’s people – speak, nor even when the Non-Aligned Movement, with its 120 members, speaks.

At the UN, US President Joe Biden said, “We are not seeking a new cold war.” This is welcome news. But it is also discordant. Prime Minister Mottley asked for clarity and honesty. Biden’s comment seemed neither clear nor honest,

since around the time of the UN meeting, the US entered a new arms agreement that masqueraded as a military pact with Australia and the United Kingdom (AUKUS) and held a meeting of the Quad (Australia, India, and Japan). Both have military implications that intend to pressure China.

Beyond this, US government documents refer over and over again to the desire for the US military to be expanded to “fight and prevail in a future conflict with China”, this includes a reconfiguration of military activities on the African continent directed at pushing back Chinese commercial and political interests. Biden’s additional budget request for the US military says that this is needed “to counter the pacing threat from China”.

This threat is not from China, but to China. If the US continues to expand its military, deepen its alliances in the Pacific region, and ramp up its rhetoric, then it is nothing other than a New Cold War – another dangerous action that makes a mockery of the UN Charter.

At the No Cold War webinar on multipolarity, ‘Towards a Multipolar World: An International Peace Forum’, Fred M’embe, Socialist Party of Zambia president, said that, while he grew up in a world where the bipolar Cold War seemed to pose an existential threat, “the unipolar world is more dangerous than the bipolar world”.

Solidarity

The system we live in now, dominated by the Western powers, “undermines global solidarity at a time when human solidarity is needed”.

You cannot eat the UN Charter. But if you learn to read, and if you read the Charter, you can use it to fight for your right to human decency. If we 7.9 billion people came together and decided to form a human chain to advance our human rights – each of us standing three feet apart – we would form a wall that would run for 6.5 million kilometres. That wall would run around the equator 261 times. We would build this wall to defend our right to become human, to defend our humanity, and to defend nature.

Tricontinental

‘Saving generations from the scourge of war’

IN 1945, in the Herbst Theater auditorium in San Francisco, delegates from 50 nations signed the United Nations Charter, establishing the world body as a means of saving “succeeding generations from the scourge of war”. The Charter was ratified on October 24, and the first UN General Assembly met in London on January 10, 1946.

Despite the failure of the League of Nations to arbitrate the conflicts that led up to World War II, the Allies as early as 1941 proposed establishing a new international body to maintain peace in the postwar world.

The idea of the United Nations began to be articulated in August 1941, when US President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill signed the Atlantic Charter, which proposed a set of principles for international collaboration to maintain peace and security. Later that year, Roosevelt

coined “United Nations” to describe the nations allied against the Axis powers – Germany, Italy and Japan. The term was first officially used on January 1, 1942, when representatives of 26 Allied nations met in Washington DC, and signed the Declaration by the United Nations, which endorsed the Atlantic Charter and presented the united war aims of the Allies.

In October 1943, the major Allied powers – Great Britain, the United States, the USSR, and China – met in Moscow and issued the Moscow Declaration, which officially stated the need for an international organisation to replace the League of Nations. That goal was reaffirmed at the Allied conference in Tehran in December 1943, and in August 1944 Great Britain, the United States, the USSR, and China met at the Dumbarton Oaks estate in Washington, DC to lay the groundwork for the United Nations. Over seven weeks, the delegates sketched out the form of

the world body but often disagreed over issues of membership and voting. Compromise was reached by the “Big Three” – the United States, Britain and the USSR – at the Yalta Conference in February 1945, and all countries that had adhered to the 1942 Declaration by the United Nations were invited to the United Nations founding conference.

On April 25, 1945, the United Nations Conference on International Organisation convened in San Francisco with 50 nations represented. Three months later, during which time Germany had surrendered, the final Charter of the United Nations was unanimously adopted by the delegates. On June 26, it was signed. The Charter, which consisted of a preamble and 19 chapters divided into 111 articles, called for the UN to maintain international peace and security, promote social progress and better standards of life, strengthen international law, and promote

the expansion of human rights. The principal organs of the UN, as specified in the Charter, were the Secretariat, the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Trusteeship Council.

On October 24, 1945, the UN Charter came into force upon its ratification by the five permanent members of the Security Council and a majority of other signatories. The first UN General Assembly, with 51 nations represented, opened in London on January 10, 1946. On October 24, 1949, exactly four years after the United Nations Charter came into effect, the cornerstone was laid for the present United Nations headquarters, located in New York City. Since 1945, the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded more than ten times to the United Nations and its organisations or to individual UN officials.

history.com

Hungry to end food profits for the few

One in eight of world's population go without

Vijay Prashad

EACH YEAR on October 16, the United Nations commemorates World Food Day.

This year, the IPA, Peoples Dispatch, the International Collective of Political Education, and Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research will conduct a political campaign to end hunger.

Peoples Dispatch has already produced a series of stories in collaboration with six media platforms that uncover hunger in the world today and people's resistance to it; meanwhile, the International Collective of Political Education is running a series of seminars called Environmental Crisis and Capitalism that explores elements of unsustainable food production.

There is nothing more obscene than the existence of hunger, the terrible indignity of working hard but being without the means for sustenance. To that end, we have drafted Tricontinental Red Alert no. 12, A World Without Hunger, to sharpen our thinking and campaigns to end hunger.

Red alert on hunger

IN A world of plenty, why does hunger persist? Hunger is intolerable. World hunger, which had declined from 2005 to 2014, has begun to rise since then; world hunger is now at 2010 levels.

The major exception to this trend has been China, which eradicated extreme poverty in 2020. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)'s 2021 report, The State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World, notes that "nearly one in three people in the world (2.37 billion) did not have access to adequate food in 2020 – an increase of almost 320 million people in just one year". The UN's World Food Programme projects that the number of those who are hungry could nearly double before the COVID-19 pandemic is contained "unless swift action is taken".

Scientists inform us that there is no shortage of food for the population; in fact, the overall supply of calories per capita has increased across the world. People are hungry not because there are too many of us, but because peasant subsistence producers all over the world are being forced off their land by agribusiness and pushed into city slums, where access to food is dependent on monetary income. As a result, billions of people do not have the means to buy food.

All historical research shows that famines are not primarily caused by a lack of food supply, but by the

lack of the means to access food. As the FAO wrote in 2014, "current food production and distribution systems are failing to feed the world. While agriculture produces enough food for 12 to 14 billion, some 850 million – or one in eight of the world population – live with chronic hunger". This failure can be measured, in part, by the fact that one third of all food produced is either lost during processing and transportation or is wasted. It is not overpopulation that causes hunger as is often argued, but rather inequality and a profit-driven, agribusiness-dominated food system in which the basic material need for food for hundreds of millions of people – at minimum – is sacrificed to satisfy the hunger for profit of the few.

What is food sovereignty?

IN 1996, two necessary phrases, food security and food sovereignty, entered common currency.

The idea of food security, developed out of anti-colonial and socialist struggles and formally established at the FAO's World Food Conference (1974), is closely linked to the idea of national food self-sufficiency. In 1996, as part of the Rome Declaration, the concept of food security was broadened to bring into focus the importance of economic access to food, and governments committed themselves to guaranteeing food to all people through income and food distribution policies.

In the early 1990s, the idea of food sovereignty was shaped by La Via Campesina – an international network that today includes 200 million peasants from 81 countries – to insist not only that governments deliver food, but also that people be empowered to produce basic foodstuffs.

Food sovereignty was defined around the creation of an agricultural and food system that would secure "the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems".

Over a decade later, La Via Campesina, the World March of Women, and various environmental groups held the International Forum for Food Sovereignty in Nyéléni (Mali) in 2007. At the forum, they elaborated six core components of food sovereignty:

- To centre the needs of people rather than the needs of capital.
- To value food producers, namely by creating policies that value peasants and enrich their livelihoods.
- To strengthen food systems by ensuring that local, regional, and national networks collaborate with and value those who produce food and those who consume food. This would strengthen the involvement of food producers and consumers in creating and reproducing food systems and ensure that poor quality and unhealthy foods do not overwhelm the attempt to create just food markets.
- To localise the control of food production; in other words, to give those who produce food the right to define how to organise the land and resources.
- To build knowledge and skills, which insists on taking local knowledge about food production seriously and further developing it scientifically.
- To work in harmony with nature by minimising harm to ecosystems through agricultural practices that are not destructive to the natural world.

The idea of the "local" requires a sharp assessment of the hierarchies of class, ethnicity, and gender; there

is no "local community" or "local economy" that is not torn apart by the exploitation and violence of these hierarchies. Equally, local knowledge must be seen alongside the advances of modern science, whose breakthroughs in the field of agriculture should not be discounted. What unites the platform of food sovereignty is the sharp line it creates to distinguish itself from the capitalist form of food production.

Liberalised trade and speculation in the production and distribution of food create serious distortions. Trade liberalisation not only poses the threat of cheaper imports, which depresses crop prices, but also brings with it more volatile prices through the entry of international prices into domestic markets. Such liberalisation also threatens to change cropping patterns in developing countries to suit the demands of richer states, thus undermining food sovereignty.

In 2010, the UN's former special rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Olivier De Schutter, cautioned about the way that hedge funds, pensions funds, and investment banks had come to overpower agriculture with speculation through commodity derivatives. These financial methods, he wrote, were, "generally unconcerned with agricultural market fundamentals". Financial speculation in agriculture is one illustration of the disregard that money has for a balanced food production system that could benefit both producers and consumers. It encourages money power to distort the food production system.

The concept of food sovereignty is an argument against this kind of distortion, which is rooted in land grabs by agribusiness corporations. Since the beginning of this century, agribusiness corporations, such as Unilever and Monsanto, have promoted the great global enclosure

of our times, sparking the biggest mass movement of populations in history and, in so doing, destroying the relation between people and land.

Two United Nations resolutions – one to declare the right to water (2010) and the other to affirm peasants' rights (2018) – will help us shape a new agricultural system that centres on the rights of the producers (including access to land) and respect for nature and that treats water as a commons and not as a commodity.

How do we create a just food production and distribution system?

PEASANT and farmer organisations have developed sufficient knowledge of the failures of the capitalist form of food production. Their punctual demands assert a different form, one that insists on greater democratic participation in the construction and reproduction of food systems, a participation which includes the intervention of governments rather than aid agencies or the private sector. From their many demands, we have distilled the following points. We need to give economic power to the people by:

- Implementing agrarian reform for peasants and farmers so that they have access to land and resources to farm the land.
- Developing appropriate forms of production that encourage, among other things, some form of collective action to take advantage of economies of scale.
- Instituting local self-government in rural areas, where peasants wield the political power necessary to shape policies that benefit their lives and that shield the ecosystem.
- Strengthening systems of social welfare so that peasants are pro-

tected in adverse times (bad weather, poor harvests etc).

- Building public distribution systems, with particular focus on eliminating hunger.

- Ensuring that healthy food is made available to public schools and crèches.

There is also the need to develop and implement measures to ensure that agriculture is remunerative by:

- Preventing the dumping of cheapened foodstuffs from agricultural systems in the Global North that benefit from massive subsidies.

- Expanding access of rural producers to affordable bank credit and providing relief from informal lenders.

- Creating a policy to ensure floor prices for farm produce.

- Developing publicly funded, sustainable irrigation systems, transportation systems, storage facilities, and related infrastructure.

- Enhancing the cooperative sector's food production and encouraging popular participation in food production and distribution systems.

- Building the scientific and technical capacity for sustainable and ecological agriculture.

- Removing patents on seeds and promoting legal frameworks to protect native seeds from being commodified by agribusinesses.

- Providing modern farm inputs at affordable prices.

And finally, focusing on designing a democratic international trade system by democratising the World Trade Organisation, which would include:

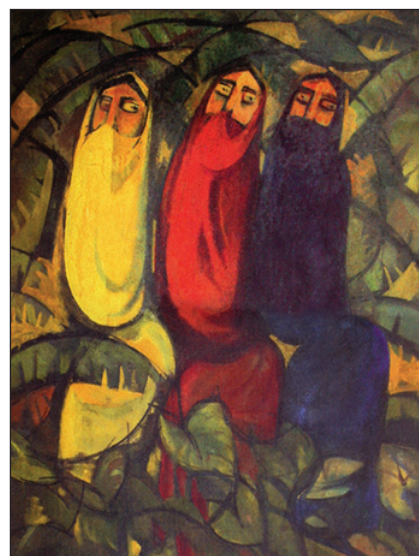
- Greater national participation of the Global South countries in shaping the rules for deliberation, greater openness of the process of negotiations (including the publication of reports and negotiation of texts), and greater participation of peasant organisations in the process of rulemaking.

- Greater transparency in trade dispute mechanisms. This includes the timely announcement of any disputes and of the form of arbitration as well as the public announcements of judicial settlements.

- Decreasing reliance upon powerful Global North platforms for designing policy and settling claims; this includes the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Bank's International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes. These bodies are controlled by the Global North, and operate almost entirely in the interest of the multinational corporations domiciled in the Global North.



Top: Ang Kiukok (Philippines), Harvest, 2004. Above left: Mohammed Wasia Charinda (Tanzania), Village River, 2007. Right: Quamrul Hassan (Bangladesh), Three Women, 1955



IMF cash boost 'is like a criminal returning to scene of the crime'

Nick Beams

TO THE accompaniment of overblown rhetoric and after months of haggling, the International Monetary Fund has agreed to try and boost the finances of low- and middle-income countries as they struggle to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic amid lack of access to vaccines and already inadequate public health services.

It recently signed off on a US\$650 billion expansion of its Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) programme.

SDRs have no conditions attached and do not have to be repaid, enabling countries to employ them without making compensatory cuts to public spending. But the decision will make little difference to the worsening situation confronting many countries as they face a continuing slowdown in the growth of their national income.

This was acknowledged, at least indirectly, by the IMF itself in its latest update to its world economic outlook. It cut the forecast for growth for emerging-market and less-developed countries, reversing the trend that has prevailed over the past two decades and more.

However, this did not stop IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva from talking up the SDR expansion when she announced it.

She said it was a "historic decision, the largest SDR allocation in the history of the IMF and a shot in the arm for the global economy at a time of unprecedented crisis".

"The SDR allocation will benefit all members, address the long-term global need for reserves, build confidence and foster the resilience and stability of the global economy," she said. "It will particularly help out most vulnerable economies struggling to cope with the impact of the COVID-19 crisis."

These claims are contradicted by the very structure of the allocation. The expansion of SDRs, the equivalent of newly printed money, will be allocated to the IMF's 190 members in proportion to their share of the global economy. This means that only US\$275 billion will go to emerging and developing economies, with the rest allocated to the world's major economies.

Furthermore, it is estimated that only 8 percent of the new money will go to countries that are classified as "highly debt vulnerable".

Debt is a problem across the board. According to the Institute of International Finance, average government debt in large emerging market economies rose from 52.2 percent of gross domestic product to 60.5 percent in 2020 – the largest increase on record.

The IMF itself has reported that more than half of emerging and developing countries had inadequate finances to meet the pandemic and had been forced to deplete their foreign currency reserves to combat it.

Many of these countries operate under the threat that a tightening of financial conditions in the US and other major economies would see the reversal of capital inflows, further escalating their economic and financial problems.

There have been calls for richer countries to channel their alloca-



The IMF assistance and debt service relief funding tracker and (inset) fund managing director Kristalina Georgieva who hailed the SDRs deal as an "historic decision"

tion of SDRs to poorer countries, and Georgieva said the IMF was seeking to advance those efforts. But given the record on the allocation of vaccines against the coronavirus, which shows that poorer countries have received only a tiny fraction of what is needed, there is little prospect of any meaningful movement on this front.

One of the most significant effects of the pandemic on less developed countries is in the tourist industry.

According to the UN's World Tourism Organisation, global international arrivals for the first five months of this year were, on average, 85 percent down from their levels in 2019, compared with a reduction of 65 percent for the same period in 2020.

In the Asia-Pacific region, now being hit hard by the Delta variant, there has been a 95 percent fall in arrivals compared with 2019 levels. Chinese tourism to the region has virtually ceased. The dependence of many of these countries on foreign visitors is exemplified by Thailand, where 20 percent of GDP and employment is generated by tourism.

Luiz Eduardo Peixoto, an emerging-markets economist at BNP Paribas in London, said the situation this year was worse than predicted.

"Last year, there was an assumption that in 2021 we would see a rebound," he said. But the drop in number last year was close to the most pessimistic scenario because, "We didn't get a recovery during the [northern] winter – quite the

contrary. This year, things are not recovering as expected."

Viewed within a longer-term historical perspective, the IMF's latest intervention via SDRs could well be described as the case of a criminal returning to the scene of the crime and seeking to expunge vital evidence.

Parlous

One of the main reasons health services in less developed countries are in such parlous condition and why debt levels are so high – constricting the spending on vital health services – is the impact of so-called "structural adjustment" programmes imposed on them in an earlier period by the IMF.

First imposed in the 1980s and

then continuing into the 1990s and the present century, countries that sought assistance from the IMF were required to meet strict conditions, including the privatisation of public services, deregulation of financial markets and reduction of social spending, including on health. Between 1980 and 2014, 109 out of 137 developing countries had to enter at least one structural adjustment programme.

A recent article by Adele Walton in *Tribune* magazine pointed out that some 25 countries were spending, "more on debt than healthcare, education, and social protection combined in 2019, meaning the intense strain of an international healthcare crisis has left swathes of populations without access to essential services and resources".

The measures, imposed by international finance capital via the IMF, have had a particularly significant impact on two of the countries that have been hardest hit by the pandemic, South Africa and India.

According to Walton's article a study in South Africa has found, "privatisation to be the primary cause of deprivation of most of the population's access to healthcare".

In India, privatisation of healthcare, "significantly reduced the government's capacity to prioritise public health needs over private profit interests". And the lack of resource coordination had, "cataclysmic consequences for the country when it experienced oxygen shortages at the height of its second wave".

WSWS.org

Cuba fights back against COVID and the US

AFTER a serious rise in Cuba of COVID-19 cases during the summer, there are encouraging signs with a downward curve in illnesses and deaths. Similar to the worldwide "third wave" of COVID, the Delta variant quickly became the dominant mutation in Cuba and swept through the island.

But workplaces, restaurants, beaches and public spaces are now opening up and tourism is set to resume on November 15.

A major vaccination programme means that by November 15, 92 percent of the population will be fully vaccinated thanks to Cuba's development and production of its own vaccines: Abdala, Mambisa and Soberana. Cuba's vaccination rate is the fastest in the world, and the only country whose children as young as two years old are being covered.

On November 15, all children will return to school fully vaccinated. Cuba's vaccination and its early medical intervention in positive cases are the two factors responsible for Cuba's recovery rate of 97.5 percent of those who have fallen ill, compared with the world rate of 90.46 percent and 85.3 percent in Latin America and the Carib-



San Miguel del Padrón Pediatric Hospital head nurse, intensive care department, Liliana Vaillant; nurse Marcia Marcial; nurse Yusliana Bustamante Hernandez; anesthesiologist Angel Labadid; and head of the intensive care department Dr Elizabeth González

bean. These statistics were conveyed in a national meeting of scientists, medical experts and statisticians together with government leaders headed by President Miguel Díaz-Canel on October 12.

From a high of new COVID cases that reached more than 9,000 per day in August, October's new cases are showing a

major decline. October 14 saw 2,138 new positive cases.

Cuba's heroes in hospitals, biotechnology centres and in the production of medical equipment, are essential actors in the country's resistance to both the US blockade and pandemic. They are achieving great feats in the midst of the most severe economic measures the US

government has ever imposed on Cuba. Trump signed 243 measures to try to strangle Cuba's economy. Biden has not only maintained Trump's anti-Cuba actions, but added new sanctions. The CIA and its allies are fuelling new subversive aggression.

The improved health indices and scientific advances are part

of Cuba's immunity to US-backed counter-revolutionary efforts.

A visit to the Paediatric Teaching Hospital of San Miguel del Padrón, which was designated early in the pandemic to care for children with COVID who have high-risk factors, shows the scale of the success. The doctors and nurses say proudly that not one child in the hospital has died from COVID during the whole pandemic.

Dr Yaima Rodríguez Espinoza, hospital director said, "At the peak of the pandemic from May to August, the 200 hospital beds were filled with vulnerable children."

"Today we have only 42 patients, which speaks to the recovery of the country's epidemiological situation."

Cuba's biotechnology industry is at the heart of the COVID fight. The government and scientists knew from the start that Cuba would have to depend on its own solutions to the pandemic and not fall victim to the world's pharmaceutical giants and the blockade.

Cuba's scientists have so far produced five vaccines with new advances underway.

Liberation



Socialism is about decent shelter for those who are homeless. It is about water for those who have no safe drinking water. It is about healthcare, it is about a life of dignity for the old. It is about overcoming the huge divide between urban and rural areas. It is about a decent education for all our people. Socialism is about rolling back the tyranny of the market. As long as the economy is dominated by an unelected, privileged few, the case for socialism will exist

Fred M'membe, Socialist Party president



JOIN THE PARTY • DOWNLOAD OUR MANIFESTO • MEET US ON THE WEB • LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

To join the party: contact us at the address or on the phone number below, find us at www.socialistpartyzambia.com or look us up on Facebook at www.facebook.com/socialistpartyzambia

You can download our manifesto/policy statement here: <http://socialistpartyzambia.com/manifesto-2>

LUS/10545, off Lumumba Road, P. O. Box 38278, Lusaka, Zambia. Tel: 09 5662 6995

www.socialistpartyzambia.com