



Challenging the ‘Western’ Narrative¹

Africa and the Migration Crisis

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Abstract:

This article seeks to give a critical analysis on the ongoing migration discourse both from an academic and policy perspective. It provides a perspective of Africa’s long history of hosting migrants and refugees including Europeans. It therefore addresses the question as to whether African states have lived up to their refugee and migration protection commitment. By doing so, it also criticizes Europe’s unfair, aggressive, and inhumanly migration policy towards migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, particularly Africans. By analysing existing data on migration, this article debunks the notion that a migration crisis is by nature an African one as if Africans are the only ones entering Europe. This scapegoating of Africans by portraying the continent at disarray will be examined closely. In that light, the article employs an Africanist line of thinking to deconstruct this narrative. This includes referenced interviews offering perspectives on this subject matter. The key question asked is as to what extent the EU should be accountable for human rights’ violation in third countries? The focus is on European Externalization of its borders to third countries in particular North Africa. It takes as an example the 2022 Melilla massacre described by western authorities as a ‘stampede’ in which migrants and refugees were killed while trying to enter Spain. This massacre took place at the borders between Morocco and Spain.

Keywords:

Migration; stampede; democratization; externalization; human rights.

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Historical Background

Historically speaking, migration is as old as the human race. It is a known and established fact that human species started in Africa about 2.5 million years ago (See Rossi, 2013; Silberman & Bauer, 2012). We can trace this claim from the work of Charles Darwin 1871 book *The Descent of Man*. Africa has hence been established as the cradle of human civilization. Human migration started in Africa to the rest of the other spheres on earth. This is a known fact and has defined human civilization. One can therefore argue that the entire history of our planet somehow relates to migration.

With this background, it is important to have a holistic view of the migration history. This will help to understand and appreciate the migration discourse. The African continent's interaction with the world is largely coerced (Muehlbauer & Ulbrich, 2018), ample seen by slavery. Colonization is a major reference point. What is not talked about is the fact that over 60 million Europeans migrated overseas during the colonialization period from 16th to 20th century (see Mandal, 1981; Daggars, 2013). Colonialism led to mass and force enslavement of Africans to Europe, Americas, and other parts of the world. According to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, 12.5 million Africans were forcefully taken to the New World between 1525 and 1866 alone. Out of these statistics only 10.7 million survived the dreaded Middle Passage Journey as they disembark to their respective destinations. What this tells us is the fact that Africa has been the main source of forced migrations in history.

Another important historical perspective to look into is the World Wars (I and II). Europe has long banked on Africa to fight its Wars mainly from 1914 to 1918 and 1939- 1945. Despite these wars being inherently European wars, Africans were forced to fight for their European masters at the time. Untold numbers of Africans were recruited and taken to fight these Europeans wars in various destinations around the world. Despite Africa's contributions through blood, sweat and sacrifice for the liberation of Europe's "free world" agenda, until now, Africa's contributions have often not even been mentioned, celebrated and/or properly documented by the same Westerners who they fought for and who are constantly preaching about human rights and justice for all. As observed by Mhango (2018) not even the numbers of those who died at these wars were accounted for, maybe, 'for fear of disclosing how Africa developed and saved Europe'. It is what led to estimate numbers by historians. There is however an attempt to come up with a rough estimate of over hundreds of thousands (ibid.) African combatants fought in the Second World War.

Post-second world war is another interesting era to analyze. It gave birth to the marshal plan because Europe's economy was destroyed after the Second World War (see Harrison, 1998). The Marshal plan was championed by the USA to save Europe's economies, thereby creating the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. This period coincided with nationalism movements that led to the independence of African states by Africans. A reason was that the War made it difficult for colonial powers to maintain and to have firm grip over their colonies. Africans saw an opening after the War to amplify their independent ambition.



This is to say that the same places the colonialists had firmed control over, eventually turn against them. The price for freedom through liberation struggles began to take shape. Furthermore, the defeat of European forces all over Asia as well in Haiti the first successful black led freedom movement also contributed to destroying the myth of European power (Guardian, 2009).

Consequences of the War

Africa as Haven for Refugees

The African continent has long been a safe haven for refugees around the world (also see section on Africa Home of the Biggest Refugee Camps). During World War II, thousands of Europeans sought refuge in Africa while the entire Africa was still under colonial occupation as well as enforced white rule at the time. However, these European refugees were living in refugee camps hosted in Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, (Lingelbach, 2020). One such group was the Polish: “Of the more 37, 000 civilians who managed to leave the USSR with the Polish army, more than a half found refuge in Africa” (Piotrowski, 2004: 137). It is ironical at the start of the Russia-Ukraine invasion in February 2022 that blacks Africans were denied entry into other European countries such as Poland and Hungary. Similarly, Jews were hosted in Africa during the holocaust period. It is an established fact that Jews have lived in Africa long before the holocaust. From the 15th century onwards to the outbreak of the World War II, Europe’s prosecuted Jews found refuge in Africa, particularly in East and West Africa (Kissi, 2020).

Europe’s Economic Downfall

In Europe the search for cheap labour intensified in order to rebuild their economics. It thus gave birth to a new ‘economic ambitions’ such as the Windrush movements and less strict visa regulations to attract cheap labor from former colonies such as the Commonwealth countries. Yet again, Africans and other Commonwealth countries in their large numbers came to Europe to help rebuilding their economies. But as UK’s aggressive policy towards migrants began taking shape in what became known as ‘Windrush Scandal’ in 2018 when they threatened to deport the Windrush generation. Despite “living and working in the UK for decades, many were told they were there illegally because of a lack of official paperwork” (BBC 2021). It is therefore evident that Africa and Africans have had long served as the backbone of European economies, security, and freedoms.

Contemporary Discourse

The so-called migration debate is very polarizing in Europe. There is an increasing sentiment that non-Europeans are taking over the EU and that 'white people' will become a 'minority' soon. This theory is well explained in Frey (2018) book *Diversity Explosion: How New Racial Demographics are Remaking America*. The theory as he puts it "minority white" is derived from increasing demographic change for fear of change, losing their privilege status, and total in support of unwanted groups in their communities. Demographic change therefore comes with political and economic consequences. This reduced status or replacement theory is what is driving anti-migration rhetoric especially in conservative networks such as Fox News. One of its anchor Tucker Carlson is reported by the New York Times (May 30, 2022) to have promoted this idea more than 400 episodes in his program. It is not surprising that it is widely used to smear migrants and minority groups in Europe and America.

But is this sentiment true? According to EUROSTAT 2021, about 5 percent of people living in the EU are non-EU citizens. Out of these statistics 40 percent live in Europe because of employment, 28 percent for family reasons, 11 percent education and 21 percent others (including international protection such as asylum). Anything these statistics are showing is the fact that EU's population is still a high majority of native born contrary to how it sounds like that Europe's population is dominated by foreigners. Secondly, the majority of non-Europeans coming to Europe have valid reasons such as work, education etc. Again, it is contrary to what is a common narrative, namely that every immigrant is illegal and would be in Europe due to the migration crisis.

The other key issue is the question of Africans dominating Europe, especially amid the migration crisis. But are African migrants overwhelming Europe? There is no question that migration has risen across the globe. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) World Report 2022, international migrant in 2020 was estimated at 281 million people globally. The report goes further to state that: "The total estimated 281 million people living in a country other than their countries of birth in 2020 was 128 million more than in 1990 and over three times the estimated number in 1970". If anything, these statistics show is the fact that migration is real. In other words, Africa and Africans are not inherently the issue but rather they are used as scapegoating by Western press and politicians (see section on Media Cover up).

What is Africa's share of the global migration? According to Africa Europe Foundation report of 2020 (page 2): "Only 3.0% of the African population are living outside their home country in 2020 compared to 8.5% of the European population". The same report goes further to state the fact that intra-Africa migrations is the main source of migration in Africa: "Intra-African migrations since 2010 have increased by +43.6% compared to +26.0% for Africa-Europe migrations". As result of intra Africa migration many African countries have experienced significant population increase. According to the World Migration Report 2020 population increase is largely witnessed in smaller countries as opposed to big countries such

as Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Ethiopia which did not make it to the top of the 20 countries witnessing population increase.

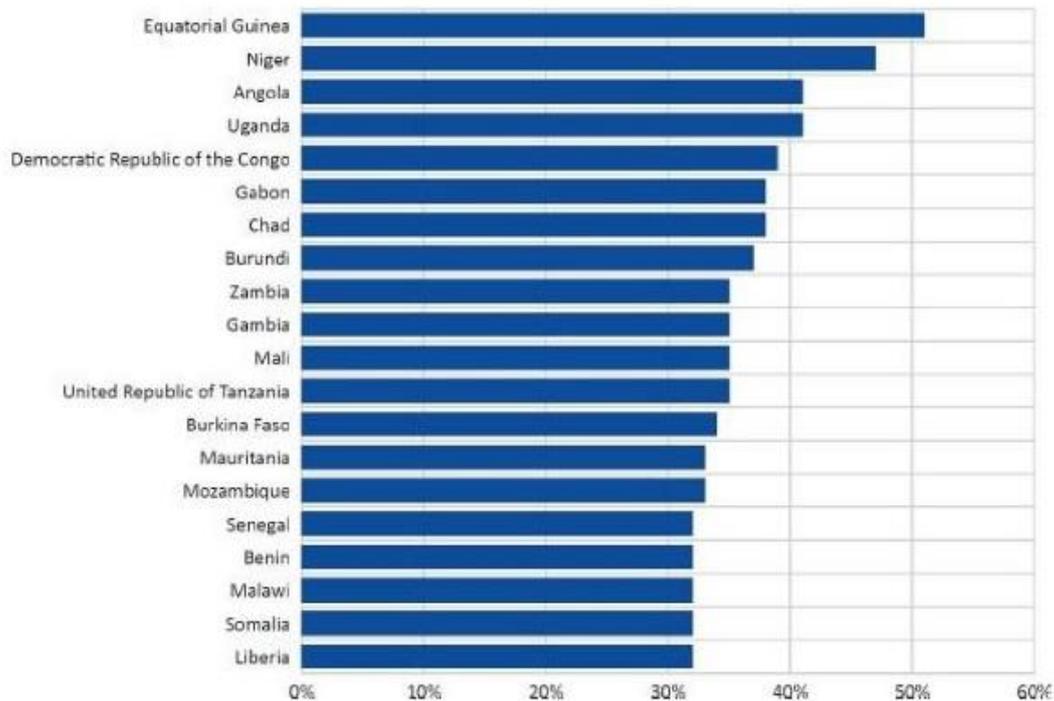


Figure 1. Top 20 Countries with the Largest Proportional Change in Africa, 2009-2019. Source: UN DESA, 2019.

These statistics show the fact that Africans are largely migrating within Africa as opposed to the negative picture portraying its population to flee to Europe. Furthermore, African migrants constitute less than 15% of the total migrant population (see chart below) in all world regions other than Africa (Africa Europe Foundation Report, 2020). The same report indicates that out of this 15 percent 82.4 percent live in Africa, 12.7 percent live in Europe, 6.3 Oceania, 5.6 Northern America, 4.8 in Asia, and 0.3 in Latin America & the Caribbean population.

What is not most talked about is the fact Africa is hosting a high percentage of the world refugees. Africa's oldest and biggest refugee camp Dadaad was established in 1991 as a United Nations haven to shelter Somalis fleeing conflicts (Androff, 2022). The chart below shows the refugee population in Africa. It goes to debunk the notion that Africa is not affected by the migration crisis. For instance, Uganda hosted 1.5 million the largest number of refugees in Africa as of 2021. This followed by Sudan 1.1 million and Ethiopia hosted around 821,300 refugees. Thus, the East and Horn of Africa are hosting most refugees in the continent.

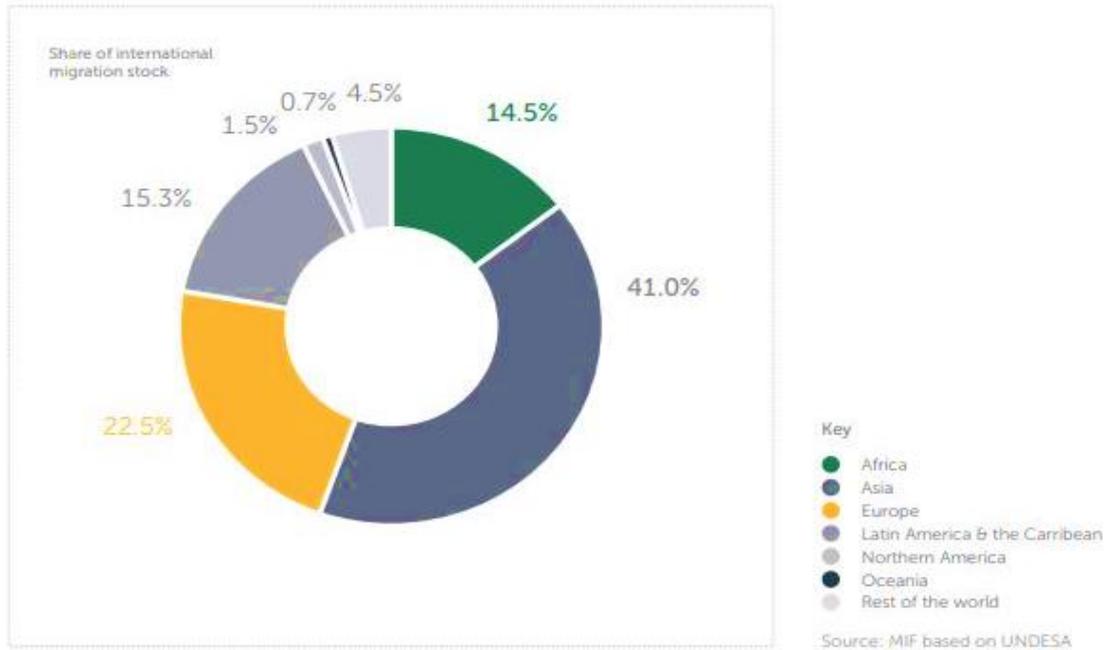


Figure 2. World Regions: Share of International Migration Stock. Source: AEFD, 2020.

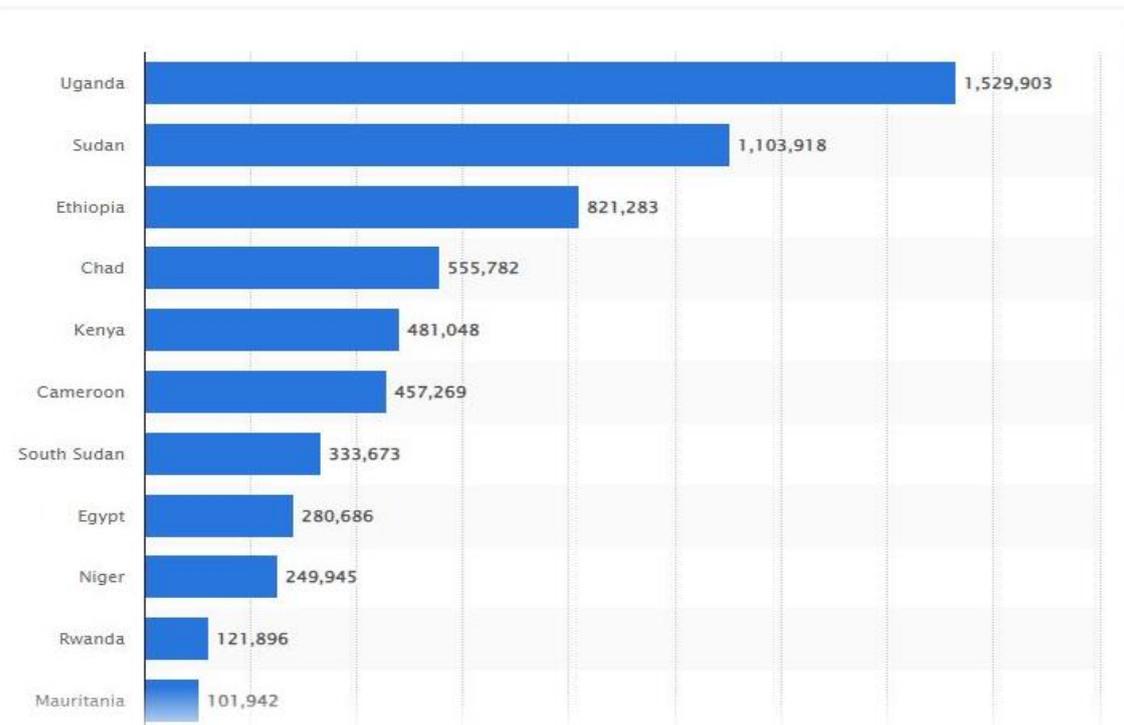


Figure 3. Number of Refugees in Africa as of 2021, by Country of Asylum-Seeking. Source: Statista, 2022.

Africa's Home of the World's Biggest Refugee Camps

Africa has thus lived up to its refugee and migration protection commitment. In other words, migration and refugee situation has long been an issue which Africa has been grappling with. Not even the smallest countries like The Gambia have been spared. The Gambia is the smallest country in Mainland Africa. It has long fulfilled its refugee obligations as a signatory to the 1951 Convention on status of refugees and its 1967 Protocol, to the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU - now renamed African Union) convention governing refugee protection in Africa (Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015). Since 1980s the country has been a safe haven for refugees and a large number of them are from southern Senegal in Casamance battling to secede from Senegal. Thus, the country continues hosting thousands of refugees from the continent fleeing wars and conflicts. For instance, during the 1990s, “several thousand refugees fleeing civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone sought protection in the tiny country of the Gambia” (Zanker, 2018: 74). At the pick of the Myanmar conflict on Rohingyas fleeing prosecution in 2015, The Gambia government offered to take in refugees. This eventually led the course to take the Myanmar government to the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Therefore, we are not only seeing Africans facing up to its migration and refugee challenge but they are also supporting and standing up for the prosecuted in other parts of the world. It is therefore unfair to sideline the immense contribution and long-standing commitment of African governments to refugee protections. But this truth about Africa is largely sidelined in the context of the migration crisis.

Challenges and Opportunities in Africa's Growing Population

What is not talked about is the fact that Africa is the continent of the future. It is important to acknowledge the fact that Africa has a fast-growing population. By 2050 Africa's population is projected to be 2.5 billion. This would mean that more than a quarter of the world's population would be in Africa. As reported by the Economists (March 26, 2020) “Sub-Saharan Africa's population is growing at 2.7% a year, which is more than twice as fast as South Asia (1.2%) and Latin America (0.9%)”. Between 2000 and 2021 it is reported by Statistic Research Department (July 15, 2022) that Africa's population has been growing from 811 million to 1.37 billion. The chart below by Statistic Research Department (ibid.) provides an overview of Africa's population from 2020 to 2050.

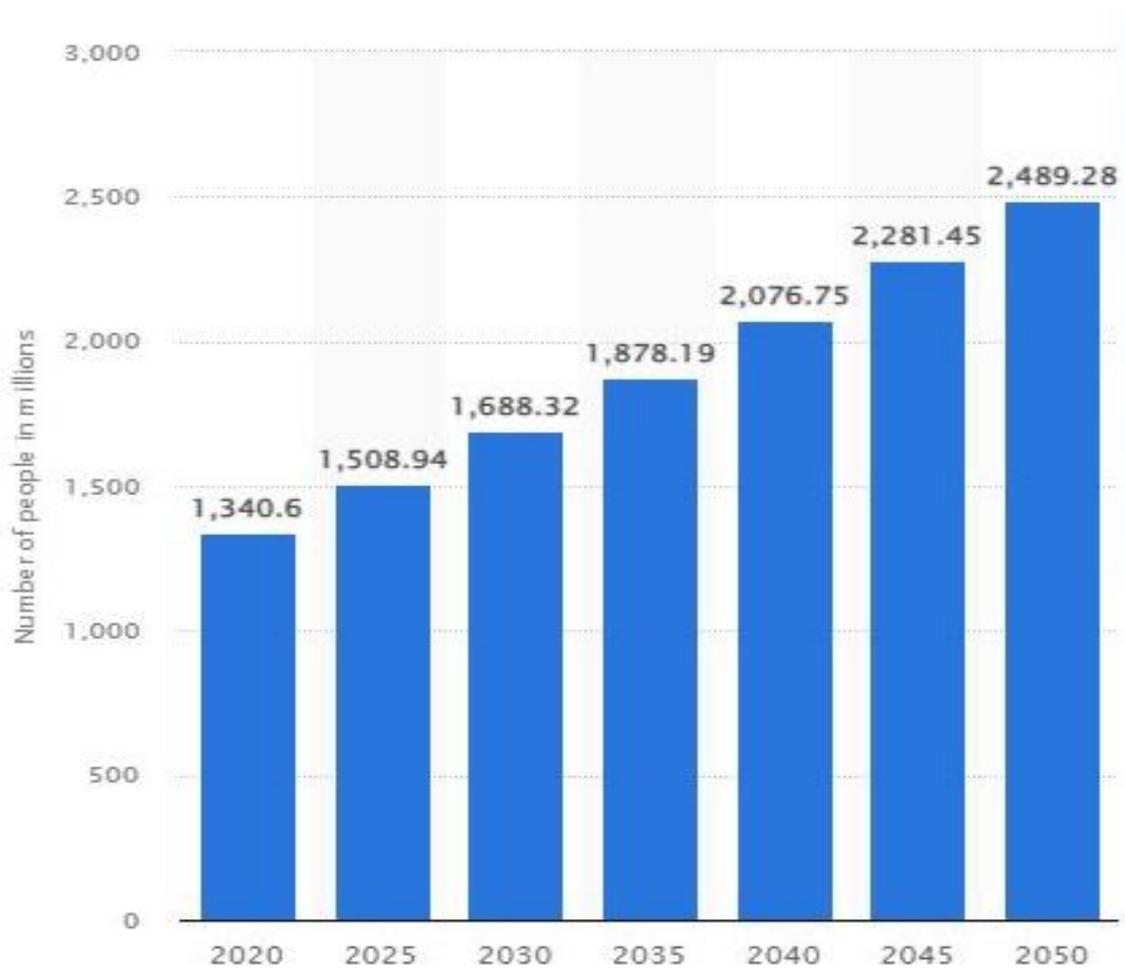


Figure 4. Forecast of the Total Population of Africa from 2020 to 2050. Source: Statista, 2022.

What does this mean for Africa and the world? Of course, it poses both a challenge and an opportunity. Europe is facing an aging population as the most aged continent (Walker, 2019). This comes with a huge challenge for Europe to maintain their welfare standards especially from an economic standpoint. As per Eurostat 2020 report indicated Europe's population would have 'shrunk' by half a million without migration, "given that 4.2 million children were born, and 4.7 million people died in the EU. In 2020, EU population shrunk by about 100 thousand people (from 447.3 million on 1 January 2020 to 447.2 million on 1 January 2021), due to a combination of less births, more deaths and less net migration".

Africa on the other hand will still be in a strong position as it is currently having 60 percent of its population considered younger than 25. Thus by 2030, it is estimated that 30 million youth will enter the labor market. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone 18 million jobs will be needed, but only 3 million are currently being created (Africa Europe Foundation Report, 2020, page 9). Clearly, there is a need to reflect on the pressing population explosion and the challenges it will pose for Africa and the rest of the world.

EU migration Cooperation with Third Countries: Why the EU must rethink its Migration Policy?

How should Europe cooperate with Africa considering the migration situation? Is externalization and anti-migrant rhetoric the solution? And should Europe and European Union face justice for their continues rights' violations meted on refugee and migrants? These questions must first be understood. Firstly, the argument that for Europe to stop the flow of refugees and migrants through security means is proofing to be inhumane, deadly and causing more problems than solutions. Speaking to an EU policy expert (name withheld) on Africa, he acknowledges this reality. The irony is that the same West that preaches about human rights' is failing to live up to its international obligations for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. It is now offshoring its responsibility to third countries after it has championed, signed and ratified 'global' instruments on human rights. Examples thereof are the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees "inherent dignity of all members of the human family" and as well as the 1951 Refugee Convention protects refugees as those people who live outside of their country of national for fear of prosecution base among others on race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

The simple question to asked is that how useful are those global instruments? Or is it that they only application to only to the West as seen in the context of the Russia-Ukraine invasion. An African Diplomat (name withheld) tweeted: "I would love to see a day when we can acknowledge that the Refugee convention is outdated, racist and discriminatory! No wonder it is protected by the mighty few who have no interest in redefining the scope and rights enshrined therein!". This twitter is loaded but also speaks of the frustration as well as the outcry for its inclusion to the present-day challenge facing refugees from other parts of the world.

The statistics speaks volume. Firstly, Europe share of refugees is just 0.6 percent (see Eurostat 2021). Secondly, we rather see the Western countries not owning up to the migration crisis that they caused themselves to a large extent, not least by the wars in Syria, Libya, and other part of the world (see section on Democratization). Thirdly, we see how the Western world was quick to receive and protect refugees from Ukraine as opposed to other refugees coming from war-torn countries. Fourthly, we see more and more unilateral decisions of the West to keep refugees at bay in third world countries, who suffer unimaginable human conditions. Therefore, the current migration tragedy brings to the fore what is described by an interviewed journalist as the Western "hypocrisy" in the context of the migration crisis. These migrants and refugees are treated differently, especially Africans. The chart below explains the number of refugees compared to total population. The share of refugees in the EU is 0.6% compared to its total population.

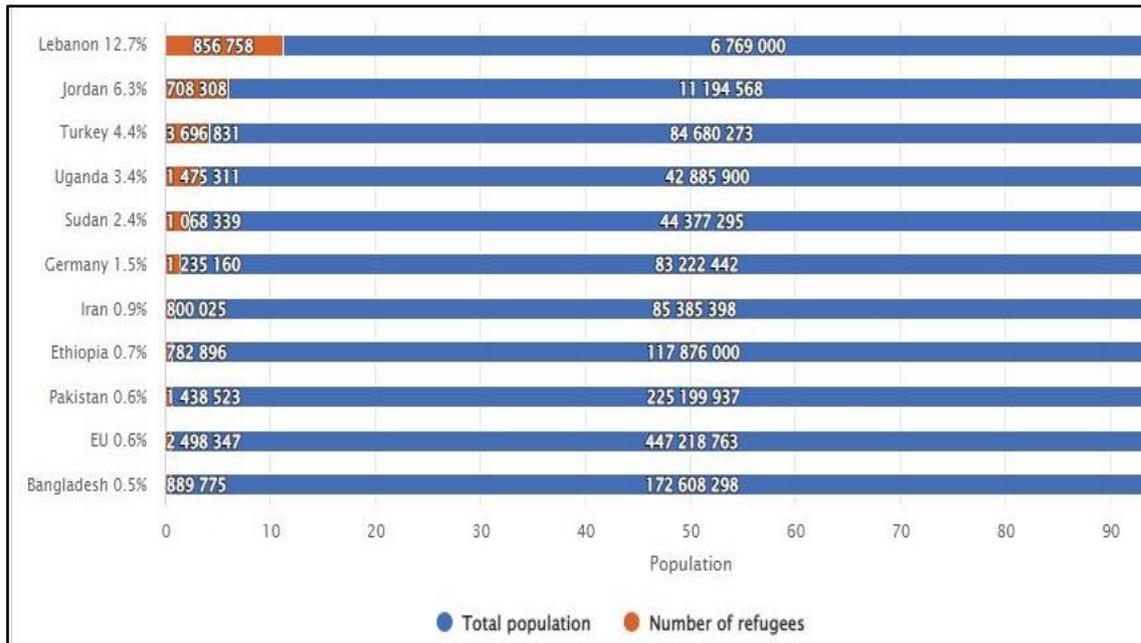


Figure 1. Number of Refugees Compared to Total Population. Source: UNHCR.

Challenges of Democratization and the Migration Crisis

Democracy is being challenged by the current migration crisis. Michael (2021) argues that the European democracy is being ‘redefined’ due to the migration crisis. It is influenced by socio-political trends to manage immigration, integration, and its growing fear of demographic changes. The West fears of migration associated with economic and demographic changes, so democracy is now seen to be under threat. As democracy Index 2021 states, less than half of the world lives in a democracy. It is thus fair to say that democracy is losing while autocracy is gaining grounds around the world. If anything, this report tells us is the fact that the fight for democracy is now more important to fight for. But the method as well as approach to use is important to avert mass migration.

For ÇOMAK et al (2021) Europe should ‘redesign’ its foreign policy. Instead of the West reneging on the ideals of democracy, it must instead rethink its foreign policy. Even though for long people living under autocratic regime look up to the West and indeed Western values. The Arab Spring in 2011 is a good example in which people revolt against their governments to end autocratic regime. Protest democracy (see Sadiki, 2015) as means to end regime change works in Tunisia and Egypt as opposed to Libya and Syria due to the international interventions. The issue here is not democracy but rather the consequences of international interventions destroyed the countries, thereby forcing people to flee. This is what had precipitated the migration crisis in recent times. It is therefore important that the West must therefore rethink about the use of force to effect democratic change.

The migration crisis brought about a serious debate as to what must have precipitated this migration phenomenon. In other words, should migration be in this way. The Libya case (2011 to date) is linked to democratization to oust a dictatorship. But the question to ask again is

what has become of this project of democratization? How does the willingness of extending democracy around the world affect the legitimacy of democracy? Why does the Libya case help us understand the migration crisis?

The wrong foreign policy of Europe, EU and America played in the current migration crisis. Before the Arab Spring, Libya served as a ‘shield’ (ÇOMAK et al, 2021) to protect Europe’s borders from migrants coming from the Middle East and Africa. Since the fall of Muammar Ghaddafi (1969-2011) the flow of irregular migrations has captured global attention. Especially the years succeeding his fall and thus has reached its peak in 2015 to date. The EU saw an unprecedented flow of migrants reaching the shores of Europe through the Mediterranean seas. On the other hand, the fall of Ghaddafi created turmoil in Libya and rendered the country ungovernable due to rebel factions. It also “facilitated the circulation of weapons of all kinds in the Sahel regions of Niger, Mali and Chad, as well as armed incursions in the northern Nigeria and Cameroon” (Green 2019: 168). This led to migrants and asylum trapped into protracted conflict. The overthrow of Gaddafi country has led to violent chaos rendering migrants with little cash and with no papers vulnerable. In addition, vulnerable Africans were sold as slaves for 400 dollars as reported and documented by CNN (November 13, 2017).

Is Europe’s Migration Policy with Third Countries Working?

To avert and to remedy this situation the EU and European countries has entered into migration control security pacts. Externalization of Europe’s borders came about due to the migration crisis. As Carrera et al noted (2019), the migration crisis has provoked ‘political and legitimization’ division in the European Union. The lack of unity in response to the migration crisis brought an externalization approach to the migration. Simply put, externalizations are efforts by the EU/European countries to ‘prevent’ migrants reaching their borders through external cooperation with third countries. It resulted in extensive border patrol and the cooperation with third countries to keep migrants at bay as means of deterring them from coming to European. As stated on the website of the Commission for human Rights: “Migrants, including asylum seekers, who do manage to enter irregularly Council of Europe member states are often criminalised, locked up in prison-like conditions, and expelled as quickly as possible – even to countries where they risk persecution and torture”. As stressed by an international human rights lawyer, this inhumane treatment of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees goes against international law.

For instance, the UK failed to reach an agreement with France to stop migrants from entering its shores. It has thus entered a shipping treaty through its Migration and Economic Development Partnership (announced on April 14, 2022) to send migrants and asylum seekers to Rwanda. This is a country known for its political instability post 1994 genocide (see Wrong, 2021) especially with its neighboring country the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Rwanda is ruled by a dictatorship who has been in power since 1994. Paul Kagame has been killing and harassing opponents. As documented by Human Rights Watch (July 7, 2022):

“Between 2019 and 2022, Human Rights Watch documented over 30 cases of opposition members, journalists, critics, and activists who have died, disappeared, or ended up in jail”. When he came into power in 1994, he was credited for economic and political transformation. But has still then ruled with an iron fist and changed the constitution which allows him to stay in power until 2034. It is largely argued that the 2003 constitution written under Kagame (Amutabi & Nasong’o, 2013) gave him absolute power to rule the country to date.

The UK’s basic argument is to serve as a deterrent for migrants not to come to Europe using the seas and tackling human traffickers. As the BBC reported (2022), however, a report by MPs from the Home Affairs Committee “has found no evidence that asylum seekers are being deterred by the policy, pointing to estimates that double the number of migrants will arrive in small boats in 2022, compared to the previous year”. The church of England leaders, including the Archbishop of York and Canterbury called this policy “immoral” and at best “shames Britain” and the rest of the world.

Since the announcement of this policy the UK government has been facing opposition as well as economic and legal challenges. “The government says the asylum system costs £1.5bn a year, with more than £4.7m a day spent on hotels to accommodate homeless migrants” (BBC 2022). The policy has been granted approval by the UK Court of Appeal, and Supreme Court. However, the policy is on hold due to the European Court of Human Rights’ ruling. Even though UK is no longer a member of the EU but is still part of the Council of Europe. Thus, the judgement has triggered further legal challenges.

Does this treaty contravene with international migration and refugee treaties? But more boldly is the UK’s blatant advocate for deterrent policy. It was on October 15, 2014, in a written statement to Parliament, that Dyce Anelay, Minister of State for the Foreign Office, opposes any plans/support for search and rescue operations to save migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean to reach Europe. The argument is that such support will encourage more migrants to come to Europe. It is not surprising that UK continue to employ such aggressive policy to now deport refugees and migrants reaching their shores to Rwanda. This position goes against the Refugee Convention. Article 33: Prohibition of Expulsion or Return (‘refoulement’) states clearly: “No Contracting State shall expel or return (“refouler”) a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion”.

Spain and Morocco Massacre on refugees a clear testament of failing “securitization” Policy?

Back to the first point on European Union externalization of its borders: What do we know about this securitization approach to curbing migration? It is anchored in the use of security through bilateral agreements with third countries, to stem the flow of migrants. In other words, cooperation on security - “securitization” – links organized crime and irregular migration as reported by Statewatch (April 28, 2022). It reported that this policy “is in fact



in line with European migration policies, which increasingly criminalise the migration process. Spain, for its part, continues to externalise its southern border in close collaboration with its Moroccan neighbour, thus consolidating an area of rights violations”.

What is the real story behind this inhuman act of humanly aggression towards these fellow human beings, particularly Africans? Firstly, Europe wants to and continues to close its borders by any means. In so doing they employ ‘European policies of externalization’ of the borders of the European Union. The recent developments in Morocco and Spain bring to light the plight of migrants in the context of European Union’s externalizations of its border to third countries. Does the EU externalization of its borders violate international law and human rights’ instruments? Should the EU take responsibility for the gross human rights’ violations meted on migrants and asylum seekers in third countries?

After the recent tragedy on the borders of Nador in Spain and Melilla, the example of Morocco brings to question EU’s migration policy and should awaken our collective human conscience. The videos and images are shocking to the core. One sees dead bodies piled up, the dead bodies still kicked, the wounded beaten, neglected shouted at. The Police and indeed security personnel watching those poor refugees (even if they are migrants) die. Clearly, “Europe is complacent and African blood is yet again in their hands”, an African activist pointed out. How long must we watch? These blatant human rights’ violations must not go unchecked. It is high time that migrants and refugee lives matter the activist relinquish. On the other hand, governments and host of these tragic events are quick to call it a “stampede”. What then is stampede? According to Meriam Webster online dictionary is: “to cause (a group or mass of people) to act on sudden or rash impulse”. The obvious question to ask is why and what causes this stampede?

Let us have a real sense of the situation as reported by EuroMed Rights one of the proactive networks of human rights organizations in the Euro-Mediterranean region. As EuroMed Rights press release (June 27, 2022) has indicated that this tragedy has been announced for several weeks. In other words, the harbinger of this human tragedy can be associated with campaigns of arrests through routine riding of camps, which leads to force displacements targeting people migrating to Nador and its region. The press release went further to add that: “For more than a year and a half, people migrating to Nador have been deprived of access to medicine and healthcare, have seen their camps burnt and their property looted, their meager foodstuffs destroyed and even the little drinking water that is available to them in the camps, it is confiscated”. One tends to wonder why the plights of these are ignored for long.

Its failure has been predicted by human rights observers like Migreurop and EuroMed Rights, “lead to more rights violations at the borders”. This is what the world woke up to on June 24. Politico similarly criticizes this cooperation given that Morocco is known for its hardcore treatment of African migrants and refugees. Similarly, it uses its position to either pleased and/or appeased the EU. Thus, Morocco uses migrants to get it what wants from the EU. A case in point is May 2021 in which the Moroccan authorities were criticized by the EU

when 6, 000 people were reported to have entered into the Spanish enclave of Ceuta. The question was as to why Morocco normally aggressive border patrols had left them to get through? And the answer was according to Politico (May 16, 2021), with Morocco, the European Union has granted “massive leverage to an unpredictable partner by striking a deal in which Morocco receives assistance in exchange for preventing refugees from travelling into Europe”.

Going by this evidence, it is fair to say that Morocco was acting tough this time to appease the EU. An activist described it as “a servant doing what the master wanted”. Again, it is fair to say that the EU rethink its migration policy based security as it is causing inhumane treatment of Migrants and refugees in third countries. The aim is to deter people from coming to the shores of Europe. How many more incidences and/or people have to die before Europe rethinks its policy? This policy is killing people and creating bitter divide between countries, in particular ports country like Morocco and her fellow Africans. In the same vein, it strains relations between Europe and Africa, and other parts of the world. This all happens at a time when Europe needs better relations with Africa, amid past colonial experience, growing rise of China, and Russia prominence.

Is the Western Media Covering Up?

The challenges of reporting news on migrants and refugees goes into question media coverage in the Western countries. A report by Cardiff School of Journalism (2016) explores media coverage of migrants in five different European countries: Spain, Italy, Germany and Sweden. The focus was between 2014 to 2015; this was at the peak of the migration crisis by compiling thousands of newspaper articles. The report found out that the Swedish press was the most positive and receptive towards refugees and migrants. On the other hand the United Kingdom was the most negative. This negative coverage continues to date.

There is little or no outcry in Europe as it relates to this incident and the many deadly stories about asylum seekers, refugees and migrants’ treatment especially in third countries. As observed by an African media expert, while the “global media refuses to report extensively as they would have, had it been a terrorism case (even suspected terrorism). Rather one come across discriminatory headlines about African in particular each time there is a boat arriving in the shores of Europe”. The likes of Nigel Farage known for his far-right views will go to the extent of hosting Facebook live to ginger anti-migration sentiments. Is the media given a blanket cover up? Mainstream media reports are quick to blame to first “call them migrants instead of refugees - a way to scapegoat, and secondly blaming these fellow human beings for their own situation”, a western activist has echoed. As the Times UK reported (June 27, 2022), “deaths occurred when about 2, 000 migrants, some armed with staffs and stones, tried to rush the board”. The same report went further to add that “Some migrants, sub-Saharan Africans desperate to reach Europe, used a sledgehammer and a radial saw to smash and cut their way through the boarder fences and gates”. This kind of reporting said the western



activist “is laughable, racist, and purely aimed at dehumanizing non-white people as mentioned”.

This is typically media propaganda against these fellow human beings. There is couple of points here to note as well. Firstly, the media is quick to classify these fellow human beings as migrants. Secondly, the media will not tell nor share the inhumane conditions which have led to this incident. Thirdly, they as always try and to a large extend have succeeded in framing the African migrants and refugees as aggressive. Fourthly, they were quick to protect the police brutality meted on these fellow human beings. This is sad state of the world right now as interviewed source told me. Emphasis on this point, an EU-Africa policy expert said, “What the West and Western media continue to do is to dehumanize the non-white race”. This must be refuted and condemned in total.

Western double standards towards asylum seekers, refugees and migrants are out there to be seen? As cited by informants. This became clearer when the West, America and Canada decided to offer swift protection for Ukrainians, rightly so. Another interviewed source told, but the same Western states are silent about this tragic incident even during their NATO Summit in Spain, the country in which these fellow human beings were massacred at. They did not even an acknowledgment of the loss of lives. In a recent interview, the Hungarian Foreign in his interview on GB News (2022) with presenter Collin Brazier proudly defended his country’s policy against other races; that Ukrainians are welcomed but “those” other migrants are not, because they “are not like us” and we must keep “Hungary as Hungarian country”. Such blatant racism, open and proud discrimination contributes to the radicalization of the Rest of the World against the West. This happens at a critical junction in which Europe and America need allied outside the Western bubble. The UN vote against Russia shows it. For instance, the world biggest democratic countries outside of the West stayed neutral: Indonesia, India and South Africa.

It is very evident that hostility towards asylum seekers, refugees and migrants is the order of the day. The global impact of racialized border violence is evident across Europe and America and elsewhere. There is no regard for human rights and democracy. As the Guardian reported (2022) migrants were found dead in the back of a truck Scores in the USA. In the Spanish enclave of Melilla people were beaten by authorities and left dead. Similarly, in the Greek border the arrivals are coerced by police daily.

Conflict of Interest

The author hereby declares that no competing financial interest exists for this manuscript.

Notes on Contributor

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