**9Th CONSULTATION MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS IN AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD (ASSECAA)**

**BUJUMBURA (Burundi), September 19-20, 2022**

**REPORT OF THE 19TH CONSULTATION MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS OF AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD (ASSECAA)**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

On September 19 and 20, 2022, there was held the 9th Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World (ASSECAA) in Bujumbura, economic capital of Burundi. That meeting was attended by nineteen delegations. These delegations which participated in the 19th consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World are the following:

1. The delegation of the Republic of Burundi, led by His Excellency Emmanuel SINZOHAGERA, President of the Senate of the Republic of Burundi;:
2. The delegation of the House of Councilors of Morocco, led by His Excellency Enaam MAYARA, President of that House and Chairman of ASSECAA;
3. The delegation of the Democratic Republic of Congo led by His Excellency Modeste BAHATI LUKWEBO, Senate Speaker ;
4. The delegation of the Republic of Rwanda led by His Excellency Augustin IYAMUREMYE, Senate Speaker ;
5. The delegation of the Republic of South Soudan led by His Excellency DENG DEND AKOON, Speaker of the Senate;
6. The delegation of the Kingdom of ESWATINI led by Her Excellency Lindiwe DLAMINI, Senate Speaker, and all members of her delegation;
7. The delegation of the Republic of Zimbabwe led by Her Excellency Mabel CHINOMONA, Senate Speaker, and all members of her delegation;
8. The delegation of the Kingdom of Bahrain led Honourable Jamal Mohamed Abdulhman FAKIRO, First Deputy-Speaker of the Shoora Council of the Kingdom of Bahrain ;
9. The delegation of the State of Qatar led by Honourable Nasser Methrif Al HEAIDI, Head of Delegation of the Shoora Council of the State of Qatar;
10. The delegation of the Kingdom of Saoudi Arabia led Honourable Dr. Hisham Al-Fares, Head of Delegation of the Shoora Council of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia;
11. The delegation of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria led by Honourable Omar Dadi Addoun, Head of Delegation of the Council of the Nation of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria;
12. The delegation of the united Arab Emirates led by Honourable Adnan Hamad ALHAMMADI, Head of Delegation of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates;
13. The delegation of Lybia, led by Honourable Dr. Basheer Al-Hosh, Head of Delegation of the Libyan Council of State;
14. The delegation of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, led Honourable Abdullahi Kabira BARKIYA, Head of Delegation of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
15. The delegation of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, led by Honourable Asumu Mum Munoz Anastasio, Head of Delegation of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea;
16. The delegation of the Republic of Côte d’Ivoire, led by Honourable Fanny MOUSSOKOURA Chantal, Deputy Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire;
17. The delegation of the Republic of Algeria, led by Honourable Snowe Jr EDWIM MELVIN, Head of Delegation of the Republic of Liberia;
18. The delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt, represented by Ambassador Yasser Elsayed Mohamed ELATAWI, Representive of the Speaker of the Senate of the Arab Republic of Egypt;
19. A delegation of the Secretariat General of ASSECAA, led by Mister Abdulwasie YUSSUF, Secretary General.

**Themes which were under analysis during the Consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World**

The meeting was centered on two themes which are :

* The effects and repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic on Arab-African economies and government responses”;
* The Russian-Ukrainian war and its effects on supply chains, energy and food prices”.

1. **OPENING CEREMONIES**

The opening ceremonies started with a prayer dedicated to God the Almighty. That prayer was successively presented successively by the representative of Christian Churches and the one of Islam. The two preachers thanked the Eternal Master of creation and begged him to bless Burundi, her leaders as well as all the guests who came to take part in the 9th Consultation Meeting of ASSECAA. They implored God to guide participants during their relexions and exchanges so that the meeting lead to good results.

The prayer was followed by a speech of the Mayor of the town of Bujumbura, the Police Brigadier General, Jimmy HATUNGIMANA. In his remark, the Mayor of Bujumbura greeted participants and wished them a good stay and full success in the activity which occupied them during the two days.

A welcome speech for participants was delivered by the Right Honourable Emmanuel SINZOHAGERA, Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Burundi. He first of all thanked the Deputy President of the Republic of Burundi who had sacrificed his numerous duties to come to these opening ceremonies of the 9th Consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World.

The Honourable Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Burundi greeted delegations present at the 9th Meeting of ASSECAA, recalling the themes which were on the agenda of the Meeting.

The Speaker of Burundi Senate indicated that this 9th Meeting would mark a decisive step in the awareness of th the urgent need to face the challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war. He hoped that these deliberations would allow good interactions between the participants to guarantee the emergence of complementary and constructive opinions.

***PHOTO of Right Honourable Emmanuel SINZOHAGERA delivering his welcome Speech at the opening of the 9th Consultation Meeeting of the A ssociationof Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and The Arab World.***

The speech of the Senate Speaker was followed by a remark of the the current Speaker of ASSECAA, i, Mister EEnaam MAYARA, Speaker of the House of Councilors of Morocco,

In his remark, he thanked Burundian authorities, more particulrly His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi, for having kindly accepted to host the holding of the 9th Meeting of ASSECAA. He also appreciated the warm welcome from which all the delegations benefited, as well as the good organisation of the meeting which permitted a good working environment.

He ended his speech hoping that participants would take advatange of all the good working conditions during the two day to **reach good results.**

**PHOTO of the Speaker of the House of Councilors of the Kingdom of Morocco delivering his speech during the opening ceremonies of the 9th Consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and Arab World.**

The opening discourse of the meeting of ASSECAA was delivered by His Excellency Deputy President of the Republic of Burundi, Mister Prosper BAZOMANZA. He indicated himself that was the spokesperson of His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi, who was impeded for reasons of service.

In his speech, Mister BAZOMBANZA affirmed before those nice delegations of ASSECAA that their presence in Bujumbura constitutes a tribute to Burundi.

**Objectives of the 9th Consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World**

Recalling the themesof the9th Meeting of ASSECAA, His Excellency Deputy President of the Republic highlighted the triple objective of the holding of that meeting:

* Promote Afro-Arab debate, dialogue and consultation on strategic and priority issues in the African and Arab regions, and better understand the repercussions caused by the covid-19 pandemic as well as the Russian-Ukrainian war and the consequences observed so far on countries' economies, supply chains, energy and food prices, and propose solutions;

**PHOTO of His Excellency Vice President of the Republic of Burundi delivering the opening speech of the 9th Meeting of ASSECAA**

* Set up a parliamentary economic diplomacy which will explore the ways and means of strengthening Afro-Arab economic cooperation in a strategic, participatory, integrated and development perspective based on the strengthening of economic, commercial and humanitarian ties between Africa and the Arab World ;
* Share knowledge and experiences between parliamentarians through the presentation of good practices and lessons learned with a view to elaborating and mitigating the economic impacts of covid-19 and the repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the economies of the countries in Africa and the Arab world.

His Excellency Deputy President of the Republic ended his remark wishing full success to the activities of this 9th consultation meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent councils in Africa and the Arab World (ASSECAA).

1. **SYNTHESIS OF PRESENTATIONS**

The 9th Consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab World was led by two university researchers on two well-chosen themes, namely:

1° The effects and repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic on Arab-African economies and government responses;

2° The Russian-Ukrainian war and its effects on supply chains, energy and food prices.

Each theme had both an economic and a political component. Thus, Mr. Aloys BATUNGWANAYO, Researcher and doctoral student in Social and Political Sciences at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland developed the political aspects of the two themes while Professor Léonidas NDAYIZEYE, Doctor in Economics, exploited the economic aspects and identified lessons learned.

**III.1. The Effects and Repercussions of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Arab- African Economies and Government Responses: Political Aspects**

Since the end of the second war in 1945, the terrestrial globe had never been shaken except for the years 2020 and 2022. At the end of this war, two winning blocs were born. They have become the policemen of the world. This is the Eastern bloc represented by part of the allies, led by the USSR, and the Western bloc, the other part of the allies represented by the USA.

There are two blocks initially ideological at the political level but which will also evolve into economic blocks. It was capitalist liberalism and socialism mixed with a dose of communism.

From allies to defeat Hitler's Germany, these two blocs became antagonists until they fueled what they called "the Cold War".

As much as the World War had repercussions outside the peoples directly concerned, the Cold War will have repercussions beyond the borders of the two blocs. If those peoples not directly involved in the world war have somehow been on the battlefield; they took a different attitude during the cold war. Thus, some African and Asian countries created in Bandong what they called the “Non-Aligned Movement”.

The purpose of the organization defined in the "Havana Declaration" of 1979 is to ensure "the national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of the non-aligned countries in their struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, segregation, racism, and any form of foreign aggression, occupation, domination, interference or hegemony by great powers or political blocs" and to promote solidarity between third world peoples. The organization, whose headquarters are in Lusaka, Zambia, brings together nearly two-thirds of the members of the UN and 55% of the world's population.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 followed by the decomposition of the Eastern bloc will mark the end of the Cold War.

Since then, a unipolar world, policeman of the world has prevailed to the chagrin of both the Eastern bloc and the non-aligned movement. The “covid shock” and the war in Ukraine have come to show that the multipolar world is rising from its ashes. This health crisis officially started in China has divided the planet earth. It provoked accusations between countries, speculations and other various reactions. But let's ask ourselves some questions to try to understand the ins and outs of this pandemic:

1. COVID 19, is it a simple pandemic or a bacteriological weapon?
2. Why does it officially break out in China?
3. Were the barrier measures decided by the WHO effective at the global level?
4. Why did each power seek to manufacture its own vaccine?

**III.2. The Russian-Ukrainian War and Its Effects on Supply Chains, Energy and Food Prices”: Political Aspects**

As for the war in Ukraine which broke out on February 24, 2022 with a Russian military offensive in Ukraine. This war seemed to surprise Westerners who perhaps no longer thought of an armed international conflict on their territory. They were used to proxy wars, western attacks on African and Asian countries. We will remember Syria, Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq...

Adding to the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the war launched by Vladimir Putin against Ukraine is already having a major negative impact on the progress of the world. And she is likely to have it even more in the future.

The consequences of both the pandemic and the war against Ukraine are indeed much greater in the countries of the South than in the rich countries. These two crises combined in a very short time have called into question the slow movement of convergence in living standards on a global scale observed for several decades.

The war on Ukraine is causing what is known as global “stagflation,” combining high inflation and economic stagnation, even recession. That situation had not been seen since the 1970s. It was accompanied in fact by a rapid and brutal rise in inflation under the pressure of the rise in the prices of foodstuffs, energy and of the main raw materials.

Admittedly, inflation had already increased throughout 2021 due to the increase in demand caused by the post-COVID-19 economic recovery and the persistent disruptions in many supply chains following the pandemic. However, it has accelerated markedly since the outbreak of war in Ukraine. And even more in the countries of the South than in the developed countries.

**II.3. The Effects and Repercussions of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Arab- African Economies and Government Responses: Economic Aspects**

Originated in the town of Wuhan, in the province of Hubei, China, the covid -19 has thereafter rapidly spread throughout the entire world, causing a human tragedy and enormous economic disasters. It thus showed how economic activities can be disrupted: almost all countries have, to varying degrees, suspended international flights, instituted quarantine for people entering the country and closed land or sea borders. In many countries, measures such as confinements have been taken, which have had the effect of limiting the movement of goods and people. Even though this pandemic has affected all parts of the world, its socio-economic impact has been very different from region to region and country to country.

For Africa and the Arab world, these two parts of the world have an important point of similarity: they are highly dependent on raw materials for export and a high level of exposure to international shocks. With containment, global activity fell sharply, and so did the demand for these raw materials.

Thus, in Africa, per capita income in most African countries is projected to remain below pre-pandemic levels, at least until 2023 (WB (2022). And poverty levels, measured at $1.90 per day, fell from 34% before the pandemic to 39% (African Economic Outlook 2021).

In the Arab world, the Arab Human Development Report (UNDP 2022) indicates that in the first year of the pandemic, existing large budget deficits widened further across the region. In 2020, the average overall deficit widened by 7% to 9.2% of GDP, while in 2021 the region's average fiscal deficit narrowed to 2.3%, a deficit that , according to the IMF, is expected to turn into a surplus of 4.1% of GDP in 2022. Large budget deficits have increased public debt, worsening an already vulnerable debt situation.

Thus, in 2020, the region's overall average public debt peaked at 60% of GDP, an increase of around 13% compared to 2019, and net foreign direct investment (FDI) flows to the region declined. 6% in 2020.

Also, in 2021, the region had the highest youth unemployment rate (15-24 years) in the world, at 28.6%, a sharp increase from 25.3% in 2019. young women was also the highest in the world, and more than double that of young men, reaching 49.1% in 2021 compared to 44.7% in 2019 (compared to 23.8% among young men in 2021 and 20.8 % in 2019).

In conclusion, African countries and the Arab world should draw lessons from this crisis to highlight industrial, monetary, social, etc. policies. which have worked and made economies resilient and which have failed. This ambitious goal requires re-examining not only the types of responses made during the initial and middle phases of the pandemic, but also the structural features that have shaped those responses and will continue to shape them in the future.

**II.4. The Russian-Ukrainian War and Its Effects on Supply Chains, Energy and Food Prices”: Economic aspects**

Since February 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. Russia, the world's 13th economic power in terms of GDP, holds 17 and 7% of gas and oil reserves respectively. It is the world's leading exporter of natural gas (20% of the total in 2019), the world's second largest oil exporter (11%) and the world's third largest coal exporter (15%) (IEA, 2022). It also ranks first in the world for exports of nitrogen fertilizers, second for those of potash fertilizers and third for those of phosphorus fertilizers (FAO, 2022), and it has been origin of more than 15% of world fertilizer exports in 2020 (UNCTAD, 2022).

For its part, Ukraine, the 61st largest economy in the world in terms of GDP, is among the largest producers of cereals in the world (wheat, barley, rye, and oats). It represents in market share on the international scene 10 to 12% of wheat, 15 to 20% of corn (it is the world's largest producer), 20 to 25% of barley and rapeseed, as well as 50% to 60% of world exports of sunflower oil and meal. Ukraine is also rich in mining (iron, magnesium, manganese, etc.) and energy (coal, natural gas, oil) resources. But most of the important deposits are in the east of the country, in a region called the Donbass, as well as in Crimea, parts annexed by Russia.

Together, Russia and Ukraine are major players in the energy, food and fertilizer sectors. That is to say that the two countries are in fact the breadbasket of the world for wheat and corn, but also many other agricultural and non-agricultural products. It is therefore not surprising that international markets have overreacted to this war given that these products have been difficult to get out of Ukraine since the beginning of the crisis and that Russia is hit with various sanctions.

In Africa, thirty-eight of the 45 countries of sub-Saharan Africa are net importers of oil, a rise in world prices translates for these countries into an increase in the import bill, transport costs and the prices of most goods. In the Arab world, many countries including Egypt, Lebanon, Yemen and many others, the Ukrainian war means that there will be less bread on the family table, these countries essentially importing Russian wheat, which could provoke popular uprisings.

Obviously, this crisis highlights the need to always diversify its supply chains and to preserve, if possible, national sovereignty in areas as sensitive as food, in particular by favoring subsistence agriculture to reduce the degree of dependence on the outside.

1. **DEBATE AND EXCHANGE**

The presentations on the two themes were followed by exchanges and debates. During the exchanges and debates, the delegations:

* Thanked the Government of the Republic of Burundi for having accepted to host the work of the 9th Consultation Meeting of the ASSECAA and appreciated the warm welcome that was given to them;
* Recognized the particular contribution of the current President of ASSECAA in the management of the Association;
* Expressed their gratitude to the Burundian Senate for having successfully invested in the preparation of the logistics of the session and the communications relating to the two (2) themes of reflection namely: 1° The effects and repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Arab-African economies and the response of the governments; as well as 2° The Russian-Ukrainian war and its repercussions on the chains of supply, the prices of energy and foods;
* Confirmed that ASSECAA offers them an appropriate space to help each other to develop diplomacy and parliamentary cooperation;
* Unanimously noted that the Covid-19 crisis and the Russian-Ukrainian war have produced obvious negative effects on the Arab-African economies, including the disruption of oil prices, a decline in global demand for oil, a decline in domestic tourism, a limitation on the movement of people, a decline of incomes per habitant, a disruption of supply chains and global trade to Africa and the Arab world, and an increase in poverty;
* Deplored the fact that the Russian-Ukrainian war has been accompanied by an increase in food prices, a worsening of Arab-African food security, inflation with a definite impact on particularly delicate economies, and confrontation between the great powers with repercussions on the rest of the world, especially on African and Arab countries;
* Noted together that ASSECAA member countries have committed themselves in a diversified way to face the Covid-19 pandemic notably through direct measures of income support, postponement or temporary relief of debts, rational management of barrier measures (containment, wearing of mask, vaccination, etc.);
* Shared together the concern to plan without delay strategies to face the consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian war or minimize them as much as possible;
* Wish to promote together as member countries of ASSECAA a united area for development based on the various potentialities that each other present in the agricultural, energy, commercial fields,.. ;
* Agree on the idea that the crises of Covid-19 and the Russian-Ukrainian war are opportunities for ASSECAA to rethink the way of managing the crises in the perspective of the cooperation of the senates in order to establish mechanisms to guarantee the populations a good economic survival thanks to the food security and the cross-border and regional trade;
* Expressed their commitment to share the experiences of the functioning of their institutions and the strategies implemented to prevent and deal with crises as soon as they occur;
* Unanimously adopted the final communiqué of the 9th Consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World.

After exchanges and debates, the following recommendations were formulated by the participants:

**Recommendations addressed to ASSECAA:**

* Transmit the recommendations of this meeting to the respective governments for their implementation;
* Strengthen the parliamentary diplomacy of ASSECAA member countries;
* Participate in the inter-parliamentary meeting session to be held in Kigali in October 2022;
* Collaborate to write our own history.

**Recommendations to African and Arab governments:**

* Take advantage of the current covid-19 and Russian-Ukrainian war crises to establish and activate strategic partnerships to ensure Arab-African food and energy security ;
* To reassess medical services in African and Arab countries and make them more efficient in order to find African and Arab solutions related to African and Arab realities;
* Invest in research to build an African and Arab world that is designed on the improved model of these two worlds;
* Redefine the concept of Arab-African security and include food security as one of its components;
* Reconsider the concept of food security, which has not yet been a priority in the agendas of international organizations or institutions, with a view to achieving food self-sufficiency for all Arab and African countries by increasing the level of production and developing staple crops;
* Study the possibilities and opportunities of Arab and African food integration in order to improve food security for all countries in the region;
* To this end, invest in joint agricultural projects given the availability of huge financial surpluses, vast arable lands, resources and diverse experiences in several fields related to the food production process which is lacking in integration;
* Prepare a series of measures to deal with the consequences of the current global rise in the price of basic foodstuffs and fuel;
* Diversify the sources of food imports, especially wheat;
* Establish a center of reflection for the exchange of economic information and a common market between African and Arab countries;
* Strengthen regional and cross-border trade;
* Expand or increase social protection systems so that every person can enjoy his or her rights to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food and the right to social security;
* Increase domestic production and reduce imports;
* To this end, invest in the agricultural sector to secure the needs of countries and not make them vulnerable to strong variations in market prices due to various political or economic shocks;
* Take advantage of the current crisis to establish and activate strategic partnerships, to use the capacities and opportunities of each one to ensure food and energy security in Africa and in the Arab world;
* Develop manufacturing, light and medium industries by relying on countries that have experience in this field;
* Mobilize investments to collectively tackle the causes and consequences of food crises;
* Act together to address the problems of importing essential foods and establishing alternative supply chains;
* Adopt guarantees/measures to minimize negative impacts in the event of economic sanctions;
* Ensure that prices of basic foods remain affordable for all;
* Create a mutual aid mechanism for humanitarian crises;
* Rethink cooperation policy to suit the current global context and take the initiative to improve diplomatic relations with the powers;
* Do all that is in their power to weigh on the international chessboard by exploiting in good father of family the richness of the basement, the ground and the facilities offered by the climate in the production of food for the food self-sufficiency;
* Prioritize the consumption of local products to give them more value
* Become aware of the concepts of political, economic and cultural independence;
* Make more efforts to share financial, technological and health resources available at home to mitigate dependency;
* Implement urgent measures to support rural farmers, as experience has shown that it is thanks to peasant agriculture that cities have survived during confinement;
* Adopt a common policy of regular consultation on health policy issues to make their voices heard;
* Increase health and research budgets to promote African and Arab medicine;
* Help each other among ASSECAA countries to carry out agricultural projects together in order to have sufficient food.

The works of the 9th Consultation Meeting of the ASSECAA were sanctioned by the adoption of a final communiqué through which the participants addressed their sincere and warm thanks to His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi, and, through him, to the Government, the Senate and the people of Burundi for the warm welcome and the generous hospitality granted to the delegations as well as for the very good organization of the meeting.

Before closing the works of the 9th Consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World, the Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Burundi offered gifts to all delegations.

In the sidelines of the 9th Consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World, the Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Burundi granted audiences to the different delegations.

1. **APPENDICES, Audiences and Exchange of gifts**

**APPENDIX** **1**:

**FINAL COMMUNIQUE OF THE 9TH CONSULTATION MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS OF AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD (ASSECAA)**

1. We, members of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World (ASSECAA) meeting in Bujumbura in the Republic of Burundi, from September 19 to 20, 2022;
2. Thank the Government of Burundi for agreeing to host the work of the 9th ASSECAA Consultation Meeting and appreciate the warm welcome extended to us;
3. Acknowledge the special contribution of the current President of ASSECAA;
4. Express our gratitude to the Senate of Burundi for having successfully invested in the preparation of the logistics of the session and the communications relating to the two (2) themes of reflection, namely:

1°. The effects and repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic on Arab-African economies and government response; as well as

2°. The Russian-Ukrainian war and its repercussions on supply chains, energy and food prices;

1. Confirm that ASSECAA is for us as an appropriate space to help each other to develop diplomacy and parliamentary cooperation on a continuous basis;
2. Note unanimously that the crises of Covid-19 and the Russian-Ukrainian war have produced obvious negative effects on Arab-African economies, which have resulted more particularly in a collapse in oil prices, a drop in global demand for this product, a decline in domestic tourism, a limitation of population movements, a decline in the level of per capita income, disruption of supply chains and global trade to Africa and the Arab world as well as an increase in poverty;
3. At the same time, we deplore that the Russian-Ukrainian war was accompanied by the increase in food prices, the worsening of Arab-African food security, inflation with a certain impact on particularly fragile economies , of the confrontation between the great powers with repercussions on the rest of the world, in particular on the African and Arab countries;
4. Note together that the member countries of ASSECAA have undertaken in a diversified manner to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular through direct measures to support income, deferral or temporary debt relief, management rational barrier measures (confinement, wearing a mask, vaccination, etc.),;
5. Share together the concern to project without delay strategies to face the consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian war or to minimize them as much as possible;
6. Desire to promote together, as member countries of ASSECAA, a united zone for development on the basis of the various potentialities that each country presents in the fields of agriculture, energy, trade, etc. ;
7. Share in the idea that the crises of Covid-19 and the Russian-Ukrainian war are to be taken as precious opportunities for ASSECAA to rethink the way of managing crises from the perspective of the cooperation of senates in order to establish mechanisms intended to guarantee populations a good economic survival thanks in particular to food security and guaranteed cross-border and regional trade;
8. Seize this closing moment of the 9th ASSECAA Consultation Meeting to express our commitment to share with us the experiences of the functioning of our senates and the strategies implemented to prevent and deal with crises as soon as they arise;
9. Faced with this observation established during the reflection on the political and economic aspects, we members of ASSECAA endorse the following recommendations:

**Recommendations to ASSECAA:**

* Transmit the recommendations resulting from this meeting to the respective governments for their implementation;
* Strengthen the parliamentary diplomacy of ASSECAA member countries;
* Participate in the interparliamentary meeting session to be held in Kigali in October 2022;
* Collaborate in order to write our own history;

**Recommendations to African and Arab Governments:**

* Take advantage of the current covid-19 crises and the Russian-Ukrainian war to establish and activate strategic partnerships to ensure Arab-African food and energy security;
* Reassess medical services in African and Arab countries and make them more effective in finding African and Arab solutions linked to African and Arab realities;
* Invest in research in order to build an African and Arab world that is designed on the improved model of these two worlds;
* Redefine the concept of Arab-African security and include food security as one of its components;
* Reconsider the concept of food security which has still not been a priority in the agendas of international organizations or bodies with a view to achieve food self-sufficiency for all Arab and African countries by increasing the level of production and developing staple crops ;
* Study the possibilities and opportunities of Arab and African food integration in order to improve the food security of all the countries of the Region;
* To do this, invest in joint agricultural projects given the availability of huge financial surpluses, vast arable land, resources and diverse experiences in several areas related to the food production process which lacks integration;
* Prepare a series of measures to deal with the consequences of the current global rise in the prices of basic foodstuffs as well as fuel;
* Diversify sources of food imports, especially wheat;
* Set up a research and information centre in order to promote exchange of information among Afro-Arab countries
* Strengthen regional and cross-border trade;
* Extend or increase social protection systems so that each person can enjoy their rights to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food and the right to social security;
* Increase domestic production and reduce imports;
* To do this, invest in the agricultural sector to secure the needs of countries and not make them vulnerable to sharp variations in market prices due to various political or economic shocks;
* Take advantage of the current crisis to establish and activate strategic partnerships, use everyone's capacities and opportunities to ensure food and energy security in Africa and the Arab world;
* Develop manufacturing, light and medium industries by relying on countries which have experience in this field;
* Mobilize investments to collectively tackle the causes and consequences of food crises;
* Act together to deal with the problems of importing basic necessities and establish alternative supply chains;
* Adopt guarantees/measures to minimize negative impacts in the event of economic sanctions;
* Ensure that the prices of basic necessities remain accessible to all;
* Create a mutual aid mechanism in the event of a humanitarian crisis;
* Rethink the cooperation policy adapted to the current global context and take the initiative to improve diplomatic relations with the powers;
* Do everything in their power to weigh on the international chessboard by exploiting, as a good father, the riches of the subsoil, the soil and the facilities offered by the climate in the production of food for food self-sufficiency;
* Prioritize the consumption of local products in order to give them more value;
* Become aware of the concepts of political, economic and cultural independence;
* Make more efforts to share the financial, technological and health resources available at home to alleviate dependency;
* Implement urgent measures to support farmers in the rural world because experience has shown that it is thanks to peasant agriculture that cities have survived during confinement;
* Adopt a common policy of regular consultation on health policy issues to make their voices heard;
* Increase budgets allocated to health and research to promote African and Arab medicine;
* Help one another among ASSECAA countries to carry out agricultural projects together and thus have enough food.

Finally, the participants forwarded a vote of thanks to Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi, and, through him to the Government, the Senate, and the people of the Republic of Burundi for the warm reception and generous hospitality accorded to them as well as for the very good organization of the meeting.

Bujumbura, Burundi, September 20, 2022

**APPENDIX 2:**

**WELCOME SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE EMMANUEL SINZOHAGERA, SPEAKER OF THE SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE 9th CONSULTATION MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS OF AFRICA AND ARAB WORLD**

BUJUMBURA (Burundi), September 19, 2022

**Excellency the Vice President of the Republic of Burundi;**

**Honourables;**

**Distinguished Participants;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, all protocol observed,**

1. Glory to the Almighty God who watches over us, our peoples and the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World.

**Excellency the Vice President of the Republic of Burundi;**

**Honourables;**

**Distinguished Participants;**

1. First of all, permit me to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Prosper BAZOMBANZA, Vice President of the Republic of Burundi who, despite his multiple responsibilities, is among us to enhance with his presence, on behalf of His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi, these opening ceremonies of the 9th Consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World.
2. Permit me then to welcome His Excellency Enaam MAYARA, President of the House of Councilors of Morocco, at the same time Speaker in office of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World.
3. Permit me also to welcome all the other delegations from African countries and the Arab world to these magnificent premises of the National Assembly of the Republic of Burundi where we are proud to welcome you.
4. I also address my thanks to the Government, to the National Assembly of the Republic of Burundi, to all the other Institutions and to all the people who have contributed in a way or another to the preparation of this meeting.
5. I also salute the contribution of the General Secretariat of ASSECAA, in collaboration with the team of the Senate of Burundi, to the meticulous organization of the activities of this Consultation Meeting.
6. Finally, my gratitude goes to all the personalities who responded to our invitation. I send them my heartfelt and sincere thanks.

**Excellency the Vice President of the Republic of Burundi;**

**Honourables;**

**Distinguished Participants;**

1. The Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World is meeting today to reflect on two themes:

1° The effects and repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic on eArab- African economies and the response of governments;

2° The Russian-Ukrainian war and its repercussions on supply chains, energy and food prices.

1. Towards the end of 2019, the World experienced the Covid-19 pandemic which spread rapidly in all countries, causing damage in all sectors. This pandemic has abruptly interrupted activities all over the World. African countries and those of the Arab world have not been spared.
2. Initially, several studies focused on the mortality that this crisis caused, neglecting its economic effects. And yet, covid-19 has also created opportunities to see how important it is to fully understand the economic effects of pandemics in order to analyze the policies to be implemented to mitigate their consequences, both health and economic.
3. As the world began to emerge from the covid-19 crisis, another crisis suddenly arose. This is the Russian-Ukrainian war which began on February 24, 2022. This crisis has come to impose additional challenges on the world economy in general, and on African and Arab economies in particular.
4. The resulting food, energy and financial crises have complicated the daily lives of citizens around the world, in Africa and the Arab world in particular.
5. The economic outlook indicates that covid-19 and the Russian-Ukrainian war could leave traces in terms of health and economic impacts for several decades.
6. It is in this global context still marked by the consequences of covid19 and the Russian-Ukrainian war that the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World begins its consultation meeting today to better understand the effects and repercussions of covid-19 on Arab-African economies, as well as the effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war on supply chains, energy and food prices.

**Excellency the Vice President of the Republic of Burundi;**

**Honourables;**

**Distinguished Participants;**

1. At this great meeting of giving and receiving, we have the honour to welcome among us;
2. His Excellency Enaam MAYARA, Speaker of the House of Councilors of Morocco at the same time President-in-Office of ASSECAA, as well as all the members of the delegation he leads;
3. His Excellency Modeste BAHATI LUKWEBO, Speaker of the Senate of the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as all the members of his delegation;
4. His Excellency Augustin IYAMUREMYE, Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Rwanda, as well as all the members of the delegation he leads;
5. His Excellency DENG DEND AKOON, Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of South Sudan and all members of his delegation;
6. Her Excellency Lindiwe DLAMINI, Speaker of the Senate of the Kingdom of ESWATINI, as well as all the members of hir delegation;
7. Her Excellency Mabel CHINOMONA, Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and all members of her delegation;
8. Honourable Jamal Mohamed Abdulhman FAKIRO, First Deputy-Speaker of the Shoora Council of the Kingdom of Bahrain and all the members of his delegation;
9. Honourable Nasser Methrif Al HEAIDI, Head of Delegation of the Shoora Council of the State of Qatar and the members of the delegation he leads;
10. Honourable Dr. Hisham Al-Fares, Head of Delegation of the Shoora Council of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the members of the delegation he leads;
11. Honourable Omar Dadi Addoun, Head of Delegation of the Council of the Nation of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria and all the members of his delegation;
12. Honourable Adnan Hamad ALHAMMADI, Head of Delegation of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates and all the members of his delegation;
13. Honourable Dr. Basheer Al-Hosh, Head of Delegation of the Libyan Council of State and all members of his delegation;
14. Honourable Abdullahi Kabira BARKIYA, Head of Delegation of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and all members of his delegation;
15. Honourable Asumu Mum Munoz Anastasia, Head of Delegation of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea and all members of his delegation;
16. Honourable Fanny MOUSSOKOURA Chantal, Deputy-Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and all the members of her delegation;
17. Honoorable Snowe Jr EDWIM MELVIN, Head of Delegation of the Republic of Liberia and all members of his delegation;
18. Ambassador Yasser Elsayed Mohamed ELATAWI, Representative of the Speaker of the Senate of the Arab Republic of Egypt;
19. Mister Abdulwasie YUSSUF, Secretary General of ASSECAA as well as the other members of the Secretariat;

**Excellency the Vice President of the Republic of Burundi;**

**Honourables**;

**Distinguished Participants;**

1. The deliberations of this 9th Consultation Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World which opens this September 19, 2022 must mark a decisive step in the awareness of the urgent need to face the challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war.
2. In the Senate of the Republic of Burundi, our wish is that these deliberations allow good interactions between the participants to guarantee the emergence of complementary and constructive opinions. We wish the debates to be guided by a spirit of openness and shared responsibilities.
3. We are certain that the exchanges of this Consultation Meeting will be punctuated by practical recommendations likely to be incorporated into our national laws in order to be implemented by our respective Governments.
4. I should not end my remarks without expressing my gratitude to my predecessor Honourable Révérien NDIKURIYO, current Secretary General of the CNDD-FDD Party for his multiple contributions in strengthening Afro-Arab relations.
5. While awaiting the conclusion of the work of this 9th Consultation Meeting, to which we wish full success, we once again assure all participants that all arrangements have been made for this Consultation Meeting to take place in a peaceful environment.
6. Our intimate wish is that you be satisfied. Because, as Prince Louis RWAGASORE, hero of the independence of Burundi, said so well, "Your satisfaction will be our pride".

**Thank you for your kind attention.**

**APPENDIX 3**

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY ENAAM MAYARA, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COUNCILORS OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO AND CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, CHOURA COUNCILS AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS OF AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD DURING THE NINTH CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION**

Bujumbura, Republic of Burundi, September 19-20, 2022

**Honourable Vice-President of the Friendly Republic of Burundi;**

**Mister Mayor of the City of Bujumbura;**

**Honourable Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Burundi;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Honourable Presidents of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils;**

**League Member Delegations;**

**Honourable Secretary General of the Association;**

**Dear colleagues;**

**Ladies and gentlemen, Distinguished participants,**

At the first attempt, I have the pleasure of expressing my sincere thanks and my deep appreciation to the Republic of Burundi, to the Government, to the parliament and to the people for the generosity, the hospitality and the warm welcome that we have received since we set foot on the land of the Friend Republic of Burundi.

I also have the honour to express to you my joy at our meeting today and through this important meeting, in order to deliberate and deepen the discussion and exchange of views on two major subjects of the international agenda, namely: “the effects and repercussions of covid-19 on Arab-African economies”, as well as “the effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war on supply chains, energy and food prices”.

There is no doubt that both topics are of great importance and complexity, as they focus on a number of interrelated main challenges facing the whole World and the African and Arab regions in particular; and they are related to achieving pandemic recovery and economic take-off to ensure food and energy security on the other hand.

**Dear Colleagues;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished participants;**

As we all know, the Corona pandemic that broke out in the world at the end of 2019 caused great damage to most of the economic sectors of the countries, which entered the world economy in a phase of semi-stagnation. According to International Monetary Fund estimates, global economic losses from the pandemic will reach around $15 trillion by the end of 2024, or 2.8% of total global output.

According to the fund, central banks the world the world all over have increased their balance sheets by a combined $7.5 trillion to deal with the pandemic, and have only injected liquidity in 2020 that exceeds what they have pumped over the last ten years combined. The Corona pandemic, according to the World Bank, has also led to a decline in the economic, health and food security of millions of the world's population, which has pushed an estimated 150 million people into poverty in 2020 alone, particularly on the African continent, and world food prices increased by 14% in the same year. With the pandemic continuing, the global economy entered 2022 in a weaker position than expected, with the global growth rate declining by more than 1.5% between 2021 and 2022. Given the high prices of energy and supply chain disruptions, the inflation is likely to continue to rise in the long run.

As far as Africa and the Arab world are concerned, the consequences of the Corona pandemic and its repercussions on the two regions have led to the collapse of oil prices and the drop in global demand for it before it increases due to other factors, and the pandemic has also led to a slowdown in the growth of the economies of the countries of the two regions, due to its direct effects on the financial sector in general and on GDP. According to the World Bank, in 2020 the Middle East and North Africa region suffered significant GDP losses estimated at around $200 billion. This includes damage to key sectors, especially energy, aviation, tourism and others. In addition, the region's economies contracted in the same year by around 3.8%, according to World Bank estimates.

At the African level, the course of economic recovery from the effects and repercussions of the epidemic is still uneven and incomplete, and it is occurring at varying paces across the African continent. However, in its latest report on the African continent, published in April this year, the World Bank projects that the regional growth rate will reach 4.1% in the current 2022 and 4.9% in 2023.

**Dear colleagues;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Honourable audience;**

As soon as the world emerged from the tunnel of the Covid-19 crisis, the Ukrainian-Russian crisis began, which directly affected regional and global economic conditions, and aggravated the crisis in energy, food, prices of raw materials, minerals, fertilizers, and supply chains, which have added increasing complications in the recovery process of the global economy in general and the Afro-Arab economy in particular, as they have hurt growth, raised prices and increased the rate of inflation.

As for the Arab and African countries, if the turbulence linked to the outbreak of the Corona pandemic had already contributed to the rise in world food prices and the worsening of poverty, the Ukrainian-Russian crisis caused prices to rise to reach its highest levels in decades, as in the level of Arab-African food security, it has decreased Stocks at a significant level; prices continue to rise, purchasing power is weakening, and the effects are direct, rapid and prolonged.

An increase in food and fuel prices would lead to security risks and instability in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, while food insecurity is likely to increase in some Arab and African countries.

In order to meet these challenges, Arab and African governments must strive to establish and expand social protection systems so that everyone in the region can exercise their rights to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food and the right to social security. It should also increase national production, reduce imports and take all economic measures that would help to deal with the effects and repercussions of this crisis.

**Dear colleagues;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Honourable audience;**

I am absolutely certain that ladies and gentlemen, the Chairpersons and members of the delegations will enrich the deliberations and discussions that will take place on these two important subjects with their documents, their interventions, their brilliant ideas and their vast experiences in a way that will enable this important meeting to address the effects and repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukrainian-Russian crisis on the Arab-African economy in a manner that serves the interests of our countries and peoples.

To conclude, I renew my thanks and my gratitude to the Senate of the friend Republic of Burundi for the considerable efforts it has made to organize this important meeting, hoping that its work will be crowned with success.

**Thank you all for listening**

**APPENDIX 4.**

**SPEECH OF HIS EXCELLENCY PROSPER BANZOMBANZA, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI AT THE OPENING OF THE 9TH CONSULTATION METING OF the ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS OF AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD (ASSECAA)**

**Excellencies;**

**Honourables;**

**Distinguished participants;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, all protocol observed**

1. Let us give thanks to the Almighty God, Master of times and ceremonies, He who has allowed us to gather in these places.
2. We are very happy, Dear Guests, to count you among ours. Permit me first of all to welcome you and wish you a pleasant stay in Burundi and to indicate, prima facie, that I am presenting this speech on behalf of His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi, who is busy with other duties. Your presence is a tribute that you pay to our country, by choosing Bujumbura, our economic capital, to host the meetings of the 9th Retreat Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World whose main themes are:

1° The effects and repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic on economies of Arab-African communities and the response of governments;

2° The Russian-Ukrainian war and its repercussions on the channels supply, energy and food prices.

We express our deepest gratitude to the organizers of this conference who have given themselves body and soul to ensure that the works are held in good terms.

**Excellencies;**

**Honourable;**

**Distinguished Participants;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, all protocol observed,**

1. The 9thRetreat Meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World seeks to achieve three objectives:

1° Promote Afro-Arab debate, dialogue and consultation on strategic and priority issues in the African and Arab regions, and better understand the repercussions caused by the covid-19 pandemic, as well as the Russian-Ukrainian war and the consequences observed so far on countries' economies, supply chains, energy and food prices, and propose solutions;

2° Establish a parliamentary economic diplomacy which will explore the ways and means of strengthening Afro-Arab economic cooperation in a strategic, participatory, integrated and development perspective based on the strengthening of economic, commercial and humanitarian ties between Africa and the Arab world;

3° Sharing knowledge and experiences among parliamentarians through the presentation of good practices and lessons learned with a view to elaborate and mitigate the economic impacts of covid -19 and the repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the economies of countries in Africa and the Arab world.

**Excellencies;**

**Honourables;**

**Distinguished Participants;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, all protocol observed**

1. At the end of 2019, the world experienced the Covid-19 pandemic, which spread rapidly in all countries, causing major damage in all economic sectors, including finance and banking and plunging the world economy in a recession.
2. According to estimates by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), global economic losses due to the corona virus epidemic will amount to around 15 trillion dollars by 2024. This is equivalent to 2.8% of gross world output.
3. The International Monetary Fund said that central banks around the world have increased their balance sheets by a combined $7.5 trillion to deal with the pandemic. He said that in 2020 alone, banks injected more liquidity into financial markets than they did in the last ten years combined.
4. In addition, according to the World Bank, the pandemic has led to a decline in the economic, health and food security of millions of people, pushing an estimated 150 million people into poverty in 2020 alone, as world prices have increased to 14% the same year.
5. With the persistence of the Covid-19 pandemic, the world economy entered 2022 in a more fragile position than expected. In its most recent version of the “World Economic Outlook” report, the International Monetary Fund expects the global growth rate to decline from 5.9% in 2021 to 4.4% in 2022.
6. Given the rising energy prices and supply chain disruptions, the International Monetary Fund also expects inflation to continue and rise in the near term, averaging 3.9% in advanced economies and 5.9% in emerging markets and developing economies in 2022.
7. With regard to Africa and the Arab world, the consequences of the corona virus and its repercussions on the two regions have led to a collapse in oil prices and a drop in global demand.
8. Covid-19 has also led to a decline in domestic tourism, as well as slower economic growth in Arab and African economies.
9. At the same time, the crisis has had direct effects on the financial and banking sector and on GDP, indirectly slowing growth in the countries of the two regions.
10. According to the World Bank, in 2020 the Middle East and North Africa suffered significant GDP losses, which were estimated at around $200 billion. These include damage in key sectors, such as energy, aviation, tourism and transport, among others.
11. Economies in the region contracted in the same year by around 3.8%, according to the World Bank estimates, and this coincided with last year's decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, in the region of about 5.4%.
12. The economic performance of Arab and African countries over the past two years has been affected by the epidemic. This led to a significant drop in the Gross Domestic Product, an increase in the unemployment rate and a significant increase in budget deficits and public debt.

**Excellencies;**

**Honourables;**

**Distinguished Participants;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, all protocol observed**

1. As the world emerged from the tunnel of the health crisis, the Russian-Ukrainian war broke out, contributing to the deterioration of global economic conditions, straining international relations, increasing the level of uncertainty, aggravating the crisis energy, food, mineral and fertilizer prices and raise concerns about their supply.
2. This situation has added additional risks to the global economy and reinforced some of the dilemmas faced by many global economies.

**Excellencies;**

**Honourables;**

**Distinguished Participants;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, all protocol observed**

1. With Russia and Ukraine being major commodity producers, supply chain disruptions have pushed up global prices, especially for oil and natural gas.
2. Food prices have jumped, with wheat for which Ukraine and Russia account for 30% of world exports.
3. Moreover, Arab-African food security is suffering enormously from the Russian-Ukrainian war.
4. In the longer term, war could fundamentally alter the global economic and geopolitical order.

**Excellencies;**

**Honourables;**

**Distinguished Participants;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, all protocol observed**

1. During these two days, your reflections will allow you to better understand the repercussions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the Russian-Ukrainian war in order to address and mitigate the economic impacts of Covid-19 and the repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the economies of Africa and the Arab world.
2. It is with these words that I declare open the 9th retreat meeting of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World on these two themes:

1° The effects and repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic on Arab-African economies and the response of governments;

2° The Russian-Ukrainian war and its repercussions on supply chains, energy and food prices.

**Thank you for your kind attention**

**God bless us**

**APPENDIX 5**

**PRESENTATION OF ALOYS BARUTWANAYO**

**ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA**

**المماثلة COUNCILS EQUIVALENT AND رابطة مجالس الشيوخ والشورى والمجالس WORLD ARAB THE AND AFRICA INفي أفريقيا والعالم العـربـي**

**ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS IN AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD**

**9TH RETREAT MEETING OF THE ASSECAA**

**FROM COVID 19 TO THE WAR IN UKRAINE : A GLOBAL SHOCK**

**Presentation: BATUNGWANAYO Aloys**

**Commissioner at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Researcher in the treatment of the past and geopolitics**

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**Bujumbura, September 2022**

**GENERAL BACKGROUD**

Since the end of the Second World War in 1945, the earth globe had never been shaken until the years 2020 and 2022. At the end of that war, two blocks of winners were born. They became the leaders of the world with the right to veto for everything that was done in the world. These are the East block represented by one part of the allies with the USSR at the lead and the Western block of allies represented by the USA.

Two ideological blocks first at the political level but which will evolve also in economic blocks. It was capitalist liberalism and socialism mixed with a dose of communism.

These two blocks will become antagonistic blocks over the years until they fuel what they call "the Cold War".

As the world war had had repercussions outside the peoples which were involved in it, the cold war had had also repercussions beyond the frontiers of the two blocks.

If these peoples who were not directly involved in the world war have been at the battle filed in a way or another, they took another attitude during the Cold war. Hence, some African and Asian countries created in Bandong what they called the “non-aligned Movement”.

Brioni's declaration of July 19, 1956, proposed by Gaml Abdel Nasser, Josip Broz Toto, Soekarno and Jawaharlal, marks the origin of the movement, which then aimed, in the context of the Cold War, to protect itself from the influence of United States and the USSR who sought to rally the world to their cause (idea of bipolarization: the two big powers that govern the world). The term “non-alignment” was coined by Indian Prime Minister Nehru during a 1954 speech in Colombo (Wikipedia.org, 2022).

The purpose of the organization as defined in the "Havana Declaration" of 1979 is to ensure "national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of non-aligned countries in their struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, segregation, racism, and all forms of foreign aggression, occupation, domination, interference or hegemony by great powers or political blocs" and to promote solidarity among the peoples of the Third World. The organization, whose headquarters are in Lusaka, Zambia, brings together nearly two-thirds of the members of the UN and 55% of the world's population.

That Cold War between the two powers ended in 1989 with the fall of the Berlin Wall followed by the decomposition of the East bloc.

Since then, a unipolar world, policeman of the world has prevailed to the chagrin of both the Eastern bloc and the non-aligned movement.

The “covid shock” and the war in Ukraine have come to show that the multipolar world is rising from its ashes.

This presentation, which analyzes the geopolitics around these two major events, is divided into two main parts:

a) Theme I: The effects and repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic on Arab-African economies and the response of governments

b) Theme II: The Russian-Ukrainian war and its effects on supply chains, energy and food prices.

On these two purely economic themes, it should be understood that they have their origins in politics. It is extremely important to tap into the political imagination to understand these crises. Economic domination would only be an illusion without a conception of politics that even involves other instruments of domination such as weapons.

**FROM COVID 19 TO THE WAR IN UKRAINE: A GLOBAL SHOCK**

Our presentation will include two parts, namely the geopolitical context of Covid and the one of the war in Ukraine. Each section will try to outline and the solution approaches to be provided.

The presentation will end with a stack of recommendations so that African and Arab countries can strengthen their resilience capacity because conflicts or disasters are inevitable. Understanding the global political spectrum will help understanding the economic challenges related to the Covid 19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

**1. COVID 19: A POLITICO-ECONOMIC PANDEMIC**

This health crisis which officially started in China has divided the planet earth. It provoked accusations between countries, speculations and other various reactions. But let us ask ourselves some questions to try to understand the ins and outs of this pandemic:

a) COVID 19, is it a simple pandemic or a bacteriological weapon?

b) Why does it officially break out in China?

c) Were the barrier measures decided by the WHO effective at the global level?

d) Why did each power seek to manufacture its own vaccine?

At the end of 2019, clusters of pneumonia cases occurred in China, some of which were fatal. On January 9, 2020, the virus is identified, it is a new coronavirus called Sars-CoV-2 responsible for a disease baptized "Covid-19" by the WHO on February 11, 2020 to this new infectious disease respiratory disease that appeared in December 2019. This pandemic has fueled existing tensions between world powers. We will remember that in 2018, China had overtaken economically and for the first time, the United States.

This emergence of China could not help fueling tensions between the two world powers. Thus, Beijing implies that the Covid-19 would have first appeared on American territory and not in Wuhan. China has even come to say that the USA created this disease to stifle the ever-growing Chinese economy. There we already see the resurgence of the Blocs and the struggle for the multipolar world versus the unipolar world installed since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

This accusation is based on the hearing, on March 12, 2020, before the House of Representatives (equivalent to the National Assembly), of Robert Redfield, director of the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC in its original version). That day, the boss of this federal agency covering the entire American health system recognizes that due to an insufficient number of screening tests, some people who died of Covid-19 could not be identified as such. Their deaths were even attributed to the seasonal flu.

This declaration is notably relayed by the spokesman of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lijian Zhao, on his Twitter account, and everything is carried away. “The director of the CDC recognizes that Americans declared dead from the flu have tested positive for the new coronavirus”, affirms the Chinese diplomat, thus estimating that cases of Covid-19 could therefore have preceded the first cases in China. “How old is the patient zero in the United States? How many people have been infected? […] Be transparent! The United States owes us an explanation,” he said in his message (Le Parisien, 24/3/2020).

The Parisian citing the statements of the Chinese continues to wonder: To support his accusation, China bases itself, in addition to the declaration of the director of the CDC, on the fact that deaths attributed to seasonal influenza could have been caused by Covid-19 (without even knowing when). It bases also on the fact that the Americans could have brought the Covid-19 with them directly to Wuhan during the Military World Games, at the end of October 2019.

**Covid 19: a biological weapon?**

China suggests to everybody that this disease is nothing but a biological weapon to prevent this Eastern power from dominating the world economically. And as proof, China gives a disturbing element in its eyes: the holding of an event (“Event 201”) organized by the John Hopkins health security centre, in partnership with the World Economic Forum and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Produced on October 18, 2019 in New York, it simulated the arrival of a severe pandemic in order to illustrate the needs necessary to deal with the large-scale economic and social consequences.

So many factors, according to Beijing, would prove that the Americans could be at the origin of the Covid-19. These innuendos and accusations come in a tense context between the two nations, particularly around trade battles. Strong resentment is also felt within the Chinese community across the Atlantic towards President Donald Trump and other political leaders who constantly refer to Covid-19 as a “Chinese virus”.

Where two elephants fight, it is rather the grass that suffers. Western and Eastern powers have reacted differently to this pandemic. Barrier measures have been adopted. The powers even wanted to impose them on developing countries. Among other measures, we can mention:

* Wearing masks,
* Containment,
* The covid test
* Preferably vaccines;
* etc.

Let us try to reflect on each of the measures taken by the powers or even the WHO.

1. **Wearing masks**

This measure has proven to be less practical in almost all African countries due to the socio-economic context of African and Arab countries, to name only the countries concerned here. Hold on, the Burundian population is 90% made up of farmers. How can a traditional farmer wear a mask in his field all day?? Impossible !!!! This is just one of many examples to show that this measure was difficult to apply. The context of the place of conception of this measure is very different from that of African and Arab countries. There, we do not add the “exorbitant” price for a peasant who has to buy them every day because most of the imported masks were for single use!!

1. **The Containment**

The populations living in these world powers used to be confined with winter. It is a kind of confinement imposed by climatic hazards. And as proof, most of these powers cultivate only six months out of twelve. The rest they consume what they have kept for themselves as well as for the cattle.

The advanced technology used especially at home, allows them to place orders being at home and to have them without difficulty.

Was it possible to apply this measure in Burundi, in Arab and African countries? In most African and Arab countries, we eat the food we seek on a daily basis. Ex: A Burundian farmer tells his wife to go and pound the cassava and he goes to catch fish, and that's day-to-day life. Here we are in regions where there are lakes. Elsewhere, they look for leaves of cassava, squash, beans that they are unable to keep. The trade system is not as developed in African and Arab countries to maintain trade in the context of confinement.

This is how Burundi and most African and Arab countries did not observe this confinement as a measure of simple logic.

1. **The covid test**

The Covid test was a compulsory measure at the global level but it must be emphasized that it was a kind of fiasco in most African and Arab countries. The Barundi, like the populations of African countries and even some Arab countries, have not massively adhered to this policy because it is expensive. Not only is it not expensive, but also, people who do not travel abroad did not find the importance of being tested as long as they felt well.

If the test was free, you had to move distances and distances for this test. In addition to travel costs, you had to wear a mask which was “expensive” for some. Also the mentality of these populations did not easily accept this kind of test.

The test became compulsory for people who had to travel outside the country, but many Africans do not travel a lot.

Apart from these financial and logistical difficulties, Africans, Arabs and even elsewhere have not failed to wonder about this pandemic, sometimes even giving a more political than health connotation. God only knows that in difficult living conditions, conspiracy theories gain ground. People who do not know which saint to devote themselves to started looking for where their misfortune comes from. This is how the mutual accusations begin because, it is absolutely necessary to find a scapegoat. As much as the USA and China accuse each other, African and Arab countries have entered the dance for accusations that are more political than health.

According to the specialist Jérémie Peltier, director of studies at the Jean-Jaurès Foundation (April 1, 2020), the epidemic lends itself particularly well to poisoning, in particular because of the confinement imposed on the population. "The fact that individuals are at home, to consume a lot of screens, and a lot of social networks … We have all the ingredients for the conspiracy to work”, he points out to Europe 1.

**d) The vaccine, or rather/vaccines**

Response measures have also been the manufacture of vaccines. It was he hard core of the politico-economic struggle of this pandemic. For lack of arbitration on the part of the World Health Organization WHO, the powers have each manufactured their own vaccine and have done everything to impose it on their partners. Thus, China, the USA, England, etc. manufactured their vaccine and each of these countries did not mutually recognize these vaccines, this to the great displeasure of travelers who had to have more than one vaccine. And there an open economic war was unleashed and hit the Arab and African world. These powers competed ardently to provide/impose their vaccine. What kind of love from these people who a few months before through the WHO had announced a humanitarian disaster in Africa?

The war was not only limited to which vaccine is effective or not, but also to the variants of this pandemic.

Thus several variant cases have been put forward and solutions have been given each time by the person who had discovered this variant.

1. **Why did each power seek to manufacture its own vaccine?**

The world powers pose as rivals on the issue of anti-Covid vaccines, with national interests regaining the upper hand over multilateralism, however advocated by the WHO. And faced with Western countries withdrawing into themselves, Chinese "soft power" is weaving its web a little more.

In geopolitics, every opportunity is good to advance one's pawns. The Covid-19 health crisis, and in particular the race for vaccines has proved it once again: questions of prestige, rivalry and "soft power" have prompted world powers to compete with each other rather than to work together. And there, national economic games come before global health issues.

The race was first to produce a vaccine, considered the miracle cure to end a pandemic that has plagued the world for more than a year. In this little game, the United States (Pfizer and Moderna vaccine), the United Kingdom (AstraZeneca vaccine), China (Sinopharm and Sinovac vaccines) and Russia (Sputnik-K vaccine) were the big winners. But the challenge, now, is to vaccinate its own population, and in this area, no one has succeeded in doing as well as Israel, of which a third of the population has already received at least one dose. Is it important at this time to find out, in the face of a global health crisis, the role and place of the WHO?

1. **Anti-covid vaccines: weapon of domination**

“With Israel, there is a real performance there. They certainly overpaid for the vaccine, but today they have the record for the vaccination rate. However, there were elections in Israel and for the Prime Minister [Benjamin Netanyahu] , who was in difficulty on other subjects, it was necessarily a plus to be able to appear before the voters with a large proportion of the population already vaccinated", underlines on France 24 Pascal Boniface, director of the Institute of international relations and strategic (Iris).

In fact, it was first of all a question for the States of responding to the demand of their own population. Whether they are in Israel, the United States or France, citizens around the world need reassurance and are eager for the restrictive measures that have disrupted their lives for months to end. The future of many leaders therefore depends on the ability to deliver vaccines and thus stem the spread of Covid-19 on its territory.

“The question of delivery has become a real political issue, confirms on France 24 Amandine Crespy, political scientist from the Free University of Brussels. Who says United Kingdom, says Brexit. So for Boris Johnson, it is essential to be in the lead of this vaccine race to show that even outside the European Union, the United Kingdom has lost none of its capacity for action and can activate levers to protect its population as well as possible, or even better than Brussels would do."

1. **Covid: Spheres of influence rise from the ashes**

Beyond domestic political considerations, the geopolitics of the vaccine is redrawing fault lines that were thought to belong to the past. On the one hand, Western countries swear by their own vaccines and appropriate them. On the other, China and Russia are trying to compete with the Western powers.

“We can clearly see that this strategic rivalry has a flavour of the Cold War, judge Pascal Boniface. The fact that Russia called its vaccine ‘Sputnik’ is anything but a coincidence.

This recalls the 'Sputnik moment', when the Russians launched their own rocket into orbit in 1957, much to the surprise of the Americans, who believed for a moment that they were strategically downgraded by the Soviet Union."

However, it is China that is doing the best. First economically, since among the major world economies, it is the only country to have experienced positive growth in 2020, above 2%. The slowdown in the US and European economies has led to more imports of Chinese-made products, resulting in record trade surpluses for Beijing of more than $70 billion last November. It was ultimately the flip side. An economy to weaken at all costs but which continues to grow.

But it is essentially in the field of “soft power” that Beijing has taken full advantage of the health crisis by filling the void left by Westerners in developing countries. While the World Health Organization (WHO) had advocated equal access to vaccination for the whole world in the spring of 2020, creating the Covax mechanism to make this possible, it was indeed national interests that prevailed.

“We see that it is not WHO-style multilateralism that prevails, but rather everyone for themselves, analyzes Pascal Boniface. There is a quite visible North-South aspect. Whereas there was a discourse on the 'common good' vaccine, Westerners have bought 90% of the doses of the two American vaccines. This will leave traces and resentment in the countries of the South."

Witness the recent statements of the South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, who openly criticized Westerners on Tuesday, January 26, 2021. “Rich countries have bought large doses of vaccines. The goal was to accumulate these vaccines and this is done at the expense of other countries in the world which need them most”, he lambasted.

"In its vaccine diplomacy, China has extremely important assets with several vaccines, considerable production capacities, vaccines that are sometimes easier to use and, above all, a very clear priority: to supply developing countries quickly enough”, explains on France 24 Antoine Bondaz, researcher at the Foundation for Strategic Research (FRS).

**Conclusion**

The Covid 19 pandemic, a natural disaster or bacteriological weapon, has remained for Arab and African countries a sad reality of the powers which want to take Africa as an ideological battleground. The unipolar world and the Western political imagination design policies to be enforced in the dominated mode (Arab and African) without consultation or explanation.

The eastern world militant for a multipolar world governs this western world and is racing against time to the African and Arab world.

With the Covid pandemic, the Arab and African world as a whole has shown another side because they have not applied to the letter the dictates of these blocs which are rising from their ashes and want, like the years of the Cold War, to impose their world Vision.

Burundi has certainly observed the barrier measures adapted to the Burundian reality.

Containment not being possible, vaccination not being systematically possible, the test not being systematically feasible, Burundi has not made these measures compulsory but optional.

This attitude earned him the name of "bad student" as if there was the continuity of students and teachers, parents and children as it was in the time of colonization. There are other African countries which have just tried to apply these measures to please the metropolises. But these measures were more or less observed in the capitals because it was not possible to apply them in the villages.

**Recommendations:**

a) To African and Arab governments

* Adopt a common policy of regular consultations on health policy issues to make their voices heard at the WHO, which seems to be at the service of its major financiers;
* Put the necessary means into the development of traditional medicine, the only sure way to overcome health disasters instead of voting budgets for importing drugs and other medical tools;
* Set up think tanks to reflect and propose approaches to solutions to challenges related to paternalism, which does not say its name.

**b) To developed countries**

* Stop always considering Arab and African countries as countries to be civilized whose peoples were taken as “big children”;
* Review their paternalistic policy in favour of cooperation between equals;
* Let the WHO work as an agency of the Nations and not an agency of the powers

**c) To the African and Arab peoples**

* Change mentalities and campaign much more for the decolonization of medicine;
* Revalorize Arab and African medicine and make it more than efficient to find African and Arab solutions linked to African and Arab realities

**2. A war of civilizations and ideology**

The war in Ukraine seems to be a war which does not say its name. It broke out on February 24, 2022 with a Russian military offensive in Ukraine.

This war seemed to surprise Westerners who perhaps no longer thought of an armed international conflict on their territory. They were used to proxy wars, western attacks on African and Asian countries. We will remember Syria, Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq...

But then, why did Russia attack its former part of the USSR?

What are the root causes of this conflict?

What are the immediate causes of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict? What is the impact of this conflict on a global level?

What is the impact of this conflict on the level of the African world and the Arab world? What can be the position of these countries mentioned above?

These questions will help us to fully understand the contours of this conflict which tends at the ideological level to strengthen the old North-East blocs.

**a)Distant origins of the conflict in Ukraine**

Ukraine was part of the former USSR. This part of the globe was the torchbearer of socialist, Marxist and communist ideology until 1989 with the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The crisis between Russia and Ukraine took an important turn on Thursday, February 24, 2022 with the declaration of Russian President Vladimir Putin, the first bombings and the entry into Ukrainian soil of Russian armed forces from the east, south via Crimea and to the north via Belarus, an ally of Moscow. This entry into the war results from long months of tensions between the two countries, Russia not accepting the rapprochement of Ukraine with the Western democracies and even less his desire to join NATO, an unacceptable point for Vladimir Putin who sees it as a threat to his borders. Russia and Ukraine have a special bond. Ukraine was indeed one of the constituent entities of the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), until the dissolution of the latter in 1991 and the proclamation of Ukrainian independence. However, Ukraine retains ties with Russia. In 2013, while a pro-Russian president was in office (Viktor Yanukovych), a revolution broke out in the country and ousted the head of state. A Western hand was behind with what the West has dubbed in several countries “the Orange Revolution”.

In repression, Vladimir Putin annexes Crimea, a Ukrainian territory. In the country, pro and anti-Russian clash. Then, Ukrainian separatists favourable to the neighbouring country took control, with the support of Russia, of part of the Dombass region, a coal basin made up of the oblasts (the equivalent of the regions in France) of Donetsk and Lugansk (in red on the map). Then, they self-proclaimed the People's Republic of Donetsk and that of Lugansk on about a third of each oblast. Historically, these are territories in which the Russian language and culture are steeped. It is therefore a subdivision of Donetsk and Luhansk oblast. The red dividing line on the OSCE map marks the boundary between pro-Russian separatists in the east and Ukrainian government-led territories in the west. To the east, the DPRs and the LPR are separated by their historical border (in grey).

On July 12, 2021, Vladimir Putin published a long text on the Kremlin website in which he returned to the history which has linked Russia and Ukraine for centuries. In his writings, the Russian president recalls that “Russians and Ukrainians were one people” in view of the history between the two nations. For him, the independence taken by the neighbouring country in 1991 “is our great misfortune and our great common tragedy”. A feeling reinforced with the reiterated will, in August 2021, of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenski to integrate NATO, and therefore move away a little more from Russia.

“I cannot accept that we are not proposing an action plan for Ukraine's accession to NATO. The longer we wait, the more countries hesitate on this issue, and the more it confirms the influence of Russia on States at the economic, political level, as well as in terms of personal relations”, he declared to several media, including Liberation.

For Russia, it is unacceptable to lose ideological influence over Ukraine, which, for ten years, has shown its desire to join NATO, an organization based on Western ideology in eternal competition with Eastern one. Judeo-Christian civilization has dominated the world for two thousand years. Today, the Middle Eastern empire is trying to get rid of it. But the globalization imposed by the West does not want to let go. The Middle Eastern empire, on the other hand, is starting to pull its claws out.

President Putin has signed a decree signing the end of the use of the dollar as a global currency and the use of Swift in the transfer of money. It does not stop there because, there is now the BRICS which emerges and faces the UN, it looks like the UN bis.

The situation in Ukraine is precisely an example of a clash of civilizations; it can be seen as a clash of globalist and Eurasian civilizations. After the “great geopolitical catastrophe” (as the Russian president called the collapse of the USSR), the territories of the once united country became “borders” (intermediate zones). These spaces to which the attention of neighbours has increased, NATO and especially the United States were interested in destabilizing the situation on the borders of Russia. It is indeed this war of civilizations that is at stake here. In the 1990s, coherent work was initiated with the executives of the new governments of the new member states of the USSR. The events of 2014 in Ukraine, the Maidan, supported so fervently by both Nuland and the famous Bernard-Henri Levy, soldier of ultra-globalization, were a turning point; in fact they opened the door to the establishment of a direct globalist dictate on Ukraine. Moreover, liberal and nationalist elements, which were more or less neutral before 2014, have joined a united front with a globalist and pro-American agenda. For 8 years in Ukraine, Russophobia was cultivated by various programmes and history was rewritten, until physical massacre of Russians.

The West's unanimous support for Ukraine in 2022, the supply of weapons on an unthinkable scale lay bare this war of civilization. The agony of a globalist regime is beginning to lose ground in the face of multipolarity. The most significant pain is that Europe succumbed to the influence of globalist propaganda and instead of remaining neutral, it sided with war. In many ways, this was certainly the plan of the United States, which had so systematically and continuously provoked the entire conflict by injecting weapons into Ukraine. From the United States alone- according to Transparency International) - more than $ 658 million was invested in aid to Ukraine between 2014 and 2017.

At the same time, we see that the countries of Latin America, the Middle East, China and India have not adopted a globalist position. Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro said his country "firmly" adheres to Russia's position. In Cuba, people were seen carrying Russian flags and Z symbols during a demonstration on May 1, recalls the German channel ZDF. Argentina accused the West of having double standards. In Brazil, presidential candidate Lula da Silva said in turn that Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelensky was responsible for what was happening in his country. China has spoken out against NATO expansion and US provocations. India has attempted to maintain its strategic neutrality (In the 1990s, India itself was the target of very painful US and Western sanctions for refusing to join the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. The country, which the West seeks to cut off from its oxygen and deprive of high technology, then held its ground (largely thanks to cooperation with Russia, which did not associate itself with the sanctions and advocated their abolition). A number of Middle Eastern countries have backed Russia's special military operation (Syria, a longtime Russian ally, knows the battle against globalism better than anyone), calls for the withdrawal of the NATO are increasingly vocal in Turkey. Many African countries, especially those with strong anti-globalist sentiment, have not backed Western criticism of Russia (Mali, Sudan, Burundi , CAR, Zimbabwe, Republic of Congo, Eritrea). These reactions indicate the end of the myth of a "single world space and the birth of other poles of influence giving free rein to the multipolar world, enemy of the West". Russia's special military operation in Ukraine accelerated the formation of a multipolar world and catalyzed many geopolitical processes.

**b) The consequences of this war in Africa and the Arab world**

The political, social and economic consequences are numerous. At the political level, diplomatic brooms have been coming to the surface lately. The West is racing towards Africa and the Arab world to cut short the growing influence of the Middle Eastern empire.

This one does not let go of the ballast but strengthens its base in this part of the terrestrial globe. It is not a parental love but the desire to keep a monopoly on the riches of these two worlds.

**How does this globe behave in relation to this paternalistic attitude?**

The abstention of several African states during the vote at the UN General Assembly on March 2, 2022 to adopt a resolution which “demands that Russia immediately cease the use of force against Ukraine” has raised questions. Also how is the war perceived on the continent and the Arab world? Should we read it in the light of a supposed return of Russian influence when we observe an expansion of Russia on the politico-military level? And what is the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war, particularly on the issue of food security?

At the social level, the West came to Africa especially with the Judeo-Christian civilization more than in the Arab world which tried to resist. The consequences on this point will not be quick but they will certainly be there. One thing is noticeable about this social civilization: Africans tend to favour the language of the colonizer, to value Western culture going hand in hand with Western consumption.

At the economic level, the consequences are already perceptible, as the Ivorian newspaper writes (Africa-press, 18/3/2022). “Inflation is the main risk of war in Ukraine. (…) For African countries that are net importers of food, there will be a direct consequence on food security and consumer prices”, warns Aroni Chaudhuri, economist at Coface. The situation is particularly alarming for wheat, thirty-two countries importing more than 90% of their consumption. There is also the lack of fuel which affects our countries, including the Arab countries, even though they are among the major producers of this black gold. Many are also very dependent on imports of refined oil, the price of which has exploded. Some hydrocarbon-producing countries will be able to benefit from a windfall effect, but it promises to be limited. “When a country does not have the capacity to produce fuel, it must import it. For example, 18% of Nigeria's imports are refined oil, even though it is the continent's leading oil producer,” the economist said.

In addition to these economic issues, Africa and the Arab world risk finding themselves increasingly caught up in the war of influence between Moscow and Western states. In recent years, Russia has repositioned itself on the African continent, in Arab countries, in particular through military partnerships. "A tenth power iron curtain rises between Europe and Russia," says Arnaud Kalika, who leads a seminar on Russia at the National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts. And Africa is becoming an extremely important square on the world chessboard. »

This attitude can be explained by the continent's extreme dependence on the external environment, the fragility of bilateral relations and the instability of the international system. But the disruption of our world, partly reflected in the war in Ukraine, calls for a profound rethinking of African and Arab diplomacy. Indeed, both politically and in the economic and military fields, Africa and the Arab world occupy a vulnerable position, the hegemonic struggles between the great powers being expressed there with more violence than elsewhere. And the debates aroused by the Russian presence in certain African and Arab countries actually testify to a rivalry between the West and Moscow on the one hand and the Eastern world on the other, which will not be without consequence on the political future of the African and Arab societies.

For reasons of geographical proximity, the West cannot remain indifferent to the extension of Russian influence in Africa and the Arab world through Russian politico-military activities. The error, for African governments, would consist in remaining in a logic of subordination obliging them to choose one power rather than another.

A real policy of sovereignty in terms of security and defense must be built. And this requires a reassessment of existing tools at the levels of the African Union, the Arab League and the Regional Economic Communities.

**c) Attitude of African and Arab countries towards this war of “civilization”**

During the vote on sanctions against Russia last March, the Arab and African countries in general surprised the world and disappointed the West to the point of being angry, as expressed by the French President.

Abstention is a political message. It is polysemic and must therefore be analyzed on a case-by-case basis. The non-alignment of emerging and developing countries cannot be invoked here, because that would mean that there is an ideology or at the very least an agreement between the various African countries which have abstained. While it should be recalled that the majority of African countries voted to condemn the Russian intervention in Ukraine, abstention must be deciphered in the light of a situation of distrust of Western powers and/or diplomatic calculations linked to military and/or economic arithmetic (partnerships with Russia, China and/or Western countries) which seem to show the prevalence of the defense of national interests. The abstention of Senegal, rather classified in the “camp” of the democracies, amazed. Several hypotheses have been put forward such as that of a precaution one year after the anti-French demonstrations. These internal questions are probably not to be weighed down. However, given the presidency of Macky Sall at the head of the African Union, and undoubtedly informed of the contrasting positions of his peers, it is more likely that he wished to maintain diplomatic cohesion in order to move forward on priority projects unique to the African continent. He, however, condemned, in the strongest terms, the racism perpetrated against African students prevented from leaving Ukraine as refugees yet granted to Ukrainians on the specious grounds put forward by some Westerners that civilizational proximity would be greater with the Ukrainians. This arbitration of (in) elegance by Westerners will undoubtedly leave traces in the structuring of future power relations.

Finally, some countries were able to abstain or not vote, because they did not feel concerned. With regard to the French-speaking member countries of the OIF who abstained at the UN on March 2 and without knowing the details of the vote which is not public, we observe that on March 16, meeting in the French-speaking Ministerial Conference (CMF), a resolution was adopted by consensus which condemns “with vigor and in the strongest terms the military aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation and condemns the resulting violations of international law, human rights and humanitarian law, including violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine”.

And there, there is a very important detail: the UN proceeded by vote, and this meeting proceeded by consensus. This resolution may appear contradictory with the vote at the UN on March 1st; it reflects a process of geopolitical re-compositions in progress, the lines of which are not yet clearly defined.

As for Eritrea, subject to US sanctions since the fall of 2021 for its role in the war in Ethiopia and which has moved closer to Russia, its firm position and therefore its refusal not to condemn the Russian intervention in Ukraine is a bias against the Washington and ultimately in favour of Moscow.

But by choosing not to choose, the African countries, far from supporting the war, intend to preserve a depolarized foreign policy, interacting on multiple poles of power, whether Western, Russian or even Chinese.

The newspaper “Jeune Afrique (of 16/3/2022) speaking about the war in Ukraine, calls on Africa to learn to stand on its own two feet. Faced with the geopolitical upheavals caused by the war in Ukraine, the continent cannot remain in a logic of subordination obliging it to choose one power over another. It must bring out an African foreign policy.

President Putin, for his part, did not mince words on 23/2/2022 when he called for a geopolitical reconfiguration of the post-Cold War international order, which would result in a reduction of the “grip of the Western camp” on the world. For him, the first countries targeted by this repositioning strategy will be the United States and Europe, true defenders of Judeo-Christian civilization and globalization.

**GENERAL CONCLUSION**

Adding to the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the war launched by Vladimir Putin against Ukraine is already having a major negative impact on the progress of the world. And it is likely to have it even more in the future. The consequences of both the pandemic and the war against Ukraine are indeed much greater in the countries of the South than in the rich countries. These two crises combined in a very short time called into question the slow movement of convergence in living standards on a global scale observed for several decades. Westerners must be aware of the major geopolitical risks associated with this trend reversal and act to limit them. In the difficult context in which they find themselves, it is not certain however that they have the means or in any case the political will.

The war on Ukraine is causing what is known as global “stagflation,” combining high inflation and economic stagnation, even recession. That situation had not been seen since the 1970s. It was accompanied in fact by a rapid and brutal rise in inflation under the pressure of the rise in the prices of foodstuffs, energy and of the main raw materials. Admittedly, inflation had already increased throughout 2021 due to the increase in demand caused by the post-COVID-19 economic recovery and the persistent disruptions in many supply chains following the pandemic. However, it has accelerated markedly since the outbreak of war in Ukraine. And even more in the countries of the South than in the developed countries.

**d) General recommendations**

1) To African and Arab countries

* Rethink the international policy adapted to the current global context;
* Take the proactive initiative to improve diplomatic relations with the powers;
* Invest in research first of the past, then for the future in order to build an African and Arab world designed on the improved model of these two worlds to avoid exoticism without a better future;
* Do everything possible to weigh on the international chessboard by exploiting as the father of the family the rich subsoil, the soil and the mild climate in the production of food able to feed the whole world;
* Learn to give real value to African and Arab products by consuming and exporting them;
* Refuse that the African and Arab world be the dumping ground for Western industries;
* Become aware of the concepts of political, economic and socio-cultural independence;
* Effectively trigger the process of decolonization which still weighs on this world.

**2) To World powers**

* Stop infantilizing the African and Arab world;
* To give the same value of human rights to the North, to the East as to the South;
* Stop stoking the racism imported by colonization;
* Recognize the crimes resulting from colonization;
* Commit to repair the harm caused by colonization, proxy wars.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION**

**APPENDIX 6**

**PRESENTATION OF PROFESSOR LEONIDAS NDAYIZEYE**

**THE 9TH RETREAT MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS OF AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD (ASSECAA)**

**SEPTEMBER 19-20, 2022**

**BUJUMBURA- BURUNDI**

**EFFECTS AND REPERCUSSIONS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON ARAB-AFRICAN ECONOMIES: WHAT RESPONSES?**

**By Professor Léonidas NDAYIZEYE**

**University of Burundi**

**Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences**

**September 2022**

**INTRODUCTION**

The world was hit by a pandemic during the first half of 2020. This pandemic was identified as a new coronavirus and later named Coronavirus 19 or Covid-19 (Qiu et al., 2020)1. While Covid-19 originated in the city of Wuhan in China's Hubei province, it subsequently spread rapidly across the globe, causing human tragedy and enormous economic damage.

Initially, several studies focused on the mortality that this crisis caused, thus neglecting its economic effects. But very quickly, Covid-19 showed how disrupted economic activities can be: almost all countries have, to varying degrees, suspended international flights, instituted quarantine for people entering the country and closed borders. land or sea. In many countries, measures such as confinements have been taken, which have had the effect of limiting the movement of goods and people.

Covid-19 has also shown how important it is to understand the economic effects of pandemics in order to analyze the policies to be implemented to mitigate their consequences, both health and economic. Recent experience has shown that very few analyzes focus on the economic effects of such shocks, at least initially.

An analysis made by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in 2021 shows that until 2020, the limited literature that existed on the economics of pandemics focused on the Spanish flu epidemic which occurred between 1918 and 1920, the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic in Asia and the Ebola epidemic in Africa. Debates often focused on mortality, with few details about the economic consequences of a pandemic.

To stop its spread, many countries have initiated such analyzes and based on the results found, measures have been taken, including social distancing. And as part of this distancing, businesses, schools, community centers, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been required to close, mass gatherings have been banned, and lockdowns have been imposed in many countries, allowing travel only for essential needs. These measures have effectively reduced the extent of the spread of this pandemic and a rush of hope was on the horizon, when, suddenly, another crisis arose. This is the Russian-Ukrainian war which began on February 24, 2022. This crisis has thus imposed additional challenges on the world economy in general, and on African and Arab economies in particular. The resulting food, energy and financial crises have complicated the daily lives of citizens around the world, particularly in Africa and the Arab world.

The African Economic Outlook clearly indicates that the pandemic and the war between Russia and Ukraine could leave scars for several years, even a decade. At the same time, some 30 million people in Africa fell into extreme poverty in 2021 and around 22 million jobs were lost in the same year due to the pandemic. This trend could continue in the second half of 2022 and in 2023.

It is within this framework that the Association of Shoora Senates and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World (ASSECAA) in association with the Senate of the Republic of Burundi, organized a consultation meeting which addresses the following two themes:

I. The effects and repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic on Arab- African economies and the response of governments

II. The Russian-Ukrainian war and its effects on supply chains, energy and food prices.

The objectives of this consultation are: (1) To promote Afro-Arab debate, dialogue and consultation on strategic and priority issues in the African and Arab regions, and to better understand the repercussions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as that the Russian-Ukrainian war and its consequences observed so far on countries' economies, supply chains, energy and food prices, and propose solutions; (2) Establish parliamentary economic diplomacy that will explore ways and means to strengthen Afro-Arab economic cooperation from a strategic, participatory, integrated and development perspective based on strengthening economic, commercial and humanitarian ties between Africa and the Arab World and (3) Contribute to the mutual exchange of knowledge and experiences among parliamentarians through the presentation of good practices and lessons learned in order to address and mitigate the economic impacts of COVID-19 and the repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the countries' economies.

This work follows this logic. It addresses these aspects from an economic point of view, to understand the economic effects of these two large-scale crises, in order to propose common, collaborative approaches, from Africa and the Arab world to prevent the effects of such crises and especially to make their economies more resilient to such shocks.

**I. The economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic on Arab-African economies**

**I.1. The effects of the coronavirus on economic African economies**

Africa represents 17% of the world's population, but is home to 25% of the patients identified on the planet, with however a predominance of vector-borne or infectious diseases such as yellow fever (95%), malaria (93%), HIV -AIDS (67%), neglected tropical diseases or NTDs (39%), tuberculosis (24%) and viral hemorrhagic fevers (Serge Loungou et al. 2021)i

According to these authors, African health systems generally have three major weaknesses: the lack of adequate hospital structures, nursing staff and financial support. While the WHO recommends a ratio of 30 hospital beds per 10,000 inhabitants, the African Region has only 10. Thus, when the Covid-19 pandemic was announced, many predicted a carnage in Africa, but the responsiveness of African countries (WHO, 2020a) and their experience of epidemics (Bernault, 2020; Belsoeur, 2020) have helped to avoid it.

However, economically, financially and socially, the continent has experienced negative repercussions of unprecedented magnitude (Le Coguic and Osman, 2021). According to the WB (2022), per capita income in most African countries will remain below pre-pandemic levels, at least until 2023. Poverty levels, measured at $1.90 a day, have fallen from 34% pre-pandemic to 39% (African Economic Outlook 2021).

Very extroverted, the African continent indeed maintains close ties with China where the pandemic originated, but also with emerging and developed economies where this pandemic has rapidly spread. However, most of these countries, led by China, closed their borders from the start of the crisis, thus limiting the movement of people both inside and outside these countries. This led to disruptions in the supply of production and world trade, which, as a corollary, caused demand shocks.

Projected output losses through 2021 are the difference between pre-pandemic GDP projections (October 2019) and the latest available projections (October 2021), and are given as a percentage of pre-pandemic projections. The savings groups are based on Appendix C of the full report. EIED = emerging and developing industrial economies; EU = European Union.

The decline in global economic activity has reduced demand for African goods and services, especially for commodities. For example, in Burundi, exports decreased by 68.9% in the second quarter of 2020, compared to the same period of 2019, falling from BIF 99,114.2 million to BIF 30,827.7 million while the country's imports increased by 13.1% over the same period from BIF 368,495.4 million in 2019 to BIF 416,746.6 million in 2020ii.

As a result, government revenues and international reserves of African countries have both declined, affecting their fiscal performance and potential debt sustainability. Emerging industrialized and developing economies.

These effects have negatively impacted corporate income, and have considerably restricted the fiscal space of States. The social impact would be directly perceptible on household incomes, with nearly 170 countries which, according to IMF estimates, saw their per capita income fall in 2020. In Africa, the pandemic has caused the main ills: generalized recession (40 countries affected out of 54 in 2020), massive over-indebtedness (more than 60% of GDP in 17 countries in 2020) and worsening poverty (more than 30 million Africans thus fell into extreme poverty in 2020 and 39 million more are expected to experience it in 2021 (Mbaye et al., 2020; African Development Bank, 2021a). Real GDP fell there for the first time in more than thirty years (–2.6% in 2020) and the contraction of GDP per capita is even more marked (–4.7%), due to the region's demographic dynamism. This recession raises fears of a sharp increase in poverty rates on the continent.

African countries have also faced a decline in investment flows from emerging and developed economies. The global economic slowdown and supply disruptions are also impacting portfolio investment outflows from Africa, causing a decline in foreign exchange reserves that could lead to currency depreciation, which could, in turn, cause inflationary pressures in African economies. This should further affect consumption patterns due to the loss of household purchasing power.

On the private sector, Economic Commission for Africa 2021 analysis iv shows that the global slowdown is affecting remittances to Africa, which in turn is impacting private consumption and investments on the continent. On the government side, public health spending has likely increased as a result of efforts to save the lives of people who have contracted the virus and to contain its spread, and much of this spending comes from public investment in some productive sectors of the economy. This reduction in investment will dampen the potential for economic growth. The slowdown in growth will be exacerbated by the consequences of the epidemic on the workforce, namely reduced attendance at work and, in some cases, the complete cessation of many economic activities, which will have repercussions on production and consumption patterns and will considerably affect Africa's already sluggish growth.

**I.2. The Arab world facing the Covid-19 pandemic**

The Arab Human Development Report (UNDP 2022) v indicates that in the first year of the pandemic, the existing large budget deficits widened further across the region, due to falling revenues, due to the reduced demand for oil, and increased financing needs to contain the pandemic and its economic impact on households and businesses. In 2020, the average overall deficit widened by 7% to 9.2% of GDP, while in 2021 the region's average fiscal deficit narrowed to 2.3%, a deficit that , according to the IMF, should turn into a surplus of 4.1% of GDP in 2022.

Large budget deficits have increased public debt, worsening an already vulnerable debt situation. Thus, in 2020, the region's overall average public debt peaked at 60% of GDP, an increase of around 13% compared to 2019, and net foreign direct investment (FDI) flows to the region declined to 6% in 2020.

The Report mentions that in 2021, the unemployment rate reached 12.6% in the Arab States region, more than double the global average of 6.2%. The female labor force participation rate was among the lowest in the world, estimated at 20.3% in the Arab States region in 2019. The female unemployment rate remained at 24% in the Arab States region, or three four times more than the world average.

Also, in 2021, the region had the highest youth unemployment rate (15-24 years old) in the world, at 28.6%, a sharp increase from 25.3% in 2019. Young women was also the highest in the world, and more than double that of young men, reaching 49.1 in 2021 compared to 44.7% in 2019 (compared to 23.8% among young men in 2021 and 20.8% in 2019).

**I.3. Why has the pandemic particularly affected Africa and the Arab world?**

Africa and the Arab world have an important point of similarity: the two parts of the world are highly dependent on raw materials for export and have a high level of exposure to international shocks. The level of exposure of the economy to international shocks is synonymous with the degree of openness of the national economy to the world economy, to international trade in goods and services as well as the volume of inflows or outflows of capital. However, with containment, global activity has fallen sharply, and so has the demand for these raw materials. This had repercussions on the growth of these countries, but also on their prospects.

For example, for Burundi, like many other developing countries, its economy is relatively closed.

Indeed, the sum of imports and exports in relation to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) amounts to 38% (in 2018), i.e. 2% below the minimum threshold of 40%. However, this ratio hides an important reality: by isolating imports of foodstuffs from other goods and services, we note that they represent no less than 17% of total imports, i.e. 2% above the 15% threshold. . Consequently, any event that disrupts the international market for agricultural raw materials will necessarily have an impact on the Burundian economy. And this is valid for all economies similar to that of Burundi.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

Covid-19 has shown how important it is to understand the economic effects of pandemics in order to analyze the policies to be implemented to mitigate their consequences, both health and economic. This pandemic has affected all parts of the world, but its socio-economic impact has been very different from region to region and country to country. This provides information on the existence of profound differences between different economies in terms of resilience to extreme events.

Countries should draw lessons from this crisis to highlight industrial, monetary, social and other policies, which have worked and made economies resilient and which have failed. This ambitious goal requires re-examining not only the types of responses made during the initial and middle phases of the pandemic, but also the structural features that have shaped those responses and will continue to shape them in the future.

This ambitious goal requires re-examining not only the types of responses made during the initial and middle phases of the pandemic, but also the structural features that have shaped those responses and will continue to shape them in the future.

**II. War in Ukraine: from one crisis to another**

On February 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. This is a war involving two great countries. Economically speaking, a "large country" is a country that can influence the prices on the world market of the products it exports and/or imports.

**II.1. Characteristics of the two countries in conflict**

For 20 years, both Russia and Ukraine have been among those countries that have invested heavily in agricultural production. They produce so much that they are able to release substantial export surpluses and thus feed world markets.

Russia is the world's 13th largest economy in terms of GDP. It benefits from the presence of many natural resources on its territory, in particular gas and oil, of which it holds respectively 17 and 7% of the world's reserves. The export of this wealth is therefore a major challenge. Depending on the year, Russia is still the 1st or 2nd world exporter of hydrocarbons. It is the world's leading exporter of natural gas (20% of the total in 2019), the world's second largest oil exporter (11%) and the world's third largest coal exporter (15%) (IEA, 2022). It also ranks first in the world for exports of nitrogen fertilizers, second for those of potash fertilizers and third for those of phosphorus fertilizers (FAO, 2022), and it has been origin of more than 15% of world fertilizer exports in 2020 (UNCTAD, 2022) Vi. It is one of the leading suppliers of metals, in particular palladium, nickel and aluminium. It supplies about 40% of European gas. It has also been the world's largest wheat producer since 2018 (Ukraine is fifth).

For its part, Ukraine, the 61st largest economy in the world in terms of GDP, is a State with an area of 603,550 km2 (Crimea included), which makes it the 2nd largest country in Europe after Russia. , with which it shares its largest border (2000 km) 2. Since 1954, when then-Russian President Nikita Khrushchev offered Crimea to Ukraine

In addition to Russia, Ukraine shares its borders with seven neighboring countries: to the west, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania (all four EU members) and Moldova; to the north, Belarus and to the east.

To celebrate the 300th anniversary of the union between the two countries, Ukraine becomes the most populous Soviet Republic after Russia and it occupies a central place in the economy of the USSR thanks to its agricultural production and its mines steel and iron. With a flat relief, Ukraine has many pastures and flat lands which have always been dedicated to intensive agricultural production: more than 70% of the country's surface area is agricultural land. These arable lands are very fertile thanks to a "belt of black soil" very rich in humus which covers a large part of the territory. Ukraine is thus among the largest cereal producers in the world (wheat, barley, rye, oats). It represents in market share on the international scene 10 to 12% of wheat, 15 to 20% of corn (it is the world's largest producer), 20 to 25% of barley and rapeseed, as well as 50% to 60% of world exports of sunflower oil and meal.

Ukraine is also rich in mining (iron, magnesium, manganese, etc.) and energy (coal, natural gas, oil) resources. Most of the important deposits are in the east of the country, in a region called the Donbass, as well as in Crimea.

Together, Russia and Ukraine are major players in the energy, food and fertilizer sectors. For maize, if the combined maize production of the two countries is 4%, we note that, with regard to exports, the contribution of Ukraine and Russia is much greater, with 20% of world exports corn in 2021.

They are also among the main producers and exporters of sunflower oil. In 2020, sunflower oil exports from Ukraine accounted for 40% of global exports, compared to 18% for Russia.

**Graph 2: The 10 main wheat exporters in the world in 2020 (in %)**

Poland: 2.32; Lithuania: 2.52; Argentina: 4.17; Germany: 4.32; Australia; 5.21; Ukraine: 8.97; France: 9.26; USA: 13.70; Canada; 13.90; Russia; 19.50

Even if it is not the leading producer of wheat, Russia represents nearly 20% of exports of this commodity and is thus the leading exporter worldwide in 2020. Russia and Ukraine alone represent 28, 47% of world wheat exports in 2020.

**Graph 3: Shares of certain exports from Russia and Ukraine in 2020 (in %)**

This means that the two countries are in fact the breadbasket of the world for wheat and corn, but also many other agricultural and non-agricultural products. It is therefore not surprising that international markets have overreacted to this war given that these products have been difficult to get out of Ukraine since the beginning of the crisis and that Russia is hit with various sanctions.

**II.2. Economic consequences of the war in Ukraine**

**II.2.1. Consequences for the global economy**

According to the OECD (2022) vii, even if the direct weight of Russia and Ukraine in the world economy and finance is modest, the two countries are essential suppliers of certain products in the commodity markets ( cereals, fertilizers, oil, gas, metals, rare gases, uranium, etc. as we have just underlined above.

As a reminder, between them, they represent approximately 30% of world wheat exports, 15% for corn, 20% for mineral fertilizers and natural gas, and 11% for oil.

In addition, global supply chains are dependent on Russian and Ukrainian exports of rare metals and gases. The prices of many of these commodities rose sharply after the outbreak of war, even in the absence of an immediate significant drop in production or export volumes. With globalization and the growing interdependence of economies, the entire planet suffers the effects of a conflict affecting a particular region. Thus, the most immediate economic impact of the Ukrainian crisis has been a sharp rise in commodity prices.

For example, grain shipments through Black Sea ports have already been halted, which could have disastrous consequences for food security in poor countries. Also, negative growth rates and high inflation rates are expected.

Based on estimates based on the World Trade Model of the WTO and which take into account

1) the direct impact of the war in Ukraine, including the destruction of infrastructure and increased trade costs;

2) the impact of sanctions targeting Russia, including the exclusion of Russian banks from the SWIFT settlement system; and,

3) decline in aggregate demand in the rest of the world due to loss of business/consumer confidence and growing uncertainty, the following results emerge: (1) world GDP at market exchange rate is expected to increase by 2.8% in 2022, down 1.3 percentage points from the previous forecast of 4.1%; (2) growth should reach 3.2% in 2023, i.e. a level close to the average rate of 3.0% between 2010 and 2019.

The IMF, in its April 2022 update of the World Economic Outlook, revised down its forecast for global growth, which is expected to fall 0.8 percentage points from the January forecast for set at 3.6% in 2022, as the economic impact of the war in Ukraine reverberates globally in the commodity market, trade and trade links. The same IMF (March 15, 2022) identified three main channels through which the war in Ukraine and the international sanctions against Russia will affect the world economy and, to varying degrees depending on the main geographical areas: (1) first, rising commodity prices, such as food and energy, will drive up inflation further, which will erode the value of incomes and weigh on demand;

(2) Second, neighboring countries in particular will face disruption in trade, supply chains and remittances, as well as a historic increase in refugee flows; and (3) finally, the loss of business confidence and heightened investor uncertainty will weigh on asset prices, which will tighten financial conditions and possibly trigger capital outflows from emerging markets. It shows that since the beginning of this conflict, the prices of energy, cereals and metals have jumped, which announces an imminent increase in inflation rates, affecting in particular agricultural products.

Graph 4: Rise in the prices of certain products following the war in Ukraine (analysis from 2013 to 2022)

**II.2.2 Impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on African economies Of the 54 countries in Africa, 11 are major energy exporters and the others are net energy importers, or near self-sufficient.**

Thus, we can consider that in general, the continent is a net importer of agricultural and energy raw materials. It could thus be strongly impacted economically by the crisis in Ukraine, especially if it persists. With regard to African agriculture, the impact of the war will ripple through the global agricultural commodity price chain in the short term.

“Inflation is the main risk of the war in Ukraine. (…) For African countries that are net importers of food, there will be a direct consequence on food security and consumer prices”, warns Aroni Chaudhuri, economist at Coface. Thus, the war in Ukraine has highlighted Africa's chronic dependence on food imports. For Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the IMF, "The war in Ukraine means hunger in Africa."

In its Report, the United Nations revealed the "high" degree of dependence of African countries in terms of importing wheat from the Russian Federation and Ukraine. According to this Report, between 2018 and 2020, Africa imported USD 3.7 billion worth of wheat (32% of total African wheat imports) from the Russian Federation and USD 1.4 billion from Ukraine (12% of total African wheat imports).

According to UNCTAD data based on the period 2018-2020, no less than 25 African countries import more than a third of their wheat from the two countries and 15 of them import more than half. Among the main importing countries are Egypt, which alone accounts for almost half of these imports, followed by Sudan, Nigeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Kenya, from South Africa and Ethiopia. Benin imports 100% Russian wheat, and Somalia gets 70% from Ukraine and 30% from Russia. Others like Sudan (75%), DR Congo (68%) and Senegal (65%) also rely heavily on these two sources of supply. If the majority of countries are turned towards Russia, which supplies the continent up to 32% (compared to 12% for Ukraine), Tunisia, Libya and Mauritania depend largely on Ukrainian wheat (30 to 50 % of their imports).

The same report indicates that opportunities to substitute imports from the Russian Federation and Ukraine with intra-African trade are limited, as the regional supply of wheat is relatively low and many parts of the continent lack transport infrastructure and efficient storage capacities.

This rapidly changing situation is alarming for developing countries, and in particular for African and least developed countries, some of which are particularly exposed to the war in Ukraine and its effects on trade costs, commodity prices commodities and financial markets.

LDCs are particularly exposed to a food and energy crisis. Since 38 of the 45 countries in sub-Saharan Africa are net importers of oil, a rise in world prices translates for these countries into higher import bills, transport costs and prices for most goods. For the populations of LDCs, this can lead to lower purchasing power, lower growth and ultimately increased poverty.

In addition, Russia and Ukraine together produce more than half of the sunflower oil, around 30% of the wheat and barley and 17% of the corn globally. Much of this food ends up on the plates of poor countries after passing through complex global supply chains. According to UNCTAD, between 2018 and 2020, Africa imported 45% of its wheat from these two countries. One in two African countries imports more than a third of its wheat from Russia, and LDCs such as Lao PDR, Benin and Somalia buy more than 90% of their wheat from these two countries.

Following Covid 19, food prices increased by 9% between 2019 and 2020 in sub-Saharan Africa, and by an additional 2% last October. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warns that prices are likely to rise even faster if imports from Russia and Ukraine continue to be disrupted or if the prices of imported products increase due to the rise in oil prices. In March 2022, the FAO Food Price Index, which tracks the monthly change in international prices of the world's most commonly traded food products, reached its highest level since its inception in 1990, at 159.3 points, more than 34% more than its value a year earlier. This increase was mainly attributable to the explosion in the prices of cereals (+37%) and vegetable oils (+56%), in particular sunflower oil. In the days preceding Russia's decision to invade Ukraine, the prices of many food products skyrocketed internationally: +54% for wheat, +31% for corn, +20% for soy and which is accentuated between February and March 2022 (+20% for wheat and +19% for corn in one month).

The World Food Program (WFP) reports that it is already purchasing its supplies 30% more expensive than in 2019. It indicates that the number of hungry people has increased from 27 to 44 million since 2019 and that Another 232 million people remain at risk.

**II.2.3 Impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the economies of the Arab world**

For many Egyptians, Lebanese, Yemenis or other Arabs, the Ukrainian war means that there will be less bread on the family table, these countries mainly import Russian and Ukrainian wheat. However, warns the Middle East Institute, “if the war disrupts the supply of wheat” to the Arab world, which is highly dependent on food imports, “the crisis could trigger new demonstrations and instability in several countries”. The possibility of an uprising is frightening in the Arab world where the so-called “Arab Spring” movements have swept away regimes. For example, in Sudan, Omar el-Béchir was overthrown under the pressure of a popular revolt born of the tripling of the price of bread.

In the Maghreb, wheat is the basis of couscous like bread. For example, Morocco increased flour subsidies to €350 million and suspended wheat customs duties. Algeria, Africa's second-largest wheat consumer and fifth-largest cereal importer, has announced that it has only six months of reserves. Egypt is the world's largest wheat importer and Russia's second-largest customer with 3.5 million tons purchased through mid-January 2022, according to S&P Global. And even if in recent years Cairo has started to buy elsewhere, notably in Romania, in 2021, 50% of its wheat imports still came from Russia and 30% from Ukraine. Tunisia is highly dependent on cereals, importing 84% of its soft wheat needs, around 40% for durum wheat and 50% for barley. Ukraine was until then a privileged supplier of Tunisia with Canada and the European Union. The country suffers from a chronic lack of storage capacity, limited to 3 months, and therefore must have a reliable and regular source of supply.

This shows how much these two countries, Russia and Ukraine, constitute a very important wheat import market for the countries of the Arab world. The disruption of these two markets therefore does not fail to cause a stir in the Arab world.

**Conclusion**

The crisis caused by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict has had a severe and negative impact on the world wheat market given the importance of exports from both countries.

Also, even if these countries do not have a heavy weight in world production, few countries will escape the effects of this war, in particular on the raw materials market, insofar as this war opposes two countries which are among the main suppliers to quite a few countries, in terms of petroleum products, aluminium, steel and other metals, cereals, fertilizers and processed products from these sectors. The uncertainties are so great today, especially since no one can say when the war will end and how it will end. We know, however, that many countries, especially in Africa and the Arab world depend heavily on imports from Russia and Ukraine for wheat, but also for corn and other products such as hydrocarbons.

Obviously, this crisis highlights the need to always diversify its supply chains and to preserve, if possible, national sovereignty in areas as sensitive as food, in particular by favoring subsistence agriculture to reduce the degree of dependence on the outside.

Also, the negative impact to the global economy and other economies from this crisis shows how intertwined the world has become through trade and global supply chains. Although the conflict is local and its immediate effects are regional, its impact is global and the responses to deal with it must be as well. Thus, in today's interconnected world, developing countries need support to make their economies more resilient to future crises, especially those related to food security. With Ukraine missing the corn and sunflower planting season, this will have further implications for global food supply.

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