

The H.R. 7311 Act represents a Collective Crossroads for African International Relations
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In a nutshell, the purpose of the H.R. 7311 Act is to "counteract harmful Russian activities in Africa," however, the concept undermines African nations, intelligence, independence, and sovereignty. The Act seeks to prohibit business transactions between the Russian Federation and African nations, and their officials are held accountable for assisting subversive influence and operations. The House of Representatives passed the bill, which is expected to become law following Senate approval and the President's signature.

The concept of the H.R. 7311 Act brings to mind the Berlin Conference that took place in 1884 and 1885. European imperialists discussed splitting Africa and setting up policies favouring colonialists so they could acquire their fair share of Africa's natural and human resources. The Conference codified and delineated their claims to African territory at the expense of the African people without their jurisdiction or consent.

It is imperative that I bring this to the attention of my fellow Africans: the H.R. 7311 act represents a severe threat to the African way of life and threatens our very existence. The majority of Africans either were unaware of the Act or did not recognise the risk, so they continued with business as usual. I am aware that during the infamous "Balkanisation" of the Berlin Conference, colonists utilised the lack of awareness among Africans to divide and conquer Africa. Despite the contemporary information era, no African country has challenged H.R. 7311 Act except South Africa's government. If we continue to be complacent, they may return physically, in addition to virtual colonisation.

The gist of this Act is to dictate to Africa whom it can and cannot do business with and to stipulate that a select few powers must sanction Africa's choices of friend and foe. Former Nigerian leader General Murtala Mohammed warned that "for too long, it has been considered that Africa requires foreign "experts" to tell us who our friends and opponents are." Further, he stated that the time has come to make it evident that we understand our interests and how to safeguard them and that we are capable of resolving African problems without "arrogant lessons on ideological threats" that are frequently unfounded in reality.

The existence of such a fact demonstrates that Africa is still governed by colonial forces or some other form of guardianship. The positive aspect of the HR 7311 Act is that it does not target specific nations but rather recognises Africa as a bloc. Hence, it is natural for the Africa Union to respond collectively against such a violent and subversive Act decisively. In a similar way, Western countries have been putting sanctions on African countries for many years, and they still do.

On record, numerous African nations were and continue to be victimised by unlawful sanctions. Western countries impose economic sanctions against Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Central African Republic, DRC, Mali, Libya, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, and Zimbabwe at the top of their list of African nations. Some sanctions are harsher than others; the severity indicates the degree to which the country opposes Western interests.

In reality, Africa has never played a significant role in defining the global order. Still, the global world order is shaped by Western Europeans and the United States. The Russians and the rapidly emerging economic power China are becoming players in the global power balance to a lesser extent.

In light of this, how could Africa be held accountable for the proxy war in Ukraine? In those difficult times, neither the EU nor the United States stood with or for us (Africa). Rather, they were colonial masters; why have we suddenly become significant players? How did Africa become significant to the games of two or three elephants? Africa has suffered and continues to suffer from proxy wars, including Angola, Ethiopia, the DRC, Mozambique, and others.

The majority of African states remained silent as other African nations were subjected to unjust economic and political sanctions by Western powers. 'What goes around comes around,' true African patriots might wonder as Zimbabweans suffer under unfair sanctions while their neighbours dance with imperial force.

The Western nations' sanctions have nothing to do with care for humanity; but rather a desire for continuous superiority. Sanctions are being imposed on Eritrea because of the country's attempts at self-sufficiency, which have angered Western powers who otherwise care little for the local population. The world observed their "humanity" in Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, and Somalia to a significant degree.

The sanction regime of western countries is more dangerous than colonialism because it can dominate all financial institutions to benefit a single party's economic interests. Thus, Africa should revise to avoid being a victim of the future sanction regime, which has been unjust in many ways. The African continent as a collective has to formulate and implement a "counter-sanction strategy" in the context of international affairs.

Collective defence indicates that an attack against one AU member state should be treated as an attack against all members. This means that Africa's foreign policy may need to be revisited. Similarly, if a one-member country is sanctioned, the others should follow suit. Perpetual economic sanctions against African states serve to "belittle and subdue" their sovereignty to the benefit of western empires.

Neocolonialism and virtual colonialism are right at our front door. The persistent hammering of the drum of economic sanctions is a menacing technique and a symptom of a weapon designed to stifle the legitimate concerns of Africans.

The most critical question Africans should ask is why they still need food aid when they have so much farmable land. The first stage for Africa is raising their utilisation of locally produced grains and reducing dependence on the consumption of grains imported from outside. Numerous African-adapted crops are probably more productive, nutrient-dense, and climate-resilient.

Africa is currently experiencing a food crisis due to global political instability and the continent's inability to produce enough grain to meet its own needs. This has been caused not only by speculation but also by supply and logistics concerns. The amount of grain that is presently accessible on global markets has reportedly dropped to levels that are at their lowest point in recorded history.

It was not anticipated that Africa would suffer to such a great extent. Still, the challenges brought about by the removal of the major producers, Russia and Ukraine, from the global market have forced prices to rise even more due to speculation. Food has evolved into a tactical instrument for the implementation of soft power.

How can Africa achieve economic self-sufficiency and political independence to protect itself from further virtual colonisation and possible national and regional sanctions? What lessons may Africa draw from the Western nations' current political, economic, and ideological predicament vis-à-vis Russia, China, and the rest of the world?

How does Africa fit into a world where a new global system must be established, or the status quo must be confirmed? What lessons can Africa learn from the crisis between Russia and Ukraine? As the war between Russia and Ukraine shows, virtual colonialism is a real phenomenon. This is because countries must cooperate with or oppose the huge elephants (powerful nations, the USA., EU, Russia and China). In the absence thereof, governments face myriad risks, including those to their security and economy.

For Africa to successfully assert its position in the world, its leaders must be able to contemplate, observe, and comprehend the global political alignment as it currently stands. In any other way, thought affects not only perceiving but also has no beneficial influence on perceiving.

This is how I argue against the fluidity of the old paradigm idea of "supremacy and subservience," which is a vision that has been stable throughout the colonial era and contains an impassable wall of subjugation. The rationale for this approach rests squarely on the backs of those with expertise in perceptual fields, and also, Africa should stand on its own feet.

Sejfe Tadelle Kidane (PhD) is a senior research fellow at the University of Johannesburg's Institute of Pan African Thought and Conversation (IPATC).