

# AFRICA

## INTEREST GROUP NEWSLETTER

### About AIG and This Newsletter

The ASIL Africa Interest Group (AIG) is committed to examining and organizing events that foster dialogue on contemporary legal and socio-political issues that directly impact the character and well being of African states and African people on the Continent and in the Diaspora. This newsletter is a place for African citizens, academics, scholars, workers, and allies to access recent developments in the field of international law, along with thought-provoking analysis and opinion pieces.

*The Africa Interest Group newsletter also wants to hear from you and is inviting contribution pieces for our forthcoming newsletter in Spring 2025! If you would like to contribute to the forthcoming issue, please contact our editors, Patricia Allen ([patricia603@gmail.com](mailto:patricia603@gmail.com)) and Boluwatife Sadiq ([bolusadiq@gmail.com](mailto:bolusadiq@gmail.com)).*

### The 2024 Global Year of Elections: An African Perspective

#### Introduction

2024 was the biggest election year in Africa's history. Voters from up to 18 African countries<sup>1</sup> went to the polls to elect national leaders.<sup>2</sup> While elections are the hallmark of democracy and good governance in any country, credible and peaceful elections on the African continent are few and far in between. The period leading up to and following elections is characteristically marred with allegations of voter

<sup>1</sup> Some of the countries that went to the polls in 2024 included Ghana, Chad, Namibia, Senegal, Mauritius, Botswana, Mozambique, Tunisia, Algeria, Rwanda, Mauritania, Madagascar, South Africa, Togo, Comoros, and Somaliland. Available at <https://african-arguments.org/2024/12/africa-elections-all-upcoming-votes/> (accessed 5 January 2025).

<sup>2</sup> Stears, 'African Election Tracker'. Available at <https://www.stears.co/open-data/elections/election-context-maps/> (accessed 23 December 2024).

—continued on page 2

### INSIDE THIS EDITION

About AIG and This Newsletter	1
The 2024 Global Year of Elections: An African Perspective	1
Member Achievements	3

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## The 2024 Global Year of Elections —continued from page 1

intimidation,<sup>3</sup> rigging,<sup>4</sup> internet blackouts,<sup>5</sup> and arrests of opposition candidates.<sup>6</sup> In a 2023 survey of 54,000 Africans from 38 countries, only 39.2% of the respondents indicated that they were “somewhat satisfied” or “very satisfied” with democracy — a 10.4% decrease from 2022.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, there have been 9 successful coups and 7 failed coups since 2020.<sup>8</sup>

The next section provides an overview of some of these recent elections from the African continent.

### Mozambique post-election violence

On 24th October, 2024, the National Election Commission (CNE) declared Mozambican ruling party candidate Daniel Chapo of the Frelimo party the winner of the Presidential election.<sup>9</sup>

<https://amaniafrica-et.org/emergency-session-on-the-post-election-violence-in-mozambique/>

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3 Africanews, ‘Namibia re-elects incumbent president as opposition claims fraud.’ Available at <https://www.africanews.com/2019/12/01/namibia-re-elects-incumbent-president-as-opposition-claims-fraud/> (accessed 5 January 2024).

4 Al Jazeera, ‘Mozambique ruling party declared winner of election amid fraud claims’ 24 October 2024. Available at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/10/24/mozambique-ruling-party-declared-winner-of-election-amid-fraud-claims> (accessed 23 December 2024).

5 AP, ‘Internet ‘blackout’ in Uganda on eve of tense election.’ Available at <https://apnews.com/article/kampala-elections-coronavirus-pandemic-uganda-united-states-65942284f4e73dbf120ace23775baae4> (accessed 5 January 2024).

6 The Guardian, ‘Rwanda opposition leader barred from standing against president.’ Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jun/07/rwanda-opposition-leader-diane-rwigara-barrred-from-standing-against-president> (accessed 5 January 2024).

7 Stears (n 2 above).

8 Megan Duzor and Brian Williamson, *By the Numbers: Coups in Africa*, VOA News (Oct. 3, 2023), <https://projects.voanews.com/african-coups/#:~:text=Of%20492%20attempted%20or%20successful,Powell%20and%20Thyne's%20data%20show>.

9 Al Jazeera (n 4 above).

### Namibia

In December 2024, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah became Namibia’s first female president. Nandi-Ndaitwah is a member of the governing South West Africa People’s Organisation (SWAPO), which has been in power since the country’s independence in 1990.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5yx0r14jrmo>

### Ghana

Opposition candidate and former President John Mahama has made a comeback after winning by a historic margin at 56.6% of the vote. President Mahama last served as president in 2017. Ghana also elected its first female Vice-President, Jane Naana Opoku Agyemang.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cqjzv9k8zjjo>

### Rwanda

In July 2024, incumbent Paul Kagame of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) won his fourth term as president after an expected landslide victory with more than 99 percent of the vote. This election extends his three decade long time as president.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cx0247xx585o>

### Who’s Next?

There are a number of elections slated for 2025 with a number of African countries heading to the polls including Togo, Gabon, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Tanzania, Central African Republic (CAR), Seychelles, Burundi, Malawi.<sup>10</sup>

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10 The African Exponent, ‘Key African Elections 2025: Vital facts and dates to know,’ 04 January 2025. Available at <https://www.africanexponent.com/key-african-elections-2025-vital-facts-and-dates-to-know/> (accessed 5 January 2024).



## Member Achievements

### The Honorary Member Award 2025

ASIL has announced James Gathii as the recipient of the **2025 Honorary Member Award**. The award is conferred upon individuals who have made distinguished contributions in the field of international law. James Gathii is the Wing-Tat Lee Chair in International Law and professor of Law at Loyola University of Chicago School of Law.

### Trial Lawyer of the Year Award 2024

Professor Matiangai Sirleaf received the **2024 Trial Lawyer of the Year Award** by Public Service, a non-profit legal advocacy organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. Professor Sirleaf, the Nathan Patz Professor of Law at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law is an interdisciplinary international scholar, justice seeker, and human rights advocate.

### Nigeria nominates Olufemi Elias as candidate for ICJ judge

Olufemi Elias has been **nominated** as a candidate for the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Judge. If elected, Elias would be the fourth Nigerian in this role, the last overseeing the ICJ in 1994. Elias is currently serving as judge ad hoc for the ICJ, which is a judge chosen by a State party to a case before the ICJ where there is no judge of its nationality on the bench.

## PLEASE SEND US YOUR NEWS AND EVENTS

The AIG newsletter is published twice a year. The Summer-Fall volume will be released in November 2025. The newsletter is a venue for sharing information regarding Africa in International Law. Your contribution to the newsletter is crucial to its sustenance, success and quality. If you would like to contribute to the forthcoming issue, please contact our editors Patricia Allen ([patricia603@gmail.com](mailto:patricia603@gmail.com)) and Boluwatife Sadiq ([bolusadiq@gmail.com](mailto:bolusadiq@gmail.com)).