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FWS NEWS & EVENTS

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EDITORIAL

Anticipating Change and the Responsibility to Prepare

The international environment entering 2027 is marked by profound transformations. Changes in the balance of global power, continuing conflicts, economic uncertainty, technological advances, and pressures on international institutions are reshaping the conditions in which governments and societies must make their decisions.

These developments raise questions that extend beyond the immediate events dominating public attention. How can societies recognize emerging risks before they become crises? How can institutions prepare for changes whose consequences remain uncertain? And how can African countries strengthen their capacity to influence developments that will affect their future?

Strategic foresight does not consist of predicting events with certainty. Its responsibility is to examine the forces already at work, identify possible trajectories, test assumptions, and help decision-makers prepare for different outcomes.

For Africa, this responsibility is particularly consequential. The continent's demographic transformation, expanding economic ambitions, natural resources, technological possibilities, and evolving international partnerships create significant opportunities. Yet the ability to benefit from them will depend upon the quality of public decisions, productive capabilities, institutional effectiveness, and cooperation among African societies.

Understanding the future must therefore be connected to the responsibility to prepare for it.

In this edition, FWS introduces its forthcoming inaugural FWS Global Strategic Outlook 2027, a comprehensive examination of Africa, global power, and the forces shaping the year ahead. The publication brings together international analysis, strategic judgments, alternative scenarios, and assessments of risks and opportunities.

Beyond this featured work, FWS News & Events continues to examine significant developments and their wider implications for societies and institutions.

Our purpose remains unchanged: to encourage informed understanding, independent judgment, and responsible action.

The future cannot be known in every detail. But the capacity to anticipate, prepare, and make deliberate choices can be strengthened.

That is a responsibility worth undertaking.

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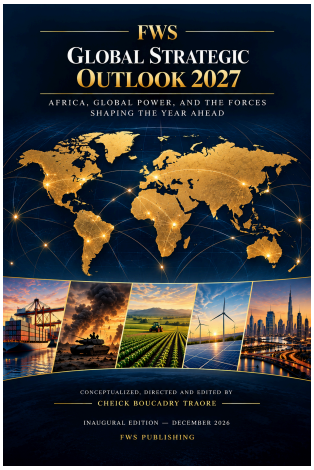
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PUBLICATION IN FOCUS

FWS GLOBAL STRATEGIC OUTLOOK 2027

Africa, Global Power, and the Forces Shaping the Year Ahead

Conceptualized, Directed and Edited by Cheick Boucadry Traore
Inaugural Edition — Forthcoming December 15, 2026



As the world approaches 2027, fundamental changes in international power, economic relations, security, technology, and institutional governance are creating new challenges and opportunities for societies across the globe.

FWS Global Strategic Outlook 2027 examines these transformations through a comprehensive international perspective, with particular attention to Africa's strategic position and the choices confronting its governments, institutions, enterprises, and rising generations.

At the heart of the work is a central proposition: Africa's future will not be determined by global developments alone, but by the capacity of African societies and institutions to anticipate change, exercise independent judgment, and translate strategic understanding into purposeful action.

Organized into six parts and 24 chapters, the Outlook examines global power, regional dynamics, Africa's strategic choices, economic and technological transformations, and international cooperation. Its concluding assessment offers ten strategic judgments and possible scenarios for 2027.

Beyond an assessment of the year ahead, the Outlook invites governments, institutions, researchers, and policymakers to consider how today's decisions may influence longer-term trajectories. It encourages strategic thinking that connects international developments with Africa's own priorities, institutional responsibilities, and capacity to shape its future.

As the inaugural edition of an annual FWS publication, the Outlook also seeks to establish a continuing framework for examining global change, reassessing strategic assumptions, and identifying emerging challenges. Its ambition is to contribute to a culture of anticipation in which informed analysis supports independent judgment, institutional preparedness, and purposeful action.

Why it matters for FWS

Strategic foresight connects research and analysis to the responsibilities of institutions and societies. For FWS, understanding global change is inseparable from strengthening Africa's capacity to make informed choices, develop productive capabilities, and participate more effectively in shaping its future.

Questions for Reflection

- How will changing global power relationships affect Africa's strategic choices?
- Which risks and opportunities should African institutions prepare for in 2027?
- How can strategic foresight strengthen independent decision-making and long-term development?

Discover the forthcoming Outlook on the FWS website.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Russia–Africa Summit: Debt, Sovereignty, and a Changing International Order

At the third Russia–Africa Summit, held in Moscow on October 28–29, President Vladimir Putin called for stronger economic, diplomatic, technological, and security cooperation with African countries. Advocating a more multipolar international order, he criticized Western powers for what he described as their continued exploitation of African resources and the use of debt arrangements that constrain the continent's development.

These statements coincided with renewed concerns about the international debt burden. The World Bank's International Debt Report 2026, released on November 5, revealed that developing countries' external debt reached a record $9.4 trillion in 2025, an increase of 5.5% over the previous year.

Countries eligible for concessional financing from the World Bank's International Development Association, including many African nations, paid an average interest rate of 8.2% on new private-creditor commitments, the highest since 1989. Across low- and middle-income countries, debt-service payments reached approximately $1.4 trillion in 2025, placing continuing pressure on public finances and development investment.

Although these figures concern developing countries worldwide and do not independently establish the political motivations behind lending practices, they illustrate the magnitude of the financing challenges confronting many African economies.

The Russia–Africa Summit also produced commitments concerning trade, energy, agriculture, technology, and institutional cooperation. Its broader significance lies in the expanding range of international partnerships available to African countries—and the question of how these relationships can strengthen their ability to finance and direct their own development.

Russia–Africa Summit >

RT / Putin’s remarks >

World Bank / Debt figures >

Why it matters for FWS

The relationship between external partnerships, debt sustainability, and African sovereignty lies at the heart of FWS's strategic reflections.

Africa's challenge is not simply to diversify its international partners or secure additional financing. It is to ensure that financial agreements, investment, and technological cooperation contribute to productive capacity, institutional independence, and lasting economic benefits.

These questions are examined in the FWS publication Africa Is Not a Diplomatic Trophy: The Summit Industry, External Powers, and the Question of African Strategic Autonomy.

The central issue remains whether international engagements strengthen Africa's ability to determine its own priorities and translate partnerships into measurable development outcomes.

FWS / Africa Is Not a Diplomatic Trophy >

DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

African Development Bank: Mobilizing the Diaspora for Africa's Economic Transformation

On November 9, 2026, the African Development Bank Group scheduled a high-level presentation of its Diaspora Initiative in Paris, bringing together policymakers, investors, entrepreneurs, financial institutions, and representatives of African communities abroad. Under the leadership of Bank President Dr. Sidi Ould Tah, the initiative aims to recognize the African diaspora as a strategic partner in the continent's economic transformation.

Aligned with the Bank's New African Financial Architecture for Development (NAFAD) and its broader strategic priorities, the initiative seeks to move beyond traditional remittances by mobilizing diaspora savings, professional expertise, entrepreneurial experience, and international networks for productive investment, enterprise development, and knowledge transfer.

Building on the Brazzaville Appeal adopted during the Bank's May 2026 Annual Meetings, the initiative reflects a wider effort to mobilize African resources in response to the continent's substantial development financing needs. The African Development Bank estimates that Africa faces an annual financing gap exceeding $400 billion, despite possessing significant domestic savings and receiving substantial financial transfers from its diaspora.

In Brazzaville, civil society groups, philanthropic organisations and diaspora representatives took on responsibilities of their own. They pledged to explain financing opportunities in their communities and to track what development projects deliver there. That gives local associations a role at both ends of an investment: identifying a need before money is raised and asking afterwards who benefited.

The Paris agenda takes up the next question: which projects are ready for investment, and which institutions can bring entrepreneurs, savers and lenders together?

AfDB / Diaspora Initiative >

AfDB / Brazzaville Appeal >

Why it matters for FWS

Africa's diaspora represents an important reservoir of financial resources, professional knowledge, entrepreneurial capabilities, and international relationships. Its contribution to development should extend beyond household support and individual investment to include institution-building, technological advancement, enterprise creation, and productive economic transformation.

For FWS, the starting point is the choice offered to families. Money sent home for food or school fees already serves a purpose. An investment should be a separate, voluntary decision, with terms a saver can examine.

Consider a growers’ cooperative that wants to process its own fruit. A diaspora investor might help pay for the equipment, while a food technologist abroad could help the cooperative meet a buyer’s safety requirements. Before anyone commits savings, members need to know who owns the equipment, who bears the loss if a buyer withdraws, and how growers will be paid. A year later, the cooperative’s accounts should show whether more of the sale price reached the people who grew the crop. That is an outcome families at home and abroad can judge for themselves.

AFRICAN INSTITUTIONS

African Courts Strengthen Judicial Cooperation and Access to Justice

The African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights opened its 83rd Ordinary Session on November 9, 2026, in Arusha, Tanzania, with proceedings scheduled to continue until December 4. The session includes the examination of pending applications and deliberations on matters concerning the protection of human and peoples' rights across the continent.

A major development is the third Tripartite Judicial Dialogue, held on November 9–10, bringing together the African Court, the East African Court of Justice, and the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice. Under the theme “Strengthening Institutional Cooperation in Africa,” the participating courts are examining ways to improve judicial collaboration, promote the implementation of court decisions, exchange legal expertise, and strengthen access to African jurisprudence.

The discussions also address the development of the African Jurisprudence Database (AJUDATA), environmental rights, and climate justice. They coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the African Court, providing an opportunity to reflect on its achievements, institutional challenges, and future responsibilities in protecting fundamental rights.

The session programme also gives the public a way to follow the Court’s work. The Court scheduled four decisions for a public sitting on 13 November, in cases concerning Burkina Faso, Mali, Benin and Malawi. Among them is Babarou Bocoum v. Republic of Mali. The session notice links directly to the case records and gives viewers outside Arusha a way to follow the sitting online.

The initiative reflects a broader effort to strengthen African judicial cooperation and reinforce the capacity of continental and regional institutions to administer justice through credible and effective legal mechanisms.

African Court / 83rd Session >

African Court / Tripartite Dialogue >

Why it matters for FWS

African national courts must remain the sole institutions responsible for investigating and prosecuting crimes committed within their territories. At the same time, African leaders must be the guarantors and foremost defenders of human rights, maintaining strong legal protections for individual rights under the rule of law.

For a person who has won a judgment, the next question is often the hardest: who will carry it out? If a court awards compensation, a family needs to know which authority must pay, when payment is due and where to turn if it never arrives. A public record of the order and the steps taken to fulfil it would allow the family, its lawyer and elected representatives to ask the same authorities for an answer.

Accessible case records also matter before a hearing. A lawyer preparing a claim can use AJUDATA to locate a judgment, read the court’s reasoning and decide whether it applies to the client’s circumstances. For a national judge faced with a similar question, access to the full decision makes it possible to explain where the cases differ. That exchange builds an African body of law that practitioners can use in their own courts.

We must continue to support African solutions to African problems, without any sense of cultural or intellectual inferiority.

INSIDE FWS

Our Areas of Work

Famuya Wale So connects inquiry, public decision-making, the circulation of ideas, and the development of human capabilities. Five complementary areas help readers navigate this work.

Strategy & Policy

FWS examines the choices shaping societies over the long term. Its approach brings evidence, historical context, and foresight to questions of governance, economic transformation, security, technology, and the responsibilities owed to future generations.

Explore Strategy & Policy >

Research

Understanding a problem is the first step toward addressing it. FWS's research agenda spans institutions, education, economies, culture, technology, and the environment, drawing on different disciplines and forms of evidence to inform responsible action.

Explore Research >

Publishing

Publishing gives ideas a wider audience and a lasting record. FWS's publishing scope includes books, research reports, policy briefs, and essays that make substantive thought accessible, encourage critical discussion, and connect African perspectives with readers worldwide.

Explore Publishing >

Dialogue & Capacity Development

FWS's program framework connects intellectual exchange with the development of skills, leadership, and institutional capability. It includes dialogue, collaborative inquiry, and capacity initiatives. Priority programs remain in development and will be announced as they are formalized.

Explore Programs & Initiatives >

Knowledge & Learning

FWS Knowledge & Learning invites readers to explore programs, knowledge classes, and a reading library. It connects the Center's ideas with opportunities to deepen understanding and support continued learning.

Explore Knowledge & Learning >

Continue the conversation

The conversation continues beyond this bulletin. We invite you to discover FWS's work, stay informed, and take part.

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We welcome your questions, your perspectives, and your interest in contributing to FWS's mission.

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