

Current Issues & Policies



THE SEJONG INSTITUTE

Foreign Affairs Outlook for 2021
No. 2020-52 (December 24, 2020)

[Series: Foreign Affairs Outlook for 2021]

Assessment of African Politics in 2020 and Outlook for 2021

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English Abstract

The number of confirmed cases and the death toll of COVID-19 in Africa were relatively fewer than in other continents. However, the spread of COVID-19 has negatively affected the political, economic, and human security of African states. Islamic extremist terrorist attacks and violence such as civil wars have been rampant in some countries. Conflicts over presidential campaigns and results have often prompted the violence. Hence, the mass migration of Africans trying to escape from civil war, political persecution, and poverty continued.

Keywords to predict the 2021 situation in Africa are: COVID-19, violence, elections, and refugees. The continued spread of COVID-19 is expected to lead to increased political oppression, economic growth stagnation, and deterioration of the public health infrastructure. Civil war and Islamic extremist terrorism are likely to continue in many states. In particular, states in regions of the Sahel and Horn of Africa are expected to be hit hard by the violence. Elections in authoritarian states are also expected to cause violent confrontations between the government and the anti-government forces. This will raise concerns over the retreat of democracy in the region. Thus, despite more strict regulations on refugee influx by the host countries, the mass migration of Africans seeking a better life is expected to continue. ♣

※ Translator's note: This is a summarized unofficial translation of the original paper which was written in Korean. All references should be made to the original paper.

※ This article is written based on the author's personal opinions and does not reflect the views of the Sejong Institute.