

# The Thinker

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SPECIAL ISSUE ON

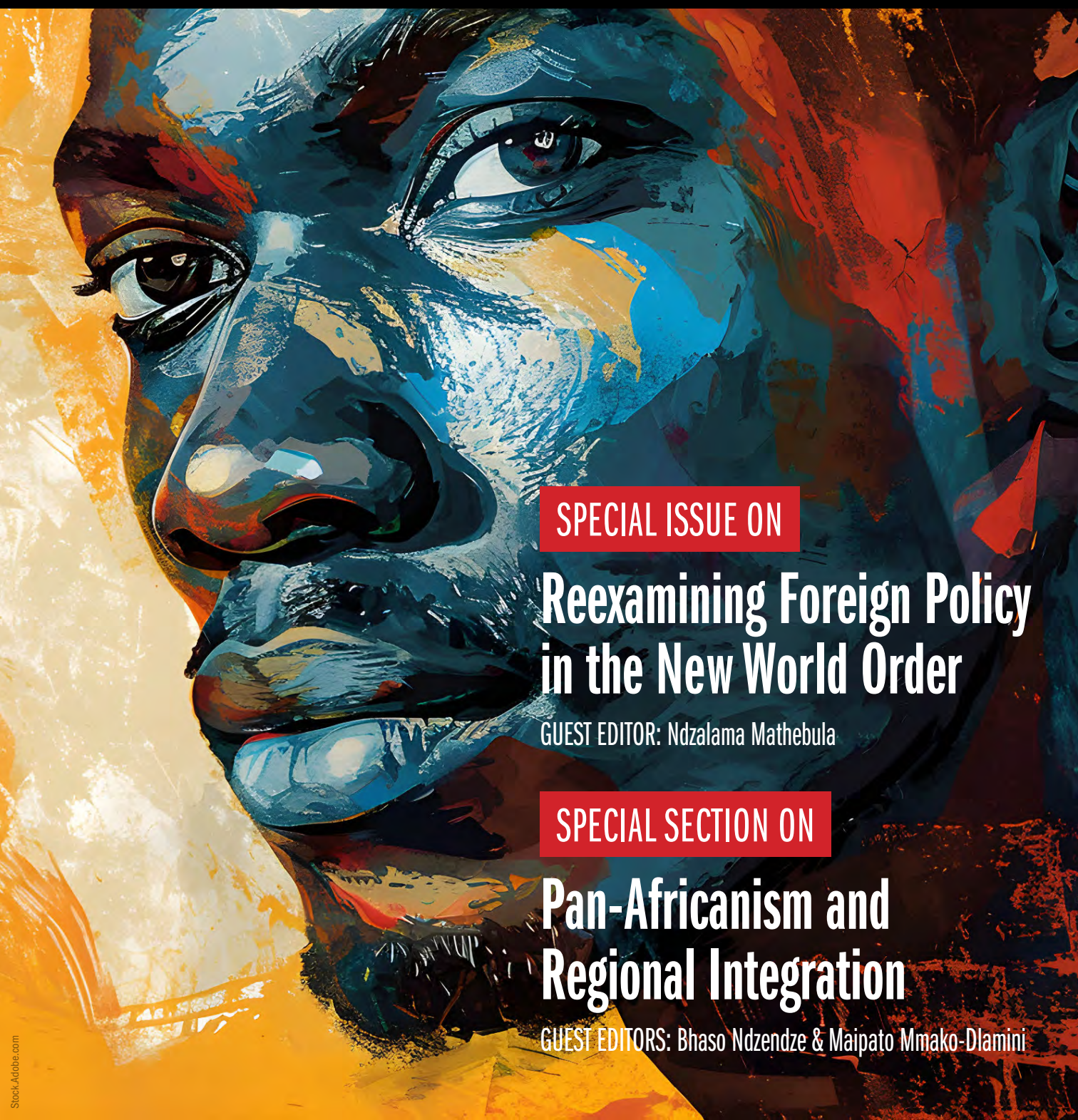
## Reexamining Foreign Policy in the New World Order

GUEST EDITOR: Ndzalama Mathebula

SPECIAL SECTION ON

## Pan-Africanism and Regional Integration

GUEST EDITORS: Bhaso Ndzendze & Maipato Mmako-Dlamini



# The Thinker

A PAN - AFRICAN QUARTERLY FOR THOUGHT LEADERS

Journal ISSN: 2075 2458

## CALL FOR PAPERS

# AFRICA

Open submissions on any aspect

For further enquiries,  
please contact the editors,  
Prof Ronit Frenkel and  
Prof Nedine Moonsamy.

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# FOREWORD



GUEST EDITOR: Ndzalama Mathebula, University of South Africa

Amid the changes in global politics, including interstate conflicts, coups, shifting alliances, new administrations, ambitions toward multipolarity, and the testing of international law, it has become apparent that states will always act in their own national interests, even at the expense of other states. Post-pandemic, numerous events have continued to confute the democratic peace theory and substantiate the view that realism always shapes a country's foreign policy through soft or hard power. While much of these developments in global politics threaten global peace and security and compel states to act in the best way that shields them from the geopolitical shocks that come with these changes, it becomes crucial to review and scrutinize the notion, practice, and understanding of foreign policy which can be defined as an activity of the state with which it fulfills its aims and interests within the international arena (Petrič, 2013). Although this definition depicts an uncomplicated scene, its practice has evinced how complex foreign policy can be through a series of current events. This can be attributed to the determinants of foreign policy, which often encompass diverse conditions, interests, and decisions at the state level, which may, unwittingly, yield unfavorable outcomes in the international arena. Different authors have conceptualized foreign policy in several ways, as follows.

According to Benko (1997), foreign policy is a set of actions and processes carried out by a state-organized group of people in the international sphere. It plans to use its political activities, all directed toward its interests, to influence the global scene in line with its goals and objectives. Calvert (1986) recognizes that foreign policy involves choices and actions primarily aimed at the relationships between states. Vukadinović (1981) argues that a state's foreign policy is an organized endeavor in which it seeks to maximize its interests and values in relation to other states and subjects operating in a foreign context. Crabb (1972) sums

up the two most important elements of foreign policy in his definition: "national objectives," which should be the aim, and "means," which should be employed to achieve this aim. The essence of these definitions depicts states wielding power to advance their 'national interest' through their relations with other states.

The significance of this issue lies in gauging changes and the evolution of foreign policy in the changing world order, while providing insights that can help explain and invigorate our understanding of global politics in its current form from a foreign policy angle.

## AFRICA BY BUS SPECIAL SECTION:

### Pan-Africanism and Regional Integration

GUEST EDITORS: Bhaso Ndzendze and Maipato Mmako-Dlamini

**P**an-Africanism is a complex theory of African liberation and integration. Its pillars include solidarity, sovereignty and unity. It came about out of political conferences among African leaders, both within the continent and in the diaspora in places such as London (1900), Paris (1919); Brussels, London and Paris (1921); Lisbon and London (1923); New York City (1927), Manchester (1945); Dar es Salaam (1974); and Kampala (1994). Initially, Pan-Africanism was seized with the objective of freeing Africans from colonialism and apartheid. Its key thinkers include WEB du Bois, Amy Jacques Garvey, Marcus Garvey, Kenneth Kaunda, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Thabo Mbeki, and Robert Sobukwe.

With the democratic transition in South Africa in 1994, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was reimagined and relaunched as the modern-day African Union (AU) in 2002 in Durban, still retaining its headquarters in Addis Ababa. The AU has a broader mandate, encompassing economic integration (seen through the launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area between 2018 and 2021), human and peoples' rights, security and defence. However, it is not the sole – or perhaps even the main – driver of Pan-Africanism. There are other forms of Pan-Africanism and regional integration, including through regional economic communities (RECs) such as SADC, EAC, IGAD and ECOWAS.

The key questions confronting us today are (1) what does Pan-Africanism look like in our 21st century

context; (2) are individual countries contributors to Pan-Africanism, and (3) what role can non-state actors play in its attainment.

Against this background, a call for paper was issued to emerging scholars who participated in the 2025 Africa By Bus Programme that involved South African, Zambian and Zimbabwean institutions, wherein they were invited to write on the theme of 'Pan-Africanism and Regional Integration', subsequent to which they were subjected to double-blind peer review. The papers in this issue address the following research questions:

1. What has been the historic trajectory and main themes in South Africa-Zambia relations, and how are they evolving under the current governments?
2. How much, and in what specific ways, have

South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe contributed to Pan-Africanism and regional integration since the 1990s?

3. Does Pan-Africanism have a future and how can institutions of higher learning ensure its success?
4. How best can Pan-Africanism be critically taught and learned across multiple disciplines?

The articles make for fascinating theoretical and policy reading. Findings indicate that the three states of South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe have taken a variety of noteworthy but inconsistent actions, underscoring the need for further collaboration, strategic goal alignment, and further research into the long-term effects of their regional roles. Moreover, trends signal a shift from Pan-Africanism as an elite political project to a grassroots movement driven by youth agency and creativity. Another study concludes that for Pan-Africanism to remain. Secondly, authors note

gradual progress in embedding Pan-African ideals into curriculum, but persistent challenges such as Eurocentric curricula, limited academic mobility, and resource constraints hinder deeper impact.

Finally, the research findings contained here have further indicated that Pan-Africanism and regional integration are transformative and feasible; however, practical application lacks and varies by disciplines as in economics, politics, and law. They are very theoretical as compared to medicine and science as is evident in these disciplines. The outcomes are clear: pan-Africanist pedagogies should play a pivotal role in critically examining colonial history, different cultural narratives, collaborations of African countries, and curriculum integration.

We are thankful to the authors, peer reviewers, and editorial teams at The Thinker for the tireless efforts that have gone into producing this issue, and we congratulate them all.

The University of Johannesburg acquired *The Thinker* in April 2019 from Dr Essop Pahad. Over the last decade, *The Thinker* has gained a reputation as a journal that explores Pan-African issues across fields and times. Ronit Frenkel, as the incoming editor, plans on maintaining the pan-African scope of the journal while increasing its coverage into fields such as books, art, literature and popular cultures. *The Thinker* is a 'hybrid' journal, publishing both journalistic pieces with more academic articles and contributors can now opt to have their submissions peer reviewed. We welcome Africa-centred articles from diverse perspectives, in order to enrich both knowledge of the continent and of issues impacting the continent.



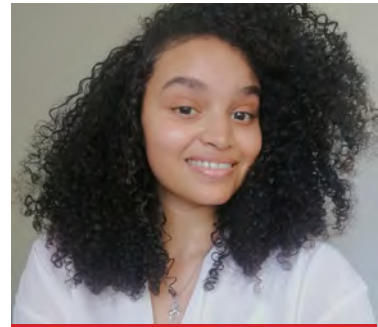
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Tamia Phiri

I want to express my earnest appreciation to the journal's editorial team for ensuring the success of this issue, the peer reviewers for their rigorous and insightful feedback that ensured the high academic standard for this issue, and the contributors who shared their rich and insightful knowledge in this special issue on the reexamination of foreign policy in the changing global order. Each article contributed significantly to the issue across a range of topics, enriching it. I also extend my appreciation to the editors and contributors of the Africanism and regional integration special section, who enriched this issue with timely and relevant contributions. *Ndzalama Mathebula.*

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