



# MOST INFLUENTIAL AFRICANS OF 2014





AFRICA IS ON THE MOVE. ITS VOICES ARE GETTING LOUDER AND PROUDER. Africa is known for being the world's youngest continent, but every year, it makes the case a little more strongly for also being its most vibrant, most innovative and most exciting.

Its never-say-die athletes are beating the best and smashing world records. Its writers and poets are wowing the world with their beauty of prose and strength of soul. Its actors and directors are pushing new boundaries and conquering hearts. Its intrepid journalists are refusing to cower in the face of power and are shouting about the stories that need shouting about.

Furthermore, in every corner of the continent, wherever there is injustice, oppression or tyranny, Africans of every stripe – from young to old, male to female, brave to even braver – are fighting and working for a better tomorrow.

*Africa is on the move.* Given this transformation, happening at every level in every country, it may seem foolhardy to pick out just a hundred or so individuals of note as the continent's most influential people. But in every march and movement, there are always a few figures who lead the line and who stick their heads above the parapets before anyone else – these can be trendsetters, visionaries, heroes, and at times even rabble-rousers whose actions or lack thereof, make or break the continent. Wielding influence comes in diverse forms and this collection portrays just that.

In what follows, therefore, we managed – painstakingly and with huge difficulty – to pick out those particularly significant figures for the year just concluding.

Thankfully, many of them are heroes whose actions have pushed Africa forwards in exciting and positive ways. But it should be pointed out that these pages will also include some figures whose actions continue to hold the continent back. They are presented to you, the good alongside the bad, in no particular order.

Some may be part of an old guard that just never tires. Some may be children of the future with footprints deeper and weightier than their years. And some you may never have even heard of as they've been innovating, creating and debating behind the scenes. But without exception, and in their own way, the people we have chosen – our most influential Africans of 2014 – have left the world a little different this year.

*Compiled and edited by: reGina Jane Jere, James Schneider, James Wan, Jon Hayward and Wanjiru Kariuki.*





KENYA

## Uhuru Kenyatta

The scourge of the ICC

The son of Kenya's first president has had a remarkable year. He started it under threat of trial for alleged crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. He ends it all but guaranteed not to face trial while in office and with the real possibility that his case will be thrown out altogether. While the Office of the Prosecutor alleges witness tampering

and non-cooperation by the Kenyan government, it is really Kenyatta's shrewd politics that have undermined the court. He rallied allied African leaders to unite many African Union members in opposition to the ICC. He reframed his case as being about the dignity and sovereignty of Kenya and more broadly Africa, rather than about the political violence following the disputed 2007 election. The struggle with the

court has been the making of Uhuru. He now seems a savvy and dominant figure in African politics, a million miles from the unsure and unsuccessful presidential candidate in 2002 or the young man who failed to win his father's former constituency nearly 20 years ago. His country faces many challenges but is full of opportunity. How will he use his newfound stature in 2015?



GAMBIA

## Fatou Bensouda

The frustrated prosecutor

It has been a difficult year for the Chief Prosecutor of the ICC. Not only has her institution been labelled anti-African, but her flagship case – against Uhuru Kenyatta – will not come to trial in the near future. The ICC remains a powerful force on the continent and Bensouda's influence shouldn't be underestimated, but it will be an uphill struggle to improve African perceptions of the court's legitimacy.

"I remain grateful for Africa's support. Our century of struggle against domination and exploitation continues." -

Uhuru Kenyatta





SOUTH SUDAN

## Salva Kiir and Riek Machar

### Rival politicians tearing their country apart

President Salva Kiir and his former Vice President Riek Machar have had great influence in their country this year - but not of the positive kind. Their rivalry has done much to smash the hope invested in their new state at independence in 2011. Their political dispute has developed into an ethnicised conflict, mainly between the Dinka and the Nuer. 1.5 million South Sudanese are internally displaced and thousands have been killed. As their representatives engage in on-off negotiations in regional capitals, the pair's inability to put their country's interests ahead of their own is not only causing damage today, but makes the task of building a sustainable state and society for the future more difficult. The two men hold enough power to end the conflict. If only they would choose to exert it.

SOUTH AFRICA

## CYRIL RAMAPHOSA

The troubleshooter

Cyril Ramaphosa has consolidated his position as the front-runner to succeed his embattled boss, Jacob Zuma. Although he only returned to politics last year, after nearly two highly successful decades in business, he has become the ANC government's chief troubleshooter. He acts as a negotiator in South Sudan's civil war, played a similar and successful role in Lesotho's political crisis, attempted unsuccessfully to calm tensions in Cosatu (the ANC-aligned trade union federation), is the chair of the crucial National Planning Commission, and the Leader of Government Business in the National Assembly. The contradictions he represents have been brought to the fore this year, especially during his appearance before the Farlam Commission of Inquiry into the Marikana mine massacre. In 2015, he will have to balance the tensions of being a former leader of the National Union of Mineworkers and having been a mining sector shareholder, including at the Lonmin-owned Marikana mine. If he can, he could very well emerge as the ANC's leader.



SOUTH AFRICA

## Thabo Mbeki

Continental statesman and negotiator

It's been six years since Thabo Mbeki stepped down as South Africa's president, but his retirement has been far from uneventful. The champion of an African Renaissance continues to play a leading role in events and issues across the continent, including as a crucial negotiator between the long-standing antagonists of Sudan and South Sudan. This already challenging task has been made all the more difficult by the ongoing civil war and political instability in the South this year, but Mbeki will be hoping that his unique experience of mediating in seemingly intractable conflicts in the past will serve him well once again.

**"Even in the context of the widely prevalent and correct African and global view that Africa is rising, all our historic and long-term challenges remain."**

Thabo Mbeki



SOUTH AFRICA

## Julius Malema

The economic freedom fighter

Julius Malema has completed the transition from being ready to “die for Zuma” to being his most vociferous critic. If his opponents thought that Malema’s expulsion from the ANC and legal difficulties with the taxman would finish him off, 2014 will have disappointed them. Malema’s new political party, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) won a respectable 25 seats in this year’s general election and has since caused waves in parliament. The EFF has highlighted how removed the political debate is from much of the population by wearing bright red workers’ clothes and by breaking with parliamentary

procedure by shouting down President Zuma with calls to “pay back the money” for his Nkandla homestead (see *Thuli Madonsela* entry below). This brand of populist politics divides opinion nationally but attracts big crowds wherever Malema goes. Despite his personal legal troubles, he may have spawned an organisation that, perhaps along with the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, which was expelled from Cosatu in November (see *pages 58-9*), can provide serious opposition to the ANC from the left, as the Democratic Alliance does from the liberal right.



SOUTH AFRICA

## Thuli Madonsela

The Public Protector

South Africa’s constitution created the so-called chapter nine institutions to guard democracy, which sit outside of government. One of these, the Public Protector, is headed by Thuli Madonsela, who has used her office to investigate the Nkandlagate scandal, in which \$20 million of public money was spent upgrading Jacob Zuma’s personal home in Nkandla, KwaZulu-Natal. Her report into the matter made uncomfortable

reading for the government, leading to calls from across the spectrum (but most loudly from Malema’s EFF) for Zuma to personally repay the state. Unsurprisingly, she has found herself under attack from Zuma’s allies, but she has not flinched. Her robust defence of the institution, both in principle and in practice, has ensured its independence, making clear that in South Africa, nobody should feel above the law.







NIGERIA

## Akinwumi Adesina

The farmer reformer

With a population of 170 million people, 70% employed in farming, the job of reforming Nigeria's agricultural sector is not

one for the faint-hearted. Fortunately, Akinwumi Adesina, Nigeria's Agriculture Minister, is not easily scared by big numbers. And this year he has some to bandy around himself: cocoa exports are up 45% on 2012; the share of bank lending to the sector has more than quintupled since 2011; and Nigeria's food import bill has dropped to \$4.3 billion, down from \$7 billion in 2009.

ZAMBIA

## Kenneth Kaunda

The elder statesman

It's been nearly twenty-five years since Zambia's first president stepped away from power, but the man popularly known as KK remains a national, regional and continental figure, mainly operating behind the scenes. With the recent death of Michael Sata igniting succession issues (see pages 62-4), many believe peace-loving KK will use his voice of reason to quell political fires.



ZIMBABWE

## Grace Mugabe

Comrade in waiting?

Grace Mugabe hit the headlines this year, even outshining her husband. She used her nationwide publicity tour to attack VP Joice Mujuru, seen as a possible successor to Robert Mugabe. At this month's Zanu-PF conference, Grace is likely to join the politburo. In 2015, she is likely to be touted as a potential successor to her husband.



SOUTH AFRICA

## Nkosozena Dlamini-Zuma

Africa's problem-solver

It has been another tough year for the chairperson of the African Union. The organisation has been criticised for its slow response to the Ebola crisis (see pages 76-7), AU peacekeepers were accused of human rights abuses in the Central African Republic, and progress in resolving the conflict in South Sudan has been haltingly slow. Despite these difficulties, Dlamini-Zuma has the continental respect and influence to fight for African solutions to these African problems.

**"Africa, right from its days of fighting colonisation, has relied on solidarity, believing that one country can't be free if all Africa is not free."**

Nkosozena Dlamini-Zuma

SOUTH AFRICA

## Thokozile Masipa

Judging Oscar

In January a few would have recognised her, but as the year drew to a close, she became one of the most recognisable faces on the continent, if not globally, thrust into the limelight as presiding judge in the global phenomenon that was the Oscar Pistorius trial. (See pages 60-1.) But aside from the famous trial and the opinion-dividing sentence she gave the athlete for shooting dead Reeva Steenkamp, Masipa is only the second black woman to be appointed to the South African high court in its history.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

## Moïse Katumbi

The reluctant ruler

They say that those who want to rule are the least suited to do it, and if that's true, it could explain Moïse Katumbi's success. Since becoming governor of the DRC's Katanga Province in 2007, access to running water has risen from 3% to 67%, school attendance has increased from 600,000 to 3 million, and revenues have risen dramatically. Yet Katumbi says he'd happily give it up to focus on his businesses and beloved TP Mazembe football club.



**SOUTH AFRICA**

## Navi Pillay

### Human rights defender

As her six years as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights came to a close this August, Navi Pillay, South Africa's first non-white female judge, did not let up one bit in fearlessly challenging heavyweights on their human rights records. In her last few months in the job, she warned of mass surveillance violating privacy rights, and condemned the UN Security Council's repeated failures to prevent conflict. The daughter of a Tamil bus driver leaves behind some huge boots to fill.



**SENEGAL**

## Babacar Gaye

The general in the UN's CAR driving seat

Lieutenant-General Babacar Gaye leads the UN peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic. He has previously served in senior roles for his native Senegal and in the UN system but is now in the midst of his most difficult job yet. He is charged with keeping a fragile peace between the opposing Séléka and anti-balaka forces, in the hope of finding a lasting one.



**NIGERIA**

## Abubakar Shekau

The maniacal grin of terror

Although the Nigerian military frequently claim that he is dead, Shekau's deadly and malicious influence only continues to grow. Boko Haram stepped up its campaign of violence even further this year, unleashing bombs in the capital Abuja, terrorising towns and villages in the country's north-east, and, of course, kidnapping the Chibok girls. Shekau's horrific violence has had a huge impact on Nigeria. 2015 is a big year for the country, with highly competitive elections scheduled for February. Sadly, Shekau and his band of killers will significantly affect proceedings unless he is stopped.

**EGYPT**

## Ayman al-Zawahiri

Al-Qaeda's emir

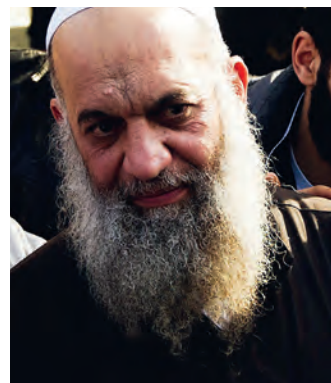
The so-called Islamic State has eclipsed Al-Qaeda in the jihadi firmament this year. However, Al-Qaeda's reach still sadly matters on the continent, with allied groups in Mali, Algeria, Libya, Somalia and Kenya. With these groups still wreaking havoc in parts of Africa, Bin Laden's former number two, al-Zawahiri, still holds considerable malign influence.

**NIGERIA**

## Muhammadu Buhari and Bola Tinubu

The new friends

In 2013, former military head of state Muhammadu Buhari and former Lagos governor Bola Tinubu united their opposition parties to form the All Progressives Congress (APC). This big-tent party is the first to present a genuine challenge to the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) since the return to electoral rule in 1999. Despite some defections, the APC has solidified in 2014; around half of the country's governors and members of the national assembly fly APC colours. Whether the APC maintains unity will much depend on the relationship between the two old men of Nigeria's opposition politics. If they succeed, Aso Rock may house an APC president come this time next year.







## Yoweri Museveni

The wily old master

Yoweri Museveni has been in the spotlight this year again as he's dealt with a potential rival from his own inner circle, continued to criticise the International Criminal Court for being an "instrument of post-colonial hegemony", faced Western flak for passing the Anti-Homosexuality Act, and played a prominent regional military role with troops deployed in South Sudan, the Central African Republic and Somalia. Uganda's president has remained able to stay one step ahead of the game proving that, after all these years, he is still a political maestro.



EGYPT

## Abdel Fatah al-Sisi

The pharaoh

Three years since the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak, it seems that Egypt's revolutionary experiment is over. And what better way to express that sentiment than with a low-turnout election in which 96.9% voted for a hard-nosed, old-style military man? Abdel Fatah al-Sisi has enjoyed cult-like popularity since ousting the Muslim Brotherhood in 2013, but it remains to be seen how long this will last now that he officially presides over the world's most populous Arab nation.

CHAD

## Idriss Déby

Central Africa's military strongman

Chad's long-serving president has had an up and down year. In April, he withdrew the Chadian contingent from the AU forces in the Central African Republic following accusations that they were siding with the Séléka rebels and led a lethal unprovoked attack on a market in Bangui. But Déby did not allow this to set back his regional security pointman ambitions for long, stepping up counter-terrorism cooperation with France and the US as well as playing a prominent military and mediating role in the Boko Haram conflict.



AFRICA

## YOU, THE PEOPLE

The real power

The sight of Burkina Faso's long-serving strongman, Blaise Compaoré, fleeing the country following a popular uprising against his continued rule, demonstrates how influential ordinary Africans can be. While the future of Burkina Faso is uncertain and events could develop positively or negatively, the Burkinabé have demonstrated that Africa's young populations have the power to forge their own destinies. Africans, the future is in your hands.







NIGERIA

## Aliko Dangote

The unstoppable spender and inevitable earner

It seems that nothing can stop the steady march of Aliko Dangote's companies into new industries, new territories, and new realms of wealth. Progress on the groundbreaking \$9 billion oil refinery and petrochemical plant has been made this year; Dangote Cement's expansion across the continent continues into the likes of Cameroon, Senegal and Zambia; and Africa's richest man is also reportedly eyeing up some of Nigeria's gas assets.



CÔTE D'IVOIRE

## Tidjane Thiam

The Ivorian insuring the world

Under Thiam's leadership, Prudential has continued its ascent as one of the world's largest insurers, with operating profits increasing by 17% in 2013. One of Prudential's latest acquisitions, the Kenyan life insurance company Shield Assurance Co., is the second big move by the company in Africa, where it is looking to expand and develop. With an annual growth of 20%, the life insurance market in Kenya is booming, mirroring the country's rapid growth and robust economy. Last year Prudential bought Ghana's Express Life Co., signalling the start of a new venture for the company, which is hoping to match the success it has achieved in South-East Asia, in the emerging African life insurance market.

RWANDA

## Donald Kaberuka

The finance man with a plan

As head of the African Development Bank since 2005, Rwanda's Donald Kaberuka has overseen several significant changes, and this year he ushered in another development by establishing the Africa Growing Together Fund. Worth some \$2 billion over ten years, and co-financed by the People's Bank of China, the fund will be used to support much-needed development projects across the continent. When Kaberuka steps down next year, leaving behind an impressive legacy, he will be a hard act to follow.



ETHIOPIA

## Eleni Gabre-Madhin

The trade reformer



From 2008 to 2012, Eleni Gabre-Madhin managed the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange, which she had founded to modernise the trade of agricultural products. The exchange was quickly successful as trading skyrocketed, membership grew and the prices some farmers were able to get for their harvests shot up. Now, through her new company Eleni LLC and as an advisor to various African governments that have sought her expertise, she is trying to replicate the achievements of the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange on a continental level.



SOUTH AFRICA

## Mark Shuttleworth

The space tourist pushing boundaries

Businessman Mark Shuttleworth is famous for being a key figure behind the Ubuntu operating system and the first African in space, but he also notoriously remarked that it cost him less to leave earth than to leave South Africa. In 2009, the tech entrepreneur was charged over \$20 million by the South African Reserve Bank to relocate \$200 million to an overseas tax haven. He fought the charge and this year won the case in a landmark ruling, which may have far-reaching effects on South Africa's ability to manage capital flight. He donated the returned \$20 million to a trust set up to help others take cases to the Constitutional Court.



MOROCCO

## Richard Attias

The man in the know

The Moroccan executive is a global influencer with one of the most effective networks in the business. Best known today for the NY Forum, Attias made his name at the World Economic Forum where he helped turn the meeting into one of the most important gatherings of world leaders. Today he is a leader in brand and reputation enhancement, championing Africa abroad and organising events for a number of African countries, this year adding the Francophonie and African Development Bank annual meetings to his widening portfolio.

BENIN

## Lionel Zinsou

Monsieur Africa

As a former advisor to France's Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, head of newly-launched Franco-African Foundation for Growth, and advisor to Benin's president Thomas Yayi Boni, Lionel Zinsou sits right on the bridge between his adopted homeland and his continent of birth. It is for these reasons that the Beninese chair and CEO of leading French equity firm PAI Partners

has been entrusted to lead France's attempts to renew and expand its economic ties in Africa. This is a move the self-declared "Afro-optimist" is all too happy to facilitate. He has previously proclaimed that "Africa will soon be the centre of the world" and with his close contacts and rising influence, Zinsou will himself be at the centre of plenty of African business.



SOUTH AFRICA

## Bridgette Radebe

The mining tycoon speaking out

As head of the South African Mining Development Association, founder of Mmakau Mining, and one of Africa's richest women, Bridgette Radebe's opinions on mining carry quite some weight. And this year, the mining magnate has been particularly outspoken on companies being allowed to list offshore, the act of transfer pricing, and the failure of the government to meet its targets for increasing black ownership of South Africa's mines. "We can't continue to be sleeping on the job," she said.





**SOUTH AFRICA**

## Elon Musk

Mr Future

Elon Musk made his fortune by cofounding PayPal, but it is now spacecrafts, electric cars and solar energy that get him excited. And so they should. This year, the South African entrepreneur's company SpaceX won a \$1.6 billion contract with NASA to shuttle astronauts into space, while his electric car company Tesla Motors announced that it would relax its patents in the hope that the sharing of information could accelerate innovation. Musk is a businessman who aims for the stars, and usually reaches them.



**NIGERIA**

## Chinelo Anohu-Amazu

The pensions chief

As Director General of the National Pension Commission in Africa's most populous country, Chinelo Anohu-Amazu has proven herself to be a strong overseer of the rapidly-growing pension fund. The Nigerian official was part of the committee whose work led to the Pension Reform Act of 2004 and under her management of the Commission since 2012, the pension fund has grown considerably, registered hundreds of thousands new contributors. This year she helped push through new legislation to further reform the system.



**NIGERIA**

## Austin Avuru & ABC Orjiako

The Nigerian oil explorers

As international oil majors look at Nigeria with ever more wary eyes, it is brave Nigerian companies that stand the most to gain by exploiting the country's oil and gas riches. Chairperson A.B.C. Orjiako and CEO Austin Avuru are demonstrating this all too clearly with Seplat, which is reportedly bidding for various oil fields and which

**"Seplat's listing is about industrial development... [It] has shown the world believes and understands the Nigerian story."**

Olusegun Aganga, Nigerian Minister of Trade and Investment

**GHANA**

## Kwesi Botchway

The monetary mediator returns

For Ghana, 2014 has been a year of economic woe as the cedi has depreciated dramatically, pushing up inflation and limiting the government's ability to narrow the budget deficit. Ghana's currency has been the continent's worst performer and the government has been forced to ask the International Monetary Fund for a bailout. Leading the negotiations, former minister Kwesi Botchway managed to secure a pledge of \$800 million to stabilise the cedi, but the conditionalities of any IMF programme could lead to various new hardships for ordinary Ghanaians.

was valued at over \$1.9 billion when it became the first ever company to be listed in both London and Lagos earlier this year.







SOUTH AFRICA

**NICKY NEWTON-KING**

The steady hand at the stock exchange

The Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) was first established in 1887 following the discovery of gold, and today it is the JSE that is setting the gold standard for African exchanges. Led by Chief Executive Officer Nicky Newton-King, the JSE has continued to forge ahead as Africa's largest stock exchange and the 19th biggest in the world, with around 400 businesses listed.



ZIMBABWE

**Strive Masiyiwa**

The telecommunications king

It took a five-year-long legal battle for Strive Masiyiwa to get Zimbabwe to lift the state monopoly on telecommunications, but since he managed it and founded Econet, the company has not stopped growing. This year, the network has continued to diversify, deepening its involvement in services such as car tracking, advertising and mobile money transfers, while it has also bought up telecoms companies in the likes of Burundi and the Central African Republic. The more Strive strives, the more Econet grows.



ALGERIA

**Issad Rebrab**

The multi-billionaire who got his way

The founder of Algeria's multi-billion-dollar conglomerate Cevital may have had some downs this year – a fire destroyed much of the Samsung-Samha plant, and he courted controversy as he fell out with the Forum of Heads of Enterprise – but overall it has been a year of ups. Not only did Issad Rebrab's conglomerate manage to acquire the French company Fagor Brandt earlier in the year, but soon after the multi-billionaire vented his anger over obstacles to his proposed plans in Algeria, he finally got permission to build what will be the country's biggest cement plant.

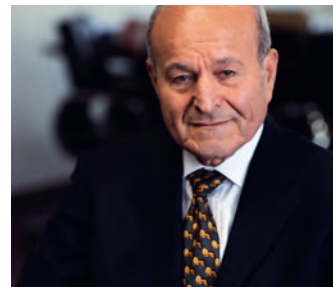


KENYA

**Tabitha Karanja**

The businesswoman tackling the brewery industry

Tabitha Karanja is the woman who dared to take on East African Breweries – the largest and, for a long time, sole brewery in Kenya – when she founded Keroche Breweries Limited, Kenya's first home-grown brewing company. This year, the company has continued to plan ahead as it looks to expand production ten-fold, from 60,000 bottles a day to 600,000. The future looks bright, bubbly and merry for the courageous Kenyan.







NIGERIA

## Tony Elumelu

The Africapitalist

According to Tony Elumelu's idea of Africapitalism, it is the private sector that will drive African development and wealth creation, and in the power sector, Elumelu wants to put his money where his mouth is. As one of Nigeria's most prominent businessmen and chairman of Heirs Holdings, Elumelu has pledged to invest \$2.5 billion in the US's Power Africa Initiative and has stated his ambition to meet at least a quarter of Nigeria's power needs in the next five years.



ETHIOPIA

## BETHLEHEM TILAHUN ALEMU

The manufacturing trendsetter

The 34-year-old entrepreneur and self-declared lover of leather may not seem like much of a rebel, but the way in which her local company soleRebels has become Africa's fastest-growing shoe brand and first global footwear brand is certainly out of the ordinary. Alemu, who is soon launching the Republic of Leather that will produce other goods, believes Ethiopia contains huge potential for manufacturing, and as the likes of H&M and other international investors eye up the country, it seems she is not the only one.



MOROCCO

## Mohamed El Kettani

The businessman dominating the banking sector

2014 results revealed that Attijariwafa Bank has raked in almost one million new customers over the past year. As CEO of the Moroccan bank, El Kettani is at the forefront of the banking sector in the country, and perhaps soon will be in the rest of the continent. With subsidiaries in the Maghreb and beyond, and plans to expand across Francophone Africa, El Kettani is on his way to making Attijariwafa one of the fastest-growing banks on the continent.

GUINEA-BISSAU

## Carlos Lopes

The transformer

For all the news of economic growth and soaring GDPs, what keeps Carlos Lopes up at night is not so much Africa Rising as Africa Transforming. At the Africa Development Forum this year, the Executive Director of the UN Economic Commission for Africa continued to call for reforms that will allow the continent to stem illicit financial flows and mobilise domestic resources for structural transformation. This strategic thinker is reshaping the development debate.



NIGERIA

## Jim Ovia

The pioneer

Nigeria's bid to move up the value chain has been given a boost this year by news that Quantum Petrochemical, a new company set up by Jim Ovia, who founded and built Zenith Bank, is building a \$1.5 billion petrochemical plant. Located in Akwa-Ibom state, in the country's South-South region, the plant will produce polyethylene, polypropylene and methanol, substances which could in turn provide the foundation for other new manufacturing industries.



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**SOUTH AFRICA**

## Trevor Manuel

The public figure turned private

This year, after two decades of service, Trevor Manuel swapped public office for private as he became a global advisor and deputy chairman of Rothschild Group in South Africa. In his 13 years as South Africa's finance minister, under Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Kgalema Motlanthe, and 5 years as national planning minister, under Jacob Zuma, Manuel was one of the country's most recognised and influential political figures. Manuel is touted as a future IMF chief. How long will Rothschild be able to keep their man?

**NIGERIA**

## Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

The economist

This year, Nigeria leapfrogged South Africa overnight to become the continent's largest economy. By rebasing its gross domestic product and taking into account industries such as telecoms, IT and Nollywood, Nigeria's GDP was found to be nearly 90% greater than previously calculated. Heralding the dramatic announcement, Minister of Finance Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, whose role in reforming the Nigerian economy has been widely praised, expressed her hope that the news would help to encourage foreign investors.



**UGANDA**

## Ashish Thakkar

Serial entrepreneur

Just before the start of this year, entrepreneur Ashish Thakkar partnered with former Barclays chief executive Bob Diamond to found the financial services holding company Atlas Mara. And in 2014, the company has wasted little time in tapping into Thakkar's continental expertise to buy up stakes in banks across Africa. It made little delay in acquiring the pan-African banking group BancABC, giving it operations in at least five countries, bought up large parts of the Development Bank of Rwanda, and continues to eye up other opportunities across the continent.

**SOUTH AFRICA**

## Ivan Glasenberg

The adventurous acquirer

As CEO of one of the world's largest commodity trading and mining companies, Glencore Xstrata, Ivan Glasenberg is famed for his big and bold acquisitions – a favourite game amongst mining insiders is apparently to guess "What Ivan will buy next". This year has been no different, though the South African billionaire hasn't always got his way. Mining giant Rio Tinto reportedly rebuffed his takeover attempts in August, for example, while in Zambia Glencore has been embroiled in allegations of large-scale tax evasion, an accusation it denies.



**SOUTH AFRICA**

## Irene Charnley

Smiling all the way to the bank

Africa is leapfrogging its technological development in a growing array of sectors, especially for example telecommunications. Under CEO Irene Charnley, Smile Telecoms, which is based in Mauritius, has been busy rolling out 4G LTE across the continent. The plucky company became the first to launch the technology in Africa in 2012 and rolled it out in Nigeria this year, with more plans in the pipeline for 2015.





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NIGERIA

## Obiageli Ezekwesili

#bringbackourgirls

On the night of 14-15 April, members of the Nigerian militant group Boko Haram stormed a girls' secondary school in the town of Chibok, Borno State, and abducted over 200 schoolgirls.

Obiageli Ezekwesili heard about the kidnappings soon after, and immediately got involved. She was slated to speak at an UNESCO event in Port Harcourt, and when she took the stage, she called for solidarity and demanded that the government "bring back our girls". One young man listening to the event tweeted her words, which soon went viral.

With Hadiza Bala Usman, Saudatu Mahdi and Maryam Uwais, Ezekwesili then officially formed Bring Back Our Girls and marched on Nigeria's National

Assembly. The movement maintained a daily presence in the capital Abuja with daily sit-ins at Unity Fountain.

Ezekwesili sees inequality as a major factor in the government's poor response to the girls' abduction. "These girls only suffered such aggravated anguish because of the social class they come from," she says. "If these girls were the children of the elite, including myself, it wouldn't have required and needed my having to go out on the street with other citizens for their anguish to be acknowledged.

"For me, it was basically a matter of voice. These people were without voice... So I made that vow like all the others that I would not stop being a voice for these girls until there is positive closure

on the matter."

While Bring Back Our Girls maintains that it is not a political platform, it has at times been treated as a hostile adversary by the government. But harsh words and counter movements have not deterred Ezekwesili. "I knew that I was putting myself out for all kinds of things to be thrown in my direction but I have my courage of conviction," she says. "I haven't done anything wrong and there's nothing to defend."

Eight months on, the Chibok girls have still not been rescued or returned home, but Ezekwesili continues to fight and remains hopeful. "We are expecting all of them to come back."

(Words by Belinda Otas)







SOUTH AFRICA

## KUMI NAIDOO

### The climate warrior

Ever since he was a teenager, protesting against apartheid through acts of civil disobedience, Kumi Naidoo has been unafraid to make trouble as he confronts injustice. Now, as the International Executive Director of Greenpeace, he can make plenty of noise as he confronts the growing problem of global climate change, an issue that will disproportionately affect Africa. Famous for his high-profile acts of protest and occupations of oil rigs, this year he led hundreds of thousands of demonstrators at the People's Climate March, probably the largest climate change march in history, calling for the UN to "Listen to the People, not the Polluters".

EGYPT

## Yara Sallam

### The protester

This October, Yara Sallam, the Egyptian human rights activist and winner of the African Shield Human Rights Defender Award was sentenced to three years in jail. Sallam, alongside 22 other activists, was charged for demonstrating against a law passed last year that makes demonstrations without police authorisation illegal and punishes violators with imprisonment. The arrest of the protesters sparked a mass hunger strike by other activists who called on the government to release their colleagues and repeal the protest law.



SENEGAL

## Marième Jamme

### The tech activist

CEO of Spot One Global Solutions and technology blogger, Marième Jamme is the woman behind the Jjiguène Tech Hub based in Senegal, a tech network that supports young women in Science, Engineering and Maths. As co-founder of Africa Gathering, a platform that engages social entrepreneurs and activists to pool their thoughts and provide practical solutions for Africa's development, Jamme has inspired young African thinkers and innovators.

This year's event, a special edition held at London's Southbank Centre, featured a variety of debates, presentations and workshops on the theme of: "Africa is Rising for Who?"



KENYA

## Ory Okolloh

### The transparency advocate

A passionate advocate of good governance and accountability in Africa, Ory Okolloh is well known as a co-creator of the Ushaidi platform, and Mzalendo, a website which acts as a watchdog for the Kenyan parliament. In 2014, Okolloh was announced as one of three trustees of the Millicom Foundation, which serves to support social innovators through financial and technical means, in a bid to foster a community of digital change-makers on the continent. Okolloh also serves as the director of investments for the Omidyar Network.





SOMALILAND

## Edna Adan Ismail

The fighter

Throughout her 77 years, Edna Anan Ismail has always been pitted against huge forces, but the Somalilander has nevertheless won more than her fair share of battles. She was Somalia's first midwife, Somaliland's first female foreign minister and, through her determination and the money she acquired from cashing in her World Health Organisation pension, she founded the country's first-ever maternity hospital. Every year she picks a battle for a fairer world; 2014 was no different as she campaigned against gender-based violence and FGM.



MAURITANIA

## Biram Dah Abeid

Malcolm X of anti-slavery

Biram Dah Abeid is a freedom fighter at the frontline of the struggle against modern day slavery and its vestiges in Mauritania. His homeland has the highest rates of slavery in the world and Dah Abeid, himself a descendent of slaves, is determined to finish the practice off for good. To this end, the winner of the UN Prize for Human Rights runs an organisation of popular struggle, IRA Mauritania (Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement in Mauritania), and ran for president in elections held earlier this year.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

## Denis Mukwege

The doctor

When sexual violence is used as a weapon of war in eastern Congo, its aim is to destroy all hope, shame victims and tear apart communities. Dr Denis Mukwege's Panzi Hospital, which has treated tens of thousands of women

subjected to horrific sexual violence, cannot end the impunity that allows these brutal acts to continue. But with its fearless staff, led by Mukwege, the Bukavu hospital provides treatment in a region where it is desperately needed. This year, the European Parliament recognised this work by awarding Mukwege the Sakharov Prize.





DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

## NOËLLA MUSUNKA COURSARIS

The model turned humanitarian

Noëlla Musunka Coursaris may be a professional model but her passion lies in promoting education, particularly that of girls, in her homeland of DRC. Founder of the Georges Malaika Foundation, which has built a free accredited school for over 180 girls in Kalebuka, Coursaris has used her status to provide for girls whose circumstances are not so different to her own when she was young. In 2014, she continued to develop her school, as well as speaking, advocating and fundraising for women affected by war in her home country at various international forums. She is also involved in the "Women Helping Women" initiative, which enhances access to clean water.



PHOTO CREDIT: PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEFANIE.CO.UK

BURUNDI

## Pierre Claver Mbonimpa

The imprisoned prison reformer

For nearly two decades, Pierre Claver Mbonimpa has been one of Burundi's foremost defenders of human rights and, in particular,

prisoners' rights. This is dangerous work to be involved with, and this May he paid the cost when he was arrested on charges of endangering state security. With many believing the charges were politically motivated, protesters took to the streets en masse while several international organisations called for his release. In September, he was released provisionally on health grounds, but his struggle continues.



LIBERIA

## Leymah Gbowee

The peace warrior



In 2003, after 14 years of conflict in Liberia, Leymah Gbowee led a group of women, united across religious and ethnic divides, to demand peace. In Monrovia, they protested, picketed and prayed, and eventually played a key role in the removal of Charles Taylor. Since then, she has continued to demonstrate that same determination and courage as head of Women Peace and Security Network Africa, promoting the role of women in leadership and peacebuilding.

SUDAN

## MO IBRAHIM

The good governance guy

The Sudanese billionaire may have made his money through the African telecommunications company Celtel, which he sold for \$3.4 billion in 2005, but he has made his name through the Mo Ibrahim Foundation. Established to support good governance, the foundation publishes an annual Index of African Governance and awards a multi-million-dollar Prize for Achievement in African Leadership. He says candidly what others may only think.





SOUTH AFRICA

## Joseph Mathunjwa

The strike leader

The first half of this year saw South Africa's platinum sector grind to a halt as workers, led by the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) and its head Joseph Mathunjwa, went out on an extended strike. Since the Marikana mine massacre of August 2012, industrial relations in the sector have taken on a huge political and

national importance. After months on strike, the workers won an average pay increase of 8% per year for three years. With the rise of the Economic Freedom Fighters and Numsa dropping support for the ANC, Mathunjwa will prove a crucial force in the emerging political and labour opposition to the ANC government.



SOUTH AFRICA

## Jay Naidoo

The union father figure and campaigner

A common theme in South African society is former trade unionists with political connections getting rich. Jay Naidoo is an exception. Cosatu's founding General Secretary and later minister for Reconstruction and Development under Mandela, has not cashed in and left public life. He is a hugely respected international figure, chairing the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, as well as sitting on the boards of a number of international organisations. But events have been dragging his attention back to domestic issues as his beloved Cosatu tears itself apart over political support for the government. He could have a big role to play as a mediator between parties or in what emerges from the fallout.

**“Society will fail if we stop caring. It fails if those in power seek to enrich themselves at the expense of the public. It fails when the people lose trust in their leaders.”**

Jay Naidoo



SOUTH AFRICA

## Irvin Jim

The union radical challenging the ANC

South Africa's largest trade union, the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), has dropped the African National Congress (ANC). In turn, the Congress of Trade Unions of South Africa, which is allied to the ANC, has expelled Numsa (see pages 58-9). Irvin Jim, the fiery general secretary, is plotting a new political course for Numsa and with it large sections of South Africa's working class. This course is explicitly socialist, pro-poor and opposed to the ANC government. Jim's name is likely to be one you will be hearing a lot of in 2015.



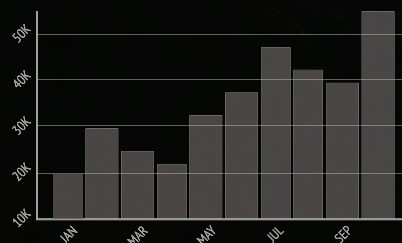


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## MUHAMMAD SANUSI II

The banking aristocrat turned traditional leader

2014 has been a rollercoaster year for Muhammad Sanusi II, formerly known as Sanusi Lamido Sanusi. He started it as Nigeria's Central Bank Governor, with a global reputation for excellence but seen as being increasingly at odds with President Goodluck Jonathan. In February, Jonathan suspended him after the governor spoke out about \$20 billion allegedly missing from the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC). Sanusi had his passport confiscated and fought his suspension and subsequent harassment in court. In June, the former Global Central Bank Governor of the Year became Muhammad Sanusi II when he was selected to succeed his great uncle Ado Bayero to become Emir of Kano, a position he had openly stated interest in. His new role as a traditional leader places him above politics but will give him a loud and prominent political, social and religious voice. He ends the year knowing that there is now no way that anyone can silence him. And he got his passport back too.

### UGANDA

## Nnabagereka Sylvia Nagginda of Buganda

A queen with a cause

Nnabagereka (queen) Sylvia of the Buganda Kingdom is redefining her role as the wife of the Kabaka (king) of the Buganda Kingdom. In September 2013, Nagginda co-hosted the launch of the African Queens and Women Cultural Leaders' Network in conjunction with HRH the Queen Mother of Toro. The Network partnered with both the Africa Union and the United Nations to focus on improving



the lives of women and girls in Africa, with a special focus on young mothers. Educated in New York, Nagginda worked as a UN research consultant and after her marriage to the Kabaka in 1999, became the first Nnabagereka to set up a fully-fledged office. With a great passion for women's rights, Nagginda will continue to use her status and influence for the development of her country, and the continent.

### SOUTH AFRICA

## Desmond Tutu

The archbishop activist

Despite his official retirement, Archbishop Desmond Tutu continues to wield huge influence as a moral icon, perhaps even more so since the passing of his friend Nelson Mandela. At both national and international levels, he has continued to call for peace, justice and compassion and to speak out on issues from gay rights to Israel/Palestine to South African politics.

Most recently, he called for anti-apartheid tactics to be employed in the fight against climate change.





NIGERIA

## TB Joshua

The preaching prophet

Those who love the founder of The Synagogue, Church Of All Nations, believe he can cure HIV and bring people back from the dead. They believe he communed with biblical figures and predicted Michael Jackson's death and the disappearance of Malaysia Airways' MH370. Those who don't love him think he's a dangerous conman whose prophecies are so vague they can fit any event, whose



miracle cures are a way to exploit the vulnerable, and whose multi-million-dollar wealth is the product of a giant scam. All agree that he wields huge influence though.

EGYPT

## Mohammed Badie

The spiritual leader on death row

The crackdown on Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood has continued, with much of the onslaught happening in the courts. Several lawsuits related to violence, terrorism and other charges have been brought against Brotherhood members this year, including Mohammed

Badie, the Brotherhood's spiritual leader. Many observers believe the mass trials have been travesties of justice and Badie has already been handed several sentences, including one death sentence following an 8-minute trial.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

## IMAM OMAR KOBINE LAYAMA, ARCHBISHOP DIEUDONNÉ NZAPALAINGA AND THE REV. NICOLAS GUÉRÉKOYAME-GBANGOU

### The men of God

In a devastating conflict that has become polarised along Christian-Muslim lines, appeals for peace and understanding from the likes of Imam Layama, Reverend Guérékoyame-Gbangou and Archbishop Nzapalainga (pictured below, left to right, with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon) are as brave as they are important. As sectarian violence continues, the humanitarian crisis deepens, and the government in Bangui struggles to impose order, the determined efforts of these religious leaders to reconcile the country provide a much-needed glimmer of hope and inspiration.





SIERRA LEONE

## KELVIN DOE

DJ Focus,  
the prodigy

When people talk of African solutions for African problems, the name Kelvin Doe should be at the forefront of the conversation. A self-taught engineer by the age of 13, Doe used scraps to build a generator in order to power a radio station, which he manages under the guise of DJ Focus. He has since signed a \$100,000 deal to develop his own solar power technology with Sierra Wi-Fi, a Canadian provider, and delivered a TED talk about his journey. Doe is an Afri-innovator in every sense.



“Creativity is universal, and can be found in places where one does not expect to find it.”

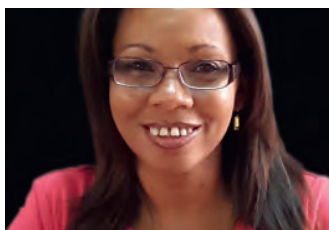
Kelvin Doe

CAMEROON

## Rebecca Enonchong

The African techie

As a mentor to several African tech start-ups and a member of various organisations promoting ICT on the continent, Rebecca Enonchong is a leading advocate of Africa's technological advancement. Her own company, AppsTech, a leading global provider of enterprise application solutions, is based in the US and has clients in 50 countries across the world. But Enonchong's heart remains on the continent as she promotes African innovation.



SOUTH AFRICA

## Thebe Medupe

The stargazer

At 13, Thebe Medupe was in the gutter – living under apartheid in a village with no running water – but he was looking up at the stars. It was 1986 and as Medupe witnessed Halley's Comet firing through the sky, he was left with a burning passion for astronomy. This interest only grew and, as apartheid collapsed, Medupe became the country's first black student of astronomy. He is now a leading light in the field and, along with his research, is trying to get other young black students to reach for the stars too.





## CALESTOUS JUMA

The champion of innovation



The Kenyan scientist sometimes seems omnipresent with his championing of innovation and sustainable development in Africa, arguing that new technologies are to be embraced rather than feared. He is a lively presence on Twitter, frequently voices his opinions in news pieces and interviews, and holds various prestigious positions, from being a professor at the Harvard Kennedy School to acting as the director of the Gates Foundation-funded Agricultural Innovation in Africa Project. It is little wonder that for many on the continent, Calestous Juma is the face of African science and innovation.



CAMEROON

## Achille Mbembe

The pan-African philosopher and intellectual

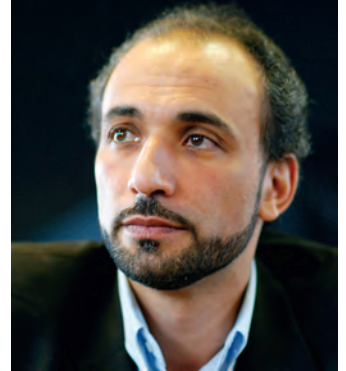
Achille Mbembe was born in Cameroon but his work, both in English and French, has a continental reach. He has held appointments at some of the finest academic institutions all over the world and is now based at Witswatersrand University in Johannesburg, South Africa. Mbembe mixes his academic work, which focuses on African history and contemporary post-colonial societies, with searing analysis of the political economy of contemporary South Africa for newspaper readerships.

EGYPT

## Tariq Ramadan

The theologian of radical reform

Tariq Ramadan is an intellectual and Islamic theologian. 2014 has seen the grandson of the founder of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood continue to analyse the changes wrought by the Arab Awakening. With one foot in the Muslim majority world and another in the Western world, Ramadan continues to forcefully argue for a non-literal return to the core of Islam to present a radical programme for social, economic, political and spiritual transformation.



NIGERIA

## Francisca Nneke Okeke

The scientist making shockwaves

Francisca Okeke is a trailblazer in the scientific community in more ways than one. The physicist's research into ion currents in the upper atmosphere has enhanced our understanding of climate change and could help identify sources of tsunamis and earthquakes. But Okeke has arguably shifted some tectonic plates herself through her rise within a male-dominated field and her efforts to encourage more women to take leadership roles in Nigerian academia.







GUINEA

## Bakary Oularé

The survivor with something to say

When Dr Bakary Oularé beat the odds by surviving Ebola, which he had caught when treating patients, he could have just counted his lucky stars. But instead, he redoubled his efforts in the fight against the disease by setting up a survivors' association. Together, these victims travel to different communities in a bid to demystify the disease in Guinea and reduce the stigma around it.

**“We needed to send a message to the people about the epidemic and also the possibility of being cured.”**

Dr Bakary Oularé

NIGERIA

## Benjamin Ohiaeri

The leader who stopped Ebola at a cost

If Ebola had been allowed to spread in Lagos, there is no telling how many victims it would have claimed in the densely populated city. But thanks to the brave staff at First Consultants Hospital, led by medical director Benjamin Ohiaeri, we will never know. When a Liberian official was found to have the disease by Dr Stella Adadevoh, she and her team ensured that he was not able to leave, sometimes physically restraining him. Several of these health workers, including Adadevoh, ended up paying with their lives to stop Ebola breaking out in their beloved city (see page 98).



TOGO

## JX PAULIN

The tablet man

**It is common to hear of Chinese migrants coming to Africa to make a living, but much rarer to hear of Africans making their fortune in China. But JX Paulin, a Togolese tech expert, did just that through a range of different ventures. Now, however, he has turned his attentions back to the African continent with his company MySimax, which makes innovative tablet devices that Paulin believes could revolutionise African education.**



SOUTH AFRICA

## Quarraisha Abdool Karim

The epidemiologist on a mission

In the struggle against HIV, Quarraisha Abdool Karim's tireless research into the disease and how it spreads has proven invaluable. She has devoted decades to examining the illness and her discovery that Tenofovir gel can dramatically reduce HIV infection while giving women effective control over their own health has been heralded as a huge breakthrough. This year, the epidemiologist's dedication to the cause was recognised as she was awarded the prestigious World Academy of Sciences' Prize.





# Fairfax

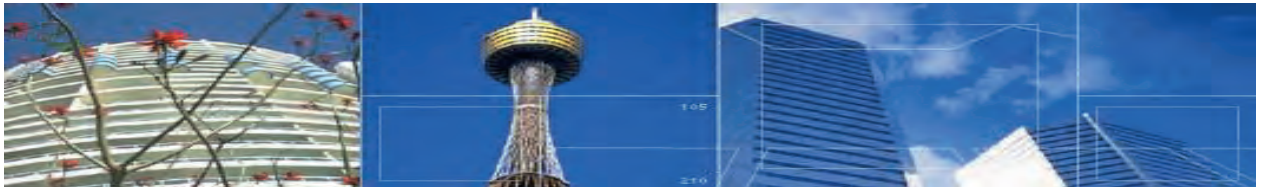
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SIERRA LEONE

## Isha Sesay

The anchor

As an anchor and correspondent for CNN *International*, Sierra Leone's Isha Sesay has been on a mission to provide better coverage of Africa. This year, she ruffled feathers as she asked tough questions over Nigeria's kidnapped Chibok schoolgirls, before criticising international reporting of the Ebola crisis for focussing on the handful of cases in the West rather than the thousands of cases in West Africa. To improve coverage, she helped set up Ebola Deeply, which aims to provide better context, clarity and understanding.



SOUTH AFRICA

## Redi Tlhabi

The radio heavyweight

From hosting Talk Radio 702 and 567 Cape Talk, to writing columns for *The Sunday Times*, to anchoring television programmes, Redi Tlhabi knows how to talk to South Africans from a multitude of platforms. She's spent some of this year embroiled in a dispute over the factual accuracy of her memoir *Endings & Beginnings*, but she has been as influential as ever, interviewing all the big political players in depth in the run-up to the South African elections.

NIGERIA

## Mosunmola 'Mo' Abudu

The 'African Oprah'

*Ebony Life Television* CEO and day-time talk show host Mo Abudu is determined to erase the negative narrative long associated with Africa, so much so that she has built a media empire which is set to disseminate a wealth of original African content to the continent and beyond in order to combat it. This year, production on the African version of *Desperate Housewives* began, the result of a lucrative deal Mo struck with Disney. Fearless Mo is fast becoming a media mogul who the real Oprah may one day have to reckon with.

"Everything you think you know about Africa is about to change."

Mo Abudu





ANGOLA

## Rafael Marques de Morais

The intrepid investigator

If getting under the skin of the powerful is a sign that a journalist is doing something right, then Rafael Marques de Morais must be doing a lot right. Despite facing constant intimidation and prison ever since he condemned government embezzlement in 1999, the investigative journalist has continued to expose high-level corruption, putting himself in the firing line of governmental ire, interrogation and legal action. In the face of high personal risk, Marques continues to fight for a better Angola.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

## Solange Lusiku Nsimire

The fearless fighter



As the fearless editor of *Le Souverain*, an independent newspaper in South Kivu, Solange Nsimire has been threatened and intimidated countless times. She has had to go into hiding and, on one occasion, when a group of armed men invaded her home in search of her, she escaped by pretending to be a confused shoe-seller. But all this hasn't diminished her resolve to challenge power, expose corruption and highlight abuse in the conflict-prone region. In an environment in

which journalists are encouraged to stay quiet, Nsimire has the courage to speak up. "I like to swim against the current and see what's going on the other side," she says. "And that's why I'm rarely tolerated."



ZAMBIA

## Kwangu Liwewe

The woman who knows Africa

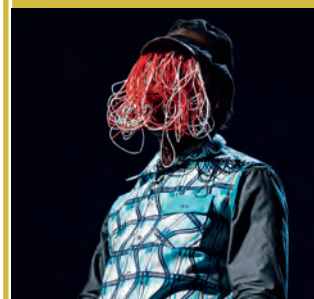
This year, Kwangu Liwewe has covered the continent's biggest stories, making a name for herself as a formidable woman in a male-dominated industry, as well as pushing the envelope for aspiring journalists. Liwewe is the executive producer and anchor of *Africa 360*, a current affairs show on eNCA, which broadcasts to Africa and the UK, as well as being the channel's West Africa Bureau chief.

GHANA

## ANAS AREMEYAW ANAS

The namer, shamer and jailer

In his native Ghana, and increasingly across the continent, the name Anas rings out with a mythic quality. Few know what the undercover journalist looks like, but his crusades to expose corruption and stand up for the most marginalised in society are renowned. On his mission to name, shame and jail, Anas has exposed cocoa smugglers, people traffickers, murderous witch doctors and many more. Long may we continue to hear his name but never see his face.



"Journalism is about results. It's about affecting your community or your society in the most progressive way."

Anas Aremeyaw Anas



SOUTH AFRICA

## Chester Missing

### The straight-talking puppet

Chester Missing is a double Emmy Award-nominated social commentator, political interviewer, and comedian. He's also a puppet. 2014 has seen him write a book and develop into an indispensable voice

in South African society, speaking sometimes uncomfortable truths about power, race and white privilege, while humorously challenging the country's political elite.



Chester Missing interviewing Blade Nzimande, South Africa's Higher Education Minister and General Secretary of the South African Communist Party

NIGERIA

## Tolu Ogunlesi

The journalist, comedy writer and poet

Award-winning writer, journalist and poet Tolu Ogunlesi has added another string to his bow. Writing for the satirical Nigerian political comedy show *Ogas at the Top*, he has adapted his political analysis and flair with words to poke fun at Nigeria's ruling class. It's very funny, but deadly serious work.



NIGERIA

## Ikenna Azuike

The joker

If Jon Stewart had an African compatriot, it would be the Nigerian/British satirical journalist Ikenna Azuike. Tackling the most pressing issues facing Africa in his YouTube show *What's Up Africa?*, Azuike engages viewers with dynamic commentary and absurd skits, to look past the façade of African politics. If the current views on YouTube are anything to go by, *What's Up Africa?* is destined to be a viral sensation in 2015.







▼  
SOUTH AFRICA

## THABANG MOTSEI

The African journalist in Moscow

As a smart, and slightly rebellious, young girl growing up on the sweltering streets of Soweto, few would have predicted Thabang Motsei would end up living in the swirling snow of Russia. But in her role as a correspondent and anchor for global news network RT (formerly known as Russia Today), that's exactly what happened. Motsei is certainly not one to shy away from new challenges and this year not only had to confront the challenge of distilling Russian politics in a particularly complex and eventful year, but also got to document her adventures as she travelled across Siberia.



SOUTH AFRICA

## Zapiro

The feared cartoonist

Sometimes it requires long treatises to diagnose the maladies of a nation, but sometimes, with the right skilful hand and satirical eye,

they can be summed up in an image. This is exactly what cartoonist Jonathan Shapiro, better known as Zapiro, has been doing for two decades, capturing, criticising and making fun of South Africa's rich and powerful in the pages of the country's biggest newspapers.

NIGERIA

## Jason Njoku

The man behind the Netflix of Africa

They say the simple ideas are often the best, and in *iRoko TV*, Jason Njoku has come up with a corker. *iRoko TV* combines the vast output of Nollywood, one of the world's most productive film industries, with the rise of the Internet by digitalising films and making them accessible to subscribers across the world. It has been dubbed the "Netflix of Africa", has millions of viewers, and seems set to get bigger and bigger.



TANZANIA

## Godfrey 'Gado' Mwapwemba

The political cartoonist

With a career that spans over 20 years, Gado's contribution to the art of satire is almost unparalleled. Not one to adhere to social boundaries, Gado's cartoons have provoked readers to view current events through a different lens. His popular Kenyan political-satirical puppet show, *XYZ*, shows the same spirit, and is further testament to the power of humour as a tool for critiquing real-life issues and perceptions.







SOUTH AFRICA

## Ferial Haffajee

### The free speech fighter

As a former editor of South Africa's *Mail & Guardian* and current editor of *City Press*, Ferial Haffajee has encountered more than her fair share of intimidation and controversy as she has fought to protect free speech and break important stories. In recognition of this impressive legacy, the unflappable editor was this year named as one of the recipients of the International Press Freedom Award by the Committee to Protect Journalists.



SOUTH AFRICA

## BRANKO BRKIC

### The media maverick

In the busy, boisterous and often blustery world of journalism, it is rare to encounter a genuine breath of fresh air. But that is exactly what the *Daily Maverick* has been. Steered by hands-on editor Branko Brkic, the South African online newspaper has gathered together some of the smartest, liveliest and feistiest contributors around and built a reputation for being the go-to place for insightful analysis and in-depth features.



ZIMBABWE

## Trevor Ncube

### The media mogul

Trevor Ncube believes that change has to start with a conversation, and as the man in charge of four newspapers in Zimbabwe and one of the biggest media organisations in South Africa, he is well-placed to facilitate that percolation of ideas. African media is getting bigger, louder, and ever more fearless, and the Zimbabwean media mogul is in pole position to help drive this trend.



## Media under threat

Journalism is not a crime

In most African countries, freedom of the press is always under threat. Too often, we only hear about the difficulties facing our brave reporters when, for one reason or another, an individual or a group of journalists becomes a *cause célèbre*. But we should remember that the famous examples of imprisoned, harassed, and even killed journalists are just the tip of the iceberg. And why are journalists attacked so? Because the pen is mighty. Each crackdown on the media is really an expression of the influence of the press. If it weren't important, it wouldn't be so much under attack.

We remain in solidarity with all our courageous colleagues.





KENYA

## Lupita Nyong'o

The African icon

2014 was Lupita's year. In February her dreams were validated when she won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role as Patsy in *12 Years a Slave*. An emerging beauty and fashion icon, Lupita was also appointed ambassador for Lancôme cosmetics. She has bagged the film rights for Adichie's *Americanah*, and she is set to feature in the upcoming Star Wars film. 2015 may belong to Lupita as well.

SOUTH AFRICA

## Trevor Noah

Africa's favourite funnyman

Trevor Noah's irreverence continues to entertain a global audience, best exemplified by his tour across southern Africa and his appearances on prominent shows such as the *Late Show with David Letterman*. A 2014 Personality of the Year nominee at the MTV Africa awards, Noah has also sold the most DVDs of any comedian on the continent. What will he do next?



NIGERIA

## Chiwetel Ejiofor

The Hollywood A-lister

The star of *12 Years a Slave* didn't win the Oscar for best actor in the end, but that hasn't slowed down Chiwetel Ejiofor's slow but steady conquering of Hollywood. This year saw the international release of *Half of a Yellow Sun*, directed by Biyi Bandele, while next year he will play a Cold War scientist in the post-apocalyptic *Z For Zachariah* and an intrepid space traveller in Ridley Scott's *The Martian*. Perhaps even more excitingly, the Nigerian actor is also being tipped to play James Bond's next nemesis.





"I am on cloud 9, it's been one of the best years of my life, it's been fantastic.. I just feel so blessed."

Sophie Okonedo



NIGERIA

## SOPHIE OKONEDO

The actor who dominated Broadway

"What happens to a dream deferred?" Langston Hughes once wrote. Nigerian-British actor Sophie Okonedo would not know, despite taking to the stage as Ruth Younger in the revival of *The Raisin in the Sun*, whose title comes from the same Hughes poem. Okonedo's dreams have readily come true. She won the 2014 Tony Award for Best Performance by an Actress, and received a personal backstage visit from the impressed Obamas. Not a bad way to spend 2014.

KENYA

## Jim Chuchu

The unique voice



As part of the innovatively unconventional band, *Just a Band*, Jim Chuchu had already marked himself out as a unique creative presence, a reputation he maintained with his fantastical 2013 short film *Homecoming* and post-apocalyptic photography projects. But this year, he took his non-mainstream creativity in a brave and controversial new direction with the critically-acclaimed *Stories of Our Lives*, a film made up of five fictional vignettes based on true stories about life as part of the LGBTI community in Kenya.

MAURITANIA

## Abderrahmane Sissako

The master director

Abderrahmane Sissako, the Mauritanian director who grew up in Mali, already had an international reputation for mesmerising filmmaking. But his heartrending, human, and at times humorous 2014 film *Timbuktu* (see pages 96-7) has elevated him to new levels of admiration. The film, which won the Prize of the Ecumenical Jury and the François Chalais Prize at the Cannes Film Festival, follows the stories of people struggling, rebelling and striving to maintain their humanity under Islamist occupation in northern Mali.





NIGERIA

## Chimamanda Adichie

### The happy feminist

This year, the cinematic release of *Half a Yellow Sun*, an adaptation of Adichie's second novel, garnered solid reviews, while her musings on feminism also drew many a crowd. Not only did she release a short book entitled *We Should All Be Feminists*, capturing the ideas articulated in her 2012 Ted Talk, but the same talk was sampled by Beyoncé in her 2014 single "Flawless", launching Adichie's discourse further into popular culture.



KENYA

## Ngugi wa Thiong'o

The literary giant



The Kenyan literary giant remains influential not just for the lasting power of his works, but because his ideas are arguably as relevant today as they've ever been. From his debut 1964 novel *Weep Not, Child*, about dispossession under colonialism, to his latest novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006), about a fictitious African dictatorship, Ngugi wa Thiong'o has continued to call for African unity and a decolonisation of the mind. Does it matter he still hasn't been awarded the Nobel Prize? What do you think the Gikuyu critic himself would say?



KENYA

## Yvonne Owuor

The novelist sprinkled with stardust

Binyavaga Wainaina described an early draft as "crap", and it may have taken seven years to reach completion, but Yvonne Owuor's novel *Dust* was worth every moment invested in it. The lyrical story of the Oganda family in Kenya,

spanning from the Mau Mau uprisings to the 2007/8 election violence, has been widely acclaimed by readers and critics alike for its breath-taking imagery and ambition. Let's hope we don't have to wait another seven years for Owuor's follow-up.

SOUTH AFRICA

## Athol Fugard

The final bow



During apartheid, the South African playwright fought the system by organising a multiracial theatre, supporting international boycotts, and addressing subversive themes. But this year, as the 82-year-old returned to the stage for what he says is the last time in his new semi-autobiographical play *The Shadow of the Hummingbird*, he is no longer reckoning with his country but himself. "I allowed the mystery and splendour to slip away through my fingers," laments his ageing character Oupa. We should be grateful that we haven't let Fugard slip away through ours just yet.



NIGERIA

## Wole Soyinka

Nigeria's national conscience



When Wole Soyinka speaks, people listen. And when the 80-year-old writer and Africa's first Nobel Prize for Literature winner sees injustice, corruption or incompetence at work in his native Nigeria he is not afraid to speak. This year, he has been a fierce critic of the government's response to Boko Haram and has called for a new generation of Nigerians to step up. Any new leaders would do well to learn from this literary great.

KENYA

## Binyavanga Wainaina

The imagination catalyst

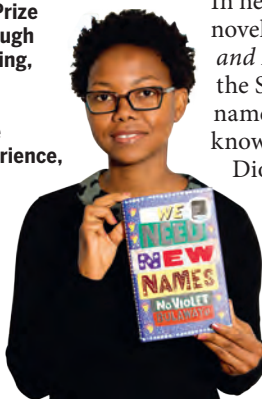


ZIMBABWE

## NoViolet Bulawayo

The young author who won't stop winning awards

**NoViolet is back on the list after amassing further awards this year for her debut novel *We Need New Names*, including the Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Legacy Prize for fiction. Through the eyes of Darling, NoViolet paints a jarringly vivid depiction of the immigrant experience, where dreams are shattered by the harsh realities of America, and the clash of cultures causes confusion.**



SENEGAL

## Fatou Diome

The adventurer away from home



In her critically acclaimed novels *The Belly of the Atlantic* and *Impossible de Grandir*, the Senegalese author made a name writing about what she knows best. But this year Fatou Diome veered out of her comfort zone when she was sent to Nepal where she wrote a touching five-part essay about the injustice and struggles facing refugees from Bhutan.

NIGERIA

## TEJU COLE

The Teju Cole of Teju Cole

It is difficult to pin down exactly what Teju Cole is. He is a writer, of course, a chronicler, tweeter and commentator. But from his critically-acclaimed 2011 novel *Open City*, to his short story composed of retweets, to his genre-defying novella/collection/memoir *Every Day is for the Thief* – about a Nigerian man who returns to Lagos after having moved to the US – Cole escapes easy categorisation. In the spirit of his parody of CNN's Ebola coverage, maybe it is easiest then, and most accurate, to just say he is the Teju Cole of Teju Cole.

**"I want to live a life of a free imagination. I want to work with people around this continent to make new exciting things."**

Binyavanga Wainaina







NIGERIA

## Davido

The new face of African music

Nigerian artist Davido has had a stellar year. Not only did he win the 2014 MTV Africa award for best artist and best male, he was also named BET's best international act of the year, and is the only African artist to be nominated at the Soul Train Awards 2014, pitted against other international giants such as Shaggy and Ziggy Marley. Davido has truly "skelewu-d" his way to the top, and all before his 22nd birthday.

SOUTH AFRICA

## SpoeK Mathambo

The fresh prince of township tech

A few years back, the young Johannesburg musician coined the term "township tech" to refer to his inventive brand of grime-dubstep-house-electronica fusion. His first two albums won him critical acclaim and a handful of prestigious awards. But this year, SpoeK Mathambo turned the spotlight onto other musicians in his documentary *Future Sounds of Mzansi* as he searched for the princes and princesses of countless other innovative strains of South African electronic music in townships across the country.



BENIN

## Angélique Kidjo

Auntie Africa

As well as publishing the inspirational memoir *Spirit Rising: My Life, My Music*, releasing an album dedicated to African women, and taking a prominent role in the ground-breaking People's Climate Change March this year, Angélique Kidjo also put on a concert in tribute of Miriam Makeba. And if there is one person qualified to inherit the title "Mama Africa" from her late friend – or perhaps be baptised Auntie Africa – it is the celebrated, multi-lingual Grammy-winning singer, activist and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, Angélique.



GHANA

## David Adjaye

The starchitect

Like many of the grand and mesmerising buildings he designs, there is a depth and diversity in David Adjaye's work which has to be seen to be believed. Echoing his own globe-trotting upbringing, the architect has been working on diverse projects in countries all across the world. From the Moscow School of Management, to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington DC, to the Cape Coast Slavery Museum in Ghana, Adjaye continues to design structures as impressive as his reputation.





TANZANIA

## Flaviana Matata

Beauty queen turned high fashion model

Flaviana Matata stunned the world when she defied traditional beauty norms with her shaved head at the Miss Universe 2007 competition, where she came sixth. The model has consistently knocked down barriers, landing fashion campaigns with both commercial and editorial brands, which is no mean feat. It is rare to be successful in both industries, proving that Matata's beauty, and the way in which she harnesses it, is appreciated on a universal level.



SOUTH AFRICA

## David Tlale

The king

The king of fashion David Tlale will not be dethroned anytime soon. His Spring/Summer 2015 collection, opened by Tyson Beckford, was revealed at New York fashion week, and showcased at the Mercedes Fashion Week Africa last month. The collection, a juxtaposition of ethereal silhouettes and more structured pieces, aptly named *Feminine Allure*, was both powerful and elegant, and demonstrated why Tlale is so deserving of his crown.

KENYA

## Diana Opoti

The fashion pan-Africanist

Television host and fashion PR strategist Diana Opoti set out on what she called "a personal challenge" this year – to wear African designs from her wardrobe for 100 days straight. The results were mind-blowing. The campaign, well received on social media for showcasing the diverse aesthetics of African designers and for demonstrating to the public how the clothes can be worn by anyone, was also a savvy mix of marketing and market research for various African brands. Diana has launched a second campaign, and with it, she will undoubtedly continue to revolutionise the fashion industry, one Instagram at a time.



"I believe that it's not just a particular race that wears fashion... Everyone under the sun should."

David Tlale





KENYA

## Boniface Mwangi

The eye of the people

After years of intimidation and risking his life to publicise and fight government corruption and injustice, Kenya's most prominent photojournalist-cum-activist decided this year that enough is enough. Having led many of Kenya's most dramatic protests in recent years, from carrying 49 coffins around parliament to drawing graffiti on the streets of Nairobi, Boniface Mwangi says he has decided to get off the streets. This move has left many Kenyans disappointed, but Mwangi has vowed to continue fighting for change, just in less risky ways.



GHANA

## El Anatsui

The junk sculptor

When most people spot a discarded bottle cap, rusty nail or block of driftwood, they see junk. But not El Anatsui. For the celebrated Ghanaian sculptor, these everyday materials are the pieces of the puzzle that make up the grand mosaic of his powerfully mesmerising works. Drawing on the artistic traditions of West Africa, El Anatsui's ambitious and varied sculptures engage with the region's rich cultural present and past, drawing the acclaim of admirers all around the world.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

## BALOJI

The maestro on tour

Baloji takes to stages with the swaggering, strutting style of a sapeur and brings a sound that fuses the stirring sounds of the Congolese rumba and soukous with the sharp edge of modern hip-hop, funk and rap. And this year, accompanied by L'Orchestre de la Katuba, the Congolese musician has been taking to a lot of stages in a lot of countries. His eclectic style and conscious message is spreading and it seems audiences cannot get enough.





DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

## Sindika Dokolo

The gentleman opening a new frontier of African art

He has one of the largest African collections of contemporary art, and served as a keynote speaker at the 1:54 forum this year. Sindika Dokolo is a businessman whose passion for African art is opening a new frontier in the industry. Determined to not only keep contemporary African art on the continent, but to also allow the public to access the works of the most important artists – African or otherwise – Dokolo is fostering a new appreciation for art and painting a bright future for emerging artists.



SOUTH AFRICA

## Mafikizolo

The duo who get Africa dancing

After nearly 15 years in the music industry, the South African duo infiltrated the African market with their 2013/2014 hit, “Khona” and became the biggest group on the continent. Comprised of Theo Kgosinkwe and Nhlanhla Nciza, Mafikizolo, the band has exposed the world to South African house music, influencing emerging artists to incorporate the genre into their work. Their latest single, “Tchelete”, featuring Davido, is another hit, and another reason why the duo had to make our list.

“We wanted to sell Africa through the Khona video...it was a very simple concept; embrace Africa, and embrace who we are as Africans.”

Mafikizolo



SOUTH AFRICA

## Hugh Masekela

The old man with young blood

He's still got it. Over 50 years since his first album, 60 years since he first picked up a trumpet, and 75 years since he was born in a township of Witbank, South Africa, the world-famous Afro-Jazz pioneering, protest-song singing, African icon and flugelhornist Hugh Masekela has still got it. With a dry wit, a wide smile and a level of energy befitting of a teenager, Masekela continues to wow and charm crowds across the world with his exuberant performances.





KENYA

## Julius Yego

The self-taught athlete

He taught himself how to throw a javelin through clips on YouTube, and this year he won two gold medals. Julius Yego is defying athletic tradition in Kenya, and doing a very good job of it. Born in the Rift Valley, the home to numerous world-class runners, Yego decided he wanted to be different when he picked up the javelin and never looked back. His gold at the Commonwealth Games this year saw him beat the favourite and Olympic gold medalist Keshorn Walcott of Trinidad and Tobago, and his second gold medal at the Africa Championships was less than a metre shy of the national record. Yego is certainly one to watch.



NIGERIA

## Blessing Okagbare

The golden girl

It's been a golden year for the Nigerian athlete. In the Commonwealth Games, she left her rivals for dust, winning gold in the 100m in a tournament record, before repeating the feat in the 200m. A couple of weeks later, she picked up two more gold medals in the African Championships in Morocco, in the 100m and 4 x 100m relay. Winning gold is becoming a habit for the Nigerian.



ETHIOPIA

## Tirunesh Dibaba

The baby-faced destroyer

Perhaps the scariest thing about the Ethiopian long-distance runner, apart from her nickname "the baby-faced destroyer", is that her appetite for victory shows no signs of letting up. The 29-year-old holds the 5,000m world record, five World Championships titles and five Olympic medals (three of them gold), and she has now turned her attention to running marathons. She could only come third in the 2014 London marathon, but that's not bad for a first-timer.



KENYA

## Dennis Kimetto

The fastest man in the world

In the ever-intensifying battle between Kenya's marathon runners, Dennis Kimetto took the plaudits this September in Berlin as he beat fellow Kenyan Emmanuel Mutai and broke the world record previously held by his other compatriot and rival, Wilson Kipsang. Kimetto is the first man in history to run a marathon in under 2 hours 3 minutes. And at 30, he has years left at the top.



BOTSWANA

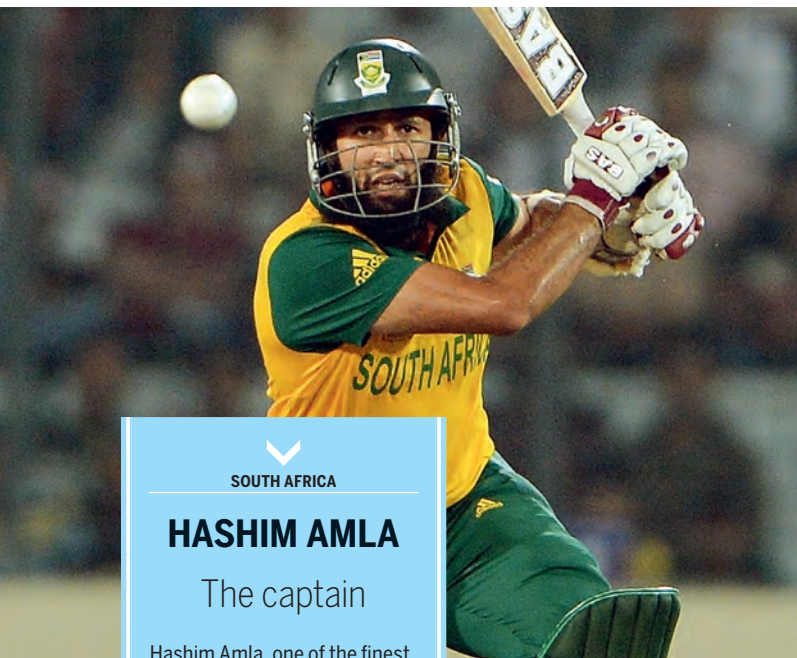
## Nijel Amos

The young pretender comes good

The 20-year-old middle distance runner looks set to be one half of an epic rivalry that could play out for years to come. In the exceptionally fast 800m final in the London 2012 Olympics, Kenya's David Rudisha stormed to victory, beating Botswana's Nijel Amos in second. But since then, Amos has been closing the gap, and in the Commonwealth Games this year, he knocked Rudisha off his perch. Get ready for some very fast 800m races in 2015 and beyond.







SOUTH AFRICA

## HASHIM AMLA

The captain

Hashim Amla, one of the finest batsmen of his generation, made South African sporting history in June by becoming his country's first non-white permanent Test captain. His predecessor, Graeme Smith, is a tough act to follow, but Amla immediately won round the team and the public with his calm authority that many will recognise from his batting. His impact was swift, leading his team to the top of the world rankings by beating Sri Lanka on their home patch for the first time since 1993.

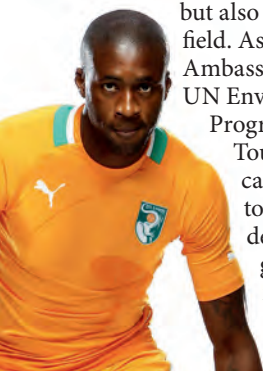
CÔTE D'IVOIRE

## Yaya Touré

The midfielder tackling agriculture

He's better known for his surging runs at the opposition and bossing the play, but this year the Manchester City star has been influential not just in the midfield

but also the maize field. As a Goodwill Ambassador for the UN Environmental Programme, Yaya Touré has been calling on Africans to come together to demand that their governments invest more in agriculture.



SOUTH SUDAN

## Luol Deng

The NBA veteran

After ten successful years playing for the Chicago Bulls, Luol Deng is now a forward for the Miami Heat. A British citizen born in present day South Sudan, Deng is no stranger to change and is set to surpass his scoring average for the 2014-2015 season. Together with teammate Dwyane Wade, will Deng push the Heat towards a fifth consecutive NBA final?



NIGERIA

## Asisat Oshoala

The female football star of the future

The young Nigerian football star stole the spotlight at the 2014 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup, where she was not only the top goalscorer, but hailed as the player of the tournament. Oshoala's upward trajectory towards greatness will recommence when she plays for Nigeria's Super Falcons at the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup. Still only 20, Asisat is on course to become Africa's finest female footballer. Watch out for her.



NIGERIA

## Vincent Enyeama

The show-stopping shot-stopper

Africa's image didn't fare all that well in the 2014 World Cup amidst reports of pay disputes, player strikes and alleged match-fixing. But one man who came away with a greatly enhanced reputation was Nigeria's athletic, exuberant, heroic goalkeeper. It is unlikely Nigeria would have reached the knock-out stages without Vincent Enyeama's lightning-fast reactions and full-stretch fingertip saves.

