

# Will South Africa Lead? President Ramaphosa Has a Choice

by David Cherry and Ramasimong Phillip Tsokolibane

*We dedicate this article to the memory of our coworker Douglas DeGroot, who died unexpectedly while we were still writing.*

Nov. 3—At the summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Beijing in September, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa spoke as co-chair with China’s President Xi Jinping. The summit had brought together almost all African heads of state or government, and South Africa’s pre-eminent position as co-chair marked its importance in Africa. As the continent’s only full-set economy, South Africa has a special responsibility to function as the engine and gateway for Africa’s development.

South Africa has more scientists, engineers, and technical specialists per thousand of population than any other African country. South Africa’s rail grid is much denser than any other in Africa. It is the only country on the continent with a nuclear power plant.

President Ramaphosa, speaking for the African side at the FOCAC summit, said in part (combined excerpts):

We look to China as a valuable and committed partner in advancing [the African Union’s] Agenda 2063.... It is in pursuit of this vision that we embrace China’s ‘Belt and Road’ initiative.... We have observed with interest and admiration China’s remarkable economic ascendance... We applaud its achievements in social development, lifting millions of people out of poverty... There are many valuable lessons that Africa can learn from China’s impressive growth model and its approach to meeting the needs of



Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa (left) and Xi Jinping, President of China, at the FOCAC summit, September 2018.

its people.... We welcome the fact that, in addition to trade, China has become a major investor in the continent.

President Ramaphosa spoke well as the representative of Africa’s governments. But did he, the President of South Africa, speak for his own government?

In the months since Ramaphosa became President on February 15, his government’s actions have been inconsistent with strong, enduring cooperation with China—the China that Ramaphosa had praised for its “impressive growth model and its approach to meeting the needs of its people.” The discrepancy is prominently shown in his government’s preliminary moves toward privatizing major elements of South Africa’s state sector and its rejection of new nuclear power plants—two features of the economy that are necessary for the kind of cooperation with China that Ramaphosa praised.

Ramaphosa did not come to the Presidency without ties and obligations. Under apartheid in the 1980s, leading mining families loyal to the British—including the Menells, Ruperts, and Oppenheims—had chosen Ramaphosa to lead the new black trade union movement. Later, when the ban on the African National Congress

(ANC) was lifted in 1990, these same families were able to place him among the ANC leaders with whom they would negotiate the transfer of power to black majority rule.

If Ramaphosa hopes to make South Africa a partner in China's Belt and Road Initiative, not only in word, but also in deed, he will have to free himself from the influence of these longtime guiding patrons. There are many who would eagerly help him to do so. But so far, it is these patrons' imperatives and interests that have been generously served by the government's actions. South Africa's national elections will take place in May or June of next year. Should Ramaphosa, currently an interim President,

become the next elected President, he may have only months in which to reverse the current direction of the country and establish his dedication to the common good. As the leader of the Patriotic Alliance party, Gayton McKenzie, puts it, "Black people live in squalor. . . . You must be mad if you think this will be tolerated forever."

South Africans have witnessed the forced resignations of Presidents Mbeki and Zuma, and could possibly arrange a forced resignation of their own choosing.

But it is also not beyond imagination that President Ramaphosa could take control and implement a South African version of China's "impressive growth model," for meeting the needs of South Africa's people. In September, Ramaphosa met U.S. President Donald Trump at a lunch on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York. He must have gotten a sense of President Trump's commitment to friendly relations with China and Russia. Ramaphosa may also benefit by noting that Italy's new government, under Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, while collaborating with Trump, has rejected the European Commission's imperious economic domination.<sup>1</sup> There is the proof that economies (such as South Africa's), formerly dependent on the London and Wall Street money centers, no longer exist in an economically unipolar world.

1. See Claudio Celani, "Strategic Shift: Italy Promotes the FDR Model, Repudiates Austerity," *EIR*, Oct. 26, 2018, pp. 34-37.



GCS

Former President Jacob Zuma (center) on site for the opening of Medupi Power Station Unit 6, Aug. 30, 2015. Medupi is a large, coal-fired power plant.

## The Government's Record Since February

Over the past months, the British-driven network in party and government has been removing officeholders and political figures who might oppose a program to dismantle the state sector, including crucially the state-owned electric power company, Eskom. Eskom is the beating heart of the state sector, its premier institution when the Afrikaners first built it, and essential to South African sovereignty. The British want to see Eskom broken up into parts and sold off.

*Cheap, abundant electrical energy is the foundation stone of an industrial economy. To privatize Eskom is to destroy it as an engine of national development, which would also mean eliminating it as the best platform for a further nuclear-power build. And such an increase in nuclear power is necessary to ensure South Africa's sovereignty.* One of the authors of this article, R.P. Tsokolibane, as leader of LaRouche South Africa, has taken the point for more nuclear power, and has warned of the British total onslaught, at great risk to himself.

The British got rid of one obstacle, Eskom Acting CEO Matshela Koko, a thirty-year Eskom veteran, through a campaign of legal harassment. On February 20, just days after Ramaphosa became president, the CEO of Rothschild South Africa, Martin Kingston, wrote to Koko's successor at Eskom, Phakamani Hadebe, proposing that "an immediate priority . . . should be an independent assessment of the financial

position of Eskom, so as to assist in the development of a viable plan to restore confidence.” In his lengthy [letter](#), marked “Strictly Private and Confidential,” Kingston urged upon him Rothschild’s qualifications to perform this “independent” assessment.

As for [Hadebe](#) himself, he arrived at Eskom from Barclays Africa, where he was CEO for investment banking (speculative investing) at this British imperial institution. He is the first Eskom CEO to be a career banker. Praised by that enemy of national sovereignty and the state sector anywhere, the IMF, Hadebe’s experience overseeing state-owned enterprises (SOEs) has been largely from working at the National Treasury under Finance Minister Trevor Manuel, ever loyal to the City of London, who used to enjoy quarterly meetings with Rothschild. Today, Trevor Manuel is CEO Kingston’s associate as Chairman of Rothschild South Africa. It’s a small world.

Days after the Rothschild letter, on February 26, Ramaphosa appointed Pravin Gordhan as Minister of Public Enterprises, the man former President Jacob Zuma had fired one year earlier as Finance Minister, precisely because of his persistent obstruction of state-sector major projects, including the planned nuclear build. The reaction of the British crowd to Gordhan’s firing had been worse than a tantrum—the sky was about to fall. The British-steered press, such as South Africa’s *Times*, *Mail & Guardian*, and *Daily Maverick*, portrayed Gordhan as a national hero.

South African commentator Phapano Phasha has recently again identified Britain’s hegemony in the South African economy, in her [article](#) now reprinted on P.D. Lawton’s blog, AfricanAgenda.net. What further illustration of that hegemony could be more dramatic, than these developments targeting Eskom?

## The British in South African History

Recall the history. Nathan Rothschild, the first Lord Rothschild, was present at the Creation, so to speak. That banker-friend of the British Royal Family, along with courtier Reginald Brett who had the Queen’s ear, and a few others, received Cecil Rhodes at Rothschild’s country house in February 1890 to hear Rhodes’ plan for a secret society to extend British Rule to the farthest corners of the Earth. They loved Rhodes’ idea. Brett, soon to be Lord Esher, noted that Rhodes seemed to be “quite unscrupulous”—perhaps he saw that as a plus. The secret society, formed a year later, soon obtained the support of the immensely powerful Cecil family,



cc/World Travel & Tourism Council

*Jabu Mabuza, now the chairman of Eskom. He has been CEO of AngloGold Ashanti, a British gold-mining multinational.*

headed then by Lord Robert Salisbury, and Lord Rothschild became a trustee of the society’s funds.

We know of the secret society thanks to Professor Carroll Quigley’s work, *The Anglo-American Establishment*, completed in 1949 but not published until 1981, after his death. Quigley had been in communication with members of the society, but apparently wrote without their knowledge. Lord Alfred Milner led the society after Rhodes’ death in 1902, and it was called “the Milner Group” from that time.

Eskom was founded in 1922 over howls of opposition from the British crowd, as was the founding of the state-owned steel company Iscor a few years later.<sup>2</sup> The expression in CEO Kingston’s letter, “an independent assessment of the financial position of Eskom,” must be understood to mean “independent of any influence other than that of the Empire.” But of course, Rothschild is not the only Empire-steered financial adviser in South Africa; there are other such “independent” advisers.

Indeed, recently appointed Eskom chairman, Jabu Mabuza, announced from London on October 8 that another imperial British bank, Lazard Brothers & Co., had been hired to assess which of Eskom’s assets could be sold. Lazard Brothers, from early on, was one of the great patrons of the imperial Milner Group and—a bit later—of the Milner Group’s creation, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, according to Quigley.

2. See “[British ‘State Capture’ of South Africa Must End!](#)” by David Cherry and Ramasimong Phillip Tsokolibane, *EIR* Aug. 25, 2017; and Alice Jacobs, *South African Heritage: A Biography of Dr. H.J. van der Bijl*, 1948, chapters 4-5.

Picture it: Here we have a newly appointed Eskom chairman, going to London and offering tribute to the Queen’s bankers, for their “help” in deciding which of South Africa’s limbs should be sawn off in the first round. This is not corruption; it is something far worse.

### An Ominous Pattern

The government’s actions have gone down hill from there. One day after the hiring of London-based Lazard Brothers, on October 9, Ramaphosa appointed—or was induced to appoint—Tito Mboweni as his Minister of Finance. Mboweni is no patriot. He had been Governor of the South African Reserve Bank in 2001, when a conspiracy of foreign exchange speculators was relentlessly driving down the South African rand. Mboweni had been quietly warned about these dirty operations, but did nothing. When the CEO of the South African Chamber of Business then blew the whistle, Mboweni flew into angry denial and demanded an apology, calling him a “populist.”

This British policy direction had also been confirmed when in April President Ramaphosa appointed—or was induced to appoint—Trudi Makhaya as his Economic Adviser. She has been promoting the “restructuring” of the state-owned enterprises, including privatizations. Rhodes Scholar Makhaya has held positions at Deloitte South Africa (Deloitte is one of the Big Four accounting and professional services multinationals) and Anglo-Gold Ashanti, the world’s third largest gold miner, both being British imperial operations in good standing. As recently as in her Nov. 25, 2015 [opinion column](#), Makhaya illustrated her breathtaking ignorance—or disregard—of Africa’s needs by attempting to dismiss the China model and praising the African continent as a market for Europe’s luxury goods.<sup>3</sup>

### Anti-Nuclear Folly, As in Brazil

The government is about to finalize a new 20-year Integrated Resource Plan that will probably exclude any new nuclear power plants. When the Zuma government had planned to spend well under \$70 billion on new nuclear power plants over perhaps 20 years, it was



*Tito Mboweni, newly appointed Finance Minister.*

World Economic Forum

a “scandal.” But now that the government is going to spend more than \$70 billion on intermittent wind and solar over the same period, but with facilities having less than half the lifespan of nuclear power plants, [there is no scandal](#). Because it is blessed by London. This suicidal horror show is likely to result in South Africa—now an energy exporter—becoming an energy importer of expensive liquefied natural gas as a back-up for the intermittent renewables.<sup>4</sup>

South Africa is thus increasingly suffering the fate of Brazil. Ever since Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff was overthrown in a regime-change coup and Michel Temer was made president, Brazil’s state sector, including nuclear power and other vital scientific and advanced industrial capabilities, has been steadily taken down by the same “anti-corruption” apparatus (under the name *Operação Lava Jato* or Operation Car Wash) which overthrew Rousseff. The British have sought to make the BRICS combination of developing countries ineffective by attacking its African and South American members—South Africa and Brazil.

### British Psychological Operations

The attack on Eskom and the rest of the state sector is only one prong of the current British strategy for retaining control of South Africa. Another important prong is a propaganda campaign to “re-educate” South Africans to accept the regime change that is taking place, under the guise of the Judicial Commission of

3. Similarly, in a Dec. 7, 2017 [opinion piece](#) in *Acumen*, while attempting to be more relevant, Makhaya dismisses any debate over “radical economic transformation” and proposes a vague, technocratic solution.

4. See *EIR*’s interview with Dr. Kelvin Kemm, Chairman of the Board of the South African Nuclear Energy Corporation, “[South Africa Builds on Its Nuclear Success](#),” *EIR*, May 11, 2018.



SABC

*Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo, chairman of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into State Capture.*

Inquiry into State Capture (the “Zondo Commission,” chaired by Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo), whose proceedings are being broadcast live on state television, SABC. The commission has been authorized by the High Court in Pretoria to run for two years!

Media that were likely to expose the Zondo Commission have been suppressed. The commission did not begin its hearings until African News Network (ANN7)—the only television station that could have consistently opposed it—was forced to shut down on April 30, 2018, on a pretext. The LaRouche South Africa website, with 20,000 visits per month and rising, was hacked and destroyed, also in April. The *New Age* newspaper, a sister to ANN7, ceased publication on June 28. And the British-steered media are blackballing the newly unemployed patriotic journalists.

In the televised hearings, which began on August 20, the public is being exposed to a spectacle intended to nail former President Zuma and his close allies to the cross, while developing evidence against them for criminal prosecution. Conviction first, then prosecution. He has already been convicted by the press, but now the courts will give that conviction the appearance of due process of law.

The South African courts have received help from the British-driven apparatus in the U.S. Department of

Justice and FBI that uses the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act to police the world. This apparatus played a leading role in bringing down Brazil’s Dilma Rousseff and imprisoning her ally, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (“Lula”), himself a former President of the country. But this apparatus is now suffering from exposure in the middle of its coup drive against President Trump, a coup attempt on behalf of the highest levels of British intelligence.

On August 31, the Zondo Commission heard testimony from two U.S. judicial hitmen, Joel



Wikipedia

*Joel Hellman, Dean of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service.*

Hellman, dean of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service; and Daniel Kaufmann, CEO of the Natural Resource Governance Institute, both of whom have travelled the world for years, lending their “expertise” in government corruption to commissions such as this, to give the appearance that corruption is the issue, when it is only the pretext for regime change. Years ago, these two helped to bring down the very popular Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori, who had effectively fought the Shining Path terrorists. He was judged to have

violated the rights of the terrorists. Fujimori has spent ten years in prison, and is in prison today.

Zuma’s crime? He attempted to move South Africa away from British control, by bringing the country into the BRICS, by planning to build new nuclear power plants to provide cheap, abundant energy, and by putting people he could trust in his cabinet and administration. Of course, he cannot be charged with that. He is accused of having attempted to take over the state for his personal benefit, as a kind of crime boss on steroids or (depending on tactics) of having tolerated the immigrant Gupta brothers’ attempt to do so.

Corruption is not the real issue. There has been a great deal of corruption in South Africa for two hundred years; it did not start with President Zuma or President Mbeki. The corruption and alleged corruption of the Guptas is at center stage now, but the real objective is putting Zuma—and his leading lieutenants in government and in the ANC—behind bars, while promoting

the narrative of the British-owned victors, to convince the South African people that “You can’t beat the system.” This and other forms of contempt shown to the man in the street—combined with the worsening poverty—may produce a social explosion, as *EIR* and LaRouche South Africa have warned.

### **Bell Pottinger’s Smoke and Mirrors**

But who are the Guptas? Over a period of years, President Zuma had accepted the “help” of Ajay, Atul, and Rajesh Gupta, immigrants from India in 1993, who own Oakbay Investments. They were, in fact, both help and hindrance. The Gupta brothers are unscrupulous, power hungry, and openly arrogant. As bulls in a china shop, they helped Zuma’s enemies to bring him (and themselves) into disrepute. They are alleged to have privately offered government positions, even the Finance Ministry portfolio, to individuals in exchange for favors, and to have boasted of their influence in government. Zuma—not to his credit—did not always know what they were doing, according to boastful private comments of the Guptas themselves.

In December 2015—after President Zuma fired Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene and replaced him with someone of his own free choosing—the British-loyal “financial community” and the mass media unleashed the furies of Hell on Zuma. At this point, the Guptas’ influence over the Presidency was first described in the press as a “shadow government.” Then events moved quickly. In early 2016, it emerged in the press that the Guptas had hired the British public relations firm, Bell Pottinger, to burnish President Zuma’s reputation and their own, in response to the fury unleashed on Zuma. Bell Pottinger was at that time a high-flying PR and “reputation management” firm founded by Lord Timothy Bell, who had been Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s PR adviser. Lord Bell led the team that flew to South Africa to secure the Gupta account in January 2016.

In May 2016, a huge cache of email traffic between the Gupta brothers and Bell Pottinger—and some between Zuma’s son Duduzane and Bell Pottinger—was mysteriously stolen from the Guptas and allegedly leaked to the *Daily Maverick*. The theft may have actually been done through a collaboration between Bell Pottinger and the *Sunday Times*—a prestigious publication entitled to a *Guinness Book of Records* entry for its sheer volume of fake news.

These emails “prove the Guptas run South Africa,” proclaimed the *Sunday Times* on May 28, 2016. Bell

Pottinger was then attacked with great indignation by the British for having helped the pariah Guptas, and Zuma—and by dodgy-dirty means, to boot. The firm had fed racial and party tensions through its work for the Guptas. It was also manipulating Wikipedia articles and manufacturing content for tweets, chat rooms, blogs, and news articles through its Gupta account—procedures we have come to expect from intelligence agencies.

It is inconceivable that the Bell Pottinger connection worked the way the British “narrative” claims. From the time the Guptas hired Bell Pottinger, the Guptas became—wittingly or not—double agents, steerable by Bell Pottinger for the purpose of destroying Zuma and his lieutenants. Some South Africans noticed this—even if only as a possibility—beginning in 2017.

Bell Pottinger was no stranger to “black” and “gray” PsyOps. It had played a part in crafting for MI6 a phony statement attributed to Alexander Litvinenko on his death-bed, according to which he blamed Putin for his murder by poisoning. The firm also had a \$540 million contract with the CIA to make fake Arabic-language propaganda films about al-Qaeda for use in the war in Iraq. This work was vetted by the CIA, the Pentagon, and the U.S. National Security Council, according to Lord Bell himself, shortly after his Lordship left the firm in August 2016 and began contributing to its demise in his comments to the press. The firm did collapse as collateral damage in this British operation to “save” South Africa for the Empire—a small price to pay. Its “support” for the Guptas and Zuma could not be allowed to appear to have been intelligence tradecraft—which it was.<sup>5</sup>

Judge Zondo has now admitted into evidence three computer hard drives that contain the emails stolen from the Guptas. But which emails are genuine, and which have been fabricated or manipulated?

### **How Can Africa Become the Next China?**

The leader that South Africa needs is one who asks, and can answer this question: “How can Africa become the next China?” South Africa requires a president who operates in the manner that Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma did as Chairwoman of the African Union Commission from 2012 to 2017. She crafted the plan for massive, inclusive, Africa-wide development on the levels of in-

5. The mainstream media are busy developing the cover story for Bell Pottinger’s South African operation, and now [portray its successes](#) to date as its “failures”—getting President Zuma out of office and preventing his intended successor, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, from being elected as ANC party president.



GCSIS

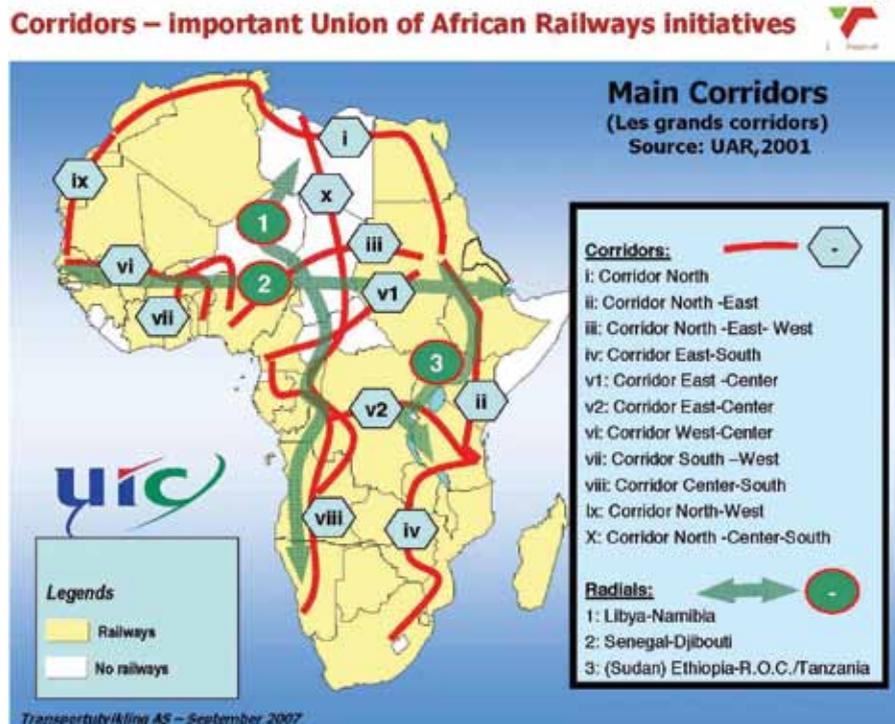
Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, founder of Agenda 2063 while Chair of the African Union Commission, 2012-2017.

Agenda 2063 should be at the center of political discussion in South Africa, and South Africa's President should be its champion. Why not help South Africans to lift their eyes—and the African continent—to the heavens?

The retrograde developments, seen in a longer view, and in world-political context, provide no reason to think that the British will prevail. They will not. Virtually all of Africa signed on to China's Belt and Road Initiative at the September summit of the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation. African governments have already seen the abundant benefits and have made their decisions.<sup>7</sup> Despite the assassination attempts against the presidents of Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, despite British interference in elections in Kenya and Zimbabwe, and despite the British attempt to mobilize anti-China agitation in Zambia and Nigeria, there is a strong tide flowing against British economic practice, a tide that knows no national boundaries.

Today the choice is President Ramaphosa's. But for how long? The majority of South Africans—in townships, shack dwellings, and rural areas—continue to be marginalized, sullen witnesses to the prosperity of a few. They are not fooled by the fine words of Rhodes Scholars. If Ramaphosa should champion what he called "China's impressive growth model and its approach to meeting the needs of its people," he will come to be loved as no South African leader has been loved since Mandela. But if his government continues on its current course, he will surely be pushed aside, to become

no more than a nasty memory.



Union of African Railways

Conceptual map of an African continental railway network, produced by the Union of African Railways in 2006, before the idea of a high-speed network was elaborated. No map of Agenda 2063's planned African Integrated High Speed Railway Network has yet been published.

frastructure, agriculture, manufacturing, scientific work, and cultural advance. She engaged in dialogue with China's President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang, and made that dialogue a permanent feature of the African Union. She created Agenda 2063, which has as its flagship project the African Integrated High Speed Railway Network (AIHSRN), and China has committed to the collaboration necessary to see it built.<sup>6</sup>

6. For the African Integrated High Speed Railway Network (AIHSRN),

see Hussein Askary and Jason Ross, *Extending the New Silk Road to West Asia and Africa*, Schiller Institute Special Report, November 2017, pp. 225-227. For Agenda 2063 more generally, see pp. 25-27 of the Special Report; the same passage appears in *EIR*'s [preview](#) of the report, *EIR*, Nov. 17, 2017, pp. 44-46. The 2017 official progress report for the AIHSRN and some other Agenda 2063 projects is [here](#).

77. For the FOCAC summit in Beijing in September, see Section III of *EIR*, Sept. 14, 2018. For the August BRICS summit in Johannesburg, see David Cherry, "BRICS Reaches Out to Africa, Africa Embraces BRICS," *EIR* August 10, 2018.