

Larbert Ebitu:

“We all Learned that we Shared Common Aspects”-



Interview conducted by: Sabrina Solomon

Among the papers presented during the ICES 2025 conference, one of the themes of self-reliance, sovereignty, and global power asymmetry was addressed by Mr. Larbert Ebitu in his presentation on “Emerging Geopolitical Alliances: Whither Africa?” Larbert Ebitu is a Political Affairs Analyst specializing in African geopolitical dynamics and pan-African issues. Based in Uganda, he has been featured on RT media and published widely in Uganda’s mainstream media on political affairs. He frequently contributes analyses on pan-African topics with Africa Interest media, where he explores Africa’s evolving role within global alliances. His work brings a critical perspective on the socio-political trends shaping Africa’s future within the context of multipolarity. He visited Eritrea for the first time to attend the ICES conference. Here are some excerpts from our conversation.

How was the conference?

The conference was amazing. There was a lot to be shared and learned. I attended presentations by people both from Eritrea and from other countries. All of the presentations and papers were extremely informative.

What significance do you think such conferences provide?

These conferences are significant because the experiences of one country may not be identical to those of another, but we can always learn from each other. This

particular conference was unique in that it involved people from various nations. It provided us with a platform to exchange ideas and experiences. During my presentation, for instance, some people had different opinions, but we all learned that we shared common aspects. This level of interaction wouldn't have been possible without the conference. The proximity of the listeners also made the experience more personal and engaging. It was enriching to sit next to the people I was speaking with and discussing ideas. So, the event planners did an amazing job in achieving this goal.



What was the paper you presented about and what was the aim behind your paper?

My paper was titled “Emerging Geopolitical Alliances: Whither Africa?” Africa is currently experiencing renewed global interest, meaning that the interest of Western countries, European nations, and even Gulf countries in Africa has intensified. This is the third wave of significant interest directed towards Africa. Looking back at history, the first wave of interest occurred when European powers decided to colonize and partition Africa. The second wave coincided with the Cold War between Russia and the United States. Now, we are in the third wave, with interest in Africa coming from all sides of the globe, from east to west and north to south. All of these powers are now developing strategies on how to engage with Africa. Metaphorically, Africa is now “wanted” from everywhere.

The question then becomes: What do we do as Africans, and where do we go from here? This is the fundamental question that my paper explores. Currently, the prevailing opinion is that African nations should carefully consider which alliances to join and how to best leverage the opportunities presented by these

alliances. However, I argue that this perspective is flawed. I believe that this perception of having numerous options is an illusion. African nations are not in control of the parameters within which these “options” are presented.

Therefore, my argument emphasizes the need for African nations to first take charge of the continent before engaging in discussions about external alliances. Unless we are strong internally, we cannot truly benefit from these external engagements. It is an illusion to think that we have genuine options when we do not have control over the fundamental conditions that shape those options.

The second part of my argument focuses on the potential destructiveness of these so-called opportunities presented by alliances. These alliances can distract us from addressing the critical internal issues that require our immediate attention. They often offer solutions that may not be the most beneficial for Africa. For example, direct foreign investment, while seemingly beneficial, can hinder the growth of local businesses.

While alliances may offer certain advantages, we must prioritize fundamental internal development. This includes establishing a unified foreign policy that addresses issues concerning Africa on the global stage. Another crucial step is the development of a unified military force that can contribute to the security and stability of African nations. These internal foundations are essential before effectively engaging with the external world.

You are active on social media concerning the topic of PanAfricanism. Tell me more about it please.

Yes, I write, blog, and provide commentary on both mainstream media and social media platforms. My focus is primarily on the positive aspects of PanAfricanism, emphasizing the shared values and common goals that unite African nations.

Many discussions about Africa tend to dwell on the negative aspects and the divisions that exist. However, we often overlook the many similarities that unite us. I often hear the argument that Africa is too heterogeneous. But consider the European Union; they are not a homogenous bloc, yet they have found ways to unite despite their differences.

We Africans also possess more similarities than differences. We need to recognize these shared values and focus on what binds us together. While acknowledging the existence of differences is important, the crucial question is how to live together despite these differences. This is the message I strive to convey through my social media engagement.

Do you think social media can be a tool or means of uniting Africans?

Yes, but it's important to acknowledge the limitations of social media. These platforms are not entirely within our control, as they can be shut down or manipulated.

However, social media has undeniably brought people closer. Traditional media like radio and newspapers are declining in influence. Social media has emerged as a powerful voice, allowing individuals to express themselves freely.

Mr. Larmbert, how can we change the negative and biased narratives about Africa and how can we solve this issue as Africans amongst ourselves?

The world today operates on the principle of "narrative warfare." Before any physical action takes place, the narrative battle must be won. This is how the world functions now. Before attempting a coup, for example, you must first win the support of others through narrative manipulation.

While limiting the flow of information to our people might seem like a solution, it is also a dangerous approach. I believe that good governance relies on trusting one's people to make informed decisions. However, it is equally important to protect them from misinformation and manipulation.

For Africa, a crucial step is to establish strong media houses and communication channels that prioritize African interests. Currently, Western media dominates the African media landscape, with their channels readily available even in remote villages. This widespread presence is a deliberate strategy to exert cultural influence.

This presents a significant challenge for Africa. However, we can leverage the tools available to us, such as social media, to build our own strong media platforms and counter these narratives.

Any final remarks?

This has been a truly valuable experience for me. It is my first time visiting Eritrea, and I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here. I particularly appreciate the peace and tranquility I have experienced, which is something I rarely encounter in other cities. I also greatly enjoyed the conference.

Thank you.

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