

INCLUSIVITY>

Use UN Security Council seat to promote empowerment of youth

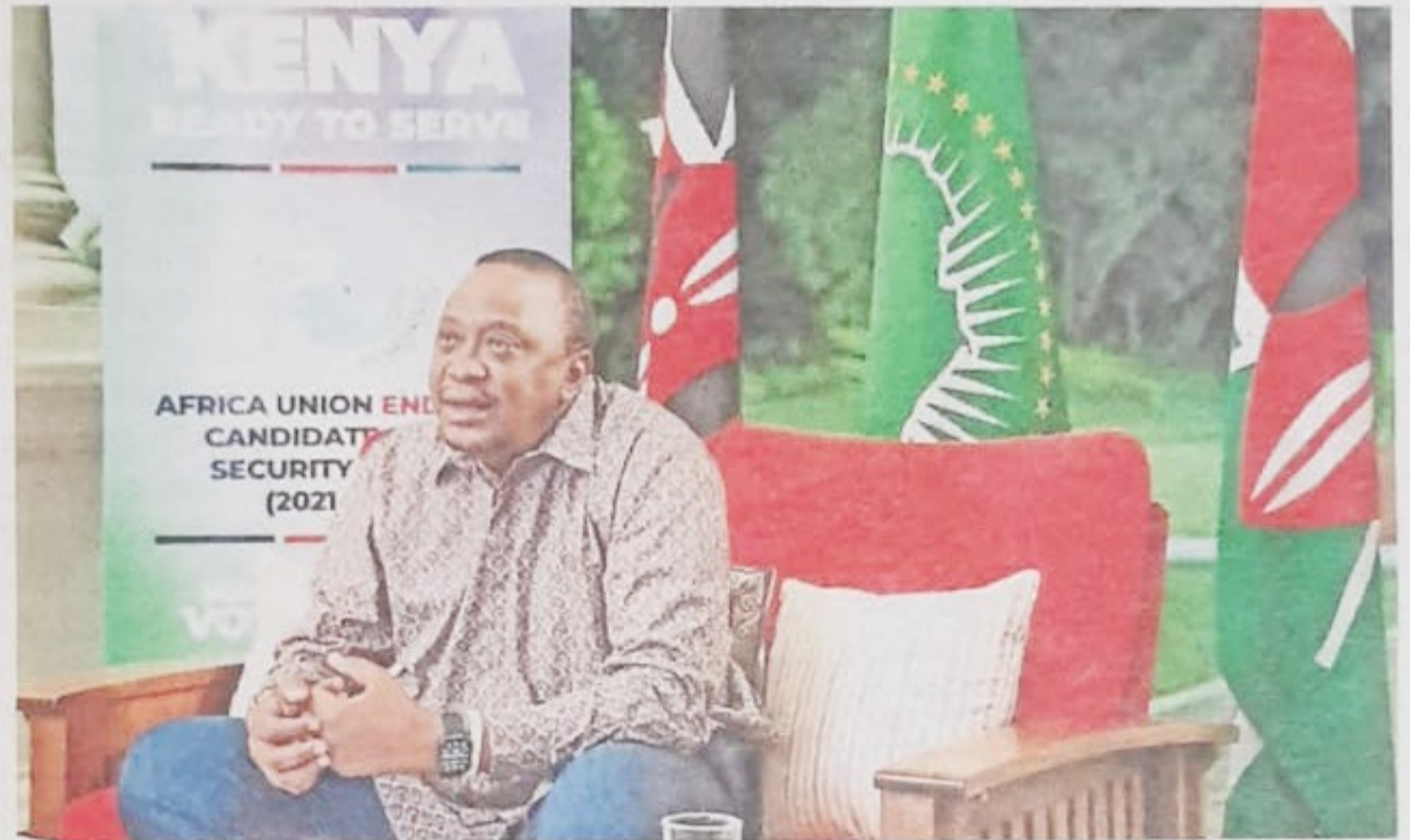
The two-round victory over Djibouti in the hotly contested election by 193 members for Kenya to become a non-permanent UN Security Council member is significantly timely for the African continent.

Kenya takes up the position when the focus on the continent as a crucial cog on the globe economy was fast gaining prominence. Africa is the second-fastest-growing continent, experiencing an average annual gross domestic product of 4.6 per cent for the period 2000-2016. For the five-year period to 2022, Africa's real GDP is projected to grow at 3.9 per cent annually.

However, on the flipside, providing better jobs, ensuring growth is sustainable and reducing inequalities has remained elusive for the continent. Therefore, there is a need for more engagement at a global level for various measures to improve its well-being.

Participation of the youth in governance has remained abysmal in Africa. But through numerous self-initiated programmes, young people have played a critical role in countering terrorist narratives at home and abroad. Kenya should engage the youth as partners to foster social cohesion and tolerance.

In particular, in 2015, the UNSC adopted Resolution 2250, which recognises the critical and positive role of young people in peace and security. It reinforces the need for their active participation and engagement in peace initiatives and the



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President Uhuru Kenyatta holds a virtual campaign meeting with permanent representatives of countries to the UN ahead of Wednesday's UNSC vote.

formulation of inclusive policies towards sustainable peace.

Resolution 2250 is the first one that is fully dedicated to the important role of the youth in the promotion of peace and security, integrated into participation, protection, prevention, partnership, disengagement and reintegration pillars. In addition, in 2016, to recommend effective responses at the local, national, regional and international levels, then-UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon commissioned an independent study on youth, peace and security.

Resolution 2419 of 2018 was the second by the UNSC on youth, peace and security and was unanimously adopted.

"The Missing Peace" study report, which is considered the blueprint for implementing

Resolution 2250, proposed ways of supporting youth-led peace building processes. It offered insights into inclusive approaches that could be used to engage youth in peace and security, recognising them as an indispensable asset in building lasting peace in societies rather than a challenge or problem.

Youth-led, youth-based peace-building organisations should be included in promoting a culture of peace by contributing towards SDG 16 on peace, stability and human rights. There is a need to harness the power of young people to make positive change.

World over, young people are driving the political agenda. The youth aren't waiting for change to happen; they are that change.

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