

CHAPTER 13

Trump 2.0, Forfeiting Global Leadership and Geopolitical Influence: Africa's Right to Look Left or Within

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Introduction

The real-estate business acumen and reality TV star Donald Trump, with no experience in government, entered politics advocating for draining the swamp in Washington and fixing a system that is rigged against Americans. He contended that the corrupt elites had sold out and prioritised the interests of foreigners, thereby compromising the interests of the American people. During his election campaign, Trump excoriated the United States (US) internationalism, labelling the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) outdated and US Western allies 'ripping off' the US through unjust trade practices and defence burden-sharing. More interestingly, Trump suggested that promoting the liberal international order would not be in America's interests (Wojczewski, 2020). Donald Trump's victory in the 2016 US presidential election was nothing short of a catastrophe for US global leadership status. Obama's foreign policy adviser Ben Rhodes spoke about a decline of the US-led global order (Schweller, 2018).

Since the end of communism in 1989, the US has acted as the global leader because of its sole unilateral hegemonic capabilities emanating from its soft and hard power. However, the US still retains its hard power attributes. For example, as of 2020, the US was still the largest economy in the world with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of approximately US\$21 trillion. Additionally, it is still the country with the largest military budget,

with a total budget of all other states' budgets combined. Interestingly, notwithstanding the hard power, the US's soft power relied solely on liberal values and principles, such as democracy, a free market, and human rights. Significantly, the US propelled its global leadership influence through making large material contributions to several multilateral entities such as the United Nations (UN) and its specialised agencies, the Bretton Woods Financial Institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Fund, International Monetary Fund [IMF]), the World Trade Organisation (WTO), NATO and others. The US intervened militarily in countries that experienced instability, such as the Balkans in the 1990s, the Middle East, specifically Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria throughout the 2000s and 2010s. In short, the US war on terror foreign policy provided the basis on which it acted as a global policeman, albeit with the concomitant controversies among its allies against its actions (Chung, 2020).

306 Despite the erstwhile administrations' efforts to retain and maintain the US global leadership position by providing a global public good in the global system, Trump 1.0 and 2.0 advanced retrenchment foreign policies to Make America Great Again (MAGA). The US has distanced itself from the world order it has immensely shaped. The MAGA foreign policy has questioned the worth of pre-existing US alliances and imposed tariffs on friends and foes. Additionally, it has severed ties with its human rights and democratic advocacy efforts worldwide and withdrawn from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Paris Climate Agreement, the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (Blackwill, 2020).

In summary, this retrenchment in foreign policy reverses years and decades of US investment in soft power, which has shaped and influenced the world. Interestingly, it does so in a context where China, the second largest economy in the world, actively engage multilateralism and Western allies and plays a preponderant role in the Global South, more especially Africa (Blackwill, 2020). This raises three fundamental research questions: Firstly, how have the Trump 1.0 and 2.0 foreign policies affected the US's global leadership position? More recently, Trump's return to the presidency in 2025 has been tumultuous, marked by a barrage of executive orders that further divide the US from the world it constructed

and shaped under the liberal paradigm (Letswalo, 2025). Secondly, what are the implications of US–China geopolitical competition in Africa? The latter has vast economic potential and rich commodities, including gold, diamonds, copper, oil reserves and cobalt, which attract major powers that establish strong links with the continent to exploit these coveted commodities and subsequently use them in the global market to enrich their respective economies (Qasim, 2023).

Finally, what could this mean for Africa's industrialisation and critical resources? The African continent possesses most of the critical minerals required for the transition to renewable energy, which constitutes the present global paradigm. Specifically, it holds 30 per cent of critical minerals, such as cobalt, copper, lithium, manganese and rare earth elements. It is significant for it to convert these commodities into resource-based industrialisation (Ouedraogo and Kilolo, 2024). The first and second questions are answerable through process tracing research design. The last question will utilise documentary analysis, specifically examining the African Green Mineral Strategy (AGMS) and African Mineral Development Centre (AMDC) as the panacea for its developmental complexities.

The chapter provides the historical background and a literature review on the role of US capabilities in maintaining a global leadership position. Secondly, it will succinctly discuss the methodology underpinning this study, focusing on the first research question: Trump 1.0 and 2.0 foreign policy and the US global leadership position. Next, the study will discuss the second research question, detailing the implications of Trump's 1.0 and 2.0 approaches to US–China geopolitical competition in Africa. Finally, it will discuss Africa's resource-based industrialisation opportunity.

Literature review

Beeson (2004), Clark (2009: 25), Falkner (2005: 585), Jonev, Berisa and Saranovic (2016) and Rehman (2023) contend that the US possesses considerable hard and soft power capabilities, making it a political force unlike any other country in the world. Indeed, the US emerged as a powerful state following the end of the Cold War, with no peer competitor.

Its global position is reminiscent of Britain in its mid-Victorian glory, but with a wider global reach (Newmann, 2011; Nye, 2002b). Moreover, the quest for global leadership has been integral to US strategy since 1945. This strategy was embedded in the notion that the US must extend abroad both its power, specifically political and economic institutions and values. Although it provided public goods to Western European states and Japan to aid in their recovery from the Second World War. It suppressed further competing powers within its sphere of influence. It maintained tight political control over its allies to tame from becoming strong enough to challenge its leadership. The prime objectives of these allies were to contain the spread of Soviet Union influence in the world (Layne, 1997).

Great powers were conventionally assessed through material capabilities indexed in the national material capability index (the use of coercion and payment) to exert hegemony in the international system (Goddard and Nexon, 2016; Ivanov, 2020). Hard power strategies lament the use of military intervention, coercive diplomacy and economic sanctions to enforce national interests. The realist school of international thought advocates for hard power, whereas liberal institutionalists emphasise soft power as an intrinsic apparatus to persuade, rather than coerce others into doing what one wants (Wilson, 2008). In short, soft power involves obtaining preferred outcomes through attraction (Ivanov, 2020; Nye, 2002a). However, the former is in line with 'rule by force', whereas the latter is concerned with 'rule by consent'. Although one may possess the hard material capabilities to exercise power without the consent of the ruled, in the present day, it is significant to have intellectual and moral leadership over the ruled in the global society (Zahran and Ramos, 2010).

Letswalo (2022) posits the significance of assessing global leadership based on the 'role' because the above-mentioned capabilities are nothing until one puts them to good use. Significantly, foreign policy outlines an imperative articulation of the willingness and mission of global leaders in driving the global public good. Erstwhile US Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama articulated their willingness in their foreign policy to accept the role as a global leader and obligation to maintain public good, peace and security and a liberal world order. However, US President Donald

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Trump took a different approach to this by resorting to nationalism in his retrenchment foreign policy, which prioritised national interests and prosperity, threatening pre-existing agreements that did not serve America's interests (Letswalo, 2022). Concurrently, US Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton stressed the significance of international collaboration and the use of global multilateral entities to promote a new world order orchestrated to replace the realist global system of bipolarity and balance of power, which dominated the Cold War era (Krahmann, 2005).

Over the course of eight decades, US policies have promoted the expansion of global trade, finance, and investment, broadly promoting the spread of democratic values and human rights. The US has led many of the multilateral entities associated with the international order, shouldering the predominant responsibility for upholding key norms such as nonaggression and serving as the primary provider of global stability and reassurance that a successful liberal order demands (Brands, 2016). In terms of global security, the US played a pivotal role in preserving its leadership position by exerting a preponderance as a stabiliser. The US has been willing to invoke intra-European defence initiatives as long as they remain subordinate to NATO obligations (Sheetz and Mastanduno, 1997).

The US provided most of the equipment and allowed free riding in its public interest. This was allowed because its global military imperialism is integral to the preponderance over other aspects, such as commerce. For example, the US would threaten to withdraw military assistance in the recipient countries in question, exposing them to instability soon. Recipient states comply with US prescriptions or interests to safeguard or secure their public good. Additionally, the US utilises its economic prowess to contribute to global multilateral entities and influence their decisions. Similar to economic imperialism, the US utilised multilateral entities founded at the post-war conference at Bretton Woods (the IMF and the World Bank), which played a significant role in preserving America's global leadership (Skerrit, 2019).

The US became the largest donor country in the world, providing bilateral financial assistance to countries in the Global South on the

condition that they assent to neoliberal and democratic values. Moreover, the US global leadership status is also attributable to its pervasiveness and benevolent agnosticism. Not only did US political elites and the upper class strive to entrench the US's global leadership and values through foreign policy against those who resisted the masses. Its culture played a phenomenal role in the adoption of American slang by young Britons and the idolisation of US celebrities and music artists globally. Interestingly, watching many 'US-based TV shows and films and absorbing their norms, values, and ideals in an osmosis-like fashion' (Skerrit, 2019). In non-English speaking countries, many learned through watching Western films and idolising protagonists such as John Wayne and Steve McQueen (Skerrit, 2019). However, the Great Recession had a pejorative effect on perceptions of US soft power. It damaged its status and ideational power. States in the global society have lost confidence in the Washington Consensus, based on free markets, democracy, and globalisation, as the only feasible economic and political development model (Layne, 2018).

310 Interestingly, soft power becomes successful if the global perception of a given country produces positive results; in this case, the US Pew Research Centre surveyed thirteen states in 2020 to evaluate whether the US yields a positive image or not. The results were poor, plummeting from twenty years earlier from 68 per cent to 31 per cent for France and from 68 per cent to 26 per cent for Germany. This decline is largely attributed to the Trump administration's handling of the COVID 19 pandemic. Additionally, America's withdrawal from its global obligations and pre-existing cooperation, such as blocking nomination for the appellate body in the WTO and withdrawing from the Paris Agreement on climate change (Schéré, 2021).

In recent decades, Blackwill (2020), Chase-Dunn et al. (2011), Fox (2014), He (2010) and Newmann (2011) discuss the decline in America's global leadership power, more specifically with the rise of emerging powers or regional powers in the Global South who act as regional leaders in their respective regions. The US struggled to construct and implement a grand strategy beyond the protection of the global liberal order. Although the George H.W. Bush administration contended that the US's 'strategy

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must now refocus on precluding the emergence of any potential future global competitor' (Blackwill, 2020: 6). However, no administration in Washington consistently pursued or implemented such policies for that strategic purpose (Blackwill, 2020).

More recently, the US perceives the current international order it built following the Second World War as obsolete and constraining its national interests. Interestingly, the US is largely oblivious to the risks posed by rising new global and revisionist powers, such as China. The rise of China and the consequential shifts in the global balance of power are a considerable threat to the pre-existing world order. However, the US attempted to salvage this potential calamity. Yet, after the 2016 presidential elections, which inaugurated the Trump 1.0 foreign policy, the US did not effectively respond to geopolitical and geo-economic rationales underlying US global strategic interests, especially in the Global South (Scheffer et al., 2016).

This chapter will invaluablely add to the existing body of knowledge on global leadership and power politics scholarship. Firstly, this will be done by assessing how Trump 1.0 and 2.0 retrenchment foreign policy affected the US's global leadership position, looking at the increase or decline in hard and soft power, as well as the role of providing public goods in the global society. It will add to the existing knowledge by assessing the implications of Trump 1.0 and 2.0 retrenchment foreign policy on US–China geopolitical influence in Africa and what this could mean for Africa's industrialisation and critical resources.

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Trump 1.0 and 2.0 foreign policy affected the US's global leadership position

In 2016, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump defied most polling predictions by defeating Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton (Gill, 2021). According to Hill and Hurst (2020: 1), during the 2016 election campaign Trump declared NATO as 'obsolete' and alliance with Japan and South Korea were exorbitant, and that the free trade agreements were a 'disaster': that had only led to the US being

ripped off (Hill and Hurst, 2020: 1). This position reflects Trump's narration from 1987 when he criticised the US public good commitment to defend global democracy in three US newspapers. 'For decades, Japan and other nations have been taking advantage of the US' (Little, 2025: para. 14). Donald Trump further questioned, 'Why are these nations not paying the US for the human lives and billions of dollars we are losing to protect their interest? The world is laughing at America's politicians as we protect ships we don't own, carrying oil we don't need, destined for allies who won't help' (Little, 2025: para. 15).

In his first 100 days in office, President Trump heavily relied on military force as the primary, if not only, foreign policy tool. This manifested in a botched special operations raid in Yemen, the cruise missile strike against the Assad regime's airfield in Syria and other budget cuts to allocate more funds to increase military spending. In addition, Trump eased Obama's restriction on the use of force in Somalia and gave military commanders more liberty to attack the Al-Qaeda-affiliated Al-Shabaab terrorist group. In response to Pyongyang's ballistic missiles and nuclear weapon project, Trump threatened to use force against North Korea to pre-empt or retaliate for a missile or nuclear testing (Juul and Gude, 2017).

Considering exercising its economic capability to provide public good in 2017, Washington submitted a bloated proposed budget priorities for 2018, which would require an additional US\$487 billion in a climate where Trump proposed major tax relief to wealthy Americans and corporations. This developmental plan and foreign humanitarian assistance programmes, especially in Africa, did not make sense in the fiscal circumstances at the time. However, Trump did not tamper with the President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR) in Africa. He targeted US support for World Bank and United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP), which had the biggest operations in Africa, specifically initiatives established by his predecessors, 'Feed the Future', an agricultural programme in Africa and PowerAfrica, which were not included in his budget. Additionally, Trump stopped funding the UN Population Fund and reduced funding to the UN Children's Fund and the WHO. Moreover, the US State Department's Emergency and Migration Assistance was defunded and reversed the US\$3 billion pledge

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made by Obama to the Green Climate Fund to invoke the mitigation and adaptation in the Global South, especially Africa, which is heavily impacted by climate change, irrespective of contributing minimally to this calamity (Stremlau, 2022).

More recently, Trump's 2026 fiscal year budget proposal included a US\$555 million cut to the African Development Fund (ADF) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) (Ekanem, 2025). Moreover, the end of the PEPFAR program in South Africa has pejorative implications on other African neighbouring states that depended on AIDS and TB medication from South Africa (Pecquet, 2025). The executive order on 20 January 2025 to pause foreign aid has placed millions of Africans who depend on US public goods at risk, especially those who rely on medication and life-saving humanitarian support in the Central African Republic, Chad, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda and Rwanda (Cilliers, 2025). Other funds within USAID were orchestrated to support agricultural productivity, economic growth, security, democracy, governance and improve access to quality education and social services are at risk (Cilliers, 2025).

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From 2016 to 2020, the Trump 1.0 administration's domestic and foreign policy has led to the US's decline in soft power in the global system. This era was characterised by US unilateralism, tariff warfare, and political populism, as well as anti-immigration policies and tension with the media and political institutions. This has affected the US soft power image abroad due to its disregard for human rights, political institutions and media freedom, deteriorating the prestigious image the US enjoyed internationally (Mohagheghnia, 2021).

The US's soft power slipped from first to third place, yielding to France and Great Britain. The percentage was lower than during the Obama administration (Mukan and Saudabekova, 2020). In a Pew Survey conducted in 2017, six African countries indicated that they do not have confidence in Trump's administration; Senegal (-51 per cent), South Africa (-34 per cent), Ghana (-33 per cent), Kenya (-33 per cent), Tanzania (-27 per cent) and Nigeria (-5 per cent). The overall decline in positive poll image decreased from 64 per cent in Obama's administration to 49 per cent when Trump took office (Stremlau, 2022). Concurrently,

the Portland Soft Power 30 index and opinion polls indicate a decline in US soft power since the inauguration of Trump's first term. This is mainly because of Trump's disregard for public diplomacy and use of Twitter (Nye, 2019).

Donald Trump used Twitter to communicate directly and express views on sensitive topics that presidents usually refrain from addressing, often making statements and personal decisions that even amazed his staff. For example, the withdrawal of US troops from Northern Syria and various tariffs against China in the context of the US–China trade war. The outcome of Trump's unpredictability and policymaking through tweets was that 'no one was sure of what US policy was, leaving the impression that the US was an ill-disciplined, unreliable, and untrustworthy ally'. Trump's Twitter diplomacy left the overall impression that the world, and particularly American partners, could no longer assume anything about the (Rodríguez Peña, 2023).

314 Furthermore, despite its human rights abuses and democratic controversies worldwide, China has improved its image in global society from one perceived as a threat to one currently regarded as a benefactor. Attributable to its soft power lies the economic capability. The Chinese government operationalised its soft power by utilising coercive economic capabilities and diplomatic levers, such as aid, investment, and participation in multilateral organisations. Concurrently, President Xi Jinping conveyed that 'we should increase China's soft power, give a good Chinese narrative, and better communicate China's message to the world' (Tella, 2021: 17). Considering the statement, China launched several initiatives such as the Chinese Dream, the Silk Road Economic Belt, the 21st Maritime Silk Road, the Asia–Pacific Dream and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to propel Chinese global soft power (Tella, 2021).

Over the past few decades, since the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was established in 2000, China has increased its involvement in utilising its material capabilities and providing public goods in African countries. America's disinvestment in soft power has left a lacuna for China in Africa. China's investment in cultural exchange, media and educational programmes has promoted its language, culture and values. However, these soft power prospects are linked to China's

economic interests in the region. It managed to gain the trust and support of African governments and citizens and assisted in securing contracts for infrastructure and natural resources (Kulungu, 2023). Feng (2022) contends that China's economic assistance, contracts and to some degree, trade with African countries have a positive image of China in Africa. The findings show that, more especially in African countries with relatively smaller populations, poorer livelihood and less open economies and average governance, China tend to hold a positive political and economic influence. This is attributable to the execution of the BRI initiative.

US-China geopolitical implications for Africa

The economic competition is a direct aspect where the US–China tension over Africa's domination is explicit. Historically, the US was the largest foreign direct investor in Africa before China surpassed it, and it has maintained a dominant position in Africa since 2011. China's BRI investment in Africa's infrastructural projects, such as railways, highways, ports and power plants, has entrenched China's influence in West and East African coastal countries (Noor and Phil, 2024). Meanwhile, America's retrenchment in foreign policy could exacerbate China's entrenchment, potentially choking off its influence on the continent through debt-trap diplomacy. More interestingly, non-conditional loans that lack transparency provide China with the advantage of utilising the country's resources and influencing its economy (Steinberg, 2021). Ebner (2015) posits that despite being rich in resources, the African continent has not been able to fuel growth, prosperity and development. In short, its resource wealth has been more of a curse than a blessing.

Africa is home to approximately 30 per cent of the world's mineral reserves, including green or critical mineral resources (Al Jazeera, 2022). These are natural mineral resources used to produce green technology such as solar panels, wind turbines and batteries. Examples of green mineral resources include: graphite, lithium, cobalt, manganese and rare earth metals (Marais, 2022). China has strategically invested in refining capacity, refining over 60 per cent of the world's lithium and 85 per cent of its rare earth, while the US is playing catch-up. 'The US CHIPS and

Science Act alongside the Mineral Security Partnership highlights a shift toward securing the supply chain through “friend shoring” and de-risking dependence on Beijing’ (Khumalo, 2025: para. 2). This has been the objective of the past few administrations, especially the critical role of mineral resources in national defence and military technologies (Burke, 2025).

Looking within - Africa’s resource-based industrialisation

The weakening US soft power tactic, especially in the provision of public goods in Africa, presents an opportunity for Africa to build resilience away from external intervention that has destabilised the continent’s development trajectory. This current moment requires the continent to look within and implement the Africa We Want – independent from foreign powers and reliance (Kuwali, 2025). This is an opportunity for the African continent to bridge the gap between vast mineral wealth and limited economic development. For example, the DRC, like many other African economies, depend on raw material exports, having failed to invest in meaningful value-added processing. This excessive dependency and lack of vertical integration, as well as economic diversification, result in the country’s vulnerability to sharp downturns if global critical mineral resource prices remain low for an extended period (Canuto and Emran, 2025). In March 2025, the African Union (AU) launched the AGMS. This is a significant policy intervention that seeks to ‘harness green mineral value chain for equitable industrialisation and electrification, creating green technologies and sustainable development to enhance the quality of life of its people’ (Manjonjo, 2025: para.3). This strategy came at the best time when global trade and tariff rules are changing and the global demand for green critical minerals necessary for the energy transition is high (Manjonjo, 2025).

Furthermore, some countries were ahead of the AGMS, and numerous policies are being implemented to promote the development of the continent’s domestic mineral value chain. For example, Zimbabwe promulgated a national ban on the export of unprocessed lithium resources (Brandcome Partner, 2023). Zimbabwe was losing approximately €1.7

billion from exporting lithium as a raw material and not processing it into batteries domestically (Africanews, 2024). Namibia subsequently enacted a similar policy six months later, followed by the most recent announcement of the approval of Ghana's Green Mineral Policy that effectively bans the exportation of unprocessed mineral resources to retain value and promote the domestic supply chain. These efforts complement the AGMS's objective, which is to guide African countries on how to strategically exploit their green mineral resources for industrialisation (Brandcom Partner, 2023).

Moreover, the AU established the AMDC to ensure the global rush for green mineral resources translates into a prosperous future, curbing environmental damage and risk at the top of its agenda. Nearly a quarter of the continent's GDP depends on the environment, and this statute is meant to ensure the continent does not lose out (Kitaw, 2023). However, the slow pace of ratifying the statute could cost the continent's management of its green mineral resources on demand. Since its adoption in January 2016, three AU member states have ratified the statute (Mali, Zambia, and Guinea), while only eight member states have signed it. The AMDC statute needs a minimum of fifteen ratifications to be enforced. These policies hold the potential to break the resource curse and propel Africa's economic sovereignty along with coveted industrialisation (Kitaw, 2023).

Conclusion and discussion of findings

Considering existing literature by Blackwill (2020), Chase-Dunn et al (2011), Fox (2014), He (2010) and Newmann (2011), the US global leadership status was in decline, however, Trump exacerbated this phenomenon. Although the US still has a grip on hard power capability, notably the largest economy and military spending. Its decline across multiple soft power indexes, namely the Pew Survey, the Portland Soft Power 30 index, and Opinion polls, has negatively impacted the US' global leadership image, specifically how other states perceive it in the international system (Stremlau, 2022). Trump's retrenchment foreign policy is based on the global hard power that the US possesses. He

propels the idea of ‘rule by force’ as opposed to ‘rule by consent’. However, as a global leader, especially in the present day, it is imperative to have intellectual and moral leadership over the ruled in the global society, and this capability is anchored in the country’s soft power (Zahran and Ramos, 2010).

Moreover, Trump 1.0 and 2.0 have regressed the US global leadership status in terms of the role it plays in providing a global public good. Letswalo (2022) contends that it is significant for a global leader to put the capabilities they possess to good use. Foreign policy serves as a guide to articulate a global leader’s commitment to advancing the global public good. Trump 1.0 ended some humanitarian and development projects that were either sponsored or executed by the US in developing countries, especially in Africa. He ended programmes that assisted many lives in Africa, such as ‘Feed the Future’, PowerAfrica, reduced funding to the UN Children’s Emergency Fund and the WHO and reversed the US\$3 billion pledge made by his predecessor Obama for climate mitigation and adaptation in the Global South (Stremlau, 2022). Similarly, Trump 2.0 withdrew humanitarian and multilateral organisation financial support and paused USAID operations in many developing countries. In short, Trump froze all US foreign assistance except for Israel and Egypt (Cilliers, 2025; Ekanem, 2025; Pecquet, 2025).

This lacuna that the Trump administration(s) have created is an opportunity for China to entrench its chokehold in Africa. China has won the hearts, pockets and security of many African countries (Ebner, 2015: 112; Noor and Phil, 2024; Steinberg, 2021). This entrenched its sphere of influence on the continent, thus having the advantage of extracting mineral resources in exchange for developmental assistance. This method positioned China to lead in having critical mineral resources supply and refining the largest share of these minerals, while the US is playing catch-up (Burke, 2025; Khumalo, 2025). The US’ retrenchment in foreign policy is a lesson for many African states that overdependence on a strategic partner can be tricky. Perhaps someday, China, as Africa’s best friend, may walk away or end the existing public good it provides to the continent.

African countries should take advantage of the high demand for

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critical mineral resources to boost industrialisation. The AGMS and AMDC are significant policies that African economies should implement to realise this goal. Although some countries have already imposed an export ban on critical minerals, they should use this opportunity to condition investment, promoting beneficiation, economic diversification, and changing the continent's contribution to the global value chain. It is the right time for Africa to look within (Brandcom Partner, 2023; Canuto and Emran, 2025; Kitaw, 2023; Manjonjo, 2025).

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