

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Tanzania Monthly Briefing August 2021

Tanzania Summary 6 August 2021

President Samia Suluhu Hassan (2021-present) and her administration allow Covid-19 vaccines to enter Tanzania and commence a nationwide vaccination campaign. The government announces additional measures to curb the spread of Covid-19, including mandatory mask wearing on public transport in Dar es Salaam and banning of unnecessary gatherings, but has yet to enforce these. While Tanzania appears unlikely to impose strict containment measures like many of its neighbours, the government is increasingly taking precautions to curb the spread of the virus. Defence and national service minister Elias Kwandikwa dies in Dar es Salaam's Muhimbili National Hospital. President Suluhu has yet to announce a replacement amid speculation that this may result in a broader cabinet reshuffle. President Suluhu undertakes state visits to Burundi and Rwanda as part of a regional charm offensive.

President Suluhu acts on Covid-19

Over the past month President **Samia Suluhu Hassan** (2021-present) has significantly changed **Tanzania's** approach to tackling the **Covid-19** pandemic. Case numbers are being reported sporadically, including an announcement on 10 July that 408 people tested positive for Covid-19; however, no historical data has been released.¹ The changing approach follows the government's mid-June request for TSh 1.3 trillion (\$563m) of loan assistance from the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** to address the economic impact of the pandemic.² Additionally, former **United Kingdom** prime minister **Tony Blair** (1997-2007) visited Tanzania and met with President Suluhu on 21 July to discuss areas for collaboration in fighting the pandemic.³

The government has also rolled out its vaccination campaign against Covid-19, announcing on 17 July that **Zanzibar** had started vaccinating front-line healthcare workers.⁴ Vaccines are now available for Tanzanian citizens who work in healthcare, are above the age of 50 or have a pre-existing health condition. The **United States (US)** embassy announced on 23 July that it had donated 1 million **Johnson & Johnson** Covid-19 vaccines to Tanzania.⁵ In a bid to overcome "vaccine hesitancy", several ministers and senior businesspeople have publicised their vaccination status, and President Suluhu received a vaccine dose on live television on 28 July.⁶ Vaccine hesitancy is expected to be high across the country, driven in part by former President **John Magufuli's** (2015-2021) failure to recognise the severity of the disease or show support for vaccination against Covid-19.

The government has taken additional steps to curb the spread of the virus. Minister of health, community development, gender, elderly and children **Dorothy Gwajima** announced on 23 July that all "unnecessary" public gatherings are banned as the country braces for a potential third wave of the virus.⁷ However, scepticism around Gwajima's announcement remains high, particularly since the health ministry defined neither "unnecessary" nor "gathering". Many suspect that the announcement was designed to appease donors or ward off protests planned after the arrest of opposition party

¹ The Citizen, 10 Jul 2021

² The Citizen, 17 Jun 2021

³ The Citizen, 21 Jul 2021

⁴ The Citizen, 17 Jul 2021

⁵ Daily News, 23 Jul 2021

⁶ The Citizen, 28 Jul 2021

⁷ The Citizen, 23 Jul 2021

Chadema chairman **Freeman Mbowe**, who was arrested on 21 July and charged with conspiracy to commit terrorist acts and killing government officials.⁸ The government has announced other measures to restrict spread of the virus, with **Dar es Salaam** regional commissioner **Amos Makalla** ordering all passengers on public transport to wear masks.⁹ To date, however, authorities appear not to be enforcing the orders.¹⁰

It is unclear at time of writing whether the government will announce – and enforce – more stringent measures, including lockdowns and curfews. This is likely to depend on the speed of the vaccine rollout and whether Covid-19 case numbers continue to rise. However, the general public appears to be less keen on seeing stricter measures implemented than citizens of neighbouring countries including **Kenya, Rwanda** and **Uganda**.

Defence and national service minister dies

Amid anecdotal reports of an increase in Covid-19 cases across the country, speculation is rife that Covid-19 caused the death on 2 August of defence and national service minister **Elias Kwandikwa**. Despite reports that Kwandikwa was being treated in at **Muhimbili National Hospital** in Dar es Salaam, the government has not reported the 55-year-old minister's cause of death.¹¹ President Magufuli appointed Kwandikwa to the cabinet role following his October 2020 electoral victory. Prior to this, Kwandikwa served as deputy minister for works, transport and communications from 2017. Kwandikwa reportedly developed a good working relationship with Magufuli, who, as a former minister for works, took a keen interest in the portfolio. Kwandikwa was a member of parliament from 2015 until his death, representing the constituency of **Ushetu** in **Shinyanga** region. Prior to entering politics, he held several roles in the office of the controller and auditor general.

Since President Suluhu came to power, there has been speculation as to when she will make her first significant cabinet reshuffle. Kwandikwa's passing may hasten this decision. Kwandikwa was viewed as a Magufuli ally, so this may be an opportune time for Suluhu to begin placing her allies into key cabinet roles. However, despite the untimely death of the senior cabinet minister, there is no sense that this will create a significant power vacuum or lead to instability within the country, due in large part to the strength of the rule of law and of security bodies such as the **Tanzania Intelligence and Security Services (TISS)**.

Suluhu embarks on a charm offensive

Optimism is growing that President Suluhu is working to mend relations with Tanzania's regional neighbours and increase calls for regional integration. In July, Suluhu paid visits to both **Burundi** and **Rwanda**. The recent regional visits, following visits to **Uganda** in April and **Kenya** in May, are in stark contrast to the perceived isolationism of her predecessor, President Magufuli, who rarely left Tanzania.

During a two-day visit to **Burundi** commencing on 16 July, Suluhu called on the international community to remove all economic sanctions on **Burundi**.¹² Tanzania is strategically important to **Burundi**, with over 80% of the landlocked country's goods coming through the **Dar es Salaam** port and trucked through Tanzania. President Suluhu and **Burundi's** President **Evariste Ndayishimiye** (2020-present) signed eight cooperation agreements covering several sectors, including mining, energy, health, agriculture and fishing. During her visit, President Suluhu instructed Tanzania's industry and trade minister, **Kitila Mkumbo**, to work on breaking down barriers between the two countries' business communities. She also instructed works and transport minister **Leonard Chamuriho** to improve the railway linkages between the two countries to help transport both people and goods.¹³

⁸ The Citizen, 22 Jul 2021

⁹ Daily News, 3 Aug 2021

¹⁰ Source, Tanzania analyst, Dar es Salaam

¹¹ The Citizen, 2 Aug 2021

¹² Daily News, 16 Jul 2021

¹³ Daily News, 18 Jul 2021

Suluhu and President Ndayishimiye also discussed the matter of Burundian refugees living in Tanzania.

President Suluhu departed on 28 July for a two-day state visit to Rwanda to “cement exist historic ties”.¹⁴ The two countries signed four memoranda of understanding to increase bilateral ties, specifically in the fields of information and communication technology, education, immigration, and regulations related to medical devices and products.¹⁵ Suluhu commended Rwanda for its progress in the ICT field, noting that Tanzania is “ready to learn from Rwanda”.¹⁶ Rwanda’s President **Paul Kagame** (2000-present) noted the two countries’ shared border, historical ties and “common aspiration to deliver prosperity to our people”:

*“Rwanda stands ready to work closely with Tanzania in the context of the **EAC [East African Community]** and beyond, in a bid to speed up our countries’ and region’s recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.”¹⁷*

Although President Suluhu is just months into her presidency, it appears as though Tanzania’s approach to its neighbours has already changed fundamentally. There is growing hope that under Suluhu, Tanzania will further embrace regional integration, via entities such as the EAC and the **Southern African Development Community (SADC)**. Former president Magufuli did not prioritise regional bodies and regional integration during his time in office, seemingly preferring protectionist policies to regional considerations.

Planner

8 Aug 2021 (**Tanzania**) Nane Nane (national holiday)

2021 (**Tanzania**) Commencement of construction of **Uganda-Tanzania** oil pipeline

2024 (**Tanzania**) Local elections

2025 (**Tanzania**) General elections

Chronology

5 Aug 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Inflows of foreign direct investment to **Tanzania** reached \$1 billion in 2020, the highest figure in five years;

4 Aug 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Telecommunications company **Vodacom Tanzania** CEO **Hisham Hendi** resigns and will move to **Spain** to take on another role with Vodacom;

2 Aug 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Defence and national service minister **Elias Kwandikwa** dies at **Muhimbili National Hospital** aged 55;

3 Aug 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Daily News*. **Dar es Salaam** regional commissioner **Amos Makalla** orders that all passengers on public transport wear masks;

2 Aug 2021 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Business Daily*. Kenya-headquartered **East African Breweries Limited** has acquired an additional 30% stake in its subsidiary **Tanzania’s Serengeti Breweries**, increasing the company’s ownership stake from 55% to 85%;

28 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. President **Samia Suluhu** departs for a two-day state visit to **Rwanda**;

28 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. The **Bank of Tanzania** (central bank) has announced a raft of measures to make it easier for the private sector to access credit;

¹⁴ The Citizen, 28 Jul 2021

¹⁵ The Citizen, 3 Aug 2021

¹⁶ The Citizen, 3 Aug 2021

¹⁷ The Citizen, 3 Aug 2021

28 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. President **Samia Suluhu** receives a **Covid-19** vaccine on live television;

26 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Daily News*. **National Microfinance Bank** announces plans to make more than Tsh 120 billion (\$51m) in loans available to help fund capital and equipment to small scale miners;

23 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Daily News*. The **United States (US)** embassy announces it has donated 1 million **Johnson & Johnson** Covid-19 vaccines to **Tanzania**;

23 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Health, community development, gender, elderly and children minister **Dr Dorothy Gwajima** announces that all “*unnecessary public gatherings*” are banned as the country faces a third wave of the **coronavirus** pandemic;

22 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Opposition party **Chadema** national chairman **Freeman Mbowe** is charged with conspiracy to commit terrorist acts and killing government officials and remains in jail in **Dar es Salaam**;

21 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. President **Samia Suluhu** meets with former **United Kingdom** prime minister **Tony Blair** in **Dar es Salaam** to discuss areas for collaboration in fighting the **Covid-19** pandemic;

17 Jul 2021 **Zanzibar (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. **Zanzibar** has commenced vaccinating its citizens against **Covid-19**, commencing with front line health care workers;

16 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. President **Samia Suluhu** travels to **Burundi** for a two-day state visit where she calls on the international community to remove all economic sanctions on Burundi;

10 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. The health ministry announces that 408 people have tested positive for **Covid-19**;

9 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. **South Korean**-based motor vehicle manufacturing company **Hyundai** wins a \$296m contract to provide 17 trains to the **Tanzania Railway Corporation**;

8 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. Fuel prices in **Tanzania** have increased by 58% over the past year, placing additional strain on consumers;

6 Jul 2021 **Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)** *The Citizen*. The **National Institute of Transport (NIT)** has received \$62m in financing from the **Chinese** government.

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