

EDITORIAL

In the first article, *Policy discourse on the possibility of a Pan-African framework on the free movement of persons*, Babatunde argues that an effectively implemented framework on free movement of persons is a key indicator of the depth of the regional integration process. According to him, this realisation shapes regional integration efforts across the globe. In Africa, the lack of a legally binding policy and unevenly developed policies on free movement of persons at the sub-regional level serve as major impediments to development efforts. This raises the importance of ensuring that innovative and effective public policy measures are employed to harness the benefits of mobility and migration. This article proposes policy measures that could shape the design and implementation of a normative pan-African framework on the free movement of persons. It recommends political measures which may include active involvement of regional powers in the realisation of a viable framework, encouraging inter-regional arrangements on the free movement of persons, strengthening the monitoring and evaluation capacity of the African Union Commission (AUC), as well as active participation of the wider civil society in the formulation and implementation of such a framework.

The second article co-authored by Ojakorotu, Kamidza and Oduaran, is entitled *Mining corporations' psycho-social, economic and political impact on local communities: The case of North West Province mining complex*. The authors in this article make use of three theories, namely resource curse, accumulation by dispossession and radical materialism, whose concepts elucidate the inextricable links between the actions of states, private sector entities and civil society in the dynamics of resource-abundance, resource-laden conflict and human rights abuses. This article reveals the diverse impacts of the mining operations in the North West Province' on South Africa's image, trade union rivalry, creation of employment, mine workers' accommodation, community projects, environment and on the communities. Amongst other, the article concludes that although the labour conflict in the North West's mining complex respect the constitutional provisions of workers' rights to assemble, expresses concerns and protest, it overlooks non-striking mine workers' constitutional rights. The labour conflict created conditions that fueled trade union rivalry between NUM and AMCU, which also directly impacted on South African political landscape at both the provincial and national spheres of government.

The third article is authored by Maserumule and is entitled *Decrypting the congress of the people's diminishing electoral prospects*. This article uses Duverger's (1951:256) electoral theory as an epistemological basis of validating the arguments. Amongst critical background discussions and analyses that are entered into in it are the history of elections in South Africa between 1994 and 2014. From this history of elections, the article draws attention to COPE's formation during 2008 and its electoral performance in the 2009 and 2014 general elections and its electoral performance in the 2011 local government elections. From an analysis of COPE's electoral performances and its support base, the article asserts that COPE is the victim of its own originative history and the fanfare associated with its formation, which generated an expectation that it failed to disentangle the ANC's political hegemony. COPE's diminishing electoral prospect is based on how it performed in the 2009 general elections. The article concludes that because COPE did not to win the elections, it has no prospects of winning future elections – it therefore faces collapse.

The fourth article is authored by Mpehle and is entitled *Socio-economic and spatial inequalities in the provisioning of sustainable housing in South Africa*. As part of the background information, the article reflects on the post 1994 legislative framework that regulates land acquisition and housing development, spatial inequalities and housing and the state of affairs of housing in South Africa in which, amongst other factors, land ownership is considered a contributing factor to socio-economic disparities. The article concludes that the South African government is ineffective in ensuring that there is a nexus between the low and high-cost housing in a manner that makes the recipients of low-cost housing appreciate home ownership as an investment. For home ownership to be formal and legal the recipients of low-cost houses must be given title deeds, something on which there is a delay. In addition, there is a need for the South African government to reassess the willing buyer-willing seller policy. Although the clause in section 25 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) provides for property rights, the previously disadvantaged citizens remain disadvantaged as they do not have ownership rights. Despite the Constitution empowering government to expropriate land for the purpose of land reform, it has not applied this process to resolve the issue of land restitution. The willing buyer-willing seller principle is rather an opportunity for landowners to enrich themselves by selling to the highest bidder.

The fifth article entitled *Ratepayers' interest in municipal reports in South Africa*, authored by Scott focuses on an important aspect of public financial management, in particular how local government financial decisions are communicated to local communities. Scott articulates in his article that a purpose of the annual report of a municipality is to promote accountability to the local community for the decisions made throughout the year by the municipality or municipal entity. This purpose is then also the main driver that guides the format and content of the annual report. In

order to 'promote accountability to the local community', it is expected that checks and balances will be in place to ensure that the local community, which is represented by ratepayers, will take note of its content, understand the implications and provide feedback to the management of a municipality or entity. In this article, Scott reports on the results of an empirical study conducted countrywide (in South Africa) to establish whether municipal ratepayers are interested in, and considers the municipal annual report as a tool to promote accountability. The research results indicate that ratepayers have little interest in municipal annual reports and that these reports do not promote accountability as intended by Legislation. The results presented by the article reveal that municipal ratepayers are almost only concerned with, and interested in the quality of service delivery. Considering the effort and financial resources that are invested in preparing and publishing annual reports against results of this article, Scott concludes that there is a need to reassess the format, preparation and publication of annual reports of municipalities in South Africa.