

From the New Editorial Collective

With issue no. 2/2021, Prof Siphamandla Zondi (who has moved from the University of Pretoria to the University of Johannesburg) paid farewell on behalf of the editorial collective (including him, Everisto Benyera, and Kgothatso Shai). Since no. 2/2018, under his leadership as editor-in-chief, they managed this journal competently and passionately. We thank them for their commitment to further anchoring the journal in the landscape of post-Apartheid South Africa's scholarly community, adding value to academic discourses and policy-related matters in the sub-region and beyond.

As the new editorial collective, we consider this a continued obligation to promote African ownership over African matters, both intellectually and politically. The *Strategic Review* will remain committed to the subject-related orientation as set out in its issue no. 1/2013 ("Southern Africa in the World. The Context for a *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*"). With the continued solid professional backup of Heather Thuynsma and Andrea du Toit in the production process, we are in good hands. We also benefit from the many competent and reliable reviewers who support us in the assessment of submissions. After all, the journal is the result of many people willing to contribute besides the authors and the editorial collective. While we remain loyal to the journal's thematic framework, we are using the shift in editorial responsibilities to present a new visual appearance; we trust this does not come across as a case of "the emperor's new clothes".

For this issue, we decided to respond, at rather short notice, to the war in Ukraine, which erupted after a somewhat long build-up just weeks before we completed the formation and constitution of the new editorial team. We are glad (and to some extent also proud) to offer you a special focus on the likely consequences of this war for Africa, presenting a variety of relevant perspectives. They underline that no states or societies are immune to its consequences, regardless of the position taken by governments. Geopolitics of this nature play out everywhere, no matter the degree to which governments elsewhere are (not) directly involved. It is also a reminder that in fundamental conflicts, even declared neutrality cannot avoid being seen (and may even be intended) as taking sides.

We are grateful to all the contributors to this focus for responding so quickly to our invitations, making this issue a very topical one that we hope offers much food for thought. We invite further engagements with the subject and related matters. Global governance and international relations, as well as geostrategic and worldwide socio-

economic shifts, have lasting effects that require and deserve further attention and analysis.

With a research article on China's Belt and Road Initiative, a review essay on Cuba's role in Africa, and a keynote lecture on lessons from COVID-19, this issue complements the focus with an emphasis on how best to cope with challenges beyond the limited domestic state-government dimensions. A research article on mining activities as part of extractive industries reminds us that local governance issues in politics and the economy matter too.

As an open-access journal, we aim to reach out to as many readers interested in the topics presented as possible and hope to be an attractive peer-reviewed accredited journal for many potential contributors. We invite you to join us either as readers or contributors and hope that the *Strategic Review for Southern Africa* remains a relevant contribution to a fruitful exchange and debate over current issues impacting the well-being of people.