Africa at LSE blogging guidelines

Africa at LSE is a platform for the latest expert analysis on African political, social, and economic affairs, placing the continent at the heart of contemporary global debates.

Multidisciplinary in scope, the blog provides accessible yet critical commentary and analysis from academics, practitioners, and policymakers to enhance public understanding of the continent.

These guidelines aim to provide a blueprint for submissions and address some frequently asked questions. For more information, please contact africa@lse.ac.uk

Style

Blogs are written in a more conversational style than academic papers to make them more accessible to a general audience. We ask that you avoid using academic terms, jargon, or acronyms. Write with the reader in mind and assume they are not experts in the subject you are writing about.

Paragraphs should ideally be made up of four or five sentences. The shorter the sentences, and the paragraphs, the better.

We use links rather than footnotes, so please provide a working URL to substantiate factual claims.

Format

Blogs should be about 800–1,200 words in length and arranged in the following format:

Title: Please include a suggested title for your post. Narrative headlines (a single sentence that sums up the main argument of the article) tend to work best. Try to think of the headline as giving the reader a reason to click on your article.

Summary: A short two- or three-line summary to introduce the subject to your reader. If the title is a reason to click on your article, this summary is the reason they should keep reading.

Body: How this is organised will depend on the subject you are writing about. But one or two subheadings usually help to ensure the piece is well-structured and easy for your reader to follow.

Conclusion: A strong ending can make a piece feel more complete and help reinforce your argument.

If you have not written for the blog before then please provide a short two-line bio and a headshot so that we can create a profile for you as a contributing author.

We use images licensed under creative commons, but if you have an image that you would like to be included alongside your work please submit it and it will be considered.

Top tips:

As with journalistic pieces 'lead with the best.' Don't save your main argument or analysis for the end of the post.

Write your article as a standalone piece, even if it summarises material in a longer paper or journal article. Try to present all your arguments and evidence within the text and avoid relying too heavily on information contained in external sources.

Please avoid introductory phrases such as "In this paper I will…" or "It is often considered that…" or using adverbs to start a sentence.

Avoid extensive explanations of methodology.

Write in the active rather than the passive voice.

Avoid equivocation, where possible.

Show don't tell.

Always keep your reader in mind, that they are reading your work in their own time, and that they may not be experts on the subject you are writing on. Your piece should be informative and enjoyable to read, as well as enjoyable to write.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact the Editor, Mark Briggs: africa@lse.ac.uk.

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