

Atlas Network's quarterly review of the worldwide freedom movement

FREEDOM'S CHAMPION

VENEZUELA'S CONTINUING NIGHTMARE

THE JOY OF FREEDOM

BY DR. TOM G. PALMER

2018 TEMPLETON
FREEDOM AWARD
FINALISTS ANNOUNCED!

HIGHLIGHTS FROM AFRICA LIBERTY FORUM

MAKING PROSPERITY POSSIBLE FOR AFRICA'S GREAT LAKES REGION

ALUMNI IN FOCUS: AIMABLE MANIRAKIZA


ATLAS
NETWORK

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FREEDOM'S CHAMPION

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Venezuela's Continuing Nightmare

The headlines paint a grim picture of Venezuela. Rule of law is virtually absent; private businesses are routinely seized; hyperinflation cripples everyday commerce; and so many people are fleeing the country that it has created Latin America's largest exodus ever. But there are a pair of Atlas Network partners still standing for Venezuela's freedom in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. We asked Rocío Guijarro, director of the think tank Centro de Divulgación del Conocimiento Económico para la Libertad (CEDICE), and Rafael Acevedo, founder and director of the think tank Econintech, for their perspectives. Page 20.

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The Joy of Freedom

By Dr. Tom G. Palmer

"In just my lifetime, I have seen the greatest poverty eradication in all of human history, as billions of people have left behind dire poverty," writes Atlas Network's Dr. Tom G. Palmer. "Not only have the percentage of humans living in poverty fallen, but, even as human population has grown, the absolute number of those in poverty has fallen. In 1990, 35 percent of the human race lived in poverty — 1.85 billion people. By 2013 that had fallen to 10.7 percent, down to 767 million people." Page 10.



Think tanks in Argentina, Croatia, Egypt, US named finalists for Atlas Network's 2018 Templeton Freedom Award

Awarded since 2004, the \$100,000 Templeton Freedom Award is named for the late investor and philanthropist Sir John Templeton. The award annually honors his legacy by identifying and recognizing the most exceptional and innovative contributions to the understanding of free enterprise and the public policies that encourage prosperity, innovation, and human fulfillment via free competition. Meet the 2018 finalists on page 6.



Impact Case Study: Economic Freedom Audits in Argentina, Egypt, and Venezuela

Over the last three years, Atlas Network has awarded 15 grants to think tanks to hold Economic Freedom Audits in partnership with the Fraser Institute. Countries represented in the project include Argentina, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Greece, Kyrgyzstan, Namibia, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Read about three successful audits in this issue's Impact Case Study on page 32.



Making prosperity possible for Africa's Great Lakes region | Alumni in Focus: Aimable Manirakiza

Aimable Manirakiza is founder of Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes (CDE-Great Lakes), which operates in Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. His organization won Atlas Network's 2018 Africa Liberty Award for its Birashoboka Campaign. One of Atlas Network's first interactions with Aimable came in 2016 when he embarked on a journey across three countries to bring translated copies of Dr. Tom G. Palmer's book, *The Morality of Capitalism*, to Burundi. Aimable discusses CDE-Great Lakes' work on page 28.

ABOUT ATLAS NETWORK

Washington-based Atlas Network is a nonprofit organization that strengthens the worldwide freedom movement by connecting 496 independent partners in 94 countries that share the vision of a free, prosperous, and peaceful world where limited governments defend the rule of law, private property, and free markets. Visit us at AtlasNetwork.org

Cover photo: Protest in Caracas, Venezuela. Deputy of the National Assembly holds a Venezuelan flag when the protest is repressed by the Bolivarian National Guard with tear gas (Caracas, Venezuela — May 3, 2017). Editorial Credit: Reynaldo Riobueno / Shutterstock.com

FREEDOM'S CHAMPION

An Atlas Network Publication

Editor-in-Chief Daniel Anthony | Graphic Designer Teresa O'Leary | Managing Editor AJ Skiera | Editor Melissa Mann



Atlas Network has been a four-star Charity Navigator member since 2008.



Atlas Network is a GuideStar Exchange Platinum-Level Participant.



Atlas Network's donation payment processor is certified to PCI Service Provider Level 1, the most stringent level of certification available.

MISSION: Atlas Network increases opportunity and prosperity by strengthening a global network of independent civil society organizations that promote individual freedom and remove barriers to human flourishing.

OVERARCHING STRATEGY: Atlas Network cultivates a network of partners that share a vision of a free, prosperous, and peaceful world where the rule of law, private property, and free markets are defended by governments whose powers are limited. To accelerate the pace of achievement by its partners in their local communities, Atlas Network implements programs within its Coach, Compete, Celebrate strategic model.

Coach: Atlas Network provides world-class training and mentoring to inspire professionalism and improve performance among its independent partners.

Compete: Atlas Network offers grant and prize competitions that fuel its partners' efforts to achieve extraordinary outcomes.

Celebrate: Atlas Network fosters camaraderie and stokes ambitions among its partners by celebrating their greatest accomplishments through its events, communications, and media outreach.

Birashoboka!

Birashoboka is a Kirundi word that means “it’s possible” — and after several days at the 2018 Africa Liberty Forum in Lagos, Nigeria, I believe that change is indeed possible for the 1.2 billion people who live and work on this incredibly vast and diverse continent. This year, more than one hundred people from 16 countries came together to talk about leadership, economic growth, and the public policy challenges that our partners face every day. I was genuinely inspired by the presence of so many young people who are committed to shaping Africa’s future through innovation and entrepreneurship — and hearing the stories of how they are knocking down the

on registering a business. If you’ve never tried to start a business in Burundi, (and I assume that you have not), it is hard to imagine the bureaucratic roadblocks that stand in your way. But CDE-Great Lakes is not giving up, and so far, they have educated more than 1,500 entrepreneurs on the challenges they face, and the Ministry of Commerce has reduced the cost of registering a new business by 71 percent.

From the stage, Aimable led the room in a rousing chant of “birashoboka – *it’s possible!*” to remind everyone that they are the architects of change who will make possible growth and prosperity in Africa. I’ll confess: I was on my feet, cheering as we were all swept away by this

I was genuinely inspired by the presence of so many young people who are committed to shaping Africa’s future through innovation and entrepreneurship.

barriers that are holding back progress is so exciting. They are smart, passionate, and know that economic freedom is the key to making Africa freer and more prosperous for all.

Aimable Manirakiza is one of those young people who is devoting his life to creating lasting change. He’s a perfect example of the “Cheetah Generation” — those young, entrepreneurial leaders who Ghanaian economist George Ayittey believes will lead the continent into the 21st century.

Aimable founded the Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes, which was this year’s winner of the Africa Liberty Award for its “Birashoboka” initiative. Birashoboka is a two-part strategy that is designed to help entrepreneurs in Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo thrive by teaching them good business practices and also works directly with bureaucrats to ease the regulatory burden imposed

stirring, optimistic moment. The emotion and excitement we all felt was palpable — and the confidence and determination I felt coming from these young leaders literally gave me the shivers. It’s possible!

So to Aimable, and to the other young champions of freedom who gathered in Lagos, I say not only “Birashoboka!” but another Kirundi word that captures the forward-thinking, ambitious spirit that these young policy and business entrepreneurs embody.

Nikibazo. It’s happening.

Because it’s not just possible — it’s actually happening. They are making it happen. You are making it happen, too. Your support of Atlas Network makes this all possible. So thank you for all that you are doing to ensure that the world is a better, freer, safer, place, filled with prosperity and opportunity for all.



THE 2018 TEMPLETON FREEDOM AWARD FINALISTS

Awarded since 2004, Atlas Network's Templeton Freedom Award is named for the late investor and philanthropist Sir John Templeton. The award annually honors his legacy by identifying and recognizing the most exceptional and innovative contributions to the understanding of free enterprise, and the public policies that encourage prosperity, innovation, and human fulfillment via free competition. The winning organization receives a \$100,000 prize and the runners-up each receive \$25,000. The award is generously supported by Templeton Religion Trust, and is presented during Atlas Network's Liberty Forum and Freedom Dinner in New York City, Nov. 7-8, 2018



The Buckeye Institute

Columbus, Ohio

Too often, lives are defined by a single mistake. This is a story about human compassion, redemption, and commonsense solutions to complex public policy issues. It is a story about changing outdated, unjust, and arbitrary laws at the state level. The Buckeye Institute is endeavoring to fix a broken criminal justice system, law by law—and it is succeeding. This small think tank in Ohio has been relentless in its quest to protect the rights of the accused and to save Ohio taxpayers millions of dollars. Buckeye’s efforts have blazed a trail to reverse Ohio’s growth trend in incarceration by shrinking the state’s prison population to below 50,000, dramatically slashing the recidivism rate from 40 to 27 percent, reducing prison admissions by nearly 10 percent, expanding opportunities for thousands of people leaving pris-



on, and redirecting \$40 million to Ohio communities for the treatment of addiction and mental health issues. As a result, Ohio’s prison admissions rate has now hit a 27-year low. The Buckeye Institute’s innovative policy victories are ensuring that prosperity and opportunity are available to all Ohioans, who are now much freer and less likely to become inadvertently ensnared by the criminal justice system.



The Mercatus Center at George Mason University

Arlington, Virginia

Ever-growing regulatory codes pose a very tangible and acutely felt burden on the lives of real people. The term “burdensome regulations” under-communicates just how harmful their impact can be. Enter the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, where scholars at the Program for Economic Research on Regulation saw an opportunity to change this ongoing problem using its ground-breaking RegData software to paint a clear picture of how reducing state-level regulations can have a



measurable improvement on economic growth. RegData’s “snapshots” of the regulatory codes of 34 states show the real-world effects of how regulations shape economic growth. These snapshots give states a way forward to reduce their regulatory burdens and make a meaningful difference in their citizens’ lives. Kentucky, for example, partnered directly with Mercatus for its regulatory reform initiative. As of August 2018, the state has reviewed over 2,300 regulations, repealed 453 of them, amended an additional 424, and identified hundreds more for future action. So far, Mercatus’s RegData snapshots have reduced red tape in seven states—and more are in progress. These red tape reductions represent an opportunity for economic growth, new job prospects, and overall more prosperity and opportunity for all.

Libertad y Progreso

Buenos Aires, Argentina

A little over a century ago, Argentina was one of the world's wealthiest nations. Yet decade after decade of economic mismanagement and a ballooning state has tanked its economy and ingrained a culture in which Argentines view their government as a benevolent provider of prosperity—even as 28 percent of the country lives below the poverty line, taxes on private firms are the second highest in the world, and public spending clocks in at 44 percent of GDP. Local think tank Liber-



tad y Progreso set out to show the real nature of government with “Downsizing of Argentina’s Government,” a massive education, awareness, and advocacy campaign that addressed issues of nepotism, government waste, and public political apathy. Libertad y Progreso’s research, media presence, and social activism resulted in the Macri administration’s adoption of a series of reforms, including tax and debt reduction, transportation modernization, and regulatory relief, to reduce the size of the state. This important work challenges the people of Argentina to revert back to their roots of self-reliance, so that individual innovation—and not government intervention—is the key driver of the country’s prosperity.

The Commonwealth Foundation

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania was sprinting toward financial meltdown with its unfunded pension liabilities and its state lawmakers apathetic to do anything about it. That was until a small think tank sounded the alarm in 2005. The Commonwealth Foundation, or CF, published the seminal report, “Beneath the Surface,” which kicked off what would become a 12-year effort to avert the crisis. CF created a statewide campaign encompassing research, effective advocacy, public awareness, and marketing to advance pension reform. Its staff worked closely with state lawmakers to craft the legislation and garner support. And despite intense opposition from government unions and Pennsylvania’s Governor Tom Wolf, CF scored a major victory for the people of Pennsylvania when the state finally passed a comprehensive pension reform bill into law in 2017. The new law reversed the growth trend of unfunded liabilities, which had grown



by 730 percent from 2006 to 2016. Now Pennsylvania is holding the line against future risk to the state’s taxpayers, with a projected savings of \$5 to 30 billion over the next 30 years. CF’s efforts are a decade-long case study of a state-based public policy group demanding and delivering better outcomes for its fellow citizens.



لدراسات السياسات العامة
The Egyptian Center For Public Policy Studies

The Egyptian Center for Public Policy Studies

Cairo, Egypt

After the dust settled following the Arab Spring in 2011, Egypt's score fell dramatically on the Open Budget Index, which measures government transparency and citizen engagement in the budget-making process.



Seeking a more transparent and accountable state, the Egyptian Center for Public Policy Studies, or ECPPS, developed a program to tackle three longstanding problems in Egypt's budgeting process, which were: a lack of transparency; limited citizen inclusion in the budget-making process; and out-of-control energy subsidies, which accounted for a third of all government expenditures. After four years on the project partnering with various stakeholders and the Ministry of Finance to address each issue, Egypt's score on the Open Budget Index increased 25 points from 16 to 41 in 2017, citizen participation in the budget exists for the first time, and the Egyptian government announced that it will cut all energy subsidies after 2019. At a time when budgeting reform in Egypt seemed politically impossible, ECPPS helped make it politically inevitable. And at the end of the day, this project means greater government transparency, better civic engagement, and more opportunities for civil society to have a voice in Egypt.



Lipa — Taxpayers Association

Zagreb, Croatia

With Croatia's population declining for decades, its government ought to pursue policies that encourage growth. Instead, it pursued a policy that threatened to further push Croatians out with the 2017 passage of a tax on privately-owned property—and since 90 percent of Croatians own their own homes, the new tax threatened to hurt the rich and poor alike. Lipa Taxpayers Association refused to stand by and allow this property tax to hit an already troubled economy, so it enlisted one of the country's most influential economists and launched an



award-winning campaign against the tax, emphasizing Croatia's already crippling tax burden. Its efforts turned public opinion sharply against the tax in a matter of months, resulting in over 146,000 petition signatures, media coverage in more than 100 news outlets, and a full repeal of the property tax. Following the repeal, public opposition to taxes has remained high, with the government unable to introduce any new taxes since. And while Croatians may still be overtaxed, they are grateful that Lipa's success means they won't be sending payments to the government just to live in their own homes.



THE JOY OF FREEDOM

BY DR. TOM G. PALMER

Atlas Network's Executive Vice President for International Programs and George M. Yeager Chair for Advancing Liberty



Adapted for print from Palmer's opening address to the Festival of Liberty (El Festival de la Libertad) in Madrid this past summer. The event was hosted by Atlas Network partner Instituto Juan de Mariana in collaboration with New Direction.

It is a joy to take part in a festival of liberty, a truly liberal event. “Festival” is really the right word, because liberty is truly something to be celebrated, its realization a cause for joy and an occasion for happiness. And the occasion for happiness is not merely our own freedom, but the freedom of other people as well. Contrary to the mischaracterizations of Marxist and fascist ideologues, who willfully misstate classical liberal ideas, liberty is not a solitary condition, but a condition of equal freedom that we enjoy with others under the rule of law.

LIBERTY IS TRULY SOMETHING TO BE CELEBRATED, ITS REALIZATION A CAUSE FOR JOY AND AN OCCASION FOR HAPPINESS.

Karl Marx, in his notorious anti-Semitic essay “On the Jewish Question,” mischaracterized liberalism as “the liberty of man regarded as an isolated monad, withdrawn into himself.” He and his followers waved away classical liberal arguments for legal equality as having “no political significance. It is only the equal right of liberty as defined above; namely that every man is equally regarded as a self-sufficient monad.” Unsurprisingly, Marx called for making such individuals “impossible.” He dismissed with contempt the individual. “... by ‘individual’ you mean no other person than the bourgeois, than the middle-class owner of property. This person must, indeed, be swept out of the way, and made impossible.” Collectivists inspired by illiberal ideologies proceeded to make millions of people “impossible,” as we know all too well. In place of society, they substituted power and violence.

A society of liberty is not a collection of monads, contrary to the ideologies of the far left and far right, but an interlocking network of networks of human relationships governed, not by violence, but by rules. For, in the formulation of Immanuel Kant, justice is “the sum total of those conditions within which the will of one person

Left: A crowd celebrates atop the Berlin Wall following the official opening of the Brandenburg Gate. Photo Credit: The U.S. National Archives

can be reconciled with the will of another in accordance with a universal law of freedom.” John Locke, another deep thinker about liberty, connected law and freedom very directly. In his *Second Treatise of Government*, he argued that “where there is no Law, there is no Freedom.” For a human being to be free means “not to be subject to the arbitrary Will of another, but freely follow his own.”

To be equal before the law and not to be subject to arbitrary power — that is our right as moral beings and, as it is our right, it is our demand. We do not request rights and liberty; we demand them and we fight for them, and we do so not only for ourselves, but for our neighbors, our fellow citizens, and our fellow human beings. We stand with the Polish freedom fighters of the November uprising of 1831, who fought “*Za naszą i waszą wolność*” (for our freedom and yours). They did not hate the Russians, but were fighting against tyranny, for freedom for

Poles, *and* freedom for Russians. The spirit of liberty is a spirit of solidarity, for unlike all the various collectivismisms, which posit conflicts based on group identities, liberty can exist for each and every one, for each and every one of us has a unique identity. There is no quantum of liberty, no fixed amount, such that if you have more, I must have less. Liberty is coordinate with equality, with justice, and with peace, for what we seek is equal liberty — under abstract rules that do not discriminate among persons — and that makes it possible for us to live in peace, each following his or her own plan of life, neither oppressing nor being oppressed.

And what a world liberty has made possible! A world of increasing prosperity, of rising dignity, of health, education, and art, of wonders that previous generations would never have imagined, much less aspired to. The poorest citizens of European countries have comforts no



The flag of the Polish-led November Uprising of 1831, the phrase “For our freedom and yours” has become one of the unofficial mottos of Poland, as Polish soldiers exiled from the partitioned Poland fought for independence movements all over the world. Source: Maciej Szczepańczyk.



Palmer delivers the opening address to the Festival of Liberty (El Festival de la Libertad) in Madrid this past summer.

king or queen of old could have imagined. And every day more people around the world move from poverty to prosperity. Freedom under the rule of law — liberty — creates prosperity, as the Chinese sage Lao Tzu recognized. He identified social order and prosperity with *wu wei*, “active inactivity,” government that sets rules without intervening, directing, commanding. *Wu wei* is not mere inactivity, but the activity of setting the rules and then letting order emerge as a result of the free actions of the people. As he wrote:

“The more prohibitions there are,
The poorer the people will be.

The more edicts are promulgated,
The more thieves and bandits there will be.

Therefore a sage has said:

So long as I ‘do nothing’ the people will of themselves be transformed.

So long as I love quietude, the people will of themselves go straight.

So long as I act only by inactivity the people will of themselves become prosperous.”

Liberty is not the exclusive inheritance of one people, one nation, or one continent. It is the right of all humanity. Good ideas do not come with little flags. Euclid was Greek, but who would think of calling geometry “Greek?” Lavoisier was French, but it would be bizarre

to call chemistry “French.” Steel production was pioneered in ancient China, but who would think that steel could only be used by Chinese people? Liberty, like all ideas, has its histories, heroes, and stories, but we know that it works, that it makes life better, and that it provides the best conditions for human flourishing. It is in accord with human nature. It is the right of everyone. It is *the* fundamental human right.

I travel frequently in Asia, Africa, Eurasia, and the Americas. In just my lifetime, I have seen the greatest poverty eradication in all of human history, as billions of people have left behind dire poverty. Not only have the percentage of humans living in poverty fallen, but, even as human population has grown, the absolute number of those in poverty has fallen. In 1990, 35 percent of the human race lived in poverty — 1.85 billion people. By 2013 that had fallen to 10.7 percent, down to 767 million people. And the percentages and the numbers will continue to fall, if the institutions and principles that produce such prosperity are maintained. But doing that will take work. *Our work.*

THERE IS NO QUANTUM OF
LIBERTY, NO FIXED AMOUNT,
SUCH THAT IF YOU HAVE
MORE, I MUST HAVE LESS.

We so easily take liberty for granted. We travel from place to place, speak without fear of arrest, choose our professions and our employment, attend the places of worship we choose, marry according to mutual consent, buy and sell at prices we agree to, and in general, we live our own lives without fear. And most of us rarely think about liberty when we do so. After all, liberty is what makes all of those free choices possible, but when we do those things, we are working, living, speaking, praying, traveling, buying, and selling. But we are not “liberty-ing.” Liberty is the condition and not the activity. We are normally focused on what we are doing without giving a thought to the conditions that makes our actions possible — in the case of liberty, to live according to our own choices without fear of the power of

other people, just as we breathe without thinking much about the oxygen that makes it possible. Fish, it seems, do not think much about water, either.

But there is an important difference between us and fish. We have conceptual abilities that fish do not have, at least as far as we know. We can think about the future and make plans. We do not have to wait for air to be in shortage for us to think about it. We can imagine being

power, for the principle of rightful freedom and against mere permission dispensed to us by power.

I said earlier that liberty is not a solitary condition, but a condition of equal freedom that we enjoy with others under the rule of law. The importance of freedom was eloquently stated by a man who dedicated his life to realizing liberty through the eradication of slavery in his native country of Brazil. Brazilian diplomat, historian, and

LIBERTY, LIKE ALL IDEAS, HAS ITS HISTORIES, HEROES, AND STORIES, BUT WE KNOW THAT IT WORKS, THAT IT MAKES LIFE BETTER, AND THAT IT PROVIDES THE BEST CONDITIONS FOR HUMAN FLOURISHING.

without air, so when we go scuba diving, we plan ahead and bring air tanks. Liberty grabs our attention most when it is lacking, but we can plan ahead for liberty, too. We can appreciate how important liberty is, not only when we lack it, but even when we have it. Not only can we, but we *must* if we are to keep our liberty.

Ronald Reagan put the matter clearly.

“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same ...”

Liberty is *always* at risk, because the human heart harbors not only the desire for freedom, but for many there is also the desire for power, to dominate and to despoil others. And, of course, to do so politically via violence organized through the state, which represents the perversion of law into the most brutal form of lawlessness. We must fight against the perversion of law and for limited government, for security of rights, for the freedom to trade, and as the overarching principle, for the presumption of liberty and against the presumption of

abolitionist Joaquim Nabuco exhorted us in his memoir of the struggle to abolish slavery, to love *the freedom of other people*.

“Educate your children, educate yourselves, in the love for the liberty of others, for only in this way will your own liberty not be a gratuitous gift from fate. You will be aware of its worth and will have the courage to defend it.”

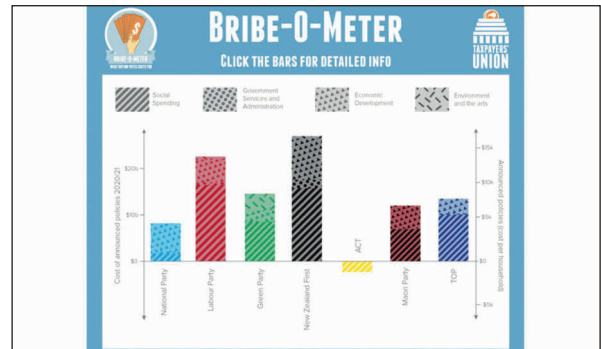
Let us dedicate ourselves to defending our liberty and to doing so with the strength and the courage that comes from loving also the liberty of others. Look to those around you; think of your families, of your neighbors, and of your colleagues and friends. Then think of those who cannot be with us, who live under oppression and tyranny, who experience daily the power of one-party dictatorships and relentless state surveillance, who are arrested, beaten, imprisoned, and murdered in the name of the people, the party, and the state. Let us think of our own posterity, of those who will come after us, who — if we do not do our work — will not know the freedom that is their birthright. Let us join together to dedicate ourselves to our freedom and theirs.

{ THIS QUARTER IN }

WORLD 10

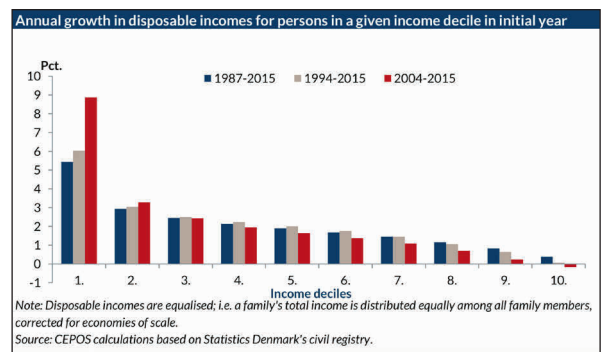
[1] CONCEPT BEHIND BRIBE-O-METER LAYS GROUNDWORK FOR INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTION IN NEW ZEALAND

The New Zealand Taxpayers' Union (NZTU) created the Bribe-O-Meter to track the spending promises of politicians. As a result, the newly elected New Zealand government will be creating an independent financial institution that builds off NZTU's work to increase government transparency and accountability.



[2] CEPOS STUDY SHOWS POOREST DANES IN 1987 SAW LARGEST RISE IN INCOME OUT OF ALL INCOME GROUPS THROUGH 2015

A new study challenges the popular claim in public debate that “advances in wealth benefit primarily or exclusively those who are already wealthy, while those with low incomes see essentially no benefits.” Danish think tank CEPOS’ dynamic approach to analyzing income inequality and income groups over decades shows that individuals increase their earnings over time.



[3] JANUS V. AFSCME DECISION ENDS COMPELLED UNION DUES FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

On June 27, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5–4 that non-union workers cannot be forced to pay fees to public sector unions. Almost 5.5 million workers across 22 states are now free to choose whether to pay union fees. Mark Janus, plaintiff in the case and a child support specialist for state government in Illinois, filed his case in Illinois in 2015 with free legal representation from the Liberty Justice Center and the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation. Additionally, several Atlas Network partners supported the case with amicus briefs and subsequent outreach campaigns.



[4] LITHUANIAN POLICY REFORMS LOWER TAX BURDEN FOR 1.3 MILLION

Taxes are about to get a lot lower for 75 percent of working Lithuanians. The Lithuanian Free Market Institute's work to increase the tax-exempt income threshold resulted in a consolidation of the country's tax base for social security contributions and reductions in the contribution rate. The project was supported by Atlas Network's Leveraging Indices for Free Enterprise grant program.



[5] CHOOSING A BIGGER POND: WHY NONPROFIT LEADERS NEED A GLOBAL NETWORK

Can nonprofit leaders be as innovative and successful as their profit-seeking counterparts when money isn't an incentive? Atlas Network COO Matt Warner finds that there's a type of motivation that transcends the drive for profit, and it can influence the behavior of nonprofit leaders towards improving results. It's called social comparison — and research shows it can be even more powerful than money.



[6] BRIDGING THE INNOVATION GAP: THINK TANK CEOS GATHER IN COPENHAGEN TO DEVELOP NEW STRATEGIES

At Atlas Network's fourth annual CEO Summit, 18 think tank CEOs from the U.S. and Europe spent two days refining their respective organizations' approaches to advancing the ideas of liberty. "Few leadership development programs have challenged my thinking and expanded my capacity like Atlas Network's Transatlantic CEO Summits," said summit participant Michael Carnuccio, president of E Foundation for Oklahoma.



[7] 'NANNY STATE INDEX 2018: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT EDITION' TRACKS PATERNALISM IN EUROPE

The European Policy Information Center's *Nanny State Index 2018* tracks state interventions in the consumption of alcohol, e-cigarettes, food and soda, and tobacco at the country level in the EU. The European Parliament Edition shows that European Conservatives and Reformists are the most laissez-faire, while the Greens are the most favorable to regulation.



[8] LITTLE-KNOWN 'BRANCH 23' A VEHICLE TO EXERT POLITICAL CONTROL OVER MEXICAN STATES

A series of new studies by México Evalúa shows that “*Ramo 23*” (Branch 23), a Mexican federal department, uses unregulated funds to extend political influence over states. Against the backdrop of the country's recent election, México Evalúa revealed that in election years the ruling party has increased the amount of government money transferred to allied state governments, while reducing transfers to state governments controlled by the opposition. Researchers hypothesize that these funds are used to “buy” state governments' loyalty. The study brought the issue to the mainstream, with 228 mentions in national media outlets discussing the need to hold the government accountable.



[9] TAX FREEDOM DAY IN GREECE SLIDES TO 198 DAYS INTO THE YEAR

Athens-based Liberty Forum of Greece (KEFiM) found that Greeks must work 198 days of the year just to pay their annual taxes. Tax Freedom Day, this year falling on July 18, marks the first day of the year that Greek people work for themselves and not the state. The findings made 4 major newspaper headlines, were presented in 17 television programs and 44 newspapers, used in 61 radio reports, received 1,222 mentions on social media, and published in 909 related online articles and blog posts. MPs of three different political parties also referenced KEFiM's survey in the Greek Parliament.



[10] A NEW APPROACH TO POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN AUSTRALIA

Students Cian Hussey and Alex Prindiville have won the inaugural Doing Development Differently essay competition, sponsored by Mannkal Economic Education Foundation in conjunction with the Institute for Public Affairs. The competition was based on Atlas Network's campaign of the same name, which seeks to support locally grown, bottom-up solutions to poverty alleviation — solutions that remove obstacles to saving, investment, and entrepreneurship in poor countries.



To learn more about any of these stories, visit AtlasNetwork.org/FCFall2018World10

{ SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT }

AN EXTRAORDINARY LIFE: REMEMBERING ANDREA MILLEN RICH

Businesswoman, publisher, television producer, philanthropist, Atlas Network board member, gracious hostess, networker extraordinaire — Andrea Rich was all of these things, and to anyone who interacted with her in the course of nearly 50 years as a leader in the libertarian movement, she was also a great and generous friend.

Andrea, who passed away on August 1 after a 19-year battle with lung cancer, spent her career at the center of the freedom movement, helping lovers of liberty build support for a free and just society. As president of Laissez Faire Books, she and her husband Howie, also a

dedicated libertarian activist and philanthropist, built a formidable catalog of the best and most influential libertarian publications, reaching readers all over the world with the works of Milton and Rose Friedman, Friedrich Hayek, Robert Nozick, Ludwig von Mises, and thousands more.

“Freedom motivated her, and millions — even billions — of people have benefited from her promotion of liberty through Laissez Faire Books and Stossel in the Classroom, and also as a result of her work on the Atlas Network board and her tireless commitment to liber-



Andrea pictured with John Stossel (left) and Atlas Network's Tom G. Palmer (right) at Liberty Forum in Miami in 2016.

Freedom motivated her, and millions — even billions — of people have benefited from her promotion of liberty through Laissez Faire Books and Stossel in the Classroom, and also as a result of her work on the Atlas Network board and her tireless commitment to libertarian ideas. — Dr. Tom G. Palmer

tarian ideas,” said Dr. Tom G. Palmer, Atlas Network’s executive vice president for international programs and George M. Yeager Chair for Advancing Liberty and a friend and colleague who worked with her for decades. During her longtime board tenure, Andrea and Howie, who was a board member at the Cato Institute, helped shift existing international programs under Palmer’s supervision over to Atlas Network, which was key in strengthening partnerships for the global liberty movement. Palmer noted that during the dark years of Soviet communism, Andrea helped him get books to take to allies who were desperate for reading material. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, she brokered deals in order to send books about liberty to book stores in newly liberated countries.

Andrea Millen was born February 8, 1939 in Johnson City, Tennessee and attended the University of Alabama, but left before graduating to take a short-term job at CBS to answer fan mail for Mighty Mouse and cartoon magpies Heckle and Jeckle. The lure of television suited her sparkling personality and ready wit, and Andrea went to work at NBC, testing her chops with comedian Sid Caesar, talk show pioneer Joe Pyne, and the NBC News election unit. Her television experience served her well during the 1980 Libertarian Party presidential campaign, when she played a key role in developing advertising for the Ed Clark/David Koch ticket.

In 2005, she turned Laissez Faire Books over to others and shifted attention towards reaching young people with the ideas that inspired her — and the movement she helped to shape — into action. As president of the

Center for Independent Thought, she launched Stossel in the Classroom, which repackaged journalist John Stossel’s ABC News and Fox Business videos on economics and public policy for secondary school students. To date, Stossel in the Classroom videos have been seen by tens of millions of high schoolers.

“Andrea never stopped thinking about ways to spread the message of liberty with people all over the world,” noted Brad Lips, CEO of Atlas Network. “She brought so much to the table — business acumen, marketing knowledge, and a genuine passion for freedom. We’re all better for having known and worked with her for so long.”

Andrea is survived by Howie, her husband of 41 years, her sister Elaine, stepsons Joseph and Dan, and an extended family of millions of readers and scholars who were touched by her work to advance the principles of liberty.

Andrea never stopped thinking about ways to spread the message of liberty with people all over the world. She brought so much to the table — business acumen, marketing knowledge, and a genuine passion for freedom. We’re all better for having known and worked with her for so long. — Brad Lips

VENEZUELA'S CONTINUING NIGHTMARE



An elderly demonstrator defies riot police during a rally against Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro. Venezuelans protest over food and medicine shortages in Caracas, Venezuela (April 20, 2017). Editorial Credit: Edgloris Marys / Shutterstock.com.

The headlines paint a grim picture of Venezuela. Rule of law is virtually absent; private businesses are routinely seized; hyperinflation cripples everyday commerce; and so many people are fleeing the country that it has created Latin America's largest exodus ever. But there are a pair of Atlas Network partners still standing for Venezuela's freedom in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. We asked Rocío Guijarro, director of the think tank Centro de Divulgación del Conocimiento Económico para la Libertad (CEDICE), and Rafael Acevedo, founder and director of the think tank Econintech, for their perspectives.

Rocío Guijarro:

Socialism has been the official regime in Venezuela since 1999. Hugo Chávez, a former organizer of a failed coup in 1992, was elected through democratic elections in 1998. And it's important to note that he didn't campaign on a platform to set up a political regime of this kind. In his campaign he was essentially a newcomer, who many people thought would fight corruption and clientelism—the broad culture of trading of favors for advantage—of traditional political parties.

Fast-forward nearly two decades and Venezuela now has a socialist regime with military rule, "Cubanism," price and exchange rate controls, inefficiency, corruption, hyperinflation and scarcity, over-dependence on oil industry, and the cult of Chávez.



MILITARY RULE – ARMY OFFICERS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS HAVE THE MAIN POSITIONS AND RESOURCES IN THE GOVERNMENT **"CUBANISM"** – THE MAIN GUIDELINES OF POLICY COME FROM CASTRO'S REGIME. THE TECHNOLOGIES OF AUTHORITARIANISM ARE INSPIRED BY THE CUBAN EXPERIENCE SINCE 1959. CUBAN OFFICERS AND SECRET SERVICE OPERATE IN VENEZUELA. **PRICE AND EXCHANGE RATE CONTROLS** – RENT-SEEKING AND HUGE PROFITS COME FROM THE ARBITRAGE BETWEEN OFFICIAL AND BLACK-MARKET PRICES. **INEFFICIENCY** – PRIVATE SECTOR HAS BEEN NULLIFIED. REPRESSION ON PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS, LIMITATIONS TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP, RED TAPE AND UNCERTAINTY ABOUT ECONOMIC POLICIES MAKE BUSINESS UNSUSTAINABLE. **CORRUPTION** – A CONSEQUENCE OF BIG GOVERNMENT AND FREE-RIDING INCENTIVES. **HYPERINFLATION AND SCARCITY** – A RESULT OF DISORDER IN GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS (THE FISCAL DEFICIT IS 18 PERCENT OF GDP) AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR. **OVER-DEPENDENCE ON OIL INDUSTRY** – VENEZUELA HAD BEEN AN OIL EXPORTER SINCE 1925, AND MOST OF THE ECONOMY WAS BUILT ON THAT ANCHOR. OIL WAS NATIONALIZED IN 1976. VOLATILITY OF OIL PRICES, AND MACROECONOMIC MISMANAGEMENT BROUGHT ECONOMIC INSTABILITY DURING THE 1980S AND 1990S. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PRIVATE ECONOMY SINCE 1999 PREVENTED ANY DIVERSIFICATION IN THE ECONOMY UNDER SOCIALISM, AND THE HIGH OIL PRICES DURING 2005-2014 GAVE ADDITIONAL POWER TO THE GOVERNMENT TO REPRESS AND DOMINATE THE PRIVATE SECTOR. **THE CULT OF CHÁVEZ** – AFTER HIS DEATH IN 2013, MR. CHÁVEZ WAS CANONIZED AS THE MARTYR OF SOCIALISM, AND THE PROLONGATION OF THE SIMON BOLIVAR MYTH. VENEZUELA HAS THIS INDEPENDENCE WAR HERO AS A PERMANENT REFERENCE, AND ALL DICTATORS TRY TO LINK THEIR POLICIES WITH THE TRADITION OF MILITARY ORDER, CONCENTRATION OF POWER AND POPULISM SET DURING THE INDEPENDENCE WAR.

Political red graffiti of Hugo Chávez and Nicolás Maduro on a wall in Pampatar, Venezuela (Margarita, Venezuela), April 18, 2015. (Editorial credit: Michel Piccaya / Shutterstock.com).

Socialism distrusts the individual and its overall concept of man is quite poor. It considers personal initiative as destructive, and freedom is considered socially dangerous. The policy under socialism is homogeneity whereas the motivating forces of competition, creativity, and profit are considered as sources of social unrest. A single explanation of history and society is the great wish of the socialist government. It prefers to have servants instead of citizens.

In practice, the socialist government has built a society of rent-seekers and beggars. The government takes control of the economy, and gives subsidies and aid to the ones that are loyal. It's a brutal system, a concentration camp where individuals must obey and follow instructions.

An example is the conditioning of social aid and subsidies to those affiliated with the political party of the government. To get food and medicine, citizens must get a card, the "Patriotic Card" (in Spanish, "Carnet de la Patria"). Getting this card demands submission to the political order. "Beggars are not choosers" is the message. If you want to eat, you must obey.

Socialism hurts its citizens acutely.

It undermines personal value because it thinks only in collective terms. Trust in other individuals is abandoned for trust in the leader, whose will everyone must accept. If someone doesn't choose to emigrate, obedience and acceptance are the only way to survive.

Under socialism property is systematically destroyed. Inflation, sanctions, repression, and volatility erode the net worth of families and enterprises. There's no way to manage risk and protect property under the economic mismanagement of this system.

Access to foreign goods and technologies is restricted. There is censorship. And people struggling to survive see their capabilities to think, reflect, and create diminished by the immediate needs of food, shelter, and basic staples that are scarce and difficult to get.

It's not easy, but we at CEDICE try to offer a counter voice to socialist ideology.



Rocío Gujarró is a long-time friend of Atlas Network, director of the think tank Centro de Divulgación del Conocimiento Económico para la Libertad (CEDICE), and a staunch advocate for freedom in Venezuela.



Empty supermarket shelves in Venezuela. Due to the economic crisis and hyperinflation in Venezuela there is a large shortage of food and medicine (Caracas, Venezuela — January 14, 2018). Editorial credit: sunsinger / Shutterstock.com.

We keep track of the attacks on property rights and on the private sector. We collect the statistics about the sanctions and closures of business after government decrees and interventions to regulate prices, fine business, and confiscate their assets. Companies like Heinz, Cargill, Mattel, Kellogg's, and so many more, have faced some kind or another assault to their property rights. And these assaults don't just happen to multinational corporations, they happen to hundreds of local, independent companies too. We've dedicated much of our work late-

property violations. We also try to keep an active presence in the media. When possible, we take part in public debates, publications and programs, including Internet resources and newsletters. We also provide educational courses and resources for journalists that promote the dissemination of free-market ideas and practices. Many journalists rely on us for our tracking and analysis of the overall Venezuelan economy. Our Economic Freedom Audit of Fraser Institute's *Economic Freedom of the World Index* in 2016 was one of our research milestones.

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ly to investigating, analyzing, and advocating on behalf of the rights of entrepreneurs. Our project, "Por un País de Propietarios" (For a Country of [Property] Owners), has a website that provides resources for people to report

We've been working in Venezuela promoting free market ideas and research since 1984. We know that there's a lot left to be done, and we're not giving up anytime soon.

Rafael Acevedo:

One of socialism's biggest victories in Venezuela is that it has created a great bias against freedom, at both the social and individual level. That's why we at Econintech want to tackle this problem at the root. And for us that means educating a new generation about the concept of economic freedom. Our new project "Venezuela's Entrepreneurs" focuses on educating people from some of the poorest sectors of the country. They are educated in management practices, business plans, finance, presentation skills, and other fields in order to give them the tools to succeed in their start-ups. This sort of entrepreneurial coaching is essential to break the bias against natural freedom. Also, in 2018 we published our first book *Causes of Venezuela's economic disaster: A tribute to Hugo Faria* (*Causas y Causantes del desastre economico de Venezuela un homenaje a Hugo Faria*). The

book is a compilation of four of Faria's essays about Venezuela and notes about Hugo's work from well recognized free-market professors James Gwartney and Maria Lorca-Susino, among others.



A former Smith Fellow of Atlas Network, Rafael Acevedo is founder and director of Econintech.



Protesters closed a highway in Caracas while participating in the event called "The mother of all protests" in Venezuela against Nicolás Maduro's government (Caracas, Venezuela — April 26, 2017). Editorial Credit: Edgloris Marys / Shutterstock.com.



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- ▶ Prestigious \$100,000 Templeton Freedom Award announcement at Freedom Dinner
- ▶ Lights, Camera, Liberty film festival
- ▶ John Blundell Elevator Pitch Competition
- ▶ Great Communicators Tournament finals taking place live at Liberty Forum

Learn more and register at
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HIGHLIGHTS FROM AFRICA LIBERTY FORUM 2018

Finding ways to unlock the enormous economic potential of Africa was a key theme of Africa Liberty Forum 2018, which was held in Lagos, Nigeria with co-host African Students for Liberty. The two-day event drew 106 attendees from 35 organizations representing 16 countries. Panelists discussed ways to eliminate corruption, protect private property, and encourage entrepreneurship as the best path to economic freedom. Renowned Ghanaian economist George Ayittey, who dubbed the continent's young freedom champions the "Cheetah Generation," spoke of the need to reject foreign aid in favor of limited government and the rule of law. Ayittey, whose new book *Applied Economics for Africa* is available for download at AtlasNetwork.org, made it clear that liberty is the propellant that will change the future of the continent. "If Africa can fix the corruption problem," said Ayittey, "she can find all the aid she needs within herself."



Winfred Nduati, national coordinator of Students for Liberty — Kenya, helps to brainstorm a project during the Crowdsourcing Liberty session.



Attendees of Africa Liberty Forum 2018. Left: Linda Kavuka, African Students for Liberty; rear: Olumayowa Okediran, African Students for Liberty; center Veronica Kanyara, law student at Catholic University of Eastern Africa; right: Kerry Kagiri, Kubamba Company Limited.



(Left) Former Atlas Network intern and successful entrepreneur June Arunga Kimani (Usafi Comfort, Kenya). (Right) Attendees of Africa Liberty Forum 2018 share a laugh during a panel on rule of law challenges in Africa.

{ ALUMNI IN FOCUS }

MAKING PROSPERITY POSSIBLE FOR AFRICA'S GREAT LAKES REGION **ALUMNI IN FOCUS: AIMABLE MANIRAKIZA**

“The future of Africa depends on freedom,” says Aimable Manirakiza, the young, dynamic founder of Centre for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes (CDE-Great Lakes). Manirakiza, who joined the liberty movement after attending a Students for Liberty conference three years ago, made a solo journey across three countries in 2016 to bring copies of Dr. Tom G. Palmer’s book, *The Morality of Capitalism*, to Burundi. CDE-Great Lakes, which operates in Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, won Atlas Network’s 2018 Africa Liberty Award for the Birashoboka campaign.



Aimable educates about entrepreneurship and doing business in the Great Lakes region.

Atlas Network: What was your entrance into the African movement to advance liberty?

Aimable Manirakiza: My first contact with the freedom movement came in 2015 when I first participated in the African Students For Liberty conference. Dr. Tom G. Palmer, who was a speaker, inspired me to promote the ideas of liberty in my country. I realized that most people do not understand that the Great Lakes region, which includes the countries of Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, will never be able to thrive without freedom — because freedom is the key to a better future.

It is difficult in Burundi. Human rights and free expression have come under attack. But I believed that we could influence a new climate of ideas in Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. So we solicited the support of Atlas Network through the think tank start-up grant program and founded the Center for Development and Enterprises Great Lakes (CDE-Great Lakes), the first libertarian think tank in the region.

One of the first and most important steps we took was to register for Atlas Network's Leadership Academy in order to learn how we could promote ideas that eliminate poverty in order to achieve a free and just society. The Leadership Academy, one of Atlas Network's best programs, has been instrumental in making our work as efficient as possible, given our scarce resources.

Also, these ideas are new to the Great Lakes region. The training has helped us learn more about what is necessary to run a think tank as well as how we can reach out to influential people. I learned the basic principles of organizational management, fundraising, advocacy, analysis, research, communication, strategic planning and other principles that we use today to guide CDE-Great Lakes' work. Finally, the training is helping me develop valuable relationships with intellectual entrepreneurs and think tank leaders from many countries, many of whom share their experiences and knowledge with us.



Aimable accepts the 2018 Africa Liberty Award at Africa Liberty Forum, held in Lagos, Nigeria in late August.

What is the story behind the word “Birashoboka?” How does it guide your work on the project?

“Birashoboka” means “it’s possible” in the local language of Kirundi. We believe that the best entrepreneurial ideas are useless if an impenetrable bureaucracy impedes the commercialization of these ideas. Minimizing the cost of business regulation and providing business skills education are some of the most critical steps toward a prosperous economy that enables people to create value through market transactions. That’s why CDE-Great Lakes, with the support of Atlas Network, launched the Birashoboka Regulatory Reform campaign in Burundi, which seeks to reduce regulations and the requirements to create a business or open a bank account in Burundi (a country that ranks 164th out of 190 countries in the World Bank’s *Doing Business* report). In addition, our Great Lakes Entrepreneurship program is working to educate potential entrepreneurs in Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. We want them to know that it is possible for them to thrive.



Aimable (far right) has appeared on numerous radio programs throughout the Great Lakes region speaking about entrepreneurship, government barriers, and the Birashoboka project.

We organized workshops to exchange knowledge on the best practices in new business enterprises. We launched a media campaign and had discussions with policymakers to explain the drawbacks of regulation. We also started producing a series of short videos of entrepreneurs who are struggling to make their way through the Burundian system so that policymakers can see firsthand how unnecessary regulations make business so much harder.

We've been successful so far. The government has reduced registration fees for a company in Burundi from 140,000 francs (approximately \$80 USD) to 40,000 francs (approximately \$23 USD). Previously, these fees stifled the entrepreneurial spirit—remember, this is a country where the annual income is \$280 per year, which is about \$0.76 USD per day.

Today, more than 3,500 people follow our activities on our social networks, more than 1,500 people have been trained to become free-market advocates, and local media uses our blog posts and research on the Birashoboka campaign.

The main goal in all we do is work to change public opinion with respect to our philosophy of social change. That's why we started working on reducing regulation in Burundi. We want to bring hope for a better future to thousands of people who are desperate. Although we are making an impact, our fight is only just beginning because the average income of a Burundian remains one of the weakest in the world.

The future of Africa depends on freedom.

My involvement with Atlas Network's Leadership Academy has not only strengthened our organization but is important in my work with the freedom movement. Our challenge now is to demonstrate to policymakers the positive impact of reform by helping the public understand why they should demand better economic policies, rule of law, and accountability. The future of Africa depends on freedom.

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THINK TANK IMPACT CASE STUDIES: ECONOMIC FREEDOM AUDITS IN ARGENTINA, EGYPT, VENEZUELA

How do you measure economic freedom? And why does it matter, anyway?

Imagine living in a country where starting a business is full of roadblocks, owning a home is out of the question, and government regulation is always the largest impediment to progress. Under those conditions, sometimes just putting food on the table is the biggest concern. Who has time to think about the merits of economic reform?

Research overwhelmingly proves that in countries with less economic freedom, poverty is the result. Understanding the root causes of poverty is key to changing the way government officials, media, academics, and other thought leaders can work together to bring about prosperity. Since 2015, Atlas Network has collaborated with Canada's Fraser Institute to facilitate Economic Freedom Audits, which use objective measurements to develop practical policy reform ideas, create local ownership, and deliver fundamental tools related to a country's economy to legislators, bureaucrats, media, and other opinion leaders. The Economic Freedom Audits create a big picture perspective on how a nation does against the regional, world, and top 10 averages in economic freedom in 42 dimensions, and provide world-class policy examples for improvement.

The audits directly involve members of the elite in business, government, academia, and the media during the reform program process. Involving locals creates local ownership — designed by people in the nation — who understand the situation far more than outsiders do. Policy and continued change are the goals, and the report is one of the ways to garner media attention to help better the situation in whichever country the audit targets. Several audits have been successful in sparking a conversation toward reform, among them being Libertad y Progreso's audit in Argentina, the Egyptian Center for Public Policy Studies' audit in Egypt, and CEDICE Libertad's audit in Venezuela.

Research overwhelmingly proves that in countries with less economic freedom, poverty is the result.

ARGENTINA: LIBERTAD Y PROGRESO (LyP)

Argentina is one of the lowest ranked countries in the latest *Economic Freedom of the World* Report, ranking 155 of 159 with a score of 4.88 out of 10. LyP assembled high-ranking public servants including the past minister of the economy, vice president of the central bank, secretary of political economy, general manager of the central bank, and the secretary of trade. LyP presented the results of its audit to professors from prominent universities, members of the media, policy makers, and other important figures. Among other issues, the audit found that heavy regulatory and tax burdens make it extremely difficult for businesses to hire new workers, leading to high rates of unemployment and use of welfare in Argentina. LyP highlighted Argentina's welfare problem in its 2017 film "Why Argentina Fails," which won Atlas Network's Lights, Camera, Liberty Film

Festival Award. As a result, the government is slowly rolling out a program that incentivizes businesses to hire Argentiniens on welfare.



Members of LyP's team with Atlas Network's Elisa Bishop and the Fraser Institute's Fred McMahon at Argentina's Economic Freedom Audit.

EGYPT: THE EGYPTIAN CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY STUDIES (ECPPS)

In order to narrow the focus of Egypt's audit, ECPPS targeted four main areas of economic freedom: intellectual property, non-tariff trade barriers, monetary and fiscal policies, and subsidies. In each of these areas, ECPPS believed legislative regulations and reforms were in order and aimed to foster political awareness of the topics. ECPPS structured the audit to include a research paper for each of the four areas, a stakeholder meeting, a public meeting, media appearances, one-on-one meetings with Members of Parliament (MPs), and workshops for MP staffers. The MP meetings strove for greater economic freedom by informing Egyptian politicians of the status of each topic area, possible merits of reform, and proposed solutions for reform. ECPPS chose stakeholders based on their relationship to and interest in the four identified areas and economic freedom in general. Journalists were chosen in order to give general coverage of economic freedom in Egyptian news media. Government figures, however, as well as non-government organizations, were chosen specifically for their relationships to the four topic areas. Stakeholders, as well as guests from embassies, political parties, and even international organizations such as World Bank and USAID, were invited to the project's opening conference in July 2018. The audit is still ongoing, but ECPPS's creative strategy and the high caliber of the conference attendees provide reason for optimism in Egypt.



Left to right: Fred McMahon, the Dr. Michael A. Walker Chair in Economic Freedom at the Fraser Institute, ECPPS Executive Director Ahmed Ragab, and Ahmed Abd Elwahab, researcher for ECPPS' Economic Freedom Program, at Egypt's Economic Freedom Audit.



Workshop Session on Property Rights at Venezuela's Economic Freedom Audit. Standing: Ms. Sary Levy-Carciente, researcher and member of the Venezuelan Academy of Economics.

VENEZUELA: CENTRO DE DIVULGACIÓN DEL CONOCIMIENTO ECONÓMICO PARA LA LIBERTAD (CEDICE LIBERTAD)

Venezuela is the lowest ranked country in the latest *Economic Freedom of the World Report*, coming in 159th with a score of 2.92 out of 10. CEDICE has a strong track record of providing materials and conferences for those in media, government, business, and education — this allowed it to assemble an excellent group of contributors and attendees. However, the guarantee of anonymity was the critical factor in their choice to attend. Given that the opinions expressed throughout the audit were critical of the Venezuelan government, this was understandable. The audit found that the people of Venezuela are suspicious of liberalism and that small policy changes that inject limited free market principles into the socialist system are more likely to be implemented than wholesale reform. Since completion, CEDICE has presented the results to organizations from Venezuela and other countries using both hard data and anecdotal stories to present their findings in the way most likely to generate support. Although the present and future are dim, the fact that something like an Economic Freedom Audit is possible in Venezuela demonstrates that citizens recognize the problems of the socialist regime and are willing to fight for change.

{ INSIDE ATLAS NETWORK }

ATLAS NETWORK'S SUMMER OF SOFTBALL AND OFFICE CAMARADERIE



This summer Atlas Network experienced a new level of team camaraderie! This was the first time Atlas Network created a softball team. It participated in the Think Tank League of Washington. The team name, Batless Network, was a play on words to denote that more than half of the team had never played organized adult softball before.

And while many in the league wanted to rename our team Winless Network after a very long losing streak, just before the end of the season, tides turned. Our team's bats came alive when we beat the Department of State and the Washington Institute.

After the first win against the Department of State, Atlas Network's CEO Brad Lips said, "I'm very proud to be part of the first softball victory in Atlas Network's storied 37-year history! It was a great team win with big accomplishments up and down the lineup. How apropos that the win came against the State Department — illustrating another example of private initiative beating bureaucracy!"



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"The cause of liberty has lost a dear friend and a wise counsel, but her spirit remains active through every person she convinced of the value of liberty and through every person she inspired to stand against violence and tyranny; they are far, far more than they know. The world is better because of you, Andrea. Freedom is your contribution and your monument."

— Dr. Tom G. Palmer, Atlas Network's executive vice president for international programs and the George M. Yeager Chair for Advancing Liberty, writes about Andrea Millen Rich, Atlas Network supporter and board member, who died Aug. 1, 2018. Read more on page 18.