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Africa & Haiti: Global Rankings For Human Freedom

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To say that President Trump's recent alleged remarks about African countries and Haiti at a private White House meeting with a group of important U.S. Senators ignited a firestorm would be an understatement. Although there were denials that the president ever uttered the offending remarks, virtually every cat and dog has rounded on the President.

One thing that has been missing from the debate, if we can call it a "debate," is an objective look at the African countries and Haiti. Just what does that look like? One obtains a clear picture by studying [The Human Freedom Index 2016: A Global Measurement of Personal, Civil, and Economic Freedom](#), a report authored by Ian Vásquez and Tanja Porčnik, and published jointly by the Cato Institute, the Fraser Institute, and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom.

The report covers 159 countries using data from 2014. Twelve broad freedom indicators, comprised of 47 sub-indicators, are measured and used to rank each country. For example, the "Rule of Law" is a broad indicator, and its sub-indicators are: "Procedural Justice," "Civil Justice," and "Criminal Justice." The indicators and their sub-indicators are itemized in the table below.

Freedom Indicators

	INDICATOR	SUB-INDICATOR
1	Rule of Law	Procedural Justice Civil Justice Criminal Justice
2	Security and Safety	Homicide Disappearances, Conflict, Terrorism Women Security, Safety
3	Movement	Freedom of Foreign Movement Freedom of Domestic Movement Women's Freedom of Movement
4	Religion	Freedom of Establish Religious Organizations Autonomy of Religious Organizations
5	Association, Assembly, and Civil Society	Freedom of Association Freedom of Assembly and Demonstration Autonomy of Organizations Freedom to Establish Organizations
6	Expression of Information	Press Killings Laws and Regulations that Influence Media Content Political Pressures and Controls on Media Content Freedom of Access to Foreign Information State Control over Internet Access
7	Relationship	Parental Rights Same-Sex Relationships Divorce
8	Size of Government	Government Consumption Transfers and Subsidies Government Enterprises and Investments Top Marginal Tax Rate
9	Legal System and Property Rights	Judicial Independence Impartial Courts Protection of Property Rights Military Interference in Rule of Law and Politics Integrity of the Legal System Legal Enforcement of Contracts Regulatory Restrictions on the Sale of Real Property Reliability of Police Business Costs of Crime
10	Sound Money	Money Growth Standard Deviation of Inflation Inflation: Most Recent Year Freedom to Own Foreign Currency Bank Account
11	Freedom to Trade Internationally	Tariffs Regulatory Trade Barriers Black-market Exchange Rates Controls of the Movement of Capital and People
12	Regulation	Credit Market Regulations Labor Market Regulations Business Regulations

Source: Ian Vásquez and Tanja Porčnik. *The Human Freedom Index 2016*. Cato Institute, the Fraser Institute, and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, 2016.
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The Human Freedom Index's "Freedom Indicators"

The indicators are measured and used to construct a “Human Freedom Index.” Once a country receives an index score, it can be ranked relative to the other countries studied. In the table below, I have divided Africa into “North Africa” and “Sub-Saharan Africa.” Haiti stands alone, as it is not an African country.

Human Freedom Rankings for Africa and Haiti

North Africa

Country	Rank
Algeria	152/159
Egypt	144/159
Libya	159/159
Morocco	131/159
Tunisia	123/159
<i>Mean</i>	<i>142/159</i>
<i>Median</i>	<i>144/159</i>

Sub-Saharan Africa

Country	Rank	Country	Rank
Angola	150/159	Madagascar	65/159
Benin	79/159	Malawi	106/159
Botswana	93/159	Mali	124/159
Burkina Faso	88/159	Mauritania	143/159
Burundi	122/159	Mauritius	34/159
Cameroon	126/159	Mozambique	103/159
Cape Verde	92/159	Namibia	69/159
Central African Republic	155/159	Niger	132/159
Chad	146/159	Nigeria	140/159
Congo, Democratic Republic of	151/159	Rwanda	85/159
Congo, Republic of	139/159	Senegal	111/159
Cote d'Ivoire	110/159	Seychelles	51/159
Ethiopia	142/159	Sierra Leone	133/159
Gabon	135/159	South Africa	74/159
The Gambia	125/159	Swaziland	134/159
Ghana	59/159	Tanzania	99/159
Guinea	149/159	Togo	136/159
Guinea-Bissau	118/159	Uganda	100/159
Kenya	88/159	Zambia	103/159
Lesotho	94/159	Zimbabwe	148/159
Liberia	94/159		
<i>Mean</i>	<i>111/159</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>111/159</i>

Haiti

Country	Rank
Haiti	61/159

Source: Ian Vásquez and Tanja Porčnik. *The Human Freedom Index 2016*. Cato Institute, the Fraser Institute, and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, 2016.

Note: A total of 159 countries were ranked.

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The human freedom picture is clear. On average, Africa's human freedom rankings are terrible with North Africa coming in with a dismal average rank of 142 out of 159, while Sub-Saharan Africa isn't much better: 111 out of 159. Haiti comes in with a human freedom rank of 61 out of 159, nothing to brag about.

Lacking personal, civil, and economic freedoms, African countries and Haiti are impoverish and unstable. While stability might not be everything, everything is nothing without stability. It's time for these countries to take a strong dose of policies that will enhance the freedoms of their citizenry.

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