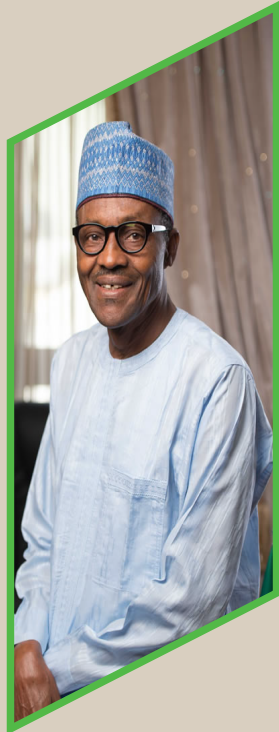


# Cover Story



## AFRICA AND ITS NEW CROP OF LEADERS

By Ify Ezinwa

**K**wame Nkrumah of Ghana, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Nigeria's Nnamdi Azikiwe; Seretse Khama of Botswana, Nelson Mandela of South Africa and Sam Nujoma of Namibia are among the first set of African leaders who administered the affairs of their respective countries immediately they gained independence from colonial imperialism and apartheid.

The fight for self-rule by African countries spanned decades, with leaders of the various liberation struggle movements remaining resolute, focused, determined and relentless despite the brutality and unyielding stance of the imperialists. They wanted freedom and the right to be in charge of their own affairs, in their own lands, and they resolved to get it even at the risk of their lives. Many truly lost their lives while others suffered immeasurably but,

their doggedness paid off as from the 1950s, countries began to regain their independence from the clutches of the colonial imperialists.

The above-mentioned Icons were at the forefront of the liberation struggle for independence in their countries and when colonialism gave way to self-rule, they went on to become the very first sets of political leaders - some democratically elected by the people as founding presidents and a few others

naturally assuming the responsibility from their leadership positions in the liberation movements.

Nationalism was one of the things all these leaders had in common - a political ideology they felt was vital in the quest to totally free their countries from the tight grip of the colonial imperialists as they tried to build foundations for self-governance. As far as these Icons were concerned, the interest of their countries took