THE FIVE-STEP FACT-CHECK

CAN I FACT-CHECK THIS?

YES

It can be verified or proven using publicly available, credible information.

1. Identify the original source and verify the content.
   - Verify the exact wording of the claim.
   - Review video/audio evidence of the event.
   - Contact the person or organisation quoted to confirm whether they were quoted correctly (should you not be able to find the proof) and what/who their source was.

Approach experts.
   - Contact experts in the field to verify/clarify information.
   - Ask which data sources or research you should consult.
   - Always ask them: Is the claim correct? How should the data be interpreted?

2. Define the terms and concepts within the claim.
   - Get official, scientific or legal definitions for all terms or concepts in a claim.
   - Does the claim relate to a specific time frame, region or demographic?

Be sure experts:
   - Are neutral and objective.
   - Have a good academic track record with published research.

3. Inspect the evidence using the latest reliable data.
   - Build up a “library” of quickly accessible, reliable data sources.
   - Africa Check’s Info Finder, factsheets and guides are great sources.

4. Set out your evidence.
   - Explain step by step how you reached your conclusion.
   - Always hyperlink to original sources and include citations.
   - Inform the person you have fact-checked of your conclusion.

What if I haven’t been able to verify information?
Not all information can be verified. Explain the steps you have taken to try to authenticate the claim/s.

NO

You can’t fact-check an opinion or a claim about the future.

What next?

Remember:
Someone reading your fact-checking report should be able to assess the same claim and reach the same conclusion by following your process.