

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS IN AFRICA

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Government and politics in Africa

Africa presents two faces. There is the Africa of lingering poverty, AIDS, intractable ethnic conflicts, irredeemable corruption, leadership failure and other social, economic and political ills. And there is the Africa of ancient history, rich traditional culture, Olympic soccer champions, Nobel Laureates, great economic potentials, and more. However, much of what is known about Africa today in the outside world, including the United States, is based on the former than the latter- thanks to inadequate scholarship and media bias that have encouraged public generalizations and misconceptions about the continent. With the goal of providing an informed and balanced view of Africa, this course will consider a broad range of empirical and theoretical questions about the continent. Although we will touch on Africa's colonial history and legacies, the focus will be on events from the second half of the 20th century (1950-2012), when nearly all contemporary African countries achieved political independence. We will explore varied sources of information to understand Africa's socio-demographic, economic and political transformations over this period. It is hoped that at the end of this module, students will have gained capacity to analyze Africa objectively and broadened their global perspectives and to have mastered the trend and current state of politics and government in Africa Politics and Good Governance: with emphasis on democracy, human rights and ethics and National Integration in Africa.

Concepts such as politics, good governance, democracy, human rights and integration, in relation to Africa, will require at least a two-hundred-page book for each concept. Certainly, such undertaking requires more expertise and time to execute. Therefore, what is done here is to introduce the topic, and to dwell more in Liberia, in observation of the trend of governance in Africa over the years.

Politics, good governance, democracy, human rights, ethics and national integration are all concepts and concerns associated with the process of governance.

Politics is about how decisions affecting the collective interest are made, whether it is decision about the issue of leadership or the issue of how leadership is exercised in the process of governance.

Good governance is about the greater satisfaction of the greater number of the people by ensuring, transparency, accountability, tolerance of opposing views, respect for human rights in general and the rule of law.

Democracy is a governing process that allows for decisions made by a greater majority of the people in an atmosphere of freedom, both in the process of determining a leader and how the leader should lead.

Human rights and ethics underscore the need to promote and protect fundamental human rights, within certain legal and moral boundaries.

National integration relates to how decisions are made in the process of governance to ensure that people live in unity and harmony.

The question this topic poses is this: Has Africa been governed in a manner, by the governments of the various African countries, to ensure acceptable politics or political processes, good governance, democracy, respect for human rights and national integration? Of course the answer is a resounding NO. If the answer were to be yes, Africans could not have found themselves as refugees in different parts of Africa, Europe and the United States. Millions of Africans have been displaced by civil wars and exiled due to bad politics, abuse of democratic processes, bad governance and a very poor record of human rights over the years. From one country to another, in Africa, the situation is virtually the same, with one person or a group of persons in an effort to seize power or to keep it, turning people against each other on the basis of race, ethnicity, clan, geography, religion, culture, language, family connections etc. Therefore, from the 1960s to the 1980s we saw multiple coup de tats in every region of Africa and from the 1980's through 2000s, we have experienced civil wars. These wars are not being fought for any national or collective interest, but most often for the selfish motive of one criminal-minded individual, who opportunistically takes advantage of the displeasure or anger of a segment of the population or a majority of the people over the process of governance, to wage war in order to capture state power and preside over the resources, not for the benefit of the majority, but for his own benefit and those in close association with him. Bill Berkeley, the author of the book, *The Graves are Not Yet Full*, describes this trend of events in Africa as organized crime against the people of Africa. Is it not true? Just look at the life style of the coup makers in Africa when they seize power and the warlords even while they are waging war. They display wealth in the presence of extreme poverty and human sufferings as if they are blind or mentally ill. Perhaps the only exceptions to these criminals are the late general Murtala Muhammed of Nigeria and the Late Captain Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso. They were selfless and decent examples of the leadership that is required in the proper governance of Africa.

In this gloomy picture of Africa, it is sad to say that, Liberia, the country whose name suggests a land of liberty, has turned out to be the worst example of governance in Africa. Liberia as a country was conceived and founded on the dream that it would be a country where the respect for human rights would be the highest consideration in the conduct of national affairs. This dream was highlighted by Joseph Jenkins Roberts and other freed slaves in the declaration of

independence, when they said they were establishing a state in which their rights would be respected because, they, the founders of Liberia, were citizens of the United States where they paid taxes and demonstrated liberty but did not benefit from the rights of citizenship and citizens of other nations with different skin pigmentation were preferred over them. The motto of Liberia, "The love of Liberty brought us here" emphasizes the Liberian dream. Yet, these founders of Liberia and their descendents led Liberia for 133 years excluding Africans who were met on the land, and denying the basic rights of these Africans in inconceivable ways.

Following over a hundred and twenty five years of Americo-Liberian rule, President Tolbert, a very enlightened and far-sighted leader tried in the late seventies to address the issue of exclusion by his decision to appoint the late Jackson F. Doe as his vice president, but the hawkish conservatives of the ruling True Whig Party, the party of the founders and their descendents, vehemently opposed this effort by president Tolbert and he unfortunately gave in to the pressure of the hawks. He did not appoint Jackson F. Doe. Believeably, President Tolbert made a great mistake----a mistake that has caused Liberians to suffer beyond expectation. It is often said that when a doctor makes a mistake one person suffers but when a politician makes a mistake thousands, if not millions of people suffer. President Tolbert, as an agent of change, should have remained guided by his conviction and redeem the Liberian nation, but he did not. Liberians are suffering today as a result of this political mistake.

It is strongly believed that if the late Jackson F. Doe had been appointed vice president, as president Tolbert intended, there would not have been a coup d'etat in 1980, because his appointment would have been a turning point in Liberian politics. It is well known that the foundation of political agitation in Liberia, prior to the coup was the exclusion of the indigenous population from the process of governance. Interestingly, majority of the members of the pressure groups in Liberia at that time, the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL) and the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) were from Nimba County, the birth place of the late Jackson Doe. His appointment, therefore, would have slowed down the activities of those two pressure groups, as Nimba would have been the first beneficiary of inclusion of the indigenous in the political process in Liberia, at the highest level. In this respect, Tolbert's decision to appoint Jackson Doe vice president was correct. It was also correct, because even if that appointment had eventually led to the transfer of power to the natives, the rights of the Americo-Liberians would have been respected and they would have remained a part of the governing process at the highest level, particularly in the legislature and the judiciary, because, although, Jackson F. Doe was an indigenous by birth, at the age of 12, his father, then a chief in Gblolay, in the Central Province, now Nimba County, carried him to Monrovia to live with the late Louis Arthur Grimes, then Secretary of State. He lived with the Grimes until he completed university education. He grew up in Monrovia and many Monrovia considered him the brother of Rudolph Grimes and Mary Antoinette Grimes. His administration would not have hurt the Americo-Liberians or the indigenous. He certainly would have integrated Liberia.

In 1980, a Master Sergeant in the Armed Forces of Liberia, Samuel K. Doe, a young man in his late twenties from Grand Gedeh County with other young non-commissioned soldiers, largely from Grand Gedeh and Nimba Counties seized power in a military coup to the amazement of the Liberian people and the world. They named their government the Peoples Redemption Council (PRC). These young men were not capable of performing the difficult task of governing a nation torn apart by serious political problems and at that time a contested territory of combating forces in the cold war. These young men did not have the education and experience to govern Liberia, they did not know the issues and therefore, they could not provide the solutions.

With this state of confusion, these young men turned on different segments of the Liberian population one after the other. At first they summarily executed thirteen officials of the Tolbert government. Then, they turned on the students, then politicians who were opposed to the True Whig Party and finally began to turn against others. At least seven members of the Peoples Redemption Council (PRC) were executed by the governing entity they put in place. The governing process adopted by the PRC did not only lead to the deaths of people but sent a lot of Liberians into exile. Political parties and other forms of association were banned and freedom of expression curtailed. Like the TWP, the PRC turned National Democratic Party of Liberia, excluded the Americo-Liberians from participation in the governance of Liberia at the highest level and silenced opposing views by all kinds of repressive means.

In order to find a remedy to this terrible state of affairs, a group of exiled Liberians largely of indigenous background led by an Americo-Liberian, supported by initial funding from both indigenous and Americo-Liberian sources, launched a military attack on the Doe regime and this attack evolved into a full-scale civil war.

If the general and presidential elections held in Liberia in 1985 had been free and fair, there would not have been a civil war and Taylor could not have become president of Liberia later. The election was largely free as to the casting of the ballot but was unfair as to the counting of ballots. The ballots were counted two weeks following the elections, not by the Special Elections Commission, but by a fifty person committee appointed by the interim government headed by Samuel Doe, a candidate. The result was in favor of Samuel Doe.

Despite this official result, it was widely believed that Jackson F. Doe of the Liberia Action Party won the presidential elections. Interestingly, this was the second time that Jackson F. Doe had come close to having access to power at the highest level. It was a popular view in Liberia then that once more Jackson had been denied political power. This denial, like the first one, was again based on the pressure of the hawks within the NDPL, who felt that the absence of Samuel Doe in power would have denied them of jobs and other opportunities. As in the case of Tolbert, the hawks succeeded in making Samuel Doe to make the wrong decision of forcing the Elections Commission to declare him winner of the elections. This was a mistake by Samuel Doe. Probably if Samuel Doe had allowed Jackson Doe to become president of Liberia, there would have been peace in Liberia, as Jackson Doe could have reconciled the people of Nimba and Grand Gedeh specifically and the Liberian people generally. As president, Jackson F. Doe could have brought true unity between the Americo-Liberian and the indigenous population of Liberia. He was the bridge to peace, national

integration and unity, which are preconditions for the building of a prosperous Liberia. Tolbert and Samuel Doe changed their minds using this bridge and the result was a coup d'etat and civil war. Taylor, as a warlord, saw this bridge, this unifying link between the young and the old, the Nimbaians and the Grand Geddeans, and the Americo-Liberians and the indigenous and instead of using it broke it to pieces. Undoubtedly, Taylor would not have been where he is today (at the ICC), if he had not broken that bridge. Today, Liberia stands in need of a person who can unify and reconcile the people, so that the nation can move forward.

In view of the observations thus far, it appears that some of the Americo-Liberians and some of the indigenous Liberians, have, by their poor governance, contributed to undermining the survival of the Liberian state. The problems in Liberia today cannot, therefore, be exclusively attributed to the Americo-Liberians or the indigenous Liberians. As the Bible says "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23.

In an effort to redirect the path of Liberia, Liberians need not evaluate each other on the basis of the original sins of their kinsmen, whether those kinsmen were Americo-Liberians or indigenous Liberians. Liberians must not engage in guilt by association. The better way forward is to examine each Liberian on the basis of his track record and what he has personally done or said about the governing process in Liberia. The personal evaluation approach is a catalyst for promoting proper behavior in national life because if people know that what they do or say today will affect their quest for public office tomorrow they will be careful in whatever they do or say.

It is this lack of critical evaluation of individuals that got Liberia where it is today. If Liberians had been more careful they could not have elected a government that would deny the people of Liberia essential services and violate their rights. If Liberians had been more careful they could not have elected a government that has no respect for the separation of powers as defined by the Constitution of Liberia. If Liberians had been more careful, they could not have elected a government that could be linked to the destabilization of other countries. If Liberians had been more careful they could not have elected a government that has no respect for internationally accepted standards of governance. If Liberians had been more careful they could not have elected a government that does not seek the welfare of its people and give them protection. But Liberians were not careful although it was very clear to them all that an election gone wrong could subject the state of Liberia to serious trouble.

Because Liberians were not careful, they elected Charles Taylor president, whose government institutionalized the politics of opportunism, mediocrity, nepotism, bigotry, dishonesty and disregard for human rights and the rule of law.

Governance, Leadership Crisis and Underdevelopment in Africa.

The issues relating to governance and critical leadership in Africa are replete with tales of woes when considered within the ambit of development, especially in this era of globalization. Many orthodox views hold the industrialized western nations of the North culpable. On the other hand, the nascent economic theorists of western origin implicate the fragile economic structures and institutions of governance and leadership responsible for Africa's underdevelopment status. While the debate is on, some others view African status as endogenously inherent in her leadership response to the crises of poverty, food security, political instability, technological development and other critical malaise. Here we explore the extent to which these views can be relevant to explicate Africa's under-development. We implicate the roles played by African comprador leadership, fragile economic institutions, governance and Africa's leadership response to the call for economic liberalization as underlying factors to this crisis of development in Africa.

Turning Point/ Understanding Africa from the view-point of Africans

On April 15, 1959, at Carnegie Hall, New York, the world - wide First African Freedom Day was celebrated at a Conference to mark the discovery of Africa by Africans. This was in complete contrast to the discovery of Africa by Europeans in the 19th century." Again, the celebration aimed at presenting a platform on which Africa could be recognized and understood from the view-point and perspective of her own people. Africa was no longer to be referred to as "British, French, Belgium or Portuguese Africa" where it was in the whims of external control of colonial masters who dictated the pace of development. Probably, that was the concept of African freedom, a people in search of the national question and identity in Africa.

It appeared that the excitement of independence and the unanticipated load and pleasures of leadership it bestowed on those involved in the anti - colonial struggle and emergent African leaders blurred the vision of these nationalists. This is because the incipient national consciousness of the anti - colonial struggle appeared to have derailed soon after independence instead of crystallization into a formidable force for unification of all the various peoples into a united and strong continent.

(European Journal of Social Sciences – Volume 12, Number 3, 2010)

It was not able to rationalize, galvanize and re-direct the popular resistance movement in terms of the cardinal need for national unity and development. Yet, the continent had the natural endowments - human and material - that were the attractions to the colonial masters. The foundation of a technological break-through and impetus to capitalism of what is Europe and America today are but the galvanized loots and booties - human (during slave trade) and material resources (during the colonial period) - from Africa before and during the 19th century. The dearth of natural endowments in Europe and America and the urge to bridge the gap necessitated the spread of tentacles in form of colonialism to fertile areas where such could be explored and exploited. What to do with the finished goods or surplus from the raw materials was another mind-boggling necessity. Ogungbamila (2005) argued that there arose intensifications on the level of interaction, interconnections or interdependence between the societies involved in the evolving economic and political relationship and which constituted the world community. The stretching formed a deepening of global process -an

historical interlocking relationship that later metamorphosed into centre - periphery polar divide or what is generally referred to as developed and underdeveloped nations of the world (Galtung, 1981; Koo, 1981; World Bank, 2002).

Incidentally, the arrow of relationship between these relating societies pointed towards socio-political and economic development.

Here we are concerned with explaining why Africa that provided the theatrical platform on which the relationship revolved and which formed the pillar of European and America's development springboard became a junior partner allowing the visitors to gain the upper hand. Probably, the relationship was designed by the western initiators to ensure domination of the colonies for their projected intention and gains. This is evident in the kind of administrative and leadership style and legacies and development programs provided by the colonialists in Africa. It also appears that African leaders at the expiration of the period of relationship and nationalist struggle were over-whelmed by the enormity of largesse that followed the devolution or shift of power at independence (Eke, 1983; Nwabueze, 1999). It could be interpreted that the development structures and policies by the colonialists never allowed space for the emergent leaders in Africa to revolt against the structures or, worst still, that these leaders did not realize the necessity to reform the inherited development structures to the needs of Africa and Africans.

The position of industrialized countries of the North in the comity of nations, the economic influence of world politics and the continued insistence of international bodies on the kind of development policies such as deregulation, liberalization, operations of development assistance, etc, especially for the South appear to undermine the efforts of daring African leaders to revolt against Africa's underdevelopment status. Such can also account for the fragile development structures.

In order to examine the foregoing, we underscore the implications which the crisis of governance and challenges of critical leadership have presented with respect to underdevelopment status in Africa. The rest of this work will revolve around the roles which Africa's foreign interaction played in relation to the institutionalization of underdevelopment in Africa, challenges of governance and leadership crisis and underdevelopment in Africa, and exploration of sustainable development structures in Africa.

Institutionalization of Underdevelopment in Africa

The issue of underdevelopment status in Africa underscores the implications of the form and intent of Africa's early interactions and relationships with foreigners from Europe and America in the areas of economy, politics and religion. This dates back to the era of slave trading. There were some socio-cultural and economic issues that consequently led to slave trading. Underdevelopment in Africa is traced to the era when Africans sold or exchanged their brothers and sisters for foreign goods, political and economic power, security, self aggrandizement etc.

(European Journal of Social Sciences – Volume 12, Number 3, 2010)

Africans sold their relations to the white explorers because they perceived them to be enemies, oppositions, for material and wealth acquisition and a source of income. In some cases, these brothers were seen as weaklings and insolvent and were best gotten rid of by selling them off, giving them out to the colonial explorers as servants and/ or allowing them to go to missionary or colonial schools since they were of no consequences or perceived to be of no contribution to the development of the society (see Chinua

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*). Fortunately, some of these sold slaves became the first crop of civil servants and educated elite in the struggle for independence in Africa.

Slave trading had deleterious effects on human capital and economic development in Africa. The human resources that could have been harnessed and crystallized for economic and leadership development in Africa were sold off to Europe and America where they were deployed, under inhuman treatment and strict supervision, in plantations and other artisan works (Frank, 1966; Rodney, 1972; Eke, 1983; Emeagwali, 2004, Ogungbamila, 2005). Consequently, Africa was denied of the labor and entrepreneurship of the slaves. What became a woe to Africa was a delight to the foreign explorers. Some of the slaves were also deployed in some mines in Ghana, Zimbabwe, South Africa etc, for gold mining and plantation farms (Shaw, 1976).

In a related case to slave trading, there is the understanding that Africans, in the early rise of civilization, did not understand other races as they should. They took these other races just like themselves. No wonder the whites were able, not just with their might in technology, but through knowledge, craft and ingenuity, to creep right into the hearts of Africa and upturned their institutional structures, values and customs. Africans were unnecessarily open-armed and even exposed their secrets, identity, customs, traditional technology, crafts etc, to the visitors thinking they were harmless. This back-fired in no distant time; though, it became late when it was realized. Probably, Africans did this ignorantly and as a result of the enthusiasm of seeing a white - colored man on African soil.

African naivety was explored and exploited by the visitors to their own advantage. This is a source of underdevelopment in Africa.

In another instance, the exploration of Africa's underdevelopment status observes that Africans did not take seriously the solution to certain clandestinely detrimental problems that arose from their societies. The issues of criminals and banishment or ostracism of criminals and perceived oppositions, and in addition those perceived to be insolvent such as

the osu in Igboland, south eastern Nigeria, indicate that Africans did not realize the implications of their actions and the disregard and neglect for rehabilitation and provision of secured places for those banished or sold off. Probably, these were done out of their psychological dictates and necessity of getting rid of the criminals and oppositions as an immediate solution to the excruciating problems of security, instability and governance. Most African traditional rulers did this ignorantly and on the advice of colonial masters who adopted the divide and rule system. It is argued here that placing monetary values on criminals, banishment of criminals and opposition etc. indicated the low respect and disregard for the dignity and sacrosanct of the human person. Yet Africans were regarded as 'their brothers' keepers'. Placing monetary value on criminals etc. also accounted, in part, for the institution of slave trading and consequent underdevelopment in Africa; if not for anything but for depopulation, decimation, denial and loss of entrepreneurship, human capital development, status inconsistencies and disregard to the dignity of human person in the eyes of the visitors. The indigenous and foreign partners in the slave trade only involved themselves to the extent that they gained from the interaction and ignorance of the indigenes. It is argued here that the psychological act and fear of insecurity in African societies of old are still manifest in modern-day African politics and governance of divide and rule and comprador-ship. There is insecurity, political instability, intolerance of oppositions and parallel political parties in the land. The current situations in Robert Mugabe's and Morgan Tsvangirai's Zimbabwe and South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) in – fighting, Sudanese government / ethnic militia of Janjaweed, Darfur, and South Sudan (Likoti, 2007) substantiate this claim. *European Journal of Social Sciences – Volume 12, Number 3 (2010) 412*

This is also observed in almost all government relationships with some developmental institutions such as labor unions. African leaders are intolerant to opposition and allergic to constructive criticism. The intolerance and allergy are now rampant in spheres of politics, religion, public offices, institutions of learning, etc. Insecurity in Nigeria has added the dimension to kidnapping. These are all elements of underdevelopment characteristic of a people still in the process of search for identity and rediscovering themselves years after the shift of power from the colonial masters to indigenous African leadership.

It is also argued that the institutionalization of under-development in Africa is traced to the regional economic alignment and attachment of African 'independent' nations to states of their former colonial masters. These states continue to direct affairs and influence economic and political processes in their former colonies because of lingering appendages of the colonial interaction.

The Challenges of Leadership Crisis and Underdevelopment in Africa

Development, as a multidimensional process, is much more than economic phenomenon dealing with the material and financial growth in a people's lives. It involves the reorganization and reorientation of the people's entire economic and social systems. Apart from improvements in incomes and output, radical changes in institutional social, administrative structures, people's popular attitudes, customs and belief systems, development involves a fundamental modification and reorganization of the international economic and social system to accommodate equity that negates global inequality (Todaro and Smith, 2003). If development involves the above, there is the necessity for visionary and dedicated leadership that is imbued with the desire for change that is anchored on patriotism and democratic governance. The current world economic system demands total reorganization in economic relations and trade in line with the forces and facilitators of globalization. For the reorganization and modernization to achieve development targets and be effective, leadership everywhere should be adequately equipped with the requisite knowledge, motivational force, managerial ability, forth-rightness, accommodating spirit, flexibility, acuity, organizing capacity etc. to identify the necessary institutional structures for reforms. This is expedient to drive the wheel of development in this era of information and communications technology (ICT), Knowledge - driven economic production and knowledge leadership for millennium governance.

Different and differing theories of (economic) development have been proffered, especially to accelerate development among the underdeveloped nations of the South - Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. Todaro and Smith (2003) enumerated four major strands or theories that explain why development does or does not take place. These include:

The Linear - Stages of Growth Model which avers that there is a process of development involving series of successive stages of economic growth through which all economies must pass. It involves the right quantity and mixture of savings, investment and foreign aid that will enable developing nations to proceed along the economic growth path that historically, had been followed by the technologically advanced countries. Development, therefore, is viewed as a rapid aggregate economic growth.

The second is the Structural - Change Pattern that insists on the underdeveloped economies to transform their domestic economic structures. The revolutionary transformation is towards a more modern, more urbanized and more industrially diverse manufacturing and service economy instead of heavy emphasis on traditional subsistence agriculture. For a developing economy to generate and sustain a process of economic growth, food security etc. it must employ some required statistical analytical tools and stringent resource allocation.

The third is the International - Dependence

Revolution Approach and it found favor with the anti-globalization crusaders, however modified in form. European Journal of Social Sciences – Volume 12, Number 3 (2010) 413. It states that developing economies are underdeveloped because of certain domestic and international institutional, political and economic rigidities which envelope them in a dependence and dominance relationship with the rich economies of the North. The dependence and dominance paradigm demands strategic and revolutionary new policies that will deal with poverty, create more diversified employment opportunities and reduce global and domestic income inequalities. The international - dependence model has focused on the proliferation of dual societies both within and among the nations of the world.

The fourth approach is the Neoclassical or Neoliberal Counter Revolution Economic Model that emphasizes on free markets, open economies, the dismantling of public ownership of factors of production and privatization of inefficient public enterprises. It is counter to the earlier dependence approach that emphasized on exploitive external and internal forces. Its primary argument is that economies, especially those of the underdeveloped nations, fail to develop because of too much government intervention and regulation of the economy. The neoclassicists got support from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and have influenced development and underdevelopment in the world today.

A critical examination of these models exposes the fact that they are parochial and do not intend to improve on the growth of the economies of the underdeveloped nations. It is hard to believe, in the first instance, that all nations must pass through the stages of economic growth as the developed nations of the world. Secondly, limiting government intervention and regulation in economic activities implies less spending in an economy that needs injection of capital to enable growth and more money in the hands of the poor. Employment cannot be created in an economy where government that is the greatest employer of labour abdicates its fiscal and monetary responsibilities. Again the people in these areas are poor and hardly have any for savings and investment; how then can employment be generated in an economy that is not regenerating. Probably, the suggestion on government minimal intervention is to create wider opportunities for foreign direct investment (fdi). Acceptance or rejection of such international economic regulation challenges governance and leadership, especially in Africa and impacts heavily on underdevelopment.

The development models that recommend structural and institutional reforms, attitudinal change, liberalization, open economies, free markets and market friendly economies point at the necessity for reforms by knowledgeable and visionary leadership. Reforms are both endogenous and exogenous and are implemented basing on current necessities and structural needs. This then implies articulation of objective policy options for reforms and governance.

The Washington Consensus or the ten (10) point recommendations by John Williamson in 1990, otherwise known as Structural Adjustment, listed the following: fiscal discipline and an end to deficits; reduced public expenditure and reordering of government priorities; tax reform; flexible interest rates; competitive exchange rates; trade liberalization; a favourable environment for Foreign Direct Investment (fdi); privatization; deregulation and property rights. George (2007) argues that though this list has been mixed from the original, it has become genuinely toxic for a large number of developing countries; otherwise, how can we explain the worsening economic condition in Nigeria and other countries that have applied the Structural Adjustment, yet poverty, food insecurity and underdevelopment continue to deepen? George argues that the interpretation of fiscal discipline implies accumulating big budget surpluses and not spending them even if large number of people in the country is going hungry. Again, reordering government priorities means practicing cost – recovering with respect to certain social facilities such as health and education and getting the people who are already tied to the ground by poverty to pay full price for them. Reduction of public expenditure implies elimination of subsidies on basic foodstuffs, energy, public transport etc. These are the necessities that have direct bearing on the lives of the people and links to poverty reduction. A critical observation of these recommendations shows that the effects impact so much on governance, patriotism, national integration and development. Policy reform options on institutional and economic infrastructures should be articulated in such a way that they do not have negative effects on the lives of the people while improving the economy of the facilitators of the Washington Consensus. The European Journal of Social Sciences – Volume 12, Number 3 (2010), 414 sources

These recommendations defy the needs of the underdeveloped. Essentially, the reform options should not be in favour of western / international orientations that tend to under develop African countries especially.

Leadership implies critical management of critical resource endowments in a country. Africans are endowed with critical indigenous knowledge, traditional technologies and wealth (Gakuru, 2005). Indigenous knowledge encompasses traditional knowledge, innovations, technologies and practices. It involves broad based subject matters such as traditional agriculture, biodiversity-related and medicinal knowledge and folklore. On its part, traditional technologies are defined as processes and products that have been valuable sources of technology even before western industrialization. They include, among others, agriculture, food production, processing and preservation and brewing; water procurement and storage; health and medicine; plant and animal breeding; forestry; engineering; energy; architecture; textile; cosmetology; music etc. When these are preserved and encouraged, they can boost entrepreneurship, economy through foreign exchange etc. and subsequent development. The question however, is: Have African leaders and governments ensured these technologies and knowledge to achieve diversified economy, food security, job and employment generation, entrepreneurship, leadership and capacity building and wealth creation? There

is the get - rich - quick mania in Africa, especially among the political leaders. The inordinate ambition for wealth accumulation is an offshoot of corrupt practices which are aspects of underdevelopment. An African appears to be contented with stealing public money and eventually remitting the same to other foreign banks, yet the industrialized countries that claim to be corrupt-free accommodate such practices.

An African also appears to be happy stealing from one side of his pocket and transfers the 'loot' to the other side of his pocket and congratulates himself for a job well done. These acts have no multiplier effects on national economy since the booties are not invested for regeneration. This culture of inordinate material acquisition accounts for underdevelopment in Africa.

There are poor human capital development and poor health development policies and programmes in almost all countries in Africa. This is attested to by the number of qualified Africans and technocrats in foreign countries where they are not better treated. Insecurity and poverty account for the brain drain (Emeagwali, 2004). A healthy nation is a wealthy nation. When the citizens are poor, they cannot access health care facilities, their capacities are not developed, and it implies that the resource endowments in the area are dormant and unexplored. Developed human capital is the catalyst for resource development. This gives the foreigners engaged in foreign direct investment opportunities to exploit the area and further under develop the economy.

There is a noticeable increase in the deterioration of infrastructures and social services in underdeveloped countries as a result of poor management of resources, poor governance and corruption. Where infrastructural development is carried out at all, it lacks quality, integrity and comparable standard. Reducing public expenditure and reordering of government priorities and removal of subsidies on essential facilities and commodities implies deepening the poverty situation and underdevelopment.

There is need therefore, to explore ways of mitigating underdevelopment in Africa.

Sustainable Development Structures to Check underdevelopment in Africa

Africa should wake up from the slumber and stop ruminating over the effects of colonialism. The interactions and effects on the economic institutions and development structures should be an energizing spirit towards development. Reforms should explore ways of up-turning the effects to objective conditions towards economic independence, food security and integration into global markets. Leaders should ensure that Africa is no longer a dumping ground for finished goods which is what the North and their institutional agencies want it to be through its development assistance policies. Africa's wealth and resource endowment should serve as a resource and bargaining power at the international arena. *European Journal of Social Sciences – Volume 12, Number 3 (2010) 415*

Participatory governance and reorganization of electoral systems are advocated to ensure that citizens are not alienated or marginalized. Social and political exclusion in governance generate opposition and acrimony to the extent that political instability becomes a hindrance to development. Leaders should accommodate constructive criticisms. It is only a visionary and knowledge – driven leadership that is able to identify and crystallize objective policy options for development. Leaders in Africa should avoid suspicion of their opponents and brothers in the theatre of development. The knowledge - driven leadership advocated is characterized by knowledge, ideas, forthrightness, patriotism, knowledge management, accommodation, initiative, creativity, fairness etc. to enable it govern well.

Governance and leadership crises in Africa are reinforced by the inability of leaders to identify, sieve and apply relevant development policy options and theories as proffered by World Bank, IMF and other development institutions and agencies. He who wears the shoe knows best where it pinches. There is need for the generation of domestic and endogenous development paradigm for Africa. This is where critical and knowledge - driven leadership becomes relevant.

Conclusion

Africa cannot develop if it continues to stake its economy in the hands of foreign investors whose interest is profit making and abdication of social responsibilities to host communities. Granted that no economy is self sustained and that there is need for exchange, especially in this era of interdependence and economic integration, the leaders in Africa should know when to be diplomatic and to apply the proposals on deregulation, removal of subsidies etc. Technological development anywhere takes root from the indigenous knowledge and traditional technology. There are aspects of cultural values and material culture that are the foundations of technological breakthrough like in Japan, China and elsewhere.

1. Adaptation policy, governance and politics in sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa has been dealt a particularly cruel hand with respect to climate change. It has played virtually no part in the making of the problem, and even now contributes less than 4% of greenhouse gas emissions associated with fossil fuel use. But at the same time many parts of the continent are likely to be hit particularly hard by climate trends and extremes. It is precisely recognition of these kinds of asymmetries that has led to the establishment of the Green

Climate Fund, intended to help pay for adaptation to climate change in the world’s poorest countries, many of which are in sub-Saharan Africa.

There is now a large and increasing academic literature on adaptation and development (some of which is reviewed below), and many international aid agencies are wrestling with the issue of how to support adaptation to climate change in practice, in anticipation of the hoped for \$100 billion a year that will flow through the Fund by 2020. However, what is striking about much research and donor practice is how little thinking there has been about the political context in sub-Saharan Africa, what this means for the quality of governance, and the capacity to plan and deliver what are often quite complex policies and programmes. This is all the more surprising given the quantity and depth of what is already known about politics and governance in Africa. What can be learned from that body of knowledge and experience that is relevant for adaptation policy? It is very much a preliminary analysis and rather than presenting clear evidence for particular conclusion, it mainly points to a research agenda to be pursued.

The primary conclusion is that, by failing to acknowledge the constraints of the political and governance context, much thinking about adaptation policy in Africa is unrealistic, and much donor activity is likely to have little effect. Indeed, in some cases, a large increase in climate finance may have a perverse effect, sustaining political systems that undermine the capacity of states to build adaptive capacity. It is argued that a perspective on adaptation informed by political analysis helps not only to anticipate where particular problems are likely to be encountered, such as specific sectors or locations in a country, but also to point to more effective responses. Here we focus on adaptation policy, but much of the analysis would also apply to mitigation, or low-carbon development policy. However, the latter would involve a much deeper consideration of the private sector in African countries and the complexities of the relationship between politicians, the state and the private sector.

2. Climate change in sub-Saharan Africa

Although there is considerable uncertainty about the detail, sub-Saharan Africa is likely to be particularly badly affected by climate change (Parry et al 2007, Ch 9). The region is expected to warm more than the global average and experience major changes in average rainfall, with drying in the sub-tropical regions and increased rainfall in the tropics. At the same time, many of Africa’s economies are heavily dependent on sectors that are highly exposed to climate change, especially rain-fed agriculture which generates around 60% of employment and in some countries approaching 50% of GDP (Collier et al 2009). Evidence on the impacts of already existing climate change since the 1950s on economic growth suggests that poor countries (most of which are now concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa) have experienced a significant negative effect, with wide-ranging effects on agricultural and industrial output and investment (Dell et al 2008). A recent review of the literature on the poverty impacts of climate change concludes that Africa (along with South Asia is expected to see “substantial increases in poverty relative to a baseline without climate change” (Skoufias et al 2011: 22). Impacts (both current and expected future) will fall across a wide range of sectors and contexts (Parry et al 2007 Ch 9, Collier et al 2009). It is often argued that the direct impacts on agriculture, livestock management and ecosystems (with implications for rural economies and food security), on water and on health (with the spread of malaria and dengue in tropical regions being a particular concern) will be the most important for the livelihoods of the mass of the population. However, other impacts are also likely to have a crucial effect on long-term poverty reduction and economic growth. For example, recent integrated assessment model studies of Ethiopia, Ghana and Mozambique by the World Bank have pointed to the critical role played by road infrastructure in Africa and the potential disruptive impacts of heavy rainfall on roads. Energy supply could also potentially be unusually sensitive to climate change, because of sub-Saharan Africa’s current reliance on and massive potential for hydro-electric power (Eberhard et al 2011). Similarly important will be long-run impacts on tourism, industry and coastal zones (because most large African cities are coastal).

Sub-Saharan Africa’s particular vulnerability to climate change lies not only in more anticipated severity of and exposure to adverse climatic trends and climate-related shocks. As the IPCC’s Fourth Assessment Report notes:

“This vulnerability is exacerbated by existing developmental challenges such as endemic poverty, complex governance and institutional dimensions; limited access to capital, including markets, infrastructure and technology; ecosystem degradation; and complex disasters and conflicts. These in turn have contributed to Africa’s weak adaptive capacity, increasing the continent’s vulnerability to projected climate change.” (Parry et al 2007: 435)

Thus, while climate change is not a problem of Africa’s making, many African countries are likely to be hit particularly hard, and at the same time their capacity to adapt to climate change is weak (Collier et al 2009: 140). In principle, the responsibilities of wealthier industrialized countries are clear – to mitigate climate change by radically reducing emissions (Birdsall et al 2005) and to help African countries adapt to climate change that is already inevitable.

The nature of the adaptation challenge

Current approaches to adaptation policy

What is the nature of the adaptation challenge? The growing literature on and experience of adaptation to climate change in developing countries has identified several distinct but related dimensions.

One is based on the important idea that households and communities have been adapting to climate-related risks for generations and to climate change for the last few decades – so-called “autonomous adaptation”. The community-based adaptation (CBA) approach attempts to build on and support autonomous adaptation at local level (Huq and Reid 2007). But more broadly, the role of adaptation policy at national and global levels can be seen as to support autonomous adaptation in the face of climatic changes that threaten to overwhelm local efforts. These views are fairly widespread in the UK’s international development ministry (DFID), for example.

A second issue is the distinction between specific actions needed to adapt to particular climatic changes (“adaptation”) and the capacity to plan and undertake those actions (“adaptive capacity”) (West and Gawith 2005, Adger et al 2003, Yohe and Moss 2000). An increasingly common view in the international development context is that building adaptive capacity should be the primary aim of policy. An alternative formulation is that policy should seek to build “resilience” to climate shocks and trends, and there is on-going debate on the appropriateness of these terms (Leach 2008, Bahadur et al 2010). Closely related to these approaches is the idea that, although climate change introduces new complexities and uncertainties (Mitchell and Maxwell 2010), the best kind of adaptation policy is largely “good development” or, for some, economic growth. As the 2007 Human Development Report puts it:

“Human development itself is the most secure foundation for adaptation to climate change. Policies that promote equitable growth and the diversification of livelihoods expand opportunities in health and education, provide social insurance for vulnerable populations, improve disaster management and support post-emergency recovery all enhance the resilience of poor people facing climate risks. That is why climate change adaptation planning should be seen not as a new branch of public policy but as an integral part of wider strategies for poverty reduction and human development.” (UNDP 2007: 172)

As this suggests, a third interpretation of adaptation policy is that it should aim at “mainstreaming” or “integration”, i.e.: “to facilitate the successful integration and implementation of mitigation and adaptation in sector and development policies.” (Klein et al 2005: 584. See also Lemos et al 2007).

These approaches to what adaptation policy should aim at have largely defined objectives in relationship to climate shocks and trends, or in relationship to sector or wider development policies. However, from a public policy viewpoint, at a deeper level, it is also possible (and believably useful) to think of adaptation policy as simply as providing public goods and services, both directly by government, and via setting incentives. What is involved in practice, whether it is providing accurate and relevant information about changing future weather patterns, developing scenarios about a range of possible future climatic effects and applying these in planning or policy, a different approach to agricultural extension, or restructuring economic growth away from sectors vulnerable to climate change, is of this nature. A question of critical importance for adaptation policy in a developing country context is therefore one that applies to public policy more widely: what are the barriers that prevent the formulation and implementation of policies providing public goods and services, and how might these barriers be overcome?

Why might adaptation to climate change in Africa be difficult?

Much of the existing literature and donor practice on adaptation policy in developing countries tends to answer this question in terms of a lack of technical capacity. A fairly common approach is to think about adaptation policy in terms of lists of analytical, planning and delivery processes (e.g. West and Gawith 2005, Agrawal and van Aalst 2008, UNDP 2007: 173, Mitchell and Maxwell 2010). This administrative view is well summed up in a recent formulation from the UK-based Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN):

“There could be a four-stage process to secure climate-resilient development. First, policy makers would assess climate risks and uncertainties. Second, they would develop and evaluate measures to address those risks and uncertainties. Third, they would prioritise the most effective measures and, finally, integrate them into development strategies” (Mitchell and Maxwell 2010: 4) 5

AFRICAN DREAMS TOWARDS A NEW VISION AND DYNAMISM

Africa is making significant progress in promoting good governance in all its dimensions. This progress is not limited to violent conflicts which are receding; but the continent’s economic growth rates in recent years have also surpassed the global average. Despite these giant strides, the enormity of the challenges faced by Africa in its new determination to accelerate the momentum of development points to a difficult and daunting task. Africa is, perhaps, the only region where poverty is increasing. The continent is also not on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Cognizant of these challenges, African leaders have pledged to take joint responsibility to eradicate widespread poverty on the continent and place their countries on a path of sustained economic growth and development as encapsulated in the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) in 2001.

Governance and democracy are central to Africa’s search for social, political and economic renewal. In recognition of the imperative of good governance for development, African countries, over the last decade, have made remarkable strides and commitments as partners towards good governance in Africa. The 2000 Lomé Summit of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) which adopted the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU), the Inaugural Summit of the AU in Durban, South Africa in 2002, the launch of the NEPAD in 2001 and the adoption of the African Peer Review

Mechanism (APRM) in 2003 are important landmarks in the effort to develop common values and standards of good governance in Africa.

This progress is also exemplified by the adoption of a number of governance initiatives including: the 2001 AU/NEPAD Foundation Document on Conditions for Sustainable Development in Africa; the 2002 Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance; the 2002 Kananaskis G8 Africa Action Plan on Capacity Building and Conflict Resolution; the coming into force of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights in 2004; the 2005 Commission for Africa Report; and the 2007 Potsdam G8 Action Plan for Good Financial Governance in Africa.

However, the concept of "governance" is highly contested and indeed its definition and application are not without problems. Since its appropriation into the development discourse in the late 1980s, "governance" has not just become associated with its normative partner, "good", but it is also highly politicized. "Good governance" has come to be associated with a set of technocratic variables pertaining to the functioning of a government. African governments, for their part, have expressed their concern with the politicization of "governance", especially with how this is used as conditionality. There is generally a consensus on the continent that "governance" must be defined in a less prescriptive and technocratic manner. This definition will have to take into account the relationship of "governance" to development, democracy, state effectiveness, and the market. From this perspective, "governance" can be defined in terms of state-society relations and internal structures and processes within government as a principal organ of the state.

There is, of course, a correlation between governance and development. There is widespread agreement that governance matters intrinsically and for improvement in economic and social outcomes. The evidence from cross country analysis is clear. Governance matters instrumentally for socio-economic performance; better governance is positively associated with improved investments and growth; government effectiveness and efficient bureaucracy and the rule of law are associated with better economic performance, adult literacy; and corruption hinders development. A key lesson however, is that governance is contextual. While it is possible to identify concepts and principles of governance that are universal, they make no sense without adequate contextual reference. The peculiar conditions of each country do provide both constraints and opportunities to improve governance. Furthermore, the World Bank indicators coupled to the Mo Ibrahim Indicator of Human Development illuminates the complex relationship between governance and development in general and particularly in the African context. Scholars and practitioners such as Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen, have presented intricate arguments demonstrating the causal connections between governance and democracy on growth and development. However, current data and governance indicators allow for the presentation of meaningful correlations that are indicative of the positive impact that improved governance has had for human development on the continent. The basis of this interpretation is that Africa has recently exhibited consistent and significant growth rates that are NOT simply the result of the resources boom due to increased demand from Asian countries. Improvement in the investment climate and the management of macro-economic fundamentals are indicative of enhanced economic governance on the continent.

It is important to note that with the increase in economic growth, there is also an increase in the rating of most African countries with regard to human development. This suggests that the resources generated by economic progress are increasingly being used more effectively and efficiently. The general improvements in the provision of health and educational services coupled to inroads into poverty suggest better governance and the management of resources to the benefit of citizens. This correlation is supported by the World Bank Governance Indicators of "Voice and Accountability", "Government Effectiveness" and "Control of Corruption".

This data indicates that improved economic performance is linked to better governance and that improved governance has contributed to the more effective utilization of resources. Africa appears to be moving forward in terms of economic growth, human development as well as democratic and political governance.

AU/NEPAD AND THE NEW GOVERNANCE IMPETUS

"Governance" is at the center of the AU/NEPAD programme, not only as one of the principles and conditions identified for sustainable development, but it is also among the top priorities of the program. Accordingly, with NEPAD's Democracy and Political Governance Initiative, African leaders committed themselves to creating and consolidating basic governance processes and practices; leading in supporting initiatives that foster good governance; and institutionalizing NEPAD commitments with the view to ensuring that the program's core values are abided by.

The notion of a triangular relationship between democracy/governance, peace/security, and development is central to the NEPAD philosophy. The NEPAD's base documents, including the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance, are very consistent in their articulation of this triangular relationship. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), based as it were on the latter Declaration, is established with a view to encouraging Member States' compliance with the common values and standards.

The paramouncy of good governance in the achievement of development goals, including the MDGs, has been recognized in the 2001 AU/NEPAD Foundation Document on Conditions for Sustainable Development in Africa. Good governance involves the creation of conducive socio-economic, legal, political and institutional environments to foster the state's material strength; to free people from the evils of abject poverty, preventable diseases, ignorance, squalor and

idleness; to provide the citizenry with the voice to choose those who rule over them, to hold those in power accountable when they do not work for the greater good, to demand transparent structures and to fight down socially regressive policies, and to treat every citizen equal without regard to gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and creed.

As recognized in the AU/NEPAD Foundation Document, harnessing the power of private enterprise for wealth creation with a facilitative role for the state remains the best way to expand the material wealth of the nation. A government working on the principles of good governance will provide a stable macro-economy, well-defined and secure property rights, a non-arbitrary legal system, social peace, low-cost and efficient infrastructure services and an efficient public service conducive for private sector-led economic development. Excessive and complex regulations on businesses, expropriation of the means of production and diversionary activities such as corruption, are inimical to economic growth and development.

Good governance, as acknowledged by Africa through NEPAD, also entails the whole society partaking in the fruits of development. Although an entrepreneurial society ensures that the maximum is obtained from the minimum resources, unfettered free markets are unfair, leaving behind the unlucky, the underprivileged, the shortsighted and the indolent. Extremes of poverty and inequality also foment social instability and represent a loss of dynamism in the economy.

It is also accepted that some government intervention in the economy is desirable and that for good governance to ensue, the regulatory and judiciary bodies, public enterprises and other public administration institutions should be effective, efficient, fair, accessible, responsive and accountable. Decentralization of power and resources to local governments is one way for governments to get closer to its citizens, to be more accountable, transparent and responsive to its citizens, and in increasing the scope for citizens to influence priorities and service interventions. However, experience has shown that decentralization per se does not guarantee improvements in the quality, equity and efficiency of service delivery for the poor. Successful decentralization requires, at a minimum, political commitment and leadership, adequate financial resources and technical and managerial capacity for planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring in local governments.

In the political realm, Africa accepts that good governance requires free and fair competition for political power and effective and independent parliaments, judicial systems and media organizations to check any tyrannical tendencies of governments and ensure that measures and policies advantageous to the state are taken. The state should use all the legitimate means at its disposal to protect its citizens from aggression from without its borders and by other citizens. It is now not acceptable in Africa for any Government to strive less than meeting its democratic commitments of carrying all segments of its society and national stake-holders in the governance process. The diversion of a large proportion of scarce resources away from wealth creation to aggress other nation states and for internal repression is seen as militating against the engenderment of good government.

Additionally, it is accepted that the state does not have the capacity and cannot, by itself, deliver economic development effectively. Good governance, therefore, also involves the state forging closer partnerships with the private sector and civil societies to improve public service delivery and bring about economic advancement. To this end, governments are recognizing the full role of non-state actors in the development process by giving them the space for them to play their full roles in policy formulation, service delivery and empowerment of communities to demand services. It is also recognized that, to have credibility and legitimacy, non-state actors should be professional and have sound internal governance and leadership structures that ensure accountability, transparency and performance.

AFRICA'S DETERMINED QUEST FOR GOOD SOCIAL ORDER

African leaders had, indeed, been aware, at least by the 1990s, of the causal linkage between “development” and “peace and security”, and this understanding was well articulated in the summit declarations and decisions adopted during that period. What was lacking, however, was a clear articulation of the location of governance in its multi-dimensional ramifications in that equation. It was, thanks to NEPAD, that “governance” was put at the centre of that equation. Since the 1990s, the continent's drive towards common values and standards can be divided into three phases: the 1990s to the 2000 Lomé Summit of the OAU which adopted the Constitutive Act of the African Union; the period from 2002 to 2005 when concerted efforts were made to operationalise both the AU and NEPAD; and the current period whose focus is organized around the move towards a Union Government in Africa.

Phase I: The Constitutive Act of the AU, 2000

The adoption of the Constitutive Act of the AU at the Summit of the OAU of 2000 in Lomé, Togo, was an important turning point in terms of promoting the principles of good governance in Africa. The AU Constitutive Act fundamentally transformed the OAU into the AU, in that the scope of the objectives and principles of the AU were so broad and comprehensive to include issues that were not covered even in the OAU Charter and some of the relevant treaties which were already in force. For example, “respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance”, absent in the OAU Charter, is recognized in the AU Constitutive Act.

Another contribution of the AU Constitutive Act to the development of common values and standards is in its redefinition of sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States. The latter principle is retained in the Constitutive Act but with a qualification that recognizes the right of the Union to “intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity”. Also, a Member State can “request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security”.

Furthermore, the Constitutive Act, building on the decision of the 1999 OAU Summit in Algiers, Algeria, included, as one of its principles, the “condemnation and rejection of unconstitutional changes of government”. Indeed, the Lomé Summit also adopted the historic Declaration on the Framework for an OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes of Government. “Unconstitutional Government by armed dissident groups and rebel movements; and refusal by an incumbent government to relinquish power to the winning party after free, fair and regular elections. This was historic, not least because Africa has, since the mid-1960s, been confronted with the problems of coups, military interventions and, in the 1990s in particular, disputed elections.

The nine points set out in the Declaration on the Framework for an OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes of Government addressed the importance of: the adoption and respect of a democratic constitution; the separation of powers; popular participation and the promotion of political pluralism; the holding of free and regular elections; recognition of the role of the opposition; freedom of expression and the media; the recognition of fundamental rights and freedoms as per the international and continental human rights instruments.

The promotion and protection of human rights is an integral part of the agenda of the AU as enshrined in its Constitutive Act. The work of the AU in this respect includes building the delivery capacity of key local actors, which comprises member States’ institutions such as the independent national human rights commissions, ombudsperson, civil society organizations and the media. It also entails mainstreaming human rights in every aspect of the work of the AU Commission, supporting the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights and its relations with other organs of the African Union on issues related to human rights, applying human rights based approach to conflict resolution and promoting gender equality and the rights of the African woman.

Indeed, among the most respected initiatives taken by African states in this domain has been the adoption of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights to establish an African Court as a meaningful and effective mechanism to address the question of human rights violations on the continent. The Protocol came into force in January 2004.

Phase II 2002 - 2005: Operationalization of AU and NEPAD

25. The 2001 AU/NEPAD Foundation Document on Conditions for Sustainable Development in Africa is underpinned by three pillars of good governance:

- The Peace and Security Initiative;
- The Democracy and Political Governance Initiative;
- The Economic and Corporate Governance Initiative.

The Peace and Security Initiative has the object of ensuring peace and security through conflict-prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction and development initiatives at the sub-regional and regional levels.

The Democracy and Political Governance Initiative is aimed at promoting the principles of democracy, transparency, accountability, integrity, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Enhancing the quality of economic, financial and corporate governance is the purpose of the Economic and Corporate Governance Initiative.

The African Peer Review Mechanism, based as it were on the AU/NEPAD Foundation Document and the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance, is established with a view to encouraging member States’ compliance with the common values and standards discussed above.

Phase III: Towards Union Government

Furthermore, in adopting the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance at the recent AU Summit in Accra, Ghana, African leaders have not only given more legislative force to the consensus already achieved on the causal linkage between development and governance; they have also placed Africa’s march towards full and comprehensive democratic governance on a new path. The Charter, in Chapter 10, spells out measures that have to be taken at country, sub-regional and continental levels for the mainstreaming and institutionalization of the objectives of the Charter, and, in Chapter 11, even makes provision for action against “any State Party that violates this Charter”.

AFRICA'S GIANT STEPS

Available statistics show that governance performance in Africa over the past decades has been fairly positive. The political and economic landscape in Africa is changing fast and positively. For the first time in over a decade, economic growth and development indicators have begun to respond to brighter prospects of governance in Africa. On the socio-economic front, real per-capita GDP growth in most parts of Africa increased from 0.1% during the period of 1986-90 to an estimated 4% in 2002. The number of African countries experiencing double-digit inflation rates fell from 16 (World Bank and IMF (2007): Global Monitoring Report 2007) in 2004 to 12 in 2006 while net foreign direct investment flows to African countries have more than doubled from US\$ 6.9million in 1998 to US\$ 17.6 million in 2003. In the period January 2005 to April 2006, thirty-two countries in Africa effected positive business climate reforms and seven countries introduced negative reforms. Tanzania was the best reformer with four positive reforms, followed by Ghana, Morocco, Nigeria and Rwanda with three. Indeed, Tanzania and Ghana were among the top ten (10) reformers worldwide, according to the 2007 World Bank Governance Indicators.

The business climate and corporate governance framework have also improved remarkably. Accordingly, Africa witnessed US\$8.2 billion of new listings during the first seven months of 2007, this being 13% higher than the previous year; with Nigeria being the largest recipient.

Without doubt, the increasing quality in African governance is both a cause and consequence of the substantial reduction in conflicts, the renewed vigour towards sustaining peace, stability and security in post-conflict situations, enhanced public service delivery, and the considerable advancement in regional integration.

Most importantly, the widespread appeal and growing embrace of the tenets of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is reflective of the deepening democratic ethos and political pluralism and is accentuating the benefits of political and economic reforms. For the first time in over a decade, economic growth and development indicators have begun to respond to brighter prospects of governance in Africa.

Admittedly, however, there are still challenges to address in the area of corporate governance. These include lack of appropriate legislation and inadequate enforcement and implementation; embryonic capital markets; inadequate entrepreneurship and SME development; high unemployment and low skills training; gender disparities; overworked commercial justice systems; the shortage of available land; lack of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activity; and corruption. (UNECA (2007): Economic Report of Africa 2007).

The London Business School's study, Corporate Governance in Africa: A Survey of Publicly Listed Companies (2003), had concluded: "Overall, we find that businesses listed on African stock markets have corporate governance standards that are on par with (and in some instances are better than other emerging markets"

In general, nevertheless, the findings of the African Governance Report (AGR) published in 2005 by UNECA shows that there have been improvements in all aspects of governance in Africa. The AGR found that in the twenty-eight African countries surveyed, there has been an increase in the use of competitive, democratic elections, improvements in macroeconomic and public financial management and greater checks and balances on the executive branch of government. African countries and governments are definitely not shying away from confronting the many governance challenges, including in the areas of human rights, gender equality, corruption, quality of public service delivery, political instability, high cost of doing business and capacity constraints in key governance institutions.

Data from the World Bank shows that Algeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Sierra Leone have made significant progress across a number of dimensions of governance in the 1998-2006 period.

Multiparty elections have now become part of the continent's political landscape as witnessed in 175 national elections which took place in 42 African countries between 1989 and 2001. Recent developments on this front include the first democratic election in the DR Congo, Nigeria where power passed from a civilian to another civilian government for the first time, and Liberia where a defeated incumbent conceded and handed over the reigns of power to the opposition.

The AU has also played its role in promoting the consolidation of democracy on the continent, thanks to the enforcement of the policy on the rejection of unconstitutional change of government. Examples here include the intervention in Togo in February 2005, and Mauritania in August of the same year. In both cases the AU acted decisively against what were perceived as unconstitutional change of government.

In addition, since achieving independence, many African countries have endeavored to reform the public service to make it more relevant to their needs and to ensure the development of an effective structure for the state. The establishment of a collective and continental 'Programme on Governance and Public Administration' within the overall NEPAD framework represents a historic moment on the continent. Operating under the guidance of the Pan-African Ministers of Public Service – a forum that has met five times since 1994 - the programme embodies a commitment by the continent to revitalize governance and public administration through strengthening the capacity of state institutions. Indeed, the programme is characterized by intervention in specific priority areas: the All African Innovation Awards, African Public Service Charter, Post-Conflict Reconstruction, and Development and the Africa Public Service Day.

Since its inception, the AU has been making strides towards involving Civil Society organizations (CSOs) by inaugurating the establishing the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) as an organ for the representation of CSOs in the AU system; organizing pre-summit CSO events to feed into summit deliberations; and actively promoting CSO involvement in sectoral work of the Union, notably through participation in activities of other organs. At country-level, gone are the days when CSOs were considered an enemy. The CSOs for example, are the center of the African Peer Review Mechanism.

There has also been a renewed commitment on the part of African leaders to gender equality. The existence of instruments that promote women's rights, notably the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) alludes to this. This commitment to gender equality as a major goal of the AU is not limited to the provision in Article 4 (1) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, but also includes the decision by at least two AU Summits on gender parity within the Union and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) adopted at AU Summit of July 2004. Since then, among others, the First AU Conference of Ministers Responsible for Gender and Women's Affairs was held in October 2005; the African Union Women's Committee (AUWC) was established; and the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa entered into force in November 2005. For that matter, the AU Commission did not hesitate to investigate the allegations of sexual misconduct by some soldiers of the African Mission in Sudan (AMIS).

At the sub-regional level, the RECs have also been active in promoting better governance climate in their respective member states. In pursuance of the 2001 ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, ECOWAS deployed a 60-member Observer Mission to Sierra Leone for the August 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. The Mission comprised members of the ECOWAS Council of the Wise, experts drawn from national electoral management bodies and civil society. Indeed, since 2006, ECOWAS through its Zonal Bureau on Conflict Prevention, based in Monrovia, Liberia, had been monitoring the progress of the processes in Sierra Leone regarding reforms of the electoral law, return to constituency-based elections, nomination of party candidates and the political campaigns. The ECOWAS Mission concluded that the voting process was adequately free, peaceful and credible, noting further that the determination and commitment of the Government and people of Sierra Leone to consolidating peace, stability and deepening the culture of democracy was evident through the historic elections.

Within the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), respect for democracy and good governance is considered a major tool of promoting regional integration and development. The Community adopted the instrument titled Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections in furtherance of Article 5 of the Treaty of Windhoek 1992, which commits member states to consolidate, defend and maintain democracy, peace and stability through common political values to advance human rights, democracy and the rule of law. SADC has been in the vanguard of ensuring the blossoming of the principles of freedom of association, full participation of citizens in the political process, equal opportunity to exercise the right to vote, independence of the judiciary and the impartiality of electoral institutions. Other RECs in the continent have also been making giant strides in promoting international standards and best practices in governance.

AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM (APRM)

In recognition of the imperatives of good governance for development, the Sixth Summit of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) of the NEPAD, held in March 2003 in Abuja, Nigeria, adopted the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the African Peer Review Mechanism. The Mechanism, which is turning out to be the most innovative aspect of NEPAD, is an instrument voluntarily acceded to by Member States of the AU as a self-monitoring initiative for good governance. The mandate of the APRM, earlier mentioned, is to ensure that the policies and practices of participating countries conform to the values, principles, codes and standards enshrined in the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance. This commonly agreed-to instrument for self-monitoring has at its epicentre the dissemination of best practices and the rectification of underlying deficiencies in governance and socio-economic development processes among AU Member States. The framework is aimed at encouraging and building responsible leadership through a self-assessment process, constructive peer dialogue and the sharing of information and common experiences in order to reinforce successful and exemplary practices among African countries.

The APRM is open to all AU member states. Accession entails undertaking to submit to periodic peer reviews and to facilitate such reviews. It includes commitment to implementing the National Programme of Action (NPOA) arising from the peer review, and operationalising the agreed parameters for good governance across the following four thematic areas: Democracy and Political Governance, Economic Governance and Management, Corporate Governance, and Socio-economic Development.

Djibouti's ascension in July 2007 brings to 27 the total number of AU member countries that have so far voluntarily acceded to the APRM. Others member states are Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Republic of Congo,

Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan South Sudan , Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. It is hoped that more Member States of the AU will join the mechanism, with a view to advancing and promoting the ideals and common values and standards enshrined in the AU decisions and key base documents.

Since its inception in 2003, the APRM Panel has launched reviews in 14 countries and fielded country review missions to five countries: Ghana (April 2005), Rwanda (April 2005), Kenya (October 2005), South Africa (July 2006), Algeria (December 2006) and Benin (July 2007). So far, peer reviews at the level of Heads of State and Government have been conducted for five of these countries. Ghana was the first country to be peer reviewed in January 2006. Rwanda and Kenya followed in June 2006. The peer review of Algeria and South Africa, the first two of the five initiating members of NEPAD to reach this stage, was conducted at the 7th APR Forum Summit Meeting attended by 18 Heads of State and Government on 2 July 2007 in Accra, Ghana.

The APRM is no doubt a milestone in the continent's history of political and economic transformation. It represents a sea of change in the thinking of African leaders as they seek to reverse the trend of lack of accountability, political authoritarianism, state failure, and corruption, to embrace and consolidate democracy as well as effect sound and transparent economic management. As an initiative created, owned and driven by Africans, the APRM is a groundbreaking, and a self introspection tool which has generated an expectation for Africa to tackle the governance problems which, as argued already, stand as an obstacle for the continent's development. The Mechanism represents a bold new approach to transformation for capacity development and good governance in Africa. As the most visible measure of the progress of African states adopting norms of good governance and sound economic policies, the APRM also serves as a barometer on Africa's progress.

Four years on (2003-2007), the APRM has won acclaim worldwide. The interest generated by the process around the world and in Africa has been tremendous. The credibility of APRM remains high with its Reports so far delivered, and there is great confidence in the members of the APRM's oversight committee, the Panel of Eminent Persons. There is now a concrete demonstration of Africa's commitment to addressing governance issues forcefully. With the APRM, Africa is showcasing the continent's innovative thinking in governance.

Notwithstanding the positive progress that has been registered by APRM, there are a number of challenges that still require attention. As might be expected, the implementation of an enormous and complex undertaking such as the APRM has been fraught with a number of challenges, ranging from financial, capacity, procedural, operational and political challenges, both at the national and continental levels. This is understandable, given that the concept of political peer review is a unique one, and that there was no model or rule to draw upon in any part of the world.

The most urgent challenges include addressing the slow pace in completing the review cycle from developing the country's self-assessment report to the peer review by the Heads of State and Government. For example, Ghana and Rwanda each spent 10 months between the country support mission and the country review mission, Kenya took fourteen (14) months and South Africa eight months. These are the countries that have succeeded in putting themselves on the fast-track. Adequate funding is fundamental to the sustainability, independence and African ownership of the process.

Other challenges are the need to get more African countries to sign up to the Mechanism and those that have already acceded to complete the process expeditiously; aligning the APRM instruments to the specific circumstances of each country; the importance of building and strengthening capacity both at national and continental levels so as to better manage the Mechanism; the urgency of creating and managing credible data bases that would provide reliable information for informed decisions; and how best to mobilize the requisite resources for fulfilling the APRM mandate, especially as more countries sign up to the process. Perhaps, the main dividend of the APRM will emanate from implementing the National Programmes of Action by countries that have completed the review.

In recognition of these challenges, the APRM, in collaboration with the Algerian Government, organized an experience-sharing and brainstorming workshop aimed at strengthening and fast-tracking the process as part of the APF in Algiers from 8-9, November 2007.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICAN

Addressing Africa's remaining governance challenges and constraints

Notwithstanding the achievements since the 1990s in the development of common values and standards, the issues of compliance monitoring and enforcement continue to pose a challenge. Overall, some of the major governance challenges include addressing the human rights issue, particularly the rights of women and children; elimination of corruption; poor service delivery; peace and stability; shortage of skilled labour; independence and effectiveness of oversight functions of regulatory bodies; inadequate business rules and regulations; integration of traditional institutions into modern governance system; need by civil society organizations to improve internal governance; prevalence of capacity deficits in governance institutions, especially electoral institutions, judiciary, parliamentary, civil service and media organizations. However, four key challenges need to be singled out as challenges at country-level.

Firstly, there are problems of an institutional nature with respect to, notably, the capacity of the state to execute its responsibilities, governance mechanisms for political oversight and the management of state-society relations. Here, capacity-building measures are necessary to help improve the policy-making process; delivery on policies and services at the national and local levels; management of national resources; and mainstreaming sub-regional, continental and

global commitments at country-level. Ultimately, these capacity-building measures should target policy-makers in both state and non-state institutions. A second challenge facing African nations is to address, with appropriate structures and mechanisms, more fully, the right-to-development issues so that all citizens participate actively and fully in the development process. The outcomes of such a process would foster gender equality, women empowerment, human rights and more active and meaningful participation of the civil society in the development process.

Thirdly, the private sector in Africa has, and continues to face enormous challenges. Governments, would, of course, continue in their endeavour to reduce the costs of doing business by improving the quality of regulatory frameworks, reducing administrative barriers, improving physical infrastructure facilities and stamping out corruption. Further improvements in businesses' access to finance and market information and corporate governance, investments in human capital development and consolidation of the macroeconomic gains already realized are also called for.

Lastly and more importantly, the attainment of the MDGs remains an immediate challenge, not least because of studies that have prognosticated considerable obstacles

to overcome for Africa in this area. At the continental level, the AU Commission and other AU organs need to be strengthened institutionally in order to enable them to play an effective role in the monitoring and enforcement of compliance with the common values and standards. African countries should also take the necessary steps to increase intra-Africa trade through deepened regional integration. To this end there is a need to expedite the programme aimed at the rationalization and harmonization of the RECs in addressing the special governance challenges of post-conflict countries. For many countries in Africa emerging from war, the governance challenges are even more daunting. It is important to keep in mind that although many of the characteristics of post-war countries are similar in terms of the consequences of conflict, the causes may be context specific and thus approaches to addressing the challenges must be context specific. The immediate challenge is to address the fundamental and urgent issues of post-conflict reconstruction, including maintaining peace and security, restoring government and reintegrating society. Also important in the short term would be quick recovery programmes, such as labour-intensive public works to absorb ex-combatants as a way to preserve social peace. As building public institutions takes time, the role of non-state actors would be crucial for the successful implementation of such programmes. This process may be aided by making funds quickly accessible to civil society and private sector organizations with good track records in service delivery. Over the medium to long term, it is needless to affirm the imperative for the government to rebuild public institutions, public administration systems and infrastructure, focusing on public officials especially in the areas of policy design and implementation. A capable state delivering quality services to its citizens effectively is the only way to restore trust in government in the long run.

The Role of Development Partners

In a globalized and interdependent world, there is an important role for the international community to play. External partnership support to finance education, health, gender, women empowerment and infrastructure development programmes of African countries would still be necessary to assist Africa progress towards the attainment of the MDGs. African countries would also benefit from enhanced market access for their exports in the developed countries. Progress in the WTO Doha Development Round negotiations and trade-related capacity development to help African countries overcome supply constraints to the promotion of exports will be of immense benefits to Africa. External partnership support to capacity development programmes targeting key institutions of governance such as parliament, anti-corruption commissions, the judiciary and revenue management bodies as well as those aimed at strengthening economic management, procurement and financial management systems, will be necessary. For the good governance agenda to bring progress to Africans, regional and continental institutions have to be supported. In this respect, development partners would need to continue to provide support to the AU Commission, NEPAD Secretariat, the APRM Secretariat and the RECs to implement their programmes effectively. Of critical importance will be support to the APRM process in general and in particular, the implementation of national plans of action of APRM-participating countries in particular. Of similar importance is support for the continuous internalization of the principles and strategies of NEPAD at all levels on the continent in the policy design and implementation, and the engagement of the citizenry in the process. Also of critical importance will be the help provided to African countries to strengthen capacities in controlling corruption, combating bribery and money laundering in their countries. They could also be assisted, by, among others, overcoming bank secrecy laws and other constraints on repatriating stolen assets. The African Development Bank-OECD Action Plan on Bribery and OECD Anti Bribery regulations and Monitoring Report are therefore welcomed developments in these regards. External partnership support to ratify and implement the requirements of the UN Convention on Corruption will also improve governance outcomes in African countries.

Development partners are increasingly using measures of governance when deciding on the allocation of development aid. For example, the World Bank uses its Country Policy Institutional Assessment indicators to decide on how to allocate aid. Although this appears to support the NEPAD agenda by rewarding countries with good performance in governance, there is a need for more transparency in how the governance assessments are applied in aid disbursement. There is also need to encourage more efforts towards good governance by the generality of African states by measures that are not unduly discriminatory and punitive on the citizens of countries that are not favourably perceived by Africa's external partners. Furthermore, there should be more donor harmonization in the indicators used in such assessments to reduce transaction costs of development aid recipients, in line with the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

The Need for Mutual Accountability

Both Africa and her development partners must honour their obligations made in various commitments relative to furthering Africa's development agenda. There is now a consensus in the development community that joint monitoring of commitments on the side of Africa and its international partners is an invaluable tool to improve development effectiveness and outcomes.

On their part, under NEPAD, African leaders have committed themselves to sustained economic development of the continent by putting in place measures of good corporate, economic and political governance, which have already translated into progress on transparent accountability, more effective checks and balances on executive power, adherence to constitutionalism, multiparty democracy and macroeconomic management. It has not been easy, but the meeting of these commitments remains on course.

Rather sadly, the commitments made by development partners through the Monterrey Consensus, the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness and various declarations at G8 Summits relative to enhancing aid quantity and quality have, in the main, not been met. If there are indeed efforts to meet them, such efforts have not concretely reflected or impacted effectively and desirably, on African development process.

The Mutual Review of Development Effective Report that will be produced in the first half of 2008 by UNECA and OECD will be an important mechanism for mutual accountability for African countries and development partners and as a basis for G8/OECD-Africa dialogue on African development agenda.

CONCLUSION

Africa is determined to sustain the momentum of good governance by concretely addressing the challenges facing it and overcoming them with the support of its valued partners across the globe.

Under NEPAD, African leaders have fully embraced the socio-economic transformation of the continent through the conducive space for development engendered by the formulation and implementation of appropriate governance policies, reforms and practices. The increase in the number of African countries that is acceding to the APRM is also cause for optimism. However, Africa still faces some governance challenges, both at the country and at the regional levels.

At the national level, challenges in the determination to assure a qualitative and comfortable life for the average African remain in the areas of human rights, gender equality, public service delivery, political stability, business environment and capacity in key governance institutions. At the continental level, the AU, the APR Secretariat and the RECs are still being constrained from delivering their programmes effectively because of capacity challenges. There is also a need to deepen regional integration in Africa through the rationalization and harmonization of the region.

Development partners have a contribution to make to support Africa overcome daunting governance challenges. It is now time for development partners to meet their pledges and commitments towards full and effective support for a new transformation and sustainable development

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