ALL LIVES MATTER

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The Thinker
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On the Cover:
"In the global media black lives may matter, but western white lives matter more."
– Simon Kuper
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THE ARMS INDUSTRY GETS RICHER AND THE POOR GET KILLED:

ALL LIVES MATTER

The spate of killings of young Afro-Americans, by trigger happy policemen spawned a powerful slogan, rich in content: "BLACK LIVES MATTER".

To a great extent the USA and NATO are responsible for the growing strength and increasing acts of terrorism not only in Paris and other major Western countries but also in Nigeria, Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Mali, Kenya, Cameroon and the Central African Republic.

In the last issue of *The Thinker* Na'eem Jeenah pointed out:

> The USA, indeed, has a great deal of responsibility for the creation of ISIS and its current actions. Its occupation of Iraq and other repeated mistakes aided in the coalescing of jihadists in ISIS. These include US mollycoddling of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, two American allies that played a major role in developing the ideologies and organisational capacity of ISIS-type groups, and the US targeting of the wrong countries and role players for the 9/11 attacks.

In the current issue Dan Glazebrook points to the drastic consequences of NATO'S war on Libya. He points out:

> NATO had effectively turned over the entire armoury of an advanced industrial state to the region's most sectarian militias: groups such as the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Boko Haram...
>
> The earliest casualty of NATO's war outside Libya was Mali. Taureg fighters who had worked in Gaddafi's security forces fled Libya

soon after Gaddafi's government was overthrown, and mounted an insurgency in Northern Mali. They in turn were overthrown, however, by Al Qaeda's regional affiliates – flush with Libyan weaponry – who then turned Northern Mali into another base from which to train and launch attacks. Boko Haram was a key beneficiary.

The brutal and murderous terrorist attacks in Paris on November 14, 2015 led to a massive and unprecedented show of support and solidarity with Paris, France and the French government. Social Media as well as mainstream mass media in North America and Europe went ballistic in their saturation coverage as well as drumming up deep sympathy and solidarity with those killed and their families and friends. World renowned buildings such as the Eiffel tower, the Sydney Opera House and the CNN tower, to mention a few, had the tricolour superimposed on them.

It is correct and humane to express sympathy and solidarity with those killed in Paris. But let us note that the Global Terrorism Index in 2015 reported that "in total, 32 658 people were killed in terrorist attacks in 67 countries in 2014. Even in the wake of the November 13 Paris attacks, the majority of terrorism related deaths do not occur in the West. Most of these deaths, over 78%, transpired in just five countries: Iraq, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria. In Nigeria alone, deaths by terrorism increased by 300% to 7512, the largest increase ever recorded by any country."

Thus more than 80 percent of
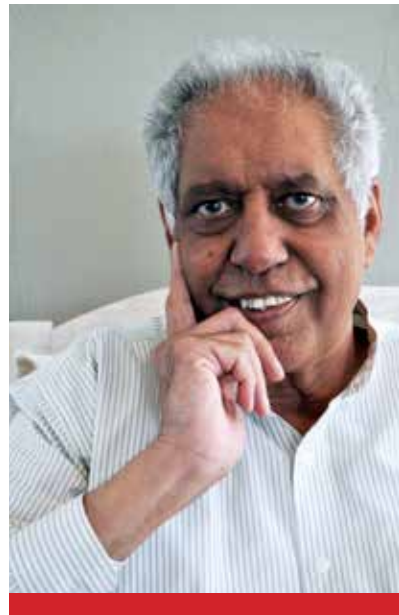
people killed by acts of terrorism are offered much less coverage and expressions of solidarity and sympathy. Progressive forces throughout the world should say it loud and clear "BLACK LIVES MATTER"; "ALL LIVES MATTER".

Two astute and outstanding columnists, Steven Friedman and Simon Kuper, writing from different parts of the world have commented on this. Steven Friedman writes:

> The Paris murders came days after IS killed scores in Beirut and at the same time as Kurdish forces in Sinjar, Iraq, discovered the mass grave of 80 Yazidi women, who appear to have been murdered by IS because their religion does not meet its standards. So all three were the victims of the same murderers. But the voices that shape world opinion did not ask us to display Lebanese flags in sympathy for the victims of Beirut. Social media did not ask us to express unity with the Yazidi. Regular media offered saturation coverage of Paris, much less on the other two outrages… Just as the international prejudice makes it harder to fight mass murder, so does the domestic one make it more difficult to build a democratic society and a growing economy because it creates the impression that rights and values that should belong to all of us are the sole property of those who hold

power in society, even if they don't hold it in the government. We fight terror best by honouring all of its victims, particularly those who are least like us." (Business Day, 18 November 2015).

Simon Kuper in an internationally respected and reputable newspaper, the *Financial Times* writes:

The blanket coverage of Paris also reveals the reality that in the global media black lives may matter, but western white lives matter more. Terror attacks in Kenya, Lebanon, Turkey and Nigeria and now Mali get relatively little international attention – one reason why Isis hit the world's most visited city.

In this issue we also carry the contributions of Thabo Mbeki and Aziz Pahad who comment on the disastrous consequences for international peace and security of the militarisation of foreign policy in the USA, France, the UK and other NATO countries, resulting from a unipolar world. Many of the points they make are echoed and developed in other articles, for example in Slava Tetekin's piece on

> ❝It can be said that war is very bad for civilians and very good for the US military-industrial complex and economy. Put in another way the arms industry gets richer and the poor get killed.❞

Russia and Alexander Mezyaev's on the ICC.

We should also view with alarm the Israel and ISIS nexus which is designed to engineer a regime change in Syria and instigate hostility to Iran and Russia. Furthermore we should give serious consideration to the impact on peace and security of Turkey downing a Russian fighter plane as well as its support for ISIS and its

acts of aggression against the Kurdish people.

Saudi Arabia is one of the biggest buyers of US made arms and ammunition. In the latest agreement they have procured nearly US$50 billion worth of arms from the US military industrial complex. It is noteworthy that as orders from the Pentagon slow down it is arms sales to the Middle East that fuels an expansion of military production in the USA. It can be said that war is very bad for civilians and very good for the US military-industrial complex and economy. Put in another way the arms industry gets richer and the poor get killed.

The escalation of terrorist attacks from both non-state and state actors is a grim reminder that it can be contained by multi-lateral co-operation and action, political, diplomatic, economic and military. This co-operation has to include the honest sharing of confidential intelligence information.

As, like Lenin, we ponder the question "What Is To Be Done?", let us popularise the slogan "ALL LIVES MATTER". ∎

The Editor and staff of *The Thinker* would like to thank all our readers, contributors and advertisers for their continuing support.

We wish you all a happy and successful year in 2016

15 YEARS OF GLOBAL EXCELLENCE

Oasis is proud to be celebrating the 15th anniversary of our global equity funds during the final quarter of 2015, giving us the opportunity to reflect on the substantial value which these funds have added to our clients' lives since the dawn of the new millennium.

As many of our readers will know, Oasis was originally established in 1997 with the simple yet powerful objective of protecting and growing the real wealth of our clients. In line with this philosophy, our global equity funds were launched in 2000 in order to service investors across the world that require superior investment management services, while staying true to their ethical and Islamic beliefs. Since then, these funds have certainly stood up to the task. By the end of 2005, our global equity funds had been given 4-star and 5-star ratings by Morningstar, and a 5 year long term management rating from S&P. Over the last decade, the Oasis Crescent Global Equity Fund additionally picked up numerous Failaka Islamic Fund Awards, as the Best Global Equity Fund across 1, 3, 5, and 10 year horizons. In 2012, S&P gave further recognition to the fund's track record of excellence, assigning it a Gold star rating over 5 years. More recently, the fund received the special accolade of being recognised as the top performer in its class over 10 years at the Lipper Fund Awards of the MENA Asset Management Conference in 2014, and this year Oasis was awarded Offshore Management Company of the Year at the 19th Annual Raging Bull Awards ceremony.

15TH ANNIVERSARY

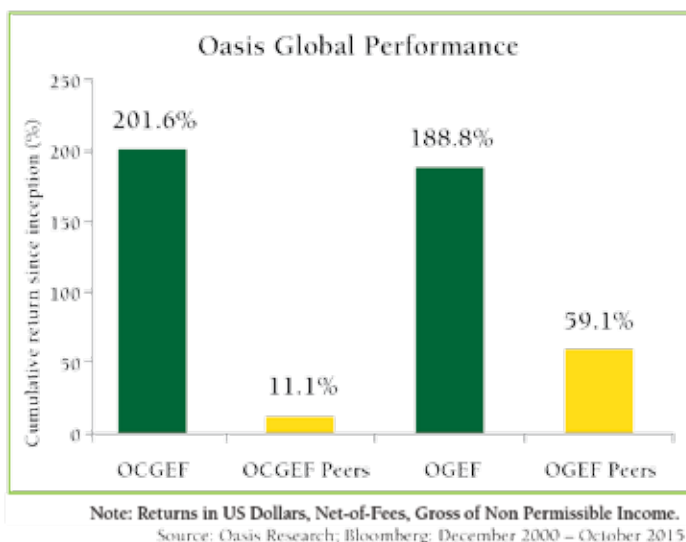Oasis Crescent Global Equity Fund

Oasis & Oasis Crescent Global Fund

Throughout the journey, Oasis has thus truly grown into a globally competitive business, providing premier investment management services to our clients across the world from offices in the UK, Ireland and South Africa. Our global products, including the flagship equity funds, are now available on wealth management platforms across countries as diverse as Switzerland, Belgium, the UK, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, South Africa, and Malaysia, while we are also registered to provide wealth management services in Singapore and Mauritius.

Over the next 15 years, we will continue to strive for both service and performance excellence, so that our clients, colleagues, service providers and communities ultimately reap the long term rewards.

Through the consistent application of the Oasis investment philosophy, both the Oasis Global Equity Fund (OGEF) and the Oasis Crescent Global Equity Fund (OCGEF) have built up a stellar 15 year performance track record to date.

OCGEF, for example, has generated a net-of-fee annualised return of 7.7% in USD terms since inception, outperforming its peer group by 7 percentage points per year. If you had invested $100 000 in this fund in December 2000, your wealth would have grown by 201.6%, to $301 600 by the end of October 2015. This is $190 000 more than what you would have earned if you had invested with the average peer group fund.

Oasis Global Performance

Cumulative return since inception (%)

- OCGEF: 201.6%
- OCGEF Peers: 11.1%
- OGEF: 188.8%
- OGEF Peers: 59.1%

Note: Returns in US Dollars, Net-of-Fees, Gross of Non Permissible Income.
Source: Oasis Research; Bloomberg: December 2000 – October 2015

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Dr David Adams was the Director of the UN International Year for the Culture of Peace, drafting UN documents, including the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, and supervising the Manifesto 2000 campaign with its 75 million signatures. Since retiring from UNESCO he has continued actively to support the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace.

Urko Aiartza Azurtza is a practicing lawyer. He is a member of the Basque Democratic Lawyers' Association, as well as the European Lawyers for Democracy and Human Rights. He has represented group and individual rights at the United Nations. As a member of the Basque national liberation movement he has also been involved in the dialogue and negotiation processes; and since 2011 he has been Senator in Madrid for the Basque pro sovereignty coalition *Amaiur*.

Dr Nestor Bidadanure is a native of Burundi and currently lives in France. He is a doctor of philosophy, journalist and writer. His first book *Memories of the Future* was published in collaboration with Francoise Cruz in 2012. In 2014 he published *Do not turn off the light*, a reflection on Nelson Mandela's political heritage. He is an expert in conflict resolution.

Dr Anton A Fabbriciani has an MPhil in Politics and International Economics and a DPhil in Constitutional Law and Politics from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. He is currently a Research Associate in at the University of the Free State. His research focuses on constitutional law, human rights, politics and international economics. He also writes for a local newspaper on a weekly basis.

Dan Glazebrook is a teacher and political writer based in Oxford, England. He writes mostly on Western foreign policy and is a frequent contributor to *Counterpunch* (USA), *Al Ahram Weekly* (Egypt) and the *Morning Star* (Britain). His book *Divide and Ruin: The West's Imperial Strategy in an Age of Crisis* was published by Liberation Media in October 2013.

Mohammed Haffejee completed his MA in Political Science from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2002. His MA dissertation centered on the transformation of the South African Intelligence Services on the advent of democracy. He is currently a PhD candidate within the School of Leadership at the University of Johannesburg.

Tsholofelo Joshua Koopedi is currently the Managing Director of the Youth Development Institute of South Africa, a collaborative partnership between the University of Johannesburg and the National Youth Development Agency, aimed at providing cutting edge research and programmes for youth empowerment in South Africa. He holds a Master's in Public Management from Wits University and is now studying Business Leadership through UNISA.

Professor Peter Lawrence is Emeritus Professor of Development Economics at Keele University, UK. He has taught economics in Tanzania and Uganda and researched development issues in several countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. He has published widely in journals and books and is a founding editor of the *Review of African Political Economy*.

LI Liqing (Shu Zan), is the former Deputy Secretary-General of China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE), former Director-General of the Africa Bureau, International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. He has also served as Counsellor at Chinese Embassies in Botswana and India.

Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki was Deputy President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999 and President from June 1999 to September 2008. He was for over three decades a member of the NEC of the ANC. Mbeki was the architect of NEPAD and the India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) forum. He has mediated in African conflict situations including Burundi; Democratic Republic of Congo; the Ivory Coast; and Sudan and Southern Sudan.

Professor Alexander Meziaev is the Head of the Department of International Law, University of Management, TISBI, Kazan, Russia. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the *Kazan Journal of International Law and International Relations*. Meziaev is a member of the International Law Association and a former member of the Association of Defence Counsel Practicing before the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. He has written eight books and many academic articles.

Professor Mammo Muchie is a fellow of the South African Academy of Sciences and the African Academy of Sciences. He is a Professor at Tshwane University of Technology, adjunct professor at the Adama Science and Technology University in Ethiopia and a senior research associate at the Technology and Management Centre for Development at Oxford University. He has written many publications, including books and articles.

Professor Mokubung Nkomo is Professor of Education at UNISA. He was director of the South Africa Partnership Programme at the School for Social Research in New York; Executive Director (1998-2000), and Interim President (2000) of the HSRC; and Deputy Vice Chancellor at the Tshwane University of Technology (2012-2013). He also served as Chair of Umalusi from 1998-2001) and SAQA (1999-2005). His work has been widely published.

Aziz Pahad has a BA from Wits and an MA in International Relations from the University of Sussex. He worked for the ANC in exile for close to three decades. He was involved in the covert talks between the ANC and various groupings from South Africa. He served as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

from 1994-2008. His book *Insurgent Diplomat: Civil Talks or Civil War* was published by Penguin in 2014.

Michael Prior is a British economist with over 30 years' experience as an international consultant specialising in energy and environment projects and policy development. He has worked in several African countries including Angola, Ethiopia, Uganda and Sudan. Michael was previously Director of the Stockholm Environment Institute at York University where he initiated continuing work on environmental issues.

Professor Anver Saloojee is Professor in the Department of Politics and Public Administration, Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada. He is President of the Ryerson Faculty Association and Vice President of the Canadian Association of University Teachers. Between 2005 and 2008 he was a Special Advisor in the Presidency, Government of South Africa.

Dr Stefan Schepers is a Member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts. He is a visiting professor at Northampton University Business School. He holds Master's degrees in law from the University of Leuven, in European studies from the University of Strasbourg, and a PhD in political sciences from the University of Edinburgh.

Mohamed Essa Suliman is an aspiring writer and researcher with a particular interest in communication and social media. He is presently employed as a project manager in the education sector. His involvement in projects includes quality assurance, research and development of e-learning materials and the use of technology in teaching and learning.

Dr Vyacheslav Tetekin is Secretary of the Central Committee and a member of the Presidium of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation. He holds a PhD from Moscow University. From 1981-1996 Tetekin was in charge of support to the ANC and SWAPO from the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee. His PhD was entitled "The UDF Against Apartheid." Tetekin is on the Editorial Board of *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, a leading national newspaper.

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INTRODUCTION FROM THE EDITOR

On the 9th and 10th November, 2015, the Concerned Africans Forum (CAF), the Foundation for Human Rights and the University of Johannesburg held a symposium on "Current Global Dynamics: Order and Disorder? Exploring the implications for Africa."

At the symposium papers were delivered by well-known scholars from South Africa and the African continent. These papers will be published as a book later in 2016.

The opening address was given by former President Thabo Mbeki and a welcome speech by Aziz Pahad, former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In this issue we publish an abridged unofficial transcript of Mbeki's address as well as the speech by Aziz Pahad. Pahad's comes first, as Mbeki refers to it in his own speech.

Current Global Dynamics
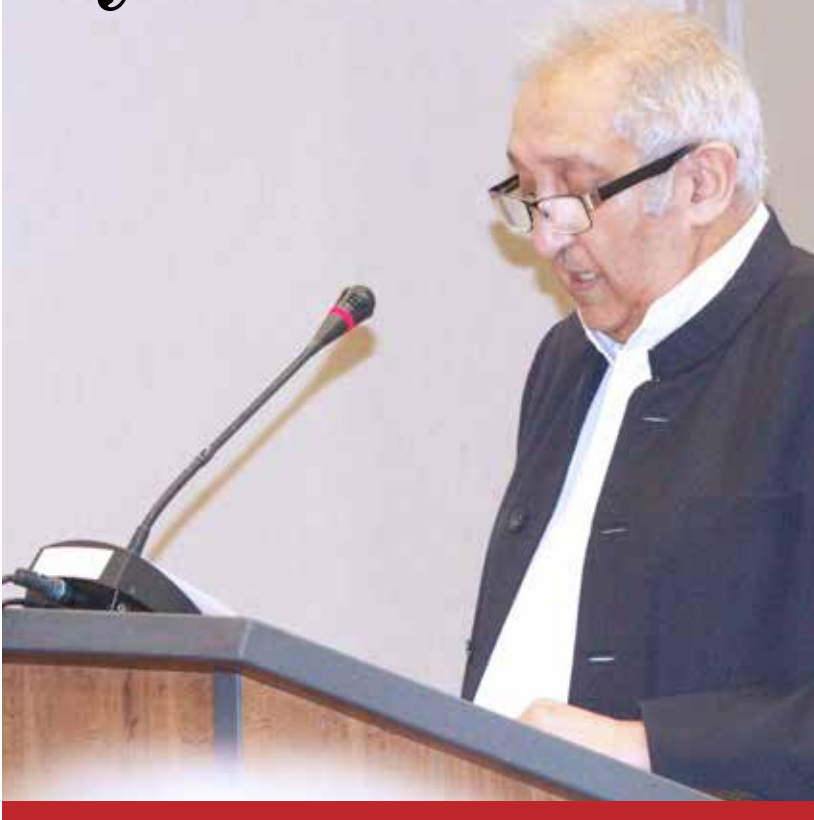
By Aziz Pahad

Throughout recent history there have been epoch-making events which fundamentally impacted on foreign policy, international relations, peace and security, stability and development; and threatened regional and international peace and security. These events and developments include:

- the technology and information revolution;
- the unprecedented pace of globalisation
- the collapse of the Socialist system in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the emergence of one superpower, resulting in the absence of a balance of power and disregard of international law; and
- the dominance of the neo-liberal agenda and the monopoly of finance capital, resulting in the successive and sustained international economic and financial crisis.

This year in May we observed the 70th anniversary of the defeat of Fascism. It is also the 65th anniversary of the infamous Nakba, when, post the Second World War, an estimated 700,000 Palestinians were forced from their land and the state of Israel was established. It is also the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

Chapter VII of the UN Charter gives the UNSC the power to "determine the existence of any threat to the breach of peace, or act of aggression", and to take military and non-military action to "restore international peace and security".

The central purpose for the establishment of the UN was to prevent war. The Nuremberg Trial concluded that starting or waging a war against the territorial integrity, political independence or sovereignty of a state or violation of international treaties or agreements was a crime that makes all war crimes possible.

It is a reality that, 70 years later, while humanity has avoided another world war, we have experienced countless wars of aggression, destabilisation and regime change, which have blatantly violated the UN Charter and international law. To date no major power responsible has been

accused or convicted of war crimes.

In 1961 President Eisenhower warned Americans about the concentration of illegitimate social power in what he called the "military-industrial complex", "whose total influence – economic, political, and even spiritual – is felt in every city, every state house, and every office of the federal government". He warned that "the potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist".

He also warned that:

The free university, historically the fountainhead of free ideas and scientific discovery, has experienced a revolution in the conduct of research. Partly because of the huge costs involved a government contract becomes virtually a substitute for intellectual curiosity. For every blackboard there are now hundreds of new electronic computers. The prospect of domination of the nation's scholars by project allocations, and the power of money is ever present and is gravely to be regarded.

Today the prophetic warning of President Eisenhower is even more relevant.

After the military attacks against the US in September 2001, the militarisation of diplomacy, i.e. the massive abuse of military and soft power to achieve regime change, has become entrenched in the military, security and foreign policy doctrines of the US. The USA National Security Strategy Document of 2001 arrogantly and in violation of international law warned the world that "the US will use its political, economic and military hegemony to act against any terrorist organisation, against any state that harbors a terrorist organisation and against any individuals that they declare to be assisting terrorism".

In a speech on June 2002 the then President Bush said:

"The US must be prepared to wage a war on terror against as many as 60 countries… Americans must be ready to launch preventative action internationally."

This was a clear warning that the US would act as a law unto itself, creating new rules of engagement.

> ❝This seminar is an attempt to provide alternative and progressive voices.❞

Today, notwithstanding changes in the Presidency and some different tactical approaches, US foreign and military policy is driven by the same perspectives of "exceptionalism" and US hegemony.

The US National Security Strategy document, 2015 states:

We must recognize that any successful strategy to ensure the security of the American people and advance our national security interests must begin with an undeniable truth – America must lead. As Americans we will always have our differences, but what unites us is the national consensus that American global leadership remains indispensable. We embrace our exceptional role and responsibilities at a time when our unique contributions are needed most…

Many of the present USA presidential candidates are calling for US "Exceptionalism" and the use of US military and soft power to maintain this.

In Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen and Ukraine extremism and terrorism are some of the disastrous consequences of US policies.

Why are the international governments and people so silent?

The freedom to generate knowledge for the public good is being seriously challenged.

> ❝ Many of the present USA presidential candidates are calling for US 'Exceptionalism' and the use of US military and soft power to maintain this.❞

Today with the phenomenal growth of technology the manipulation and distortion of information has reached new levels and governments are more open about their intentions.

The Pentagon's 2015 'manual of war' states that Psych-ops must be used to influence a target population's state of mind and shape people's perceptions as a normal standard element of information policy. There is no distinction made between domestic US and foreign media institutions and social media.

Former President Mbeki, in the forward to a recently published CAF book, wrote:

The current international environment has become much more complex. However, we should not allow this complexity to persuade us away from understanding the reality that contemporary international relations continue to be dominated by the exercise of international power among the countries of the world… What is called for are alternative and progressive voices which are able to offer different interpretations… of the fast unfolding events and… are also capable of questioning the prevailing assumptions and underlying logic of the western 'liberal order'.

As an alternative to the perception management by the main-stream media internationally and in South Africa, and the domination of Eurocentric think tanks and research institutions of the geo-strategic political and economic discourse, this seminar is an attempt to provide alternative and progressive voices. This demands that the symposium answers questions, including:

- Has there been a "peace dividend" since the end of the 2nd world war?
- Since the collapse of the Berlin Wall and Socialism in the Soviet Union and Europe has the Cold War ended?
- Is a new multipolar world emerging?
- What are the alternatives to the neo-liberal agenda? and
- Are non-state actors making a fundamental progressive impact on geo-strategic global and economic realities? ■

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CURRENT GLOBAL DYNAMICS

Order and Disorder? Exploring the implications for Africa

We need that reconstruction of that progressive voice. Without it we are not going to be able to take advantage of this new opening against unipolarity. (Refer to page 8 for the introduction)

By Thabo Mbeki

I think Aziz has properly identified the international setting and clearly I think when we talk about these current global dynamics, order, disorder, etcetera, our starting point surely must be the collapse of the Soviet Union. It has to be. And therefore the emergence of this unipolar world as it was called – I think it's still called that – with the United States as this dominant force.

This has been a defining element for the last twenty, twenty-five years in terms of foreign policy impacting on everybody across the globe. I think it's fundamentally important to understand this and really to internalise it in our thinking, because it's important then to answer the question: what is our response? What is this progressive African response? But it's got to be a progressive African response to something, and I think what it must be a response to is that reality which came with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

I think the older ones among us here – I can see some bald heads and grey heads and things like that – would remember a man called Newt Gingrich who was speaker in the US House of Representatives some time back, a republican. What I discovered about Newt Gingrich, after we had had a bit of a chat, is that actually he is an educated man. I didn't know that. [Laughter] He's actually a doctor, he has a doctorate in history. His thesis was on the Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo. So Newt Gingrich, I met him somewhere, and he asked that we should have breakfast, which we did.

And he says, we now have the United States as the only superpower in the world, so I said, yes, I agree. He says there's a consequence to that and I said, well, Mr Speaker, what is the consequence? He says the consequence is going to be that the United States is going to do wrong things because there's no countervailing power. So I said, Mr Speaker, you are right, and you are already doing wrong things. He said, I feared as much. It was interesting coming from a right-wing republican who understood the uses of power, and clearly understood that there would be negative consequences

from this situation.

I found an article written by a gentleman called Jack Matlock last year. I'll read a couple of paragraphs. He was former Ambassador to the USSR from America, 1987 to 1991, and basically he's explaining the thinking of the ruling group in the US towards Russia. He says, "Vladimir Putin was elected in 2000 and initially followed a pro-western orientation."

And that's an interesting thing to say about Putin then compared to Putin today. He says he had a pro-western orientation. And then he says, came September 2011, and he was the first foreign leader to call Bush and offer support. He cooperated with the US when it invaded Afghanistan and voluntarily removed Russian bases from Cuba and Vietnam. And then Matlock says, and what did he get in

> ❝ Let's recover as much as we can of the authority and the prestige and the standing of the United Nations because the things that the US has done have corroded this. ❞

return? Some meaningless praise from President George W Bush, who then delivered the diplomatic equivalent of swift kicks to the groin: the further expansion of NATO in the Baltic and the Balkans and plans for American bases there; the withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty; the invasion of Iraq without UN Security Council approval; overt participation in the colour revolutions in the Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan; and then probing some of the firmest red lines any Russian leader would draw: talk of taking Georgia and the Ukraine into NATO. And Matlock says,

Americans, inheritors of the Monroe Doctrine, should have understood that Russia would be hypersensitive to foreign-dominated military alliances approaching or touching its borders.

But I think this response which Matlock talks about, of the US to Russia, indicates the frame of mind of this ruling group in the States. In an earlier paragraph he talks about Bill Clinton. So it didn't matter whether they were republican or democrat, they had a particular view manifested in this way.

But this attitude described as aiming kicks in the groin for everybody was not only applied to the Russians.

Aziz spoke about US National Security Strategy documents. He should have spoken about a later intelligence estimate of the US where they say that they are not going to allow any country anywhere in the world to present a challenge of any kind to the US in any respect. These are the kicks in the groin that they are talking about, and they had political consequences, some of which Aziz has mentioned.

You see it with regard to the Palestine issue. The issue of the liberation of the Palestinian people is off the agenda effectively. Some of you will mention Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions: I support BDS, but effectively the struggle for independence, nation-formation, sovereign rights of the Palestinians, this matter is very much on the back burner. It's a consequence of this unipolar world, and even when one talks about the response, you know, George W Bush, Bill Clinton, everyone, they're the great democrats who must democratise the world, the Middle East, going into Iraq in 2003, Bush and Blair were busy saying we are bringing democracy. These are the same people who would not respect the outcome of a Palestinian election which resulted in Hamas emerging as the bigger political formation – no, we will not accept that democratic outcome, but we want democracy in the Middle East. It's exactly this view, *what we want* must be what policy becomes for everybody.

Invasion of Iraq, 2003; all of the battles in the UN Security Council about that invasion: Aziz will recall this, that we then had quite an interesting discussion with the leadership of the UN, the secretariat of the UN after that invasion of Iraq, to say to them, Kofi Annan and everybody else, that you see, as small countries the UN is

very important to us because this is an instrument in world politics which should act to defend the interests of the smaller countries. We are not a big power; therefore the UN is important. And what has happened with regard to the Iraq event is that it has weakened the authority of the UN, so it's important that the secretariat of the United Nations, particularly the Secretary General, look at the UN Charter and what it says about who the Secretary General of the United Nations is and what he stands for, what he does, he or she does.

We're saying to them you've got to stand up to reassert, let's recover as much as we can of the authority and the prestige and the standing of the United Nations because the things that the US has done have corroded this. We had a long discussion with them. At the end nothing could be done and the reason nothing could be done was because the secretariat of the UN said Washington is angry, and because Washington is angry the Secretary General cannot stand up and say on behalf of the United Nations this is what is correct. No, no, the argument was 'Washington is angry'. And because Washington is angry the world comes to a standstill. We get paralysed.

A more recent example was the US Assistant Secretary for Europe, Nuland, – that thing which was intercepted by somebody and fortunately put out for the rest of us to listen to – choosing who must be the prime minister of Ukraine: "…No, no, Yatsenyuk, Yatsenyuk is the right one, not that one." And indeed Yatsenyuk is the prime minister.

Even closer to home, I'm talking about the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of this unipolar world, its impact. If you look at a very, very obvious consequence of that on the continent, it is the destruction of the progressive Pan-African organisations on our continent. They vanished. We talk about the students, All African Students Union, I don't know where it is now. The Pan-African Youth Movement, where is it? PAWO women's organisation, all of these progressive continental organisations, they vanished. It's part of this unipolar process. I'm saying that *the political consequence*, the political

consequence of this is this universal combination of this ruling group in the United States which openly says everybody must behave as we say; and that includes the United Nations.

The militarisation of United States foreign policy: it's one of the consequences of this, because clearly, in order to achieve that domination, to be this great unipolar power, indispensable nation and then all of these things that they say, you need all the necessary power that you can exercise. And one of the options they chose was this one, the use of force; militarisation, therefore, of foreign policy. And you can see it, it's very clear, and the uses of that power, growth in military expenditure in the US, and the boast about it.

I was reading not long ago an article, a right wing conservative commentator in the States saying, this is three, four years back, that the US defence budget

> **❝They deliberately took a decision to allow ISIS to grow because of their hostility against Assad and they wanted Assad overthrown.❞**

was larger than the combined budgets of the next fourteen countries. That includes the entirety of NATO and everybody else. And it's deliberate, to be able to have this capacity to dominate.

And you see what happens with regard to NATO. What is NATO? I think NATO is clearly just an instrument of the United States. It was from the beginning that; but maybe we got persuaded that it was something that it wasn't – where you have a situation where the Europeans say our umbrella protection is provided by the US (that is, versus the USSR). The USSR disappears and the United States emerges: this is what they wanted. By this time, when he was talking about the Ukraine two years ago, a year ago, saying that we have to twist their arm sometimes to act on the Ukraine, to do what we want, those Europeans say

yes, and they do it, against their own interests.

So I'm saying these are some of the security consequences. The push for Africa, this African command, and to base it here on the continent: the military presence of the United States on the continent is very widespread. The overwhelming majority of African countries have got a US military footprint. It varies in nature. It might not be a US base, it might take another form. That would not have happened in earlier days but it's happening now. I'm saying it's part of the security consequences of that unipolar world.

Look at the Gulf. There's a war going on in Yemen now. We can discuss that another day – as to why the US are supporting that war in Yemen – and it has a direct impact on the Horn of Africa. It's across a little strip of water into the Horn of Africa, Somalia, and it's all linked to this business about the security consequences of that unipolar world. They impact on us in that manner.

If people have got time there's a very interesting interview conducted by *Al Jazeera*. It's on the internet. It's an interview with General Flynn, the Chief of Defence Intelligence of the United States until last year, 2014, and it is very interesting. They put out a report, Department of Defence Intelligence of the US, about the Middle East – Iraq, mainly, and Syria – which has leaked. Now Defence Intelligence in the States says to the administration, to President Obama – talking about Iraq – "it is quite clear that what we are seeing here in Iraq" – this must have been around 2012, 2011/2012:

> *"What we are seeing is a development of Al Qaeda in Iraq, and this thing is going to assume more violent forms, more extreme, and, as we can see, they are trying to establish themselves in Eastern Syria and the reason they are doing that is because they also wanted to target the government of Syria".*
>
> *So the Al Jazeera man asked him, "but General, this was your report…"*
>
> *and the General says, "Yes, it was my report."*
>
> *"Now why didn't you do anything about it? You saw it coming, you*

describe it, the birth of ISIS and exactly what to do. You say all of these things here. Why didn't you do anything about it?"

So he says, "My task as an intelligence person, is to prepare as accurate, as objective a report on the situation in these areas as possible and pass it to the decision-makers."

"So, oh, you are saying that the decision-makers ignored your report?" "No, I'm not saying that. They did not ignore my report. They deliberately took a decision to allow ISIS to grow because of their hostility against Assad and they wanted Assad overthrown. That's why they allowed it. This was a deliberate decision of the US government."

It's interesting coming from a US General who was Chief of Intelligence, Defence Intelligence, only until last year. And he's very straightforward about it. He says no, it's not, it was not a failure to act, it was a deliberate decision not to act because of this purpose. I'm saying that these are some of the security consequences of that unipolar world.

And of course we have the economic consequences of it, perhaps one of the most outstanding of which was the dominance of the so-called Washington Consensus globally on economic thinking. And I think all of us here are familiar with what that consensus said and some of the things that people pay particular attention to, quite correctly, like the trade liberalisation, liberalisation of imports, and so on, liberalisation of inward foreign direct investment, privatisation of state assets, deregulation, security for property rights and all that. Because clearly you can also see why this vision of the Washington Consensus becomes so dominant in economic thinking. It goes with the dominance of the political and security power of the US and the dominance of capital.

… Now the word neoliberal, it's an adjective, and they actually also use it as a swear word. So the question arises, what is neoliberal, what does it mean? I read an article some months back, which said you must start with liberal and then come to neoliberal. Okay, it makes sense. So what is liberal in these

economic terms? And they said, liberal described what Adam Smith said, and Adam Smith said the market is the invisible hand. This is why it gives order to society and progress and welfare and everything. No government, you stay out of it. The invisible hand is the market. That's liberal economics. Aha, okay, understood.

Now what is neoliberal? Neoliberal means it's not quite as bad as Smith said, because there is some intervention by government that might intervene to say watch out, don't produce toxic fumes as you are doing something in a factory, or don't employ underage children and so on, but let the capitalist economy go on as it wants but with these restrictions. That's neoliberal.

But I'm saying that is why you find

> **❝If you read about what happened to the Russian economy, advised by these professors and so on from the US, the government deliberately, and systematically went for the destruction of manufacturing in Russia❞**

the Washington Consensus called neoliberal – it is exactly because of that. It's essentially arguing the greatest possible freedom for capital across the globe, bearing in mind that there would be these little interventions by the state which makes it 'neo'liberal. In all of the things that Williamson and these others said there's no reference of any kind to the role of the state, the public sector as an instrument in terms of economic growth and development. It's not there. You're a regulator or something but not part of the processes. So I'm saying that it is quite clear why, particularly during this unipolar period, this view achieves the dominance that it does, with the negative consequences that it has.

And I think one of the outstanding

examples of the negative impact of this is the Russian economy, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. If you read about what happened to the Russian economy, advised by these professors and so on from the US, the government deliberately, and systematically went for the destruction of manufacturing in Russia – deliberately, systematically, and they largely succeeded.

One of the things that the Russian government had to deal with when Putin succeeded Yeltsin as president of Russia was what to do with the oil, oil extraction, because what had happened was that the Russians were paying the oil majors to come and produce oil. You're paying them, and they would get something from the production of oil, depending on what the oil major decided. You pay them ten dollars to go and dig there and extract and export and sell this oil as they wish and then they will say, well, look, in terms of the profit we made we think you are worth fifty cents. And you say but how could that have happened? But it was an implementation of this … or that is the only answer you get...

And that's part of the reason that people in the west started having question marks about Putin; because Putin said, "But this is wrong!" This is a very clear example of the destruction of the Russian economy and an example of the implementation of this neoliberal model in terms of economic development.

You find its impact here on the continent. I'm talking about the economic consequences. Some years ago, I attended a summit meeting of the African Pacific and Caribbean countries in Libreville in Gabon. The development commissioner of the EU at the time was a man from Portugal and we sit in the hall and he says the post-colonial period is over. So now me I'm sitting there, I'm listening, I'm saying what's this Portuguese man talking about? The post-colonial period is over and therefore we have got to redesign the relationship between Africa and the EU? And the man explains it. He's quite honest and frank. He said, you see, when I talk about the post-colonial period it's this time, it's this period when we as the European Union have allowed you all sorts of concessions,

duty-free access into the EU market, and all of these sorts of things and so much development money from the European Investment Bank and all that. The reason we did all of these things is because we were feeling guilty because we had colonised you. So we're paying for the pain that we have caused you. That's the post-colonial period, but we've paid you people enough. From now onwards it's a reciprocal relationship.

So I mean I was stunned, sitting there in Libreville. He said so, he said now a reciprocal relationship, no more of these concessions to you people because we had colonised you. The consequence: we've got economic partnership agreements. The EPAs are exactly that.

And we went and protested. We met them in Portugal, the EU, and banged tables – and the European Union said, no, but we agreed on this. Where? No, read the Cotonou Agreement – and indeed it's their right. There's a Cotonou Agreement which all our heads of state signed very happily and had champagne afterwards. It's in the Cotonou Agreement. So they say we are implementing what you all agreed. Now when I remembered my Portuguese friend in Libreville, he had said so. No more post-colonial nonsense, reciprocal relations. Now *there's a big, big issue*. **We all agreed in Cotonou.**

I'm saying these are the economic consequences for us of this unipolar world. This would not have happened in a different setting. And of course you see what has happened with regard to the African economies. Even this, which would otherwise look like a simple issue, the reform of the IMF and the World Bank to give a bigger voice to the developing countries. This is a daily slogan from the developing countries, voice, voice, voice, and everybody says yes, you deserve it, but it doesn't happen. The economic consequences…

I think even in terms of value systems, the way that money has become the measurement of what's right and wrong. You can see it everywhere: it has infused governance, even personal value systems. The bigger the house, the bigger the car,

the more expensive the clothes, the more fashionable you look, like Chris Landsberg [laughter], the more successful you are. And you see it impacting on government.

You see it in human rights. A very interesting book by Kissinger that Aziz and myself discussed many, many years ago: Kissinger discusses the issue of human rights and he says during the time when he was secretary of state and national security adviser, the matter of human rights was never an issue of ethical policy. He says we used the issue of human rights in order to defeat the USSR. He says that's all. It was an instrument that we used, not because we believed in this damn thing. And of course you can see that Kissinger is telling the truth because people are pushing these human rights, the Helsinki process and all of that. Whom were they supporting in Latin America or even

> ❝ That's the post-colonial period, but we've paid you people enough. From now onwards it's a reciprocal relationship.❞

on the continent? The worst violators of human rights and Kissinger says in black and white it's because it was an instrument we were using to achieve this particular political purpose.

But we absorb it, the human rights, oh-oh-oh, if somebody somewhere in the world says your human rights record is bad we all shrink. But it's clear it defines a particular political system which is part of this unipolar world. It's *their definition* of what is meant by human rights and what human rights means and how it must be defended that becomes global.

… I think perhaps the most dramatic of the changes that are taking place, which challenge this unipolarity, the unipolar world, relate to Syria. Not Ukraine. Ukraine is on the border with Russia, it's been part of the Soviet Union, we can understand, but Syria is 'out there'. I think the decision of

the Russians to intervene in the Syrian matter in the way that they have done and quite openly to say we can't support regime change in Syria is of great significance. In Ukraine, they failed. The regime change took place in Ukraine, next door to them, when Yanukovych was removed, but in the Syrian case they have said no, it's not going to happen, not while we are here.

I think it's a signal of this change that's taking place. I think even the decision of the Obama administration to end the sanctions, the isolation of Cuba, it's a sign of a change that's taking place which is eroding the capacities of that unipolar world.

And the people here, who I'm sure have looked at the question about China and the Chinese economy, would have noted the very interesting relationship between China and the US, with China being the largest creditor of the United States. It's the Chinese who are buying US government bonds and being of course the supplier of manufactured goods which are very cheap, keeping the cost of living in the United States manageable. There is a very intimate relationship between these two countries, but clearly the US is afraid of China. But I think that fortunately China is not afraid of the US. That becomes part of this process which changes the global situation away from that unipolarity to something that is better.

And I think as Africans we would be very pleased with this. I keep saying to all our people on the continent that in 2007 or thereabouts we all trooped off to Beijing, the African heads of state, for the Africa/China summit and adopted two documents there. One of them is an action plan in terms of the relations between Africa and China and a very good document which says you, China, you are very interested in us because you want raw materials for the growth of your economy. We are ready to trade with you on that basis, but what you must know is that we want to industrialise our economies and therefore your own obligations towards Africa are the following. And they are spelt out.

At the end of that summit we, South Africa, we had a bilateral meeting with the Chinese leadership, with Hu Jintao,

who was president at the time. And we were saying to them that we've just now adopted this very good document, a structured relationship between Africa and China such that China does not emerge as a new coloniser of the continent. It's a regulated relationship...

There's an agreement between us because we wanted to make sure that this agreed arrangement between China and the continent produces the outcomes which Africans need in terms of the structuring, restructuring, development, modernisation and so on of their economies, with China acting as partner. I'm saying it is possible.

These are some of the positive consequences of the end of the unipolar world. And indeed I'm sure we can construct our relationship with India in the same way.

Of course the 2008 financial crisis, it opened a very big open space to rethink this whole issue about the economy, because once you had this major crisis evolving out of the US banks, which became a global economic crisis, it showed you that there was something that had failed in this system. And therefore I'm saying it gave the space to rethink this, what do we do about the economy, the global economy. I'm not sure that this has happened, but it's an opening.

I think clearly there are people who are now standing up saying, "Put an end to that unipolar domination in terms of world politics, in terms of global security, in terms of the economy, in terms of the system of international relations." I think there are possibilities for us to do something to change what happens on our continent to the extent that what happens on our continent was governed by what was happening globally. Because of what is happening globally, I think now you are beginning to see the emergence of a more balanced global order with better possibilities for us.

You know, if you take the sustainable development goals that have just been agreed to in the General Assembly, there's a goal – one of the goals, goal number 10 – which says "reducing inequality within and among countries" and it says that one of the

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targets is: "Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality."

The United States would never ever have agreed to this before. It's directly contrary to what that Washington Consensus says. "Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations." This directly relates to the governance of international finance capital. There's an agreement globally, all governments have said yeah, yeah, we agree. I'm saying there are all sorts of indications like this.

There is a better possibility for us to act. What is going to be the problem? I think the problem is going to be us,

it's going to be ourselves, because in the end, if you say to the Africans, all of us, through the African Union, look at the sustainable development goals. All we need to say is that we all cite sustainable development goals at the General Assembly, so this policy, that's binding on all of us, let's therefore act and choose those elements which are directly relevant to the renewal of our continent. And let's really unite around this, creating concerted pressure as a continent, achieving mobilisation of civil society in these western countries to support us as they have in the past, calling on all progressives to establish a new solidarity movement.

Let's act on this thing and we don't have to argue with them, we just say *we all agreed in New York*.

We need that reconstruction of that progressive voice. Without it we are not going to be able to take advantage of this new opening against unipolarity and this new opening which is creating better possibilities for us to change what needs to be changed on the continent, knowing that the old ogre is not dead yet. It's still there, but it's weakened, weakened sufficiently for us to be able to do something positive for our continent. Will we do it? Maybe. As Aziz said, it's your task to say how we do that. Thanks. [Applause] ∎

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From left, Professor Chris Landsberg, Former President Thabo Mbeki and Dr. Sydney Mufamadi (white Shirt)

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Greece, the Eurozone and the Future of the EU

The Greeks have been publicly humiliated and their national sovereignty has been thrown to the wind, all for a financial plan which has no possible chance of success.

By Peter Lawrence and Michael Prior

Europe is in a mess. The EU's treatment of Greece's deficit pitted the northern states with their deficit fetishism against the southern, who themselves were split over whether economic austerity was the right way to reduce the level of public debt resulting from the financial crisis. The failure of the EU to agree on how to deal with the refugee crisis – the influx of large numbers of people fleeing war zones – caused another split, this time pitting the newer eastern EU states against the others. The UK Conservative government's decision to have a referendum on continued membership of the EU, not to mention the underlying crisis of economic stagnation, has added to the sense that Europe has lost its way. The Greek crisis raised the possibility of one country leaving the euro, bringing into question the future of the euro itself, and these subsequent developments threaten the very future of the EU.

In this article, we first pose the question of the future of the euro in the light of the deal between Greece and the EU, framed as it was by the tough stance, taken especially by Germany, on how to deal with Greece's deficit. We then consider a second, much harder, and probably more serious, question: what will happen to the European Union not only as a consequence of how Greece has been treated, but also in the context of the wider crisis in which Europe finds itself?

The simplest way to address the first question is that Greece is not being rescued, but in fact being punished. The much-publicised document, encapsulated as the Second Bailout Agreement (SBA), is quite simply a takeover by the European Commission of the running of the Greek financial and economic system[1] down to details such as how Greek pharmacies and bakeries should be registered. It is hard, probably impossible, to find an economist who believes that the harsh austerity programme imposed on Greece will resolve its economic difficulties. Even the economic advisers in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) appear to have convinced Christine Lagarde, head of the IMF and hitherto a leader of the manacles and chains group, otherwise known as

the Troika (the three institutions of the IMF, EU (Eurozone) and the European Central Bank) that Greek sovereign debt is unsustainable. As Lagarde put it in August this year:

I remain firmly of the view that Greece's debt has become unsustainable and that Greece cannot restore debt sustainability solely through actions on its own. Thus, it is equally critical for medium and long-term debt sustainability that Greece's European partners make concrete commitments in the context of the first review of the ESM (European Stability Mechanism) program to provide significant debt relief, well beyond what has been considered so far.

The IMF's own charter forbids its lending to countries whose debts are unsustainable and, as a rule of thumb, a GDP/debt ratio of above 120% is seen as such. It is apparent that the IMF is very doubtful about Greece's future unless a significant part of the current debt is written-off, something that the Germans in particular have been very resistant to allow. Greece has suffered very hard times since the financial crash of 2008. Some key statistics illustrate this:

- Greek GDP fell from €242 billion in 2008 to €179 billion in 2014, a 26% decline overall. Greece was in recession for over five years although, by some measures, it emerged from it in 2014.
- GDP per capita fell from a peak of €22,500 in 2007 to €17,000 in 2014, a 24% decline.
- The unemployment rate has risen considerably, from below 10% (2005-2009) to around 25% (2014-2015). Youth unemployment is above 50%, so high that statistical measures have ceased to have much meaning.
- An estimated 44% of Greeks lived below the poverty line in 2014.

It is difficult to over-emphasise just how close Greece is to the edge. In 2015, the Venetis bakery chain in Athens was giving away 10,000 loaves of bread a day, one-third of its total production. In some of the poorest neighbourhoods, according to the chain's general manager, there were disturbances among the large numbers of hungry people queueing up to receive bread, and he went on to say "In the third round of austerity measures, which is beginning now, it is certain that in Greece there will be no consumers – there will be only beggars."[2]

The underlying cause of the debt crisis is that following introduction of the euro in 2001, Greece, along with several other Eurozone countries, went on a massive debt-based expansion, both private and public. In Greece, one aspect of this was a boom in house buying with the result that it achieved the highest level of home-ownership, 87%, in the EU, possibly in the world. House prices have plunged since 2008 by perhaps 50% and there are few buyers.

Another aspect of this debt expansion was expenditure by the

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Greek government, most notoriously on armaments. As Paul Haydon wrote in the UK's *Guardian newspaper* in 2012:

The fact that Greece, a relatively small and democratic country with not much in the way of global ambitions, should spend as much on its military as it does is perplexing. In 2006, as the financial crisis was looming, Greece was the third biggest arms importer after China and India. And over the past 10 years its military budget has stood at an average of 4% of GDP, more than £900 per person. If Greece is in need of structural reform, then its oversized military would seem the most logical place to start. In fact, if it had only spent the EU average of 1.7% over the last 20 years, it would have saved a total of 52% of its GDP – meaning instead of being completely bankrupt it would be among the more typical countries struggling with the recession…

…One major factor is that France and Germany's arms industries have greatly profited from this profligate military spending, leading their governments to put pressure on Greece not to cancel lucrative arms deals. In the five years up to 2010, Greece purchased more of Germany's arms exports than any other country, buying 15% of its weapons. Over the same period, Greece was the third-largest customer for France's military exports and its top buyer in Europe. Significantly, when the first bail-out package was being negotiated in 2010, Greece spent 7.1bn euros (£5.9bn) on its military, up from 6.24bn euros in 2007. A total of £1bn was spent on French and German weapons, plunging the country even further into debt in the same year that social spending was cut by 1.8bn euros. It is claimed by some that this was no coincidence, and that the EU bail-out was explicitly tied to burgeoning arms deals. In particular, there is alleged to have been concerted pressure from France to buy several stealth frigates. Meanwhile Germany sold 223 howitzers and completed a controversial deal on faulty submarines, leading to an investigation into accusations of bribes being given to Greek officials.[3]

In 2014, German armaments and car parts conglomerate, Rheinmetall, was fined €37 million after a subsidiary bribed Greek officials to buy a €150 million air defence system. Earlier in the year, a former civil servant in charge of purchasing at the Greek defence ministry admitted pocketing €13 million over 20 years for backing about a dozen projects. Antonios Kantas claimed to have received €1.5 million from Rheinmetall for green-lighting the purchase of the air-defence system and an upgrade of Greek submarine electronics. The German tank manufacturer, Krauss-Maffei Wegmann, allegedly paid him €600,000 for supporting the purchase of 170 tanks at a cost of €1.7 billion.

He received a similar amount, the official said, by backing the purchase of German submarines from the Kiel-based company HDW. The submarines later proved defective.

There is no doubt that there is widespread corruption in the Greek government and in civil society in general and that tax evasion is extremely common. A form of legal tax evasion is practised by the Greek shipping industry, the largest in the world, which pays no tax on its international earnings, a practice enshrined in the Greek constitution. It is accepted that Greek entry into the Eurozone was based on false statistics as to its budgetary and fiscal situation, statistics compiled with the expert help of the Goldman-Sachs bank which knows a thing or two about concealing bad news.[4] However, the Syriza government was elected on a firm promise to do something about such civic corruption and they have showed clear intent to follow through on this. In 2013, a former defence minister, Akis Tsochatzopoulos, was given a 20-year sentence for corruption though his period in office was before entry into the euro. Although the lengthy bailout agreement contains numerous clauses aimed at reducing corruption, the fact is that enforcing ever-harsher austerity is no way to achieve this.

The Greeks are being punished. Timothy Geithner, former US Treasury Secretary, was present at the early meetings of European finance ministers to discuss the Greek situation and is very clear as to the mood:

The Europeans came into that meeting [in Canada, 2010] basically saying: 'We're going to teach the Greeks a lesson. They are really terrible. They lied to us. They suck and they were profligate and took advantage of the whole basic thing and we're going to crush them.' [That] was their basic attitude, all of them… They were lied to by the Greeks. It was embarrassing to them because the Greeks had ended up borrowing all this money and they were mad and angry and they were like: 'Definitely get out the bats.' They just wanted to take a bat to them. But in taking a bat to them, they were feeding a fire that was in its early stages. There were a lot of dry tinders.[5]

Given this vengeful reality and the fact that the austerity programme was both rejected by the Greek population in a referendum and rejected as a meaningful path to recovery by most economists, the question arises as to why the Greek Prime Minister Tsipras agreed after relatively brief negotiations to a package notably more severe than the one he had so vigorously attacked in the referendum campaign. One possible explanation is that Tsipras had expected a 'Yes' vote in the referendum and had already decided that such a vote would give him leave to accept the moderate deal he believed he could negotiate. The resounding 'No' was probably a surprise but was also coupled with massive public support for staying in the Eurozone and, even more, for staying in the EU. Perhaps he had no

> **"The basis of the European Monetary Union (EMU) has been undermined, possibly fatally, and the European Commission has taken on the aura of a supra-national dictatorship."**

real Plan B. Perhaps he believed that Wolfgang Schäuble, the belligerent German Finance Minister, had devised a plan for a relatively benign exit from the euro (Grexit), possibly based on a temporary five-year period to allow Greece to put its house in order and with some support funds and that this would be sellable to his electors. Perhaps he simply collapsed with sleep deprivation at 5.30 am after 17 hours of continuous negotiation.

Certainly, during these negotiations, there was to be no moderate Grexit plan; this was to be decisively vetoed by Chancellor Merkel. Instead there was the threat of a totally disorderly exit which would plunge Greece into even greater crisis. He may have been badly advised. There is a strong current amongst economists that

Grexit would, in the end, be the best option for Greece. However, the lure of the talismanic euro proved too great and, in any case, there is no certainty that Grexit would allow Greece to re-establish the drachma as a sound currency.[6] The result is that Europe now has the worst of all results. The Greeks have been publicly humiliated and their national sovereignty has been thrown to the wind, all for a financial plan which has no possible chance of success. The basis of the European Monetary Union (EMU) has been undermined, possibly fatally, and the European Commission has taken on the aura of a supra-national dictatorship. A rift has opened up between the two major powers in EMU, Germany and France, whilst the third big power in the EU, the UK, is having that referendum which could supply a decisive No vote.

All this means that that future of the EMU which has been linked to the future of the EU itself is under close scrutiny. The logic of a 'common market' was a 'common currency' and this view was given some theoretical weight by Nobel prize winner Robert Mundell in a seminal article in 1962 on the theory of optimal currency areas. Countries could move to a common currency if both capital and labour moved freely between the constituent countries and wages and prices were freely determined across the currency area. The most important condition was that economic imbalances within the region could be resolved by fiscal transfers in much the same way as they are within countries, with depressed areas receiving government aid for regeneration. In a currency union this would have to be done across countries, rather than regions, and indeed this was an important reason for the increased prosperity of countries like Spain and Ireland which had benefited from transfers accompanied by private investment, at least before the banking crisis of the late 2000s.

However, at times of crisis, it becomes easy to play the nationalist card, blame foreigners for your troubles and hark back to the days when countries had control over their own currencies and borders. Milton Friedman observed back in 1997 that:

Europe exemplifies a situation

unfavourable to a common currency. It is composed of separate nations, speaking different languages, with different customs, and having citizens feeling far greater loyalty and attachment to their own country than to a common market or to the idea of Europe.[7]

Two years later the currency was successfully launched and although it is not universally popular, there are few signs that the majority of people in each member country want to leave. There are countries that either want to or are treaty bound to join when their economies are aligned with EU members[8], and there are countries currently outside the euro, such as Croatia, a substantial proportion of whose domestic transactions are in euros.

The EMU originated in the Maastricht Treaty which effectively set up the European Union as it now exists and was signed in 1992. The relevant part of the Treaty is that it committed member states to following 'sound' fiscal policies with debt limited to 60% of GDP and annual deficits no greater than 3% of GDP. These principles were enshrined in the Growth and Stability Pact (GSP) of 1997 which allowed the European Commission to monitor the performance of members with respect to these criteria and, importantly, provided it with powers to intervene in a state's fiscal affairs by declaring what was termed an Excess Deficit Procedure (EDP) and, ultimately, to impose economic sanctions. It did not pass unnoticed that the first two countries to breach the GSP criteria were France and Germany who, when the Commission made moves to impose an EDP, firmly quashed such action.

After the financial crisis of 2008, a stricter version of the GSP was agreed in 2012, the so-called European Fiscal Compact (formally, the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union, or the six-pack as it is apparently known to EU insiders after its six parts). Only the UK and Czech Republic are outside this Treaty which imposes the same formal limits on budget deficits and debt/GDP ratio as Maastricht and introduces various new

stipulations as to how excessive debt is to be reduced. It also requires that the Compact be introduced into domestic law as a binding constraint on the fiscal activity of signatories.

The EFC is extremely complex, containing amongst other things probably the longest mathematical equation ever placed into an international treaty. It relates to the so-called 'debt brake rule' and reads:

$bbt = 60\%GDP + 0.95*(bt\text{-}1\text{-}60\%GDP)/3 + 0.952(bt\text{-}2\text{-}60\%GDP)/3 + 0.953*(bt\text{-}3\text{-}60\%GDP)/3$

This means, in effect, that members should not have a debt to GDP ratio exceeding 60%, and if they do, this has to be reduced at the rate of 5% a year until it reaches that magic threshold.

> ❝The refugee crisis has caused a different division within the EU with Germany taking the side of the refugees and the intransigence this time shown by Eastern Europe, but with southern Europeans, especially Greece and Italy, carrying the refugee burden.❞

Why this should be 60% and not some other number is not at all clear and may explain why most members of the EMU do not comply with it. Even Germany which, heroically, managed a small surplus in its budget in 2014, currently has a debt/GDP ratio of over 72% whilst France, the second largest economy in the group, has a debt ratio of over 96% and a budget deficit of -3.8%. The average debt/GDP of the EU-28 is about 87% whilst the average deficit ratio is 2.9%.[9]

Does this matter? Probably, in good times, not a lot. The problem is that in times of financial stress, attention becomes focused on the weakest elements, those countries whose debts are perceived as being

too high. The Eurozone was set up in the belief that a common currency would create conditions for economic convergence amongst its member countries. Following Mundell's seminal paper on optimal currency areas, the vast economic literature on the subject suggests that, however one reads it, the Eurozone never satisfied the conditions for a successful common currency, not least because of the absence of a common fiscal regime.

It contains a bloc of northern economies which run a large export surplus with other states, in particular the southern ones. The deficits are not necessarily large in relation to GDP but they require financing and, in the end, require a continual build-up of debt. There is no sign that the southern economies are converging with the northern and there are plenty of signs that this imbalance is leading to tensions within the EMU and directly within the EU itself. The rift noted above between France (a deficit country) and Germany (the major surplus economy) is one obvious sign of this.

The tensions within the Eurozone over fiscal policy not only raise questions about the future of the euro, but further about the future of the EU itself. For the original six members of the EU's precursor, the Common Market, and for others joining later, European union was always a political project stemming from Jean Monnet's vision of a united Europe which would never repeat the divisions which led to the two world wars of the 20th Century:

There will be no peace in Europe, if the states are reconstituted on the basis of national sovereignty... The countries of Europe are too small to guarantee their peoples the necessary prosperity and social development. The European states must constitute themselves into a federation...[10]

This conflict between national sovereignty and federalism has been at the heart of the debate around that contentious objective of the Treaty of Rome which established the European Economic Community, precursor of the European Union: 'the ever closer union among the peoples of Europe'. However, the second part of Milton Friedman's conclusion about Europe,

quoted above, that its citizens' national loyalties are far greater than their loyalty to a wider Europe, appears to be much nearer the mark.

So far the UK's Conservative government is the only one in the EU committed to hold an in/out referendum before the end of 2017. The UK government does not actually want to leave the EU, nor more significantly, do most of its corporate backers, but it needs to head off its right-wing and the even more right-wing UK Independence Party (UKIP), who do want out. This it hopes to do by extracting 'concessions' from the rest of the EU which would reshape it more as a customs union and restrict other 'social' aspects such as the free movement of labour and the protection of workers' rights. However, polls across Europe in May 2015 found that that well over 70% in Poland, 50% of those polled in France and Germany and just over 50% of those polled in the UK were in favour of staying in the EU. However, there is an increasing minority of citizens in each country in favour of leaving, with nationalist parties, such as UKIP in the UK and the Front National in France, pushing for exit – and one recent UK poll even suggesting a small majority in favour of leaving.

It is unlikely that the EU will agree to make the kind of concessions the UK seeks, especially the basic principle of the free movement of labour – for one thing, a fundamental condition, of remember, the currency union. In spite of this, it is unlikely that the UK referendum itself will go that way. Probably enough will be made of the uncertainties of life after the EU to persuade the majority to vote to stay in. However should the vote go the other way, and the UK exit, it is conceivable that right wing nationalist forces in other countries would gain momentum and force more in-out referenda.

While attention has focused on opposition to EU membership from right wing political forces, what of the Left? The treatment of Greece, the degree to which corporate lobbying is influencing EU decision making, especially with respect to the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)[11], and the treatment of the refugees, is

increasing left wing opposition to the EU. The predominant left view is still pro-EU because of the social aspects of the union – 'Social Europe', although left-wing sentiment against 'Market Europe' is beginning to be more widely expressed. The opportunity the EU gives for left cooperation across its members' borders is obvious, but the differences between the old social democratic parties with their support for austerity and their acceptance of the neoliberal view of the world, and the new left parties such as Podemos in Spain and Syriza in Greece with their clear opposition to those policies, will make cooperation almost impossible. However, in spite of all these differences across the political spectrum, we are still a long way from EU break-up and the return of protectionist trade policies and competing national currencies which would have serious economic consequences on overall welfare. It is not clear that most Europeans want that.

What implications does a changed future for the EU have for other parts of the world, and, readers of a Pan-African journal might well ask, for the African continent itself? A break up of the EU and Eurozone and a return to protectionism would likely reduce, or at least slow down the growth of European economic activity, although this could happen anyway because of other developments in the world economy, the current slowdown in China being one. An EU protectionist break up would only make things worse. African economies would be worse off through several channels.

First, the slump in primary product prices would be greater and thus affect demand for Africa's leading exports. Secondly, demand for migrant labour would fall and consequently reduce the level of remittances, now the second most important transfer of income from the developed countries to Africa. Such a fall in demand would also see migrants returning to their countries of origin with the positive effects on levels of skill, but negative effects of having more mouths to feed. Thirdly, there could be a slow-down, if not reduction, in foreign investment, especially in those activities connected with the export trade. This might be

mitigated by European capital seeking new investment opportunities on the continent which would serve African markets.

The Greek crisis exposed the problems of a common currency. It exposed the degree to which the prevailing orthodoxy, with an intransigent Germany in the forefront, punished Greece for actions in which Germany and others were complicit. It fuelled questions about the nature and future direction of the EU, including its potential break-up, and once again questioned the neoliberal paradigm. The refugee crisis has caused a different division within the EU with Germany taking the side of the refugees and the intransigence this time shown by Eastern Europe, but with southern Europeans, especially Greece and Italy, carrying the refugee burden. In both these cases, the EU showed that for many countries in the EU, and certainly for their peoples, national sovereignty over currencies and borders still trumps federal union, which was after all the original and, now increasingly discarded, long term objective of the founders of cooperation in Europe. ∎

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1 The full text of this document together with annotations as to its meaning can be found at http://yanisvaroufakis.eu/2015/08/17/greeces-third-mou-memorandum-of-understading-annotated-by-yanis-varoufakis/. This blog by the former Greek finance minister is a useful, though clearly partial, commentary on the Greek situation.
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6 See Peter Lawrence, 'Breaking up the Eurozone is very hard to do,' The Thinker, November 2012
7 The Times, November 19, 1997
8 It seems that Sweden and Denmark who are bound by treaty to adopt the euro are not making moves to do so at the present time (see Wolfgang Streeck, 'Why the Euro Divides Europe', New Left Review 95: 1-26, Sept/Oct 2015)
9 Debt freaks can find all this information and more at http://www.debtclocks.eu/
10 Quoted in: http://europa.eu/about-eu/eu-history/founding-fathers/pdf/jean_monnet_en.pdf. Monnet, a French diplomat and political economist, is regarded as one of the chief architects of European unity.
11 The TTIP is a set of trade negotiations intended to reduce regulation levels to the lower of the two parties (usually down to the less strict US level) and increase trade and investment between the US and the EU (most importantly by facilitating privatisation of State activities, for example in health services. A controversial element is the Investor-State Dispute Settlements (ISDS), which would allow companies to sue a government were its policies shown to result in a loss of profits.

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Russia at a cross-road: foreign policy vs domestic policy

The class interests of the ruling elite push President Putin one way. The historic interests of Russia powerfully pull him another way. He will have to make a choice. '

By Vyacheslav (Slava) Tetekin

Over the last couple of years interest in Russia, the world over, has grown considerably. Until recently Moscow seemed to be blindly following the policies of its Western partners. For a quarter of a century, since the coup d'état in 1991, Russia was constantly losing the status of a great power it had earned as a result of the victory of the Soviet Union over Nazism in 1945, as well as of unprecedented successes in sciences, technology, education, arts and culture in post-war years.

However the events in the Ukraine since 2014 (when for the first time the Russian Federation (RF) really began to defend its national interests) created fear in the capitals of the West and a ray of hope in many other capitals all over the world that Russia was regaining its role as a power able to resist the imperialist arrogance of the USA and its allies.

The Ukraine issue was however just a first display of Russia's newly acquired foreign policy independence. The Ukraine is a neighbouring state with hundreds of years of common history and millions of Russian-speaking citizens whose rights were rudely suppressed by forces that came to power in a coup d'état in Kiev in February, 2014. So Russia's involvement in the events in its sister state looked to any objective observer as natural – millions of ethnic Russians were facing a threat to their security and lives. So the Kremlin simply had to intervene.

The idea that Russia has legitimate interests in the Ukraine and moral obligations to many of its citizens gradually penetrated the stiff minds of even the most hard-line EU politicians. Furthermore the economic sanctions imposed on Russia hit hard primarily the EU economies and had a positive effect on the Russian economy. As a matter of fact the trade relations between EU and RF are twisted in such a way (you-sell-us-oil-and-gas – we-sell-you-everything-else) that they are very profitable for the West and very destructive for Russia's manufacturing and agriculture sectors. Therefore many in Russia believe that sanctions are extremely positive as they are bringing about a revival of our industry, science and technology.

The restrictions imposed by Brussels on Moscow under American pressure proved to be so bad for the EU that European leaders have had to review their once enthusiastic support for the ruling group in Kiev. Ukraine's appalling level of corruption and incompetence infuriates Kiev's Western protectors. In short the EU is fed up with the Ukrainian conflict and wants to get back to "business as usual" with Russia. And as soon as possible.

But while the West was just starting to cool down on the Ukrainian issue the Kremlin made its next move. Far more unexpected. Dozens of Russian Air Force planes and combat helicopters suddenly appeared in Syria and started to effectively support the Syrian army in the war against the Islamic State.

Earlier the US, frightened by the monster of the Islamic State which it had helped to create, formed an international coalition to fight IS. But nearly a year of bombing had brought no practical results. This was in vivid contrast to the effectiveness of the Russian Air Force strikes which made

a decisive impact on the course of the war. It is essential to note that Russia is involved militarily in Syria at the request of its legitimate government while the US-led coalition bombs Syrian territory in violation of international law.

It should also be noted that Syria is very important for Russia: far more than any other state in the Middle East. The broad economic, political and military relations between our countries started over half a century ago. At least 35 thousand Syrians were trained in Soviet/Russian universities. Soviet military officers were involved from the early 1960s in turning the Syrian army into a powerful combat force. Damascus provides Russia with its only naval base in the Mediterranean. In short Syria is Russia's most reliable ally in the Middle East.

Nonetheless the decision by the Kremlin to help Syria in its struggle against various terrorist groups came as a shock to Western leaders. They thought that since 1991 they have had a monopoly of the use of force in international affairs. For the first time in 25 years this monopoly was broken. It is not unlikely that blowing up a Russian plane over the Sinai desert as well as the provocative unwarranted downing of the Russian SU24 plane by Turkey were ways of punishing Russia for its bold action in Syria.

What has happened in relation to Russian foreign policy which for nearly two decades drifted helplessly along the lines of Western policies? Where did this abrupt change come from?

Marxism defines foreign and domestic policy of any state as that of its ruling class. The Russian ruling class is an alliance of the oligarchs and the top bureaucracy. Of course the Russian oligarchy is an integral part of the international big-business class. But its position in the big-business world is undergoing a dramatic change. Since its inception in 1991 as a result of the coup d'etat that toppled the Communist Party and destroyed the Soviet Union the emerging Russian oligarchy was in a very infantile state and needed protection and support from its Western partners.

But as the years passed by the Russian oligarchy reinforced its positions domestically and internationally. It no longer needed Western backing to retain its questionable rights to the enormous property it acquired legally and illegally during the privatisation campaign in mid-90s. The Russian oligarchs started to resist more aggressively the attempts of their Western counterparts to lay hands on the most lucrative parts of the Russian economy – oil and gas. One can call it a display of classic inter-imperialist contradictions. Russian big business started to show its teeth. The global oligarchy decided to put down a mutiny in its ranks. The increased bitterness of infighting led to fundamental changes in the Kremlin's foreign policy. The once extremely warm relations between the ruling groups of the West and those of Russia came to an abrupt end.

In my view the West since 1991

> **❝ Is this policy irreversible? Basically, yes. Because now the West is openly preparing for regime change in Russia. The people in the Kremlin simply have no alternative but to fight back. ❞**

was conducting a very effective (and dangerous) policy of "suffocating Russia in a friendly embrace". In fact the claims that the West was interested in promoting democracy and prosperity for Russia were a smoke screen designed to conceal the centuries old intention to destroy Russia as its historic rival. Military methods (like Napoleon and Hitler's invasions) did not work. Whereas the method of "suffocation in a friendly embrace" led to the destruction of Russian manufacturing and engineering, full dependence on the Western financial sector, and on its industrial equipment and consumer goods.

Russia was gradually sliding into the neo-colonial category of raw material supplier. Its army was nearly destroyed in the process of endless "reforms", just like its science and technology base. Thanks of course to the efforts of the numerous "friends of the West" in the Russian leadership that pushed the line that "democratic" Russia as part of the "civilized world" needed neither a strong army nor its own science and technology.

Then the West made a strategic blunder in prematurely deciding that Russia had completely lost its ability to resist. Out of their usual contempt they failed to recognise the enormous national feelings generated by the return of Crimea back to Russia, and by the Western-led attempts to suppress the Russian-speaking populations of the Eastern regions of the Ukraine. Plans to transform the Ukraine into yet another NATO bridgehead for potential military attacks against Russia strongly increased anti-Western feelings. In simple terms out of their arrogance US policy planners – the Neo-conservatives whose view of the world is that of a chess board where they control all the moves – grossly miscalculated. The chess board turned in their hands and hit them on their heads.

Of course one should not base assessments of Russia's moves on purely objective factors. On a subjective level President Putin had started some years ago to feel that he was cheated. He started to feel the suffocating effect of the "friendly embrace". First he was very careful not to show his changing attitude. More than that, he desperately tried to keep relations with the West at a "cordial" level.

But the Neo-conservatives who really determine US foreign policy were already on the warpath. They were in for the kill. Literally. The disobedience had to be punished the way previous displays of disobedience were. First it was the murder of Yugoslavian President Milosevic in a prison in The Hague. Then the hanging of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The last straw was the brutal murder of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. None of them was an enemy of the West. Just as President Putin was not. But they were all destroyed. When Syria became the next target for the US-led "democratisation" all the doubts in the Kremlin disappeared: Bashar Assad and then… . Hence the unexpectedly

strong resistance from Russia to the "regime change" plans for Syria.

Is this policy irreversible? Basically, yes. Because now the West is openly preparing for regime change in Russia. The people in the Kremlin simply have no alternative but to fight back.

But it would be premature to say that Russia has taken the place of the USSR in global resistance to US imperialism. The problem is that the Russian government is not homogeneous at all. There are two basic groups with quite different agendas.

The "securocratic" party (the Army, state security and police) plus the Foreign Ministry fall in my view into the "patriotic" category. "Patriots" led by highly popular Defence Minister Sergey Shoigu and equally popular Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov are behind Russia's strong stand on the Crimea as well as on the Ukrainian and Syrian issues. They are not connected to the oligarchy and they fully understand the disastrous consequences of the previous foreign policy.

Their opponents are entrenched in the economic bloc of the Russian government – Chairwoman of the Central Bank, Finance Minister as well as two "economic" deputy Prime Ministers and Prime Minister Medvedev himself. They are openly pro-Western, champions of "market fundamentalists" who believe in the struggle against inflation as the only viable economic strategy. Even at the expense of economic growth. (This "struggle" led to a 12 % inflation and 2-fold devaluation of the national currency – the Ruble). They are closely connected to the international oligarchy and act in its interests, even when their actions are highly destructive for the Russian economy. This applies especially to manufacturing and agriculture which are being continually destroyed by being intentionally deprived of government investment. It is as well to record that the Russian government has huge currency reserves (over 350 billion $US) held in Western banks at a ridiculous 1-2% interest rate!

At the same time the Central Bank (independent of any state authority and believed by many to be a branch of the US FRS) raised its key rate to a level (12 per cent) that it makes the bulk of Russian industry completely unprofitable. The Russian money authorities keep buying foreign (especially US) securities making Russia one of the biggest investors into the Western economy. The outflow of money from Russia in 2015 reached a staggering figure of 150 billion $US. But the RF financial authorities strongly resist any attempts to introduce currency controls. In my view the policies of the Central Bank and Finance Ministry of Russia are far more destructive to Russia's economy than the Western sanctions.

Hence we are facing an antagonistic contradiction between a very sound turn to an independent Russian foreign policy and exceptionally destructive domestic policy. Of course the Left forces support the new international

> **❝It is essential to note that Russia is involved militarily in Syria at the request of its legitimate government while the US-led coalition bombs Syrian territory in violation of international law.❞**

stand of the Russian leadership. But we disagree with the policy of closing the holes in the state budget created by the fall of oil and gas prices by the offensive on the people's social rights. We are facing rising food prices and communal services tariffs, the growing commercialisation of education and health care, and the freezing of the old age pensions at far below inflation rate. In the one-year budget to be adopted at the end of November 2015 the expenditure for education is cut by 8%, health care by 11 % and communal services by 41%.

At the same time the government firmly resists attempts to introduce progressive taxation (now it is 13% for everybody). Even modest proposals to increase the taxes for the super-rich to 35 per cent (well below 45-65 % tax in Europe and USA) meet furious opposition from the economic bloc of the government. This clearly shows whose class interests the economic and financial authorities serve.

The foreign policy successes will not be able to outweigh the disastrous consequences of the domestic policies conducted by the pro-Western members of the government's economic bloc. As the prospects of the recovery of global oil and gas prices look dim and the Gross National Product is expected to fall below minus 3.5 % one should expect to see a rising social temperature in Russia in 2016. Soon the harm done to President Putin's prestige by these unpopular social cuts will surpass the support he has received for his role in getting Crimea back to Russia.

The country needs a decisive turn in its socio-economic policies with a much stronger emphasis on the development of manufacturing, science and technology in the interests of the whole population and not of tiny (1%) minority of international oligarchs of Russian origin. It seems however that President Putin is not able to get rid of the top economic ministers responsible for the growing economic crisis. It seems that the remaining close ties of the Russian elite with their Western senior "partners" preclude any such drastic change in domestic policy.

But a country cannot have an independent foreign policy and a completely dependent economic policy. If President Putin does not fire the people who ran Russia (and keep running it) into economic crisis he will sooner or later face political earthquakes. When more than 50% of the people live close to the poverty line or below it one can hardly expect political stability to last long. The consequences might be rather unpleasant for President Putin. His popularity, now standing at paradoxically high 80% level, might drop quite quickly. Just as it happened to Gorbachev.

The class interests of the ruling elite push President Putin one way. The historic interests of Russia powerfully pull him another way. He will have to make a choice. We shall see how this contradiction will be resolved. ∎

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CANADA'S FOREIGN POLICY

The Imperative for Change under a New Liberal Government

Canada's foreign policy is in tatters, its global image is tarnished, and the incoming Trudeau government will need to work miracles to repair the country's damaged reputation.

By Anver Saloojee

In order to understand the depth and magnitude of what needs to change with Canada's foreign policy under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberals, it is necessary to first analyse how former prime minister Harper and the Conservatives drastically shifted Canadian foreign policy, ignored or isolated senior diplomats, eschewed diplomacy in favour of war, engaged in conservative partisan country-country relations, pursued economic diplomacy (initially with a misguided attempt at snubbing China), deliberately offended many countries, and attacked the United Nations.

After nine years of Conservative rule (2006-2015), Canada's foreign policy is in tatters, its global image is tarnished, and the incoming Trudeau government will need to work miracles to repair the country's damaged reputation. The disrepute, into which

the Harper government threw Canada, came into sharp relief when it cost the embarrassed nation a seat on the United Nations Security Council.

The Harper Decade

In 2006 the Conservative government of Stephen Harper came to power and began a radical restructuring of Canada's foreign policy. In a post 9/11 world defined by the so called 'war on terror' Prime Minister Stephen Harper charted a militaristic foreign policy on steroids. It actively promoted military aid over peacekeeping, unilateralism over multilateralism, free trade over foreign aid, aggression over diplomacy and a conscious eschewing of Canada's traditional role as a global peacekeeper. For the next five years Canada entered a 'Dark Age' in which it lost a crucial vote for a seat on the United Nations

Security Council, denounced then courted the government of China, openly, uncritically and resolutely supported Israel, denounced the first democratically elected Hamas government, engaged in a war of words with President Putin and sent military advisors to the Ukraine.

Between 2009 and October 2015 when the Liberal Party headed by Justin Trudeau came to power Harper and the Conservatives undertook what John Ibbitson calls "The Big Break", "… a rupture from everything that had come before. From Louis St. Laurent to Paul Martin, Canadian foreign policy had embraced and advanced collective security, alliances with other democracies and the international rule of law, all while shouldering our share of the burden of international responsibilities and cooperating with, while keeping a wary eye on, the American superpower to the south".[1]

Consciously, by design and with stealth the Harper government began the "Big Break". Looking back over that period the key dimensions of the big break include:

- Openly criticising the government of China for its 'poor human rights record' while expecting Canadian businesses to continue economic dealings with Chinese private and state owned enterprises.
- Improving the capability of Canada's military forces, and fostering jingoism (including renaming a major national highway after soldiers who were killed in Afghanistan).
- Vociferously staking Canada's claims in the Arctic.
- Engaging only with those multilateral forums (the G20, G8 and the Arctic Council) that advance Canada's economic interests.
- Criticising and forsaking those multilateral institutions of governance that they deemed irrelevant – including the United Nations, the Commonwealth and le Francophonie.
- Staking Canada's international reputation on four primary causes: Israel, Ukraine, maternal health and the 'war on terror' in Afghanistan, Iraq and the fight against ISIS; all the while largely disengaging

from the rest of the world. The then Minister of Defence Jason Kenney, considered one of the chief architects of Conservative foreign policy, said in an interview "I think Canada is more relevant, broadly speaking … I think we're on the right side of history when it comes to some of these issues."

- Closing Embassies and High Commissions in Iran, Cambodia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Zambia, deliberately offending these governments as well as the governments of China, Russia and Iran, while courting Israel and the Ukraine.

- Slashing foreign aid, peacekeeping forces and Canada's commitment to eradicating landmines.

Foreign Aid

Foreign aid spending and, had already begun to fall in relation to GDP in 1995 under the Liberal governments of Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin. In dollar terms, Canada's global foreign aid spending started to decline in 2011, shortly after the Conservatives won their first majority in Parliament. In 2011 foreign aid spending was $5.7-billion; by 2014 it dropped 14 percent to $4.9-billion last year. The reality is that the decline began in in the 1980s and accelerated with the deep budget cuts of 1995 when Jean Chrétien was prime minister. In the period 1975-2014 Canada's official development assistance as a percentage of gross national income declined from 0.54% to 0.24%. The corresponding numbers for the other G7 countries are: France 0.44% and 0.36%; Germany, 0.4% and 0.41%; Italy, 0.1% and 0.16%; Japan 0.23% and 0.19%; the UK, 0.36% and 0.71% and the USA 0.27% and 0.19%.[2]

In addition to this decline in direct foreign aid, its commitment to another important global initiative was abandoned. Canada undertook to clear landmines particularly in former war-torn regions of the world. A year after Harper took office Canada's funding for landmine clearance worldwide was $49.2-million (2007-08). By 2013-14 it had dropped to nearly one seventh – $7.9-million in 2013-14, according to statistics

provided by Mines Action Canada. And assistance to Cambodia where there are still six to eight million pieces of unexploded ordnance on the ground, fell from $3-million per annum to zero in 2013-14 with a one-time grant of $692,236 extended in 2015.

From Peacekeepers to Active Engagement: Neo-liberal Militarism

Two and a half decades ago Canada was the global leader in contributions to UN peacekeeping missions (with over 1000 soldiers and police deployed in the field). By 2015, despite an increase in the number of UN missions, Canada has only 116 soldiers and police deployed in the missions. This ranks Canada the 68th contributor – above Mali and below Paraguay.

Gone is the stellar reputation of a middle level G7 country that embraces peacekeeping and opposes war. Canada has sent fighter jets, military advisors and special forces to Iraq to fight ISIS. Canada now has more soldiers in the Ukraine than soldiers on peacekeeping missions. 200 soldiers from the 1st Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment are deployed in Ukraine (prior to that they were in Afghanistan). This is the same Regiment that played peacekeeping roles in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Haiti. This is a muscular militarism totally disproportionate to Canada's size and a significant departure from Canada's historic role. Ironically this muscular militarism pursued by the Conservatives was not matched by federal government spending on the military which currently stands at 1% of GDP compared to the 2% NATO asks its members to maintain.

Instead of dropping bombs on Islamic State-controlled parts of Iraq and Syria or sending soldiers to Ukraine Canada should be engaging in shuttle diplomacy and bringing the warring parties to the table in a global effort at resolving the conflicts that devastate the people of these regions.

As John Mundy, Canada's last ambassador to Iran, noted, the Harper government's 2012 decision to close the Canadian embassy in Tehran – at a time when Canada was simultaneously trying to play a larger role in the Middle East, demonstrated how the Harper

government undervalued and misused its diplomats and simultaneously how the government failed to appreciate the geo-politics of the region. "We're fighting a war in Syria and Iraq [where] Iran is one of the most important players. What Iran's intentions are is essential to the conclusion of the military effort, and we have chosen to be blind on the ground there. Why would we do that?"

The Harper government's war on terrorism has also meant that it drew very close to Israel and forsook what little it was doing in Palestine. In fact one of Harper's first major foreign affairs initiatives, misguided as it was, came on March 29, 2006, when Canada became the first country in the world – after Israel – to implement sanctions on the newly elected Hamas government and Canada cut aid to the Palestinian Authority. Three years later Canada cut funding to the core programmes of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which serves the 650,000 Palestinian refugees scattered around the Middle East.

Key diplomats in China began questioning Canada's role internationally (it was prime minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau who began the thaw with China well before the Kissinger/Nixon ping pong diplomacy). The Harper government, under pressure from Canadian businesses, did an about face on China – from not attending the Beijing Olympics prime minister Harper went on an official visit to China and did not mention human rights once.

The same question is being asked in Russia and Palestine. Where Canada was once seen as neutral under Harper it came to be seen as an unthinking, uncritical partisan nation unwilling to engage in diplomacy but ever willing to go on the offensive against certain countries.

The Environment

In 1987 Canada assembled nations from around the world to sign the Montreal Protocol to combat ozone-depleting substances. Nearly two and a half decades later the Harper government announced that Canada was withdrawing from the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on curbing greenhouse-gas

emissions. Canada became the only country in the world to sign and then withdraw from the global treaty. The shockwaves of that announcement reverberated throughout the country and around the world.

Between 2006 and 2014 the Harper government showed its utter disregard for the environment by eliminating or weakening practically every federal environmental law including:

- the Fisheries Act which no longer protects most fish;
- the Navigable Waters Protection Act which no longer protects most lakes and rivers;
- the federal Environmental Assessment Act which was repealed and replaced with significantly weaker legislation; and
- the dismantling of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy.

Economic Diplomacy and Neoliberal Free Trade

Initially highly critical of China's human rights record and refusing to go to the Beijing Olympics, Harper had to do an about turn as businesses in Canada began to feel the effects of the Harper cold shoulder treatment of China on their bottom line. Under pressure Harper took a trade mission to China and completely ignored human rights. This softening led, in 2012, to a Foreign Investment Protection Agreement with China, which secured and protected long-term Chinese investment in Canada's growing industrial sectors.

This neoliberal trade first approach to foreign affairs has shaped Canada's global and regional trade deals. Most notable are:

- the Free Trade Agreement with the EU;
- the Free trade Agreement with Honduras;
- Saudi Arabia's purchase of approximately $15 billion in Canadian military exports. As Canadian journalist, Yves Engler, has noted, "the Conservatives' ties to the Saudi monarchy demonstrate the absurdity … of Harper's claim that 'we are taking strong, principled positions in our dealings with other nations, whether popular or not'."

- Canada signed (but the Canadian Parliament has still to ratify) the Trans-Pacific Partnership creating a free-trade zone among 12 nations around the Pacific, making it the world's largest free trade zone. The twelve countries account for 40 per cent of the world's economic output ($28.5-trillion in combined gross domestic product).

The 'trade at all costs' approach to international relations also finds expression in the Harper government's neglect of Africa. After first visiting Africa in 2007 Harper did not return till 2012. In fact the Conservative government deliberately cut the number of African countries receiving foreign aid from Canada and instead shifted aid priority to Latin America. On the other hand the government has pursued a policy of "resource nationalism" where the

> **"Canada should be engaging in shuttle diplomacy and bringing the warring parties to the table in a global effort at resolving conflicts that devastate the people of these regions."**

interests of the mining companies became synonymous with Canada's policy in Africa[3] as demonstrated by the following:

- On his 2007 visit to Tanzania Harper met with 10 Canadian resource firms, to discuss "the general business climate [and] what the government of Canada can do to assist in building our investments here."
- In 2007-08 the Canadian High Commission lobbied Tanzania's Parliament to reject the recommendation of the country's Mineral Sector Review Committee, that the government keep more of the profits resulting from higher mineral prices.
- Between 2012 and 2015 the government of Canada put

significant sums of public money into mining initiatives in Africa – establishing branch offices of a professional society, the Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum, in Senegal and Burkina Faso; establishing the Senegalese school for geomatics.

- In 2014 Canada pledged $18.5 million of tax money to provide training in the extractives industry in Mozambique, and in early 2015 the government announced a $12-million grant for a project called Strengthening Education for Mining in Ethiopia "to develop more industry driven geology and mining engineering undergraduate programs."
- In 2014 the government budgeted up to $25 million per year for the Extractives Cooperation for Enhanced Economic Development (EXCEED) initiative, which it described as 'a new funding mechanism to expand Canada's involvement in areas of high development impact in the extractive sector in Africa'.
- Using public money to fund corporate social responsibility initiatives by mining companies in Africa: recently the government granted a $4.5-million 'aid' grant to Lundin for Africa. Lundin is a charity financed by the Lundin mining Group of Companies, for its operations in Ghana, Mali and Senegal. The government also gave $5.6 million for a project in Burkina Faso between Plan Canada (an NGO) and the mining company IAMGOLD. (See Engler, 2015)

Refugees and the changed discourse on foreign policy

In 2012 the Harper government drastically overhauled Canada's immigrant and refugee legislation and introduced the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. The legislation made it increasingly difficult for refugees to seek protection in Canada. In response to the Syrian refugee crisis the Harper government reproduced the old trope of state security trumping humanitarian concerns about the well-being of Syrian refuges. Initially they agreed to take in 10,000 Syrian

refugees, all of whom would be processed at the usual pace but with increased security scrutiny.

All that changed on September 2, 2015 when the drowned body of three-year-old Alan Kurdi washed up on the shores on a resort Turkish town. This tragic incident brought the reality of an interconnected world into the living room of Canadians and brought foreign policy as well as Canada's refugee policy into the very heart of the 42nd election campaign. The Harper government found itself out of step with the humanitarian concerns being voiced by Canadians.

Overnight the political parties scurried to unveil their positions on foreign policy – on war and Canada's traditional peacekeeping role; on foreign aid, developmental aid, defence budgets, immigration and refugee policy and on the importance of security screening of refugees coming into Canada.

Foreign policy and international relations, including international social responsibility, re-emerged as issues and altered the trajectory of the elections. The Conservatives found they had completely misread public sentiment and Justin Trudeau very quickly and expertly moved into the vacuum articulating and resonating with public sentiment. The Liberals pledged to (i) increase the number of Syrian refugees to Canada to 25,000; (ii) expedite the processing and security clearance for the refugees and (iii) move quickly to set up the necessary logistics in Canada as well as in Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon to fast track the resettlement of the refugees in Canada.

The new policy with respect to refugees notwithstanding, the Liberals will need to right a foreign affairs ship that has listed badly over the past decade. They will more than likely:

• stay the course on the free trade deals including ratifying the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement;
• continue Canada's policy on Ukraine though with significantly less muscular rhetoric; and
• continue Canada's close links with Israel.

On the other hand they will need to establish clear priorities with respect to six important issues:

1. Immediately re-establishing Canada's credibility at the United Nations and erasing the ambivalence and contradiction that cost Canada a seat on the United Nations Security Council.
2. Delivering on the campaign promise to end Canada's combat missions in Iraq and Syria; in particular cut Canada's combat support for the anti-Islamic State coalition led by the United States. The government has to institute humanitarian aid and argue loudly for peaceful negotiations.
3. Addressing climate change and global environment issues. As was noted above, under the Harper regime Canada's reputation on environmental issues suffered. The Liberals " …have committed to putting a price on carbon and ending the practice of setting – and ultimately missing – arbitrary emissions-reductions targets. Their platform also vows to establish a framework for tackling climate change with the provinces within 90 days of the Paris conference, and calls for partnership with the United States and Mexico for an "ambitious North American clean energy and environmental agreement."[4] At the Paris talks the government committed to:
    o Cutting greenhouse gases; and said Canada will no longer be a "laggard" when it comes to environmental issues.
    o Spending $2.65 billion over the next five years to help developing countries fight climate change. This means Canada has now exceeded the $4 billion target that environmental groups have been urging it to meet as its "fair share," based on the country's national wealth.
    o Meeting and exceeding the previous commitment to cut Canada's emissions to 30 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030.
4. Uncoupling the so-called "war on terrorism" from what in the current conjuncture has globally become synonymous with young Muslim men. Canada can and must play a vital role in this uncoupling.
5. Pledge to increase Canada's

commitment to Official Development Assistance to 0.7% of Gross National Product. 35 years ago in a UN General Assembly Resolution the 0.7% target was agreed to. It has been reaffirmed in many international agreements over the years, including the March 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico and the and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg later that year.
6. Refocus Canada's attention on Africa from one on "resource nationalism" where the interests of mining companies predominate, to a focus on promoting sustainable ecologically sound, anti-poverty, growth and development programmes and projects. Relations with South Africa, Africa, the BRICS and the Global South must be redefined on the basis of equality and mutual respect.

Conclusion

The damage done over nine years of Harper rule to Canada's international reputation while not irreparable, means that a major reorientation, reassessment, and rethink is absolutely necessary. It is in serious need of repair. In addition to articulating, establishing and implementing the priorities identified above, a new rejuvenated foreign policy must commit to restoring Canada's historic image as a nation committed to peacekeeping; negotiations and diplomacy over war; and balance over partisanship. Reputations and trust in the international arena are developed over decades but they are destroyed overnight. The latter is the legacy of nine years of Conservative rule that pandered to a narrow conservative political base. The time has arrived to rebuild Canada's international reputation. ∎

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The Real Face of the International Criminal Court

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Understanding the underlying reasons behind the actions of the ICC and exposing what is happening is an essential step in our critical resistance to this real threat to our human rights for the foreseeable future.

By Alexander Mezyaev

The International Criminal Court: The Dream and the Reality

The idea of a just world has a long history. It appeared in the theoretical works of philosophers and lawyers from early ages. Ancient Romans used to say that law is the 'art of good and justice'. But it was only after the Nuremberg and Tokyo international military tribunals in the middle of the twentieth century that the idea of justice for war crimes and crimes against humanity started to sharpen. Nevertheless it took more than 50 years to create new international criminal tribunals (for Yugoslavia and Rwanda) and they still were of an ad hoc nature. The negotiations for the creation of a permanent international criminal court were ongoing for almost 50 years and were finalised with the signing of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 1998, which entered into force in 2002 and started to operate in 2003.

But after the ICC started to operate, the dreams and realities started to clash. Analysing the activity of the ICC we always face 'strange' facts. These facts are really disturbing and because of this some commentators prefer to not mention them. Nevertheless without understanding the logic of these disturbing facts it is impossible to understand the reality of the ICC as an institution. Here are some examples:

1. The very first witness at the very first trial at the ICC (Lubanga trial, DRC situation) confessed right in the courtroom that he gave false evidence and was coached to do so by the prosecution. The court did not take action on this matter.
2. In the trial of Germain Katanga (DRC situation) the prosecution did not prove any of the charges it brought against the accused. But

instead of acquitting the accused, the court changed the charges and found Katanga guilty in relation to the new charges it had imposed.

3. During the announcement of the judgment in the case of Ngudjolo Chui (DRC situation) the presiding judge said the following: 'Mr. Chui, the fact that we are acquitting you does not mean that you are innocent'. This is a total and demonstrative violation of the presumption of innocence.

4. The President of Cote-d'Ivoire, Laurent Gbagbo, was imprisoned by the ICC for four years without trial. He spent almost two and a half years in prison even without confirmation of charges. In any local legal system no person could be detained without confirmed charges. The first hearings for confirmation of charges ended with an agreement by the judges that there was no case. Instead of dismissing the case, the majority (two judges against one) decided to give the prosecution 'more time to collect more evidence'. After a second attempt the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber finally confirmed the charges. The decision was adopted by the majority (two to one). The dissenting judge claimed that there was still no case. The defence tried to appeal this decision to the Appeals Chamber, but the Pre-Trial Chamber refused permission to appeal.

5. In the case against Uhuru Kenyatta and others (Kenya situation) the prosecution withdrew the case against Kenyatta and his co-accused *after the charges were confirmed by the court*. The trouble with this situation is that prosecution said, at this stage, that there was no evidence. But, if that were the case, how was the court able to confirm the charges without seeing supporting evidence for the charges?

6. In the case against Muammar Gaddafi after the assassination of the accused the court simply 'terminated the proceedings'. We have seen a lot of so-called contempt cases when certain individuals were put on trial because of the interruption of the integrity of the proceedings, for example, cases of bribing witnesses, or refusal to give evidence. But what could be more damaging to the integrity of the proceedings than the assassination of the accused? However, notwithstanding the fact that the killing was filmed and the criminals could easily be identified, the whole issue was not discussed or considered by the court.

7. During the trial in the case of former Vice-President of DRC Jean-Pierre Bemba all his defence team (with the exception of one non-African member) were violently arrested.

In relation to the disturbing facts listed above, we face the question of whether to ignore the facts or to interrogate the concept of the ICC. Because these facts cannot be explained by mistakes and negligence. They also cannot be explained if we consider the ICC as an international institution of the highest degree of legal standards and integrity. This means that these facts cannot be explained within the established concept of the ICC as an international court, as a guardian of law and justice. And thus we have to revisit this official concept.

The official aim of the International Criminal Court is enshrined in article 1 of the Rome Statute. It says that the ICC is established 'to exercise jurisdiction over persons for the most serious crimes of international concern'. Thus the prosecution of the most serious international crimes is proclaimed as its main aim. But the practice of the ICC shows that its activities are not in line with this declared aim.

The situation in Cote-d'Ivoire was brought to the attention of the ICC in 2003, but until 2011 the Court did nothing. Even eight years later the ICC acted not in the context of the case that was brought to it in 2003, but in the context of the new situation of the forcible removal of President Gbagbo. And in this context the ICC acted really quickly, issuing an order for the arrest of Laurent Gbagbo after a few weeks.

The situation in Libya was brought to the ICC's attention by the UN Security Council when NATO forces were preparing to invade the country. At that time Libyan citizens had the highest social guarantees. Now Libya is totally destroyed, its statehood is under serious doubt and, more than 4 years after the coup, thousands of refugees are still leaving the country. The ICC issued no indictments for those who ruined the state. Instead it issued indictments against those who built that state.

The situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) was brought to the attention of the ICC in 2005, but the only action taken during these ten years is a case against former Vice-President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo Jean-Pierre Bemba. Why was Bemba indicted by the ICC? Because he sent his troops to the legitimate CAR President Patasse, responding to his official request to help him to suppress an armed rebellion. Now the legitimate CAR President has been overthrown, the country is in ruins and ICC has produced no indictments against those responsible for the destruction.

When complaints about the situation in Uganda were lodged the ICC did nothing except publish vague orders for the arrest of three people, which were never followed through. Investigations by the ICC in Mali and Nigeria did not stop people from suffering as a result of al-Qaeda and Boko Haram's terrorist actions. But the ICC openly sided itself with these organisations, warning Malian and Nigerian leaders that they might be called to The Hague if they did not defend the human rights of these terrorists.

So where has the ICC brought peace? Where has it brought justice? It appears to have very little or no interest in most of the international human rights crimes which are happening all over the world. At the same time the ICC becomes actively involved in certain conflicts and it would be difficult not to notice that its activity in many cases is highly biased towards one side of the conflict.

Another important fact should be highlighted. When taking its decisions, the International Criminal Court seems to be a law unto itself. In this respect, it:

- gravely violates the existing rules of international law;
- derogates the existing standards of law and jurisprudence; and

- creates new rules, i.e. its own law.

The violation of existing rules of international law

The practice of ICC shows that some of its cases are based on the grave violation of fundamental principles of modern international law, namely the principle of equality of states, the principle of consent of states and the voluntary nature of international law. In this respect special attention should be paid to the situations in Libya and Sudan (and subsequently to all Sudanese and Libyan cases). Analysis shows that these situations were 'referred' to the ICC in violation of international law. The glaring nature and the graveness of these violations force us to conclude that they cannot have been made through ignorance or negligence, but must have been made consciously to destroy or challenge the very basis of modern international law.

The situation in Sudan was referred by the UN Security Council to the ICC in March 2005 and the situation in Libya in February 2011. The problem of these referrals is that they were not taken in accordance with international law. The main question that arises in this regard is: on what legal basis has the Security Council acted?

In its Resolution 1593 (2005) the Security Council (UNSC) failed to name any exact article of any exact legal document in support of its decision. It only said that it was 'acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter'. Reference to a 'chapter' is quite disturbing from the legal point of view, because it shows that the Security Council indeed could not name any exact article or clause to justify its decision. Legal decisions must be based on specific articles and even clauses of articles of a treaty, not on whole chapters. The vague reference to the chapter as a whole is itself clear proof of the absence of any legal basis for this decision.

It is interesting to note that the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber attempted to atone for this legal impotence by the Security Council. It claimed that the Security Council acted pursuant to Article 13b of the Rome Statute. This attempt to justify the referral was even more legally inept than the UNSC's failure to give any explanation, because the powers of the Security Council are regulated by the United Nations Charter, not by any other treaty. The UNSC simply could not act on the basis of the ICC Statute. The attempt to claim that UNSC based its powers on another treaty and not the UN Charter is scandalous and illegal. The Security Council does not have the right to use powers which it does not enjoy according to the UN Charter, and, moreover, in this case applying it to a State which is not a party to the Rome Statute!

The UN Charter does not give the Security Council the right to refer situations to the ICC. This is the only possible conclusion if we take into consideration the principles of

> **"The glaring nature and the graveness of these violations force us to conclude that they cannot have been made through ignorance or negligence, but must have been made consciously to destroy or challenge the very basis of modern international law."**

international law. Such a power is too serious to be considered as 'implied' and not to be included in the Charter as the legal basis for the Security Council's actions. Thus, in the absence of any amendments to the UN Charter itself, the Security Council does not have the right to refer situations to the ICC. This is especially so in relation to the States which are not parties to the Rome Statute. Members of the United Nations have given their consent only to those powers of the UN Security Council which are enunciated in the UN Charter, not to powers expressed in other treaties.

There are many other legal defects in these 'referral' cases. For example, paragraph 1 of UNSC Resolution 1593 (2005) says that it is referring the situation in Darfur "since 1 July 2002" to the ICC Prosecutor. But the very resolution was adopted on 31 March 2005! On what legal basis does the Security Council claim the right to apply criminal law with retroactive effect? Where is it stated that the Security Council has such a power? It is totally contrary to common principles of law! Let us imagine that after the UNSC referral Sudan would sign and ratify the ICC Statute. What would be the legal effect of article 11 of the ICC Statute which regulates the temporal jurisdiction of ICC? Paragraph 1 of this article states that "The Court has jurisdiction only with respect to crimes committed after the entry into force of this Statute." Paragraph 2 of the same article says, "If a State becomes a party to this Statute after its entry into force, the Court may exercise its jurisdiction only with respect to crimes committed after the entry into force of this Statute for that State, unless that State has made a declaration under article 12, paragraph 3." And what about Article 24 which specifies that "no person shall be criminally responsible under this Statute for conduct prior to the entry into force of the Statute"?

Obviously the decision of the UN Security Council is discriminatory against Sudanese citizens indicted by the ICC because different rules apply to them as opposed to citizens of states which have signed the ICC statute.

Many international human rights treaties specifically prohibit discrimination in criminal proceedings: if we accept that it is possible to initiate proceedings against a State which is not a party to the ICC (whether through the UN Security Council or by any other means) then we must accept the legality of discrimination. But it is absurd to say that an international treaty may legalise such discrimination. It is difficult to believe that states decided to discriminate between accused persons from a state party and accused persons from a non-state party, for such discrimination would be contrary to the most basic human rights. If a thesis leads to an absurd conclusion, then the thesis should be abandoned. Thus it must be concluded that without the amendment of the

UN Charter, any referral to the ICC of a situation in a non-signatory state is not possible.

There are many other legal problems with these 'referral' UNSC resolutions. For example, what is the legal value of a decision forcing a state to be obliged by a treaty to which some Security Council members themselves are not even signatories? In March 2005, only 9 of the 15 member states of the Security Council (and 3 of the 5 permanent members) were state-parties to the ICC Statute. What is the legality of a decision taken by states which are not parties to a treaty to force another state to be a party to it, or to be bound by obligations under it? In fact, even if all the members of the Security Council had been state parties to the Rome Statute then this would not have changed the illegality of their decision. This is absolutely illegal, because it violates the very foundations of the international legal order.

International courts used as a tool for crimes committed by the West

Several international criminal tribunals, including the ICC and ICTY (International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia) have been used by the West to further their aims in support of their international aggression. The three examples of Libya, Ukraine and Yugoslavia illustrate this tendency.

The situation in Libya was brought to the ICC by the UNSC in February 2011, and decisions were made too fast for any meaningful investigation to have been completed. The ICC prosecutor prepared an order of arrest against the Libyan head of state Muammar Gaddafi. This order of arrest was issued when NATO was already involved in aggression against Libya. Thus the ICC acted as a 'legal' instrument of war. (It is noteworthy to mention that one of the judges in the case against Gaddafi was an Italian citizen and Italy was one of the states taking part in NATO aggression against Libya. Thus the ICC was violating the elementary principles of independence of the judiciary).

In April 2014 the International Criminal Court received the acceptance of its jurisdiction of the ICC from the Ukraine. The defect of

this decision is that the request was sent by an improper subject. People who claimed to be "the government of Ukraine" had no legal justification for that claim. Notwithstanding that, the ICC agreed with that acceptance. It is difficult to understand how an international court may work with a government that took a power illegally through a bloody coup. The first task of the ICC is to check the legality of the subject appearing before it.

To understand why this agreement constitutes taking part in a crime we have to look at the details of the acceptance of jurisdiction. The illegal government of Ukraine accepted the jurisdiction only for the purpose of prosecuting members of the overthrown government! By accepting jurisdiction from an illegal junta the ICC appears as a weapon of the *coup d'etat* committed in Ukraine.

> ❝So where has the ICC brought peace? Where has it brought justice? It appears to have very little or no interest in most of the international human rights crimes which are happening all over the world. ❞

In 1999, during the aggression by NATO states against Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) issued an order for the arrest of the President. Notwithstanding the fact that there was no investigation, the ICTY prosecutor issued an indictment against Slobodan Milošević, who died of a heart attack whilst in jail during the trial. In this way the ICTY was not impartial but became a tool of NATO in the war.

International courts as a tool of a radical change of international law.

The best scientific approach for understanding any subject demands the use of several different approaches.

One of the obstacles to understanding the reality of the ICC is the exclusive use of the method of analysis. But it is important to also use the method of synthesis. This means that we have to look at ICC activities in the context of the activities of the whole system of international criminal justice. Use of synthesis will show us that 'strange' facts are not only the products of the ICC. These facts are reflected throughout all the international tribunals. It means that we are experiencing the creation of a whole system with specific aims and we have to detect these aims and understand them.

The first international criminal tribunal after the Nuremberg and Tokyo military international tribunals was the ICTY. The activity of the ICTY clearly shows that when it wished to convict a person for political reasons it deviated from existing international law and created its own law. In order to convict President Slobodan Milošević the ICTY inserted and used the concept of the so-called 'joint criminal enterprise' (JCE). The third category of this JCE allows the court to convict anybody, including persons who not only have not taken part in the said crimes, but were not even aware that these crimes were being committed!

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda violated the Convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide that prescribed the necessity to establish the specific intent. It decided that there was no need to establish the specific intent and that it was possible to convict a person for genocide even if intent was not established. This tribunal also 'corrected' the genocide Convention, added to it some new features with the sole purpose of convicting the accused of this tribunal. The same 'correction' of existing international law was made by other international tribunals, like the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Thus we a can detect another common feature of the international tribunals – the destruction of the already existing international law on one side and the creation of new international law on another side. Needless to stress that international courts do not have the power to either destroy existing law, or

to create new law. However, the ICC and other international courts do not appear to accept existing international law as their framework.

Another example – the practice of 'proving' cases with the use of plea bargaining. Officially it looks as if the accused pled guilty and gave testimony about his crimes. The reality of these guilty pleadings is very different. First of all the accused is not giving his own testimony but obliged to sign a text of 'facts' prepared by the prosecution. The accused receives assurances that he will not receive a harsh sentence. The accused is obliged to give testimony against his co-accused. Thus the plea bargaining procedure is not aimed at establishing the truth, but at the conviction of certain accused parties with the use of the testimony of other accused parties that were forced to plead guilty. The practice of several international criminal tribunals (especially the ICTY and the ICTR) shows that plea bargaining is used with pressure.

The whole practice of the ICTR was based on a false plea bargaining with the Rwanda Prime Minister Jean Kambanda. The whole Srebrenica case in the ICTY was based on plea bargaining with Dražen Erdemović and M Nikolić. In this context the ICC's indictment against Simone Gbagbo (wife of President Laurent Gbagbo) was a clear attempt to resolve the case of President Gbagbo without trial.

Another serious derogation of international law is a derogation of human rights law by the international tribunals. For example those accused in international criminal tribunals are denied the right to choose the counsel of their own choice. This denial has a very 'good' explanation. Only counsels approved by the ICC and other courts may defend these accused. In reality, this seeks to guarantee that the counsel will not go too far in establishing the truth.

The only case when an ICC accused was able to get the defence counsel of his own choice was Jean-Pierre Bemba (Central African situation). That was secured by the ability of Bemba to finance his counsel himself (which is a unique case in the whole history of the international criminal justice). But

in November 2013 the whole defence team of Bemba was arrested and put on trial. Officially the reason for this arrest was the attempt by the defence to prepare a false witness. It is of critical interest to note that the sudden arrest of Bemba's defence counsels was conducted just some hours before the defence was about to present evidence about how the ICC prosecution was bribing witnesses.

Bribing witnesses and presenting false witnesses is not an extraordinary event in the international criminal justice sytem. It is the rule rather than the exception. To give two examples, in the Vojislav Šešelj trial at the ICTY more than 20 witnesses gave sworn testimony that they were threatened by the prosecution and pressurised to give false evidence against the accused. The Court took no action against the prosecution! Moreover the accused was prevented from presenting his Defence Case. This is an unique case in the whole history of international criminal justice. In the Milošević trial one prosecution witness confessed that he was pressurised (and even tortured) to give a false testimony against President Milošević. The court took no action and did not investigate the claim.

When examining the ICC's activities in the context of activities of other bodies in the international criminal justice system a number of other important facts emerge: the same staff are working in these institutions (running from one court to another, and sometimes even working in different courts at the same time!); the same judges work in these courts (running from one court to another and sometimes working in different courts at the same time!); and the courts use each other's practice to set a legal precedent; thus, for example, the ICC is citing the decision of the ICTY as proof of its own legality.

Progressive international law versus regressive international law

The synthesis of the activity of the modern system of international justice allows us to detect new phenomena. But before we make a formulation about what this phenomenon *is*, it is important to stress, what it is *not*.

The analysed phenomenon is *not* just the use of double standards. The analysed phenomenon is *not* just a violation of international law. The analysed phenomenon is *not* just the destruction of international law. All these enumerated phenomena are not new. What is really new is the *creation of new international law*. All the above mentioned problems of course exist – double standards, violation, destruction. But the important new feature is the *creation of parallel international law*.

Thus we have to conclude that the activity of the ICC is no way different from the activity of other organs of international criminal justice. The facts show that the main tasks of the international criminal justice system are the following:

• to act as a 'legal' tool for regime change, giving legitimacy to the removal of disobedient heads of states (situational aim); and

• to create a new body of international law which will reflect only the interests of the western powers (conceptual aim).

The phenomenon of the creation of new international law urges us to respond. Such response must be given in theoretical and practical ways.

From the theoretical point of view, we need to explain the objective reasons for this drastic change of international law as a social value. International law at every historical period reflects the exact level of international relations and the distribution of power between main (and other) participants of international relations. That is why international law in the 18th Century accepted war as a legal instrument in international relations and slavery as a perfectly legal practice. That is why international law in the 19th Century considered colonialism as a legal base for the division of states and peoples and a justification for the robbery of natural resources from the colonised countries. That law reflected the exact historical situation, when on the international scene there was no state or group of states able to present an alternative development for the whole world. This changed only after such a state (the Soviet Union) came into being and

later the formulation of a world socialist system. The first decree of the soviet government was the Decree on Peace. The modern principles of international law (like sovereign equality of states, non-interference in domestic affairs) seem to be obvious, but they came into existence exclusively because of the appearance of an alternative – and let us stress this specially – military and economically strong enough to defend this alternative world system.

The appearance and strengthening of the alternative world system allowed for the creation of new international law. This law was created by all members of the international community and in the interest of all (at least this was its stated aim). This international law became known as 'Progressive international law'. This name reflected the essence of this law – it reflected progress in international relations.

The destruction of the Soviet Union in December 1991 marked the beginning of the end of the system based on progressive international law. On May 1993 the first institution of the new system was established – the so-called International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, followed by a series of similar tribunals, for Rwanda, for Sierra Leone, for Cambodia, for Lebanon….

All these new courts and tribunals were directed to one operative aim – the indictment and removal of targeted heads of states. The ICTY removed and indicted president of Yugoslavia Slobodan Milošević and former president Milan Milutinović. It also indicted four more heads of states (though unrecognised) – Radovan Karadžić and Biljana Plavšić (presidents of Republic Srpska), Milan Martićc and Milan Babić (presidents of the Republic of Serbian Kraina). In addition to that all political and military leaders and administrators were indicted and removed in Yugoslavia and then Serbia. The Special Court for Sierra Leone removed the President of Liberia, Charles Taylor. The Tribunal for Rwanda indicted former Prime Minister of Rwanda Jean Kambanda. Finally the ICC indicted the President of Cote-d'Ivoire, Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta and President of Sudan Omar al-Bashir…

The Al-Bashir case and South Africa

In June 2015 the ICC tried to force the South African government to arrest Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir who attended an AU meeting in Johannesburg. The North Gauteng High Court issued a decision obliging the SA government to arrest al-Bashir, and this decision was not implemented. Unfortunately the discussion on this matter was limited by the very narrow approach that was taken by the SA court, which was to some extent the result of very poor arguments presented by the state lawyers. But only to some extent, because nothing prevented the court from considering certain issues that courts are obliged to consider.

First of all is the matter of jurisdiction.

> **❝It is difficult to understand how an international court may work with a government that took a power illegally through a bloody coup.❞**

Even in the case when state lawyers did not raise any objection relating to jurisdiction, it was still the court's obligation to decide this issue for itself. It did not do so. Another mystery is why the court took the position that the obligation to cooperate necessarily meant the obligation to arrest, moreover to do this automatically. We are not going to analyse the arguments in the SA court decision in detail. What we would like to highlight nevertheless are those circumstances that somehow escaped the attention of the mass media and even judicial institutions.

First of all, there was the artificial exclusion of the majority of judges from the adoption of the decision to force South Africa to arrest President al-Bashir. The decision [that is called the 'ICC decision'] was adopted by a single judge. But the al-Bashir case is assigned not to a single judge but to a full Chamber constituted of three judges. Why were the other two judges not consulted? The formal answer to that question is that the decision was taken urgently. But this answer does not hold water, because the urgency of the decision was clearly the result of the intentionally late application by the prosecution. Information about al-Bashir's visit to South Africa was available to the ICC months in advance but the prosecution decided to apply for request to arrest just some hours before this visit. The reason is obvious – to create the urgency and thus exclude two judges (i.e. the majority!) from the decision-making process.

The other question arises with the attempt of the ICC (in reality – of one judge from the ICC) to force South Africa to arrest a sitting head of state, who, as such, enjoys immunity according to international law. Such an attempt was not legally supported. Any reference to article 27 of the ICC Statute is not convincing. This article says that 'immunities or special procedural rules which may attach to the official capacity of a person, whether under national or international law, shall not bar the Court from exercising its jurisdiction over such a person'. This article gave some commentators the wrong impression, leading to claims that nowadays heads of state no longer have immunity. In fact a more careful reading of this article shows that it is directed only to the ICC Prosecutor and other ICC officials, but not to states. This article relates only to the relations between accused and the Court. As concerns states, the immunities of heads of states and governments are regulated by norms of customary international law and treaties. These treaties clearly obliged the states to assure the immunity of the highest state officials.

Moreover, the so-called al-Bashir case is not about Omar al-Bashir in his personal capacity. It is about the President of Sudan, i.e. about state sovereignty. Because of that the attempt of the ICC to force South Africa to arrest al-Bashir was an action against South Africa, bringing the state to a position when it is asked to destroy the very base of current international law – state sovereignty and equality.

The crystal clear nature of this situation raises the legitimate question as to why the ICC engaged in that provocation against South Africa. In retrospect, knowing the consequences (the SA court decision, its supposed non-respect by the SA government, the impeachment move against the SA President etc.) we may suggest that this move was made with the intention of embarrassing the government of South Africa if not to destabilise the country.

Conclusions

To conclude, we have to see that for the moment there are two separate systems of international law. The first one is the current international law, often referred to as progressive international law. It is the result of the developments of the international system from 1945. The regime of this law is characterised by the aim (common interest for all members of the international community) and way of creation (made by all equal members of international community). The other system that is being created mainly through international courts and tribunals, is regressive international law. The regime of this law can be characterised using the same features but in negative terms: it is created by only certain 'chosen states' and operates only in their interest. Step by step this second system of regressive international law is becoming bigger and stronger.

The modern world is more complex than it was in 1945. To understand the modern world we need at least proper definitions that correctly reflect the essence of objects and phenomena. It is interesting to note that the very lack of definitions sometimes acts as a base for non-existence of certain subjects or phenomena in our minds. One of the sharpest examples in this regard is the word 'international'. We speak of international treaties, organisations, operations, politics… . Sometimes the use of this word is an obvious abuse, like in an expression 'international judge'. The idea of a judge acting as a representative of the international community is clear, but does it have anything to do with reality? The judges are elected by other states but nominated by the state of their citizenship. In some cases the election process is a pure hypocrisy – when there is no competition between candidates and their number is the same (or nearly the same) as the number of places. In this situation we are facing not 'international' institutions, but rather a group of foreign representatives.

While we have some treaties and organisations (like the United Nations) that could be more or less truly called international, we still have institutions that clearly may not be defined as such. These institutions include the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, NATO, the European Union and the International Criminal Court. We have to notice the attempt made by some researchers to correct the situation and to introduce the new definition that better reflect the situation, namely introduction of the word 'supranational'. This attempt is

> **❝The activity of the ICTY clearly shows that when it wished to convict a person for political reasons it deviated from existing international law and created its own law. ❞**

indeed very useful in defining the true nature of subjects like European Union institutions, but it is still not enough. International institutions were created for representation of the interest of the community of all states and for achieving common values and goals. Supranational institutions constitute a new phenomenon where the interest of such institutions may not necessarily coincide with the interests of member states. In such institutions the states sometimes are not the decision-makers.

Nowadays the dichotomy national/international does not properly reflect the real situation. Even the introduction of the supranational or even transnational levels does not change things. National, supranational and international are all nation-centric phenomena. But institutions like the ICC are contra-national phenomena. This level of politics reflects interest of a subject not connected with any state or group of states, though based in certain states. The interests of these subjects do not coincide with the interest of states or the international community as a whole. Moreover, sometimes the interests may be even contradictory. The strength of this subject is several times bigger than the power of most of the states. And as a *de facto* matter we witness the existence of certain institutions that assure a new level in politics. We suggest that this level may be called 'contra-national', stressing its centrifugal character, where the centre is a nation.

Thus, we argue that the International Criminal Court is an institution of the contra-national level of politics. And its real aims and policy may be understood only in this context. The ICC was established with two main purposes: to create a universal judicial institution for controlling the highest level of national and international politics. The main ways to achieve this control are through creating the power to remove 'disobedient' heads of state and destroying the protection provided by existing national and international law through creating new [regressive/repressive] international law. To be more correct – contra-national law.

To stop this process of the destruction of our international system and the seizing of power by contra-national subjects, first of all we have to detect it, to realise that this is indeed happening, and to make others aware of it. And second we have to protest the process and make it clear that we reject it and all the results of its work. If the international community does not do that, one day we will wake up and discover that no signs of progressive international law exist anymore. The repressive contra-national law that the 'chosen forces' are making for us now will become the only law available. In this context, understanding the underlying reasons behind the actions of the ICC and exposing what is happening is an essential step in our critical resistance to this real threat to our human rights for the foreseeable future. ∎

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How to achieve the freedom promised

The degree of the vitality of a democracy is measured at the same time by the level of involvement of its citizens in public debates, by the human quality of their proposals and by their ability to control the politics of the officials that they have elected.

By Nestor Bidadanure

What is the main ideological factor that has led to so much violence around the question of identity in post-colonial Africa? Can the concept of culture of peace contribute to the establishment of lasting peace in Africa? And, if so, how?

"Each generation must, with little help from the past, discover its mission, fulfil or betray it" said Frantz Fanon in his book *The Wretched of* the Earth, which was written in 1961 and which had a strong influence on the political consciousness of anti-colonial and Third World activists in his time. If we compare ourselves to the generations that have lived through slavery, colonisation and apartheid, we can say with some caution that the political reality of the African continent has generally improved today. The laws that legitimised the inequality and justified the occupation of territories of peoples of different cultures have been abolished.

African leaders who are progressive have overcome the identity manipulations imposed by colonialism; they have unified the freedom fighters of their own countries, organised pan-African solidarity and promoted international solidarity with other peoples struggling for freedom. Despite the political and economic violence that many African peoples

still experience, we should not forget the victories over oppression. Thanks to the peoples' struggles, significant economic and social rights have been achieved in much of the continent. Human rights and gender equality have emerged to a certain extent from the ruins of discriminatory laws. We must remember that no right is natural: each area of freedom we enjoy today is the result of the epic battles in the past by peoples for justice and human dignity. The promise of freedom is the fruit of resistance.

In addition to the culture of resistance, we are also heirs to values and techniques of peaceful conflict resolution. In the face of tragedies such as apartheid, the genocide in Rwanda and the wars in Mozambique and Angola, the African people have tapped into their ancient cultures to break the impasse and reconcile those who have been bitter enemies.

Thanks to the legacy of the freedom fighters of yesterday, we can look ahead today with optimism and say with certainty that a better Africa is possible. In fact the major challenge of our generation is not to begin the story, but to keep it going, not allowing it to be stopped at midpoint of the long road travelled by the generations who preceded us in the struggle for freedom. For as long as war and poverty continue in even the smallest part of the African continent, the freedom promised by the fathers of Pan-Africanism will require other heroes to ensure its fulfilment. As long as people lack freedom somewhere in the world, not one of us can feel completely free.

Therefore, the mission of our generation, post-colonial and post-apartheid is the struggle for a lasting peace in Africa. To achieve this, it is essential to first understand the belief system that continues to enable the poverty and violence linked to identity in our continent. In other words, we must identify the major obstacle to the emergence of an Africa that is free, democratic and inclusive for which previous generations have struggled. An Africa where peace is no longer a dream but a reality.

It is our point of view that most of the political and economic violence

suffered by the African peoples today is rooted in a system of thought we call Radical Identity Populism (abbreviated PIR). So what is PIR and how can the concept of culture of peace serve as an antithesis to the prejudices that serve as its backbone?

Radical Identity Populism

To understand the roots of the economic and social crisis of a country at a specific moment in history, we must examine the state of the dominant culture of its political elite. The major factor of extreme violence faced by many African countries today is to be

> ❝Those who are populists empty politics of its noble mission that should be the search for the common good; instead, they reduce politics to a means of access to and maintenance of power.❞

found in the dominant ideology of those elites that already hold the reins of power as well as those who aspire to obtain them. The phenomenon of ethnic and religious extremism as well as other forms of violence by states against their citizens mirrors the lack of a culture of peace in part of the political elite of the countries concerned. In Africa, just as elsewhere in the world, the different versions of fascism are always thought up by intellectuals. In the same way, colonialism, apartheid and the various types of extremism facing Africa today were theorised by intellectuals.

In Africa, decolonisation in the legal sense has not been followed by an ideological break with the colonial model of governance by some of the political elite as well as intellectuals. Violence against the people has been perpetuated beyond independence. While the enemy for the colonialists was those who sought independence, now for the post-colonial elite who

have not been mentally liberated from colonial prejudices, the new enemy has become the "other" who is perceived to be different. Discrimination against the colonised peoples has been replaced by discrimination against other ethnic groups, against other religions, against people from other regions, against foreigners... The colonial practice of divide and rule is continued today as the favourite political weapon of extremist elites. The phenomenon of crimes against humanity such as the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994, the ethnic massacres in Burundi in 1993, the fratricidal war in Southern Sudan, the mass crimes orchestrated by the army of the lord, the LRA in Uganda and the DRC, the war waged by the radical Islamist organisations al-Shabab in Somalia, Boko Haram in Nigeria, Al Qaeda and the Islamic State in Libya, North Africa and Mali are all rooted in theorised system of thought that legitimise extreme violence.

This extreme violence is always the culmination of a long process of erosion of the values of peace and tolerance that structure any society. The xenophobic campaigns against foreigners in many African countries are all manifestations, more or less extreme, of an identity vision of politics by the post-colonial elite. As progressive women and men, we cannot afford to close our eyes and allow Radical Identity Populism to return.

It is against this phenomenon of Radical Identity Populism that the new generation of freedom fighters must struggle if someday Africa is to live in peace with herself.

By populism, we mean the political demagoguery expressed through the discourse of hate against others who are different. Those who are populists empty politics of its noble mission that should be the search for the common good; instead, they reduce politics to a means of access to and maintenance of power. For the populist, power is an end in itself and the people are simply conceived as an instrument by which one can climb to the ranks of the highest office. Political power, instead of being a way to build prosperity for all citizens, is seen by the populist as a means of access to the material wealth and the symbolic prestige that

it confers. The populist promotes the insecurity of the scapegoat: he/she profits from the destabilisation of society by identity conflicts. This cold approach denies the humanity of the other and reveals a lack of humanity in the sense of Ubuntu. According to the philosophy of Ubuntu, I am because you are. If I am indifferent to the suffering of the other, it reveals the loss of my own humanity. In the philosophy of Ubuntu, every human being is perfectible.

By identity, we mean the manipulation of real or perceived differences for the purpose of gaining or maintaining power. Instead of celebrating the wealth for the nation represented by the diversity of peoples and cultures, the populist develops an allergy to differences. He/she dreams of a world of one colour and one dimension. If he/she could erase the colours of the rainbow and keep only one, they would. They replace equality in diversity by hierarchy of races, ethnicities, gender, religion... By hate speech and stigmatisation of the other, the populist transforms the best of his/her country, the cultural diversity of citizens, into a source of conflict. Even in countries such as Rwanda and Burundi, where Hutu and Tutsi share the same language, the same culture and live intermingled in the same territory, the populist finds a way to pit citizens against each other on the basis of superficial differences. When the populist instrumentalises religion, he/she attacks only not only the beliefs that are different from their own, but also the moderate elements of their own faith. We see this wherever intolerant religious fundamentalism is rife. The populist elite imagine a one-dimensional world where all differences of thought, culture and religion have been abolished.

By radical, we mean the will to exterminate the other who is different. In Rwanda, those who carried out the genocide of Tutsis did not ask their political beliefs before murdering them. Neither the political or religious beliefs nor the age of the victims could save them. Their ethnic origin alone was enough to condemn them to death. In fact, religious or ethnic extremist movements make no distinction between state officials and ordinary citizens. The will to exterminate the other simply because they are different is radical. Genocide is the most extreme stage of radical identity populism. Before the extermination, the populist politicians have already banalised and instrumentalised the evil that is racism, sexism and xenophobia.

Towards an Africa in peace

The Culture of Peace is not a closed concept. It is a concept that is integrated with the elements of the peoples' traditions for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the diffusion of the values of peace. From this point of view, the philosophy of Ubuntu, the tradition of the Ubushingantahe in Burundi, and the traditional and participatory justice of the Agacaca in Rwanda are all components of the

> ❝By hate speech and stigmatisation of the other, the populist transforms the best of his/her country, the cultural diversity of citizens, into a source of conflict.❞

Culture of Peace. Let us now consider the key constituents of the Culture of Peace in relation to the African situation.

Respect for life, for the human person and for his/her rights

"I am because you are" says an African proverb. The human being is foremost a social being. The philosophy of Ubuntu teaches us that the suffering of the other calls into question our own humanity. I cannot be indifferent to the violence and poverty that affects the other, without eroding my own humanity. Respect for life, for the human person and for their rights is also the condition for the respect by the other of my human rights. We cannot be free ourselves in an environment of violence and poverty. Being free is inseparable from the responsibility to the public interest. "To be free", says Mandela "is not just to get rid of my chains, but even more it is to live in a way that enhances the freedom of others." Respect for life and the human person means that under no circumstances can we justify the use of degrading practices against the other.

Access of all citizens to economic and social rights

Any power that does not seek to guarantee fundamental economic and social rights to those who are vulnerable, imposes violence on part of the society, which in some cases can amount to war. Such a pessimistic view of the future is the cause of social exclusion and wars. The idea, among a certain elite, that African countries do not have the capacity to speed up the pace of development and to overcome poverty leads to exclusion. Those who feed the misconception that there is not enough wealth in the country for everyone, and so it should belong to only a few, will tend to use all tricks to exclude others from the race to power, which they consider to be the source of their own material enrichment. They will see in the other an enemy in competition for the riches that they consider to be scarce. To struggle for a lasting peace requires that we struggle against structural violence and all the latent prejudices in the society that lead to war. Especially, we should not forget that heroism is not measured in number of lives cut down but the number of lives saved. To guarantee human rights for all means to guarantee a life of dignity to millions of individuals who, in circumstances of hate, of hunger and war, will die every day of a preventable death.

Peaceful conflict resolution and reconciliation

In much of Africa, people from different ethnic groups continue to live in harmony. They have developed or inherited traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution and a vision of the world and the other that keep them safe from identity wars. We must keep in mind that reconciliation is the affair of visionaries, those who are strong and certainly not those who are weak.

For it is indeed necessary to have courage and lucidity if one is not to reduce the history of a people to one's personal suffering. It takes courage to think that even the executioners are human beings who, perhaps, can free themselves from their deadly blindness.

We should reflect on how countries such as post-apartheid South Africa, post-conflict Mozambique or post-genocide Rwanda have found a way out of the impasse of extreme violence. The development of a specific conflict resolution process cannot ignore the experience of others. In their essence, the different reconciliation processes are all part of a philosophy of life, a strategic way of thinking that is both modern and traditional, and that concerns the construction of peace for present and future generations. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa has contributed to a peaceful transition. Through the Participatory Justice of Agacaca, Rwanda has been able to escape from the deadlock of genocide and successfully rebuild a nation at peace. One of the factors of instability in Burundi is the marginalisation of the Bashingantahes, the traditional sages who were devoted to truth and justice. For any reconciliation there is a precondition - the truth. Without the recognition of grievances, there can be no forgiveness or reconciliation.

Equality between men and women and the inclusion of diversity

Equality between men and women should result in parity. The under-representation of women in power is an act of injustice and a symbolic violence against a part of humanity. The invisibility or under-representation of women in leadership means that their identity is considered inferior to that of men. Beyond the gender issue, it must be said that there can be no lasting peace in a country where some citizens are excluded from power because of their identity. The stability of multi-ethnic and multicultural countries therefore also depends on a policy that is inclusive of women and all national diversities. For the exclusion of the other who is different creates an identity of exclusion that in the long run can become a source of violent conflict. To be effective, the policy of inclusion should not be limited solely to sharing power at the top; it must involve all levels of a state and society. It must be part of an overall policy that extends from top to bottom. The issue of inclusion of diversity is also closely linked to the fight against social exclusion. Learning to think of diversity as an asset, like the colours of the rainbow, this is the role of education for peace.

Democracy and freedom of expression

Without the right to elect one's leaders, one is the object of history and not its subject. Free and democratic elections humanise and empower when they create the conditions for reflection and when the citizens elect their representatives in good conscience: citizens thus become the masters of their own destiny. But we cannot ignore the fact that many electoral speeches exploit the fear and hatred of the other; instead of searching for the common good, the electoral process is transformed into an opportunity to destabilise society. Where institutional constraints fail to protect society against the hatred of the other, the electoral debate is not seen as a crime but as an acceptable view. In such a context, media can become amplifiers of factors of hatred in the society. The symbolic violence of identity discourse by politicians and media in Rwanda contributed to the genocide of 1994. Similarly, the concepts of "ivorian" and "congolité" were popularised by the media. We cannot imagine a democracy without freedom of expression, but how then can we ensure that freedom of speech is an instrument of peace and not of war?

Educating for democracy therefore requires the transmission of humanistic values of responsibility to the human community. It also involves the training of journalists to treat information not only as an expression of misfortune, but also as the illustration of human resistance and the victory of life over the forces of hatred and exclusion. Democracy must be both an instrument and a framework of tolerance, inclusion, development and elevation of thought. The degree of the vitality of a democracy is measured at the same time by the level of involvement of its citizens in public debates, by the human quality of their proposals and by their ability to control the politics of the officials that they have elected. A democracy that has not been misguided and emptied of its contents will not allow its government to be taken over by exclusive ethnic, religious or xenophobic and corrupt power. Because democracy is more than just access to power; its test is in the mode of its management.

Respect for the environment

Environmental pollution leads to "natural" disasters, desertification of soils and famines that generate conflict. We can no longer afford to think of the environment as a handy object at our beck and call. If we neglect it, it will affect us. We cannot afford to think that we are the only beings worthy of respect. Respect for the environment is therefore a matter of security and collective responsibility, in addition to being a philosophy of life. We are in a relationship of interdependence with trees, forests, oceans, air and animals. All of the matter that makes up our body is also contained in our environment. Taking care of ourselves also means taking care of the environment. Planting trees, reversing desertification, reducing pollution, these also permit millions of human beings to live in conditions that are decent.

Conclusion

The Culture of Peace should be considered and taught as an ideal that ties together and strengthens that which has been torn apart. It is the antithesis of Radical Identity Populism, a theory of inclusion and reconciliation with which we can achieve the freedom promised, an Africa at peace with herself and with the world. It considers the differences within a nation to be a precious resource. It reminds us that there is no national identity except the diversity, both cultural and human, of all its citizens. The Culture of Peace demands all the human rights for all the people, because, as always, it is poverty and ignorance that continue to provide fertile soil for the growth of identity demagogy. ∎

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Africa's Contribution to the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace

If the people are sufficiently fed the propaganda of the culture of war, they will continue to support the wars pursued by their states. That is why whistle-blowers like Mordecai Vanunu, Julian Assange and Edward Snowden are considered to be major enemies of the state.

By David Adam

At the end of the Cold War, during the 1990s, UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, embarked on an ambitious project called "the culture of peace." It was conceived as a radical change in the very nature of human civilization, as a transition from the culture of war that has characterised most societies for thousands of years, to a new and universal culture free from the scourge of war.

The project was launched at an international conference in Yamoussoukro, Côte D'Ivoire in 1989, and it called for "a new vision of peace culture based on the universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights and equality between women and men."

During the next decade, UNESCO initiated national culture of peace programmes in countries emerging from civil wars, especially El Salvador and Mozambique. I was privileged to work on the Mozambique programme under the direction of Graça Machel and with Noel Chicuecue, who was a member of her staff at the Mozambique Commission for UNESCO. The people of Mozambique taught us at UNESCO that one does not construct a culture of peace. It must be cultivated, in their words, "culimar."

The year 2000 was designated the International Year for the Culture of Peace by the United Nations, and our team at UNESCO was put in charge. 75 million people took part by signing the Manifesto 2000, promising to work for a culture of peace in their daily lives and their communities. And the UN General Assembly adopted a Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (A/53/243) that called for a "global movement for a culture of peace", aided by "sharing of information among actors on their initiatives".

Unfortunately, for many years after a change in leadership at UNESCO, there was little support for the culture of peace. In fact, there was opposition. Exceptionally, however, the Africa Department of UNESCO has recently again taken up the challenge. With UNESCO support, Angola hosts an annual conference for the culture of peace, formally endorsed by the African Union, and networks of African women, youth and research institutions for a culture of peace have been established.

When I left UNESCO in 2001, I needed to understand why there was so much opposition to the culture of peace, so I undertook a series of studies which led to my publication of a book called "The History of the Culture of War." What I found was a universal culture dating back at least as far as the early empires of China, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, etc. in which wars and the preparation for wars provided their wealth and power. The American Empire, the United States and its vast network of allies, military bases, etc. continues this ancient tradition. Over time, the state has come to monopolise war, forbidding it to all others, whether cities, provinces, indigenous peoples, outlaws, etc.

As the process of democratisation has developed around the world, citizens have increasingly expressed their opposition to the culture of war. In the face of this opposition, supporters of the culture of war have been forced to increase their control of information. If the people are sufficiently fed the propaganda of the culture of war, they will continue to support the wars pursued by their states. That is why whistle-blowers like Mordecai Vanunu, Julian Assange and Edward Snowden

are considered to be major enemies of the state.

The culture of war is not sustainable. Weapons do not serve any useful purposes. You cannot eat them or wear them or find shelter in them. Instead, they are ultimately a drain on the economy, either with or without wars. And so the culture of war periodically crashes, sometimes in wars (1914, 1939) and sometimes without wars (1929, 1989 for the Soviet Empire). The American Empire will be the next to collapse, either through war or through bankruptcy. This may occur very likely within the next decade. I am not the only person who predicts this!

With this analysis in mind, I have worked on a strategy for the transition to a culture of peace. Here are its main elements.

1. There is no need to defeat the culture of war. It will self-destruct. In fact, the problem is that it may self-destruct too soon, before we are able to develop an alternative to it.

2. We need to plant as many seeds as possible for a new culture of peace as an alternative that can replace the culture of war when it crashes.

3. Some of these seeds consist of raising consciousness of people that a culture of peace is possible, and how we can work to attain it. As the World Social Forum affirms, "Another world is possible!"

4. Other important seeds consist of culture of peace methodologies which enable people to transcend conflicts with reconciliation instead of violence.

5. Finally, alternative democratic institutions for a culture of peace are needed so that when the culture of war crashes, there will be institutions ready to assume its functions.

6. These alternative institutions must be at a local or regional level, rather than at a national level. The reason for this is that the state has become the culture of war and will not allow a culture of peace at its level. Even if one succeeds in advancing towards a culture of peace in one state, the other states will crush it.

7. In the long term we need to develop regional networks (and ultimately a global network) of local and regional culture of peace institutions. This

is necessary because, as indicated above, in order to be successful, a culture of peace needs to be global in scale if it is to replace the culture of war which is already global in scale.

Culture of Peace Consciousness

Just as the main weapon of the culture of war has become the control of information, so the main tactic of the culture of peace needs to be the dissemination of information. Articles in *The Thinker* are a good example. Hopefully, people will read and discuss these articles and inform themselves about the information therein.

I work on a daily basis to put articles onto the Culture of Peace News

> 66 The culture of war is not sustainable. Weapons do not serve any useful purposes. You cannot eat them or wear them or find shelter in them. Instead, they are ultimately a drain on the economy. 99

Network (CPNN: www.cpnn-world. org) that record what is happening around the world to promote a culture of peace. The more people read and discuss these articles, the more they will see that a culture of peace is not only possible, but the seeds for it are being planted every day and around the world.

The definition of a culture of peace that we put into the United Nations Programme of Action includes eight programme areas, but the first, and most important is "education for peace." Peace education is a slow process, but as mentioned above, we learned in Mozambique that a culture of peace must be cultivated, not constructed. In fact, over the years, the largest number of articles on the culture of peace have been those concerning peace education.

The other seven areas of a culture

of peace are sustainable development, human rights, equality of women, democratic participation, tolerance and solidarity, free flow of information, and disarmament.

Africa is the leading continent of the world for peace education and media for peace. Almost every month we have new articles in CPNN about initiatives in this regard. Here are some examples from the previous 12 months:

Peace education initiatives:
- Gambia: The West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP-Gambia) Holds Peace Education Training for Students, July 2015
- Senegal's First Female Graffiti Artist is Leaving a Fearless Mark, June 2015
- Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire: Opening of ISESCO Regional Centre for Culture of Peace, April 2015
- World Peace Foundation, DR Congo: Vision, Mission, Activities and Projects in 2015, March 2015
- Kenya: Memorandum of Understanding between The African Media Initiative (AMI) and United Religions Initiative to counter violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism in Africa, signed in Nairobi, February 2015
- Democratic Republic of Congo: Amani Music Festival under the theme "Dance for change and sing for peace", Goma, February 2015
- Ghana: The West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP-Ghana) recruited 150 pupils drawn from 10 selected schools in the Tamale Metro for training as peace Ambassadors, December 2014
- Mali: Capacity building workshop for local officials for promotion of peace and non-violence in the circle of Sikasso, December 2014
- Gabon: Pan-African Forum "Youth and Culture of Peace" with the theme: "African youth and the challenge of promoting a culture of peace in Africa", Libreville, December 2014
- Algeria: Presentation by the Hirondelle Foundation at the International Women's Congress for the Culture of Peace concerning the following media for peace in Africa: Radio Okapi in Kinshasa, Radio Ndeke Luka in Bangui, the Tamani

studios in Mali, Mozaïk in Ivory Coast, and Hirondelle in Guinea, October 2014

- Senegal: July 2014 workshop on the ECOWAS reference Manual for Peace Education, Human Rights and Citizenship. The Manual is online in 25 local African languages.

Initiatives for peaceful elections:

- Nigeria: International Conference and General Assembly of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice with the theme "Rethinking Post-Election Peacebuilding in Africa", in Port Harcourt, August 2015
- Côte d'Ivoire: REPSFECO-CI promotes a peaceful electoral process, August 2015
- Uganda: Government set up Election Conflict Resolution Body, August 2015
- Cote D'Ivoire: The Femua, a music festival in favour of peaceful elections in Abidjan, April 2015
- Nigeria: Why we facilitated Abuja peace accord - Ben Obi, March 2015
- Zimbabwe: Ecumenical Peace Observation Initiative by Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) and the Union for the Development of Apostolic and Zionist Churches in Zimbabwe, October 2014

Initiatives for inter-religious dialogue:

- Senegal: conference on 'Islam and Peace" in Dakar, July 2015
- Morocco: World Summit for the promotion of peace, July 2015
- Benin: "International Symposium of the Pan-African Centre for Social Prospects for Peace and Development through Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue" in Cotonou, May 2015.

Consciousness is not easily measured, especially on a global scale. However, I think we can say that there is now more consciousness than ever before in history that war must be abolished. There is more consciousness than ever before of the need to respect the human rights of every person. There is more consciousness than ever before of the need for democratic participation.

In fact, as mentioned above, that is precisely the reason why the culture of war has so much need to control information. In the past the state could simply ignore the opinions of its citizens, but that is no longer possible.

Consciousness is important. In fact, in the long run it is the basis for historical change. However, it is not enough. We need to develop methodologies and institutions that can replace those of the culture of war.

Culture of Peace Methodologies

Conflicts will not disappear in a culture of peace; they are intrinsic to human development. However, it will be important that they are resolved through dialogue, understanding and reconciliation rather than violence, whether the overt violence of warfare or the covert violence or the European/

> **"We need to plant as many seeds as possible for a new culture of peace as an alternative that can replace the culture of war when it crashes."**

American style of "justice" in which the state imposes imprisonment or the death penalty.

In this regard, Africa has already shown its leadership in recent years with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa and the Gacaca in Rwanda, enabling Africans to overcome bitter conflicts and enter a path of reconciliation. These processes have been based on the ancient, pre-colonial practices of conflict transformation, often known as the Palabra, the word, as well as the African tradition of Ubuntu, "I am because you are."

These themes are developed further in the accompanying article by Nestor Bidadanure, and the reader is encouraged to follow them there. Nestor also provides a convincing analysis of the "Radical Identity Populism" that is causing so much conflict and violence,

not only in Africa, but throughout the world, and he provides us with a political framework for a culture of peace methodology. We must elect and maintain political representation on the basis of "diversity as an asset, like the colours of the rainbow" and the principle of Ubuntu that "every human being is perfectible".

Culture of Peace Institutions

As mentioned in points 4 and 5 of the strategy, what is needed is local democratic institutions for a culture of peace.

During the transition period in South Africa following Nelson Mandela's release from prison, as part of the National Peace Accord, a broad set of regional and local peace committees were established that united representatives from political organisations, trade unions, business, churches, police and security forces to resolve disputes at local and regional levels.

The work of the regional and local peace committees was at the heart of the Peace Accord. It directly engaged people in conflict management on a grass roots level throughout the country. At their peak, there were 11 regional committees and over one hundred local peace committees, with an annual budget of almost $12 million which enabled the hiring of full time staff for regional offices.

Unfortunately, the system of regional and local peace committees was not continued on an independent basis once elections took place and a government of national unity was installed.

Now, twenty years later in South Africa, one sees that the national government is not carrying out the kind of culture of peace programme that was begun by the system of regional and local peace committees.

Elsewhere in the world, there have also been attempts to establish regional and local peace committees.

Over the years, I have been in touch with city peace commissions begun in Brazil, but unfortunately, like those in South Africa, most of them have not been continued.

On the other hand, the peace commission of New Haven (Connecticut, US) has been functioning

continuously for almost 30 years. The Commission is an official committee of the city government with a small budget and members who are approved by the mayor and the Board of Alders (the elected city council). It is composed of both elected officials and members of the civil society. I am a Commission member as a resident of New Haven.

Each year I am responsible for an annual report on "the state of the culture of peace in New Haven" which is based on interviews with activists in the eight programme areas of the culture of peace. The most recent report is available online at http://culture-of-peace.info/townhall/NewHavenCoP-2014.pdf. The report has a number of useful functions:

- The report serves as a guide for action by indicating what is working well for a culture of peace in the city (and needs to be reinforced) and, by implication, what is not working and needs to be discontinued. This is useful not only for the work of the Commission but also for policy decisions of all city institutions, both governmental and non-governmental.
- The report is an educational tool. It raises the consciousness of all who take part: the Commission, the activists who are interviewed, and all who read or hear about it. It enables them to realise that their activities in a particular area on the local basis are contributing to the development of a global movement for a new and better world. City administrators learn from citizen participation; and all those involved with the culture of peace learn from the citizens who take part in its measurement. Finally, the general public learns from media presentations of the results.
- The report focuses attention on initiatives that need to be reinforced. For example, this year we are focusing on an initiative for restorative justice in schools. The initiative is being undertaken under terms of a two-year grant to the teachers' union and the Board of Education, but we consider that two years is only a beginning for a process that needs to be carried out for decades. Hence, we are mobilising resources for a

longer-term project at the same time as we publicise the two-year project that is underway.

- It can also provide new ideas for initiatives to address weaknesses that emerge during the process of assessing the policies and programmes that are already in place. In fact, the forward-looking proposals may turn out to be even more important than the backward-looking assessments.
- By involving activists in the assessment who are not already members of the Culture of Peace Commission, the report can recruit them or engage them in collaborative work, thus expanding the scope of the Commission.
- We are hoping it will be used by the city in advertising for tourism. Tourism, in fact, is the largest non-agricultural industry in the world, when you include airlines, hotels, etc. "Come to our city and see a culture of peace in action!" can be an effective advertising slogan. Peace is very attractive for tourists. First of all, its opposite, violent conflict, is the most powerful obstacle to tourism: no one wishes to be a tourist where there is the threat of being the victim of violence. And second, since a culture of peace is informative, it means that the city can offer the tourist a learning experience.
- We are hoping to integrate the process of the report into the practice of "twinning" with cities or towns in other parts of the world. Twinned cities can exchange their experiences with measuring a culture of peace and adopting policies to strengthen the culture of peace in the community.
- In the long term the process of the report can provide a common task with other towns and cities around the world that are also assessing their culture of peace, and will make possible a new level of international solidarity that is not mediated by the state.

Of course, the annual report is only one of the Peace Commission's activities, but I have devoted the previous section to it because it provides us with an orientation for our other activities, identifying those activities that

are needed to advance the culture of peace in our city.

Networking

The world has not yet arrived at the point of establishing regional networks of culture of peace institutions in cities, towns and regions. There simply are not yet enough of this kind of institutions. But if a culture of peace is to succeed in replacing the culture of war, this next step will be essential.

I hope that as a result of this article, I will strengthen existing and make new contacts with Africans who are developing local peace commissions in Africa, and that Africa can take a leading role in building a regional network of such commissions.

Conclusion

We have seen here that Africa has already made major contributions to the key elements of the global movement for a culture of peace that are needed to make the transition from the culture of war. Africa is the leading continent of the world for peace education and media for peace, contributing to the consciousness that a culture of peace is possible. African methodologies for conflict resolution are exemplary. And, although they were not continued, the regional and local peace committees of the National Peace Accord in South Africa provided a model for the institutionalisation of the culture of peace that we need in the future.

Historically, Africa may be in a good position to take a leadership role in the global movement, because in the course of history, with the exception of the ancient empires of Egypt, Africans did not develop culture of war empires and states to the same extent that they were developed in other continents. And the rich tradition of Pan-Africanism provides an alternative model to that of empires and states. A Pan-African union could be based on a culture of peace rather than culture of war. It would be within the tradition of peace-building by Nelson Mandela. And it would fulfil the dream of that great African-American, W.E.B. Du Bois, which he shared at the end of his life with Kwame Nkrumah and the people of Ghana, an Africa at peace with itself and the world. ∎

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 5TH PAN-AFRICAN CONGRESS
Why Silence, No Commemoration?

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Outstanding Pan African leaders. Clockwise, from left Kwame Nkrumah, Kenneth Kaunda, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Julius Nyerere, Patrice Lumamba and Nelson Mandela

The third phase of a revitalised Pan-African series of Congresses with structured and agreed time lines and well-thought out plans and outcomes is needed.

By Mammo Muchie

Inspiration

"It is better to die for an idea that will live, than to live for an idea that will die." Steve Biko

"The enemies of a people are those who keep them in ignorance." Thomas Sankara

"Let us all agree to die a little, or even completely, so that African unity may not be a vain word." Ahmed Ben Bella

"We regard it as the sacred duty of every African state to strive ceaselessly and energetically for the creation of a United States of Africa from Cape to Cairo and Madagascar to Morocco." Robert Sobukwe

"There is no time to waste. We must either unite now or perish." Julius Nyerere

"The People of Africa should be yearning for unity." Anonymous

"When the threads unite, they can tie a lion." an Ethiopian proverb

"Africa is the Spiritual Frontier of human kind." W.E.B. DuBois

Is the Pan African Congress forgotten?

I was truly puzzled when I met my strong pan African sisters and brothers and asked them: do you know it is now 70 years since the fifth Pan African Congress was held in Manchester, UK, in 1945? I myself only became aware of this when the editor of *The Thinker*, Essop Pahad, suggested that I contribute a thought piece on this topic. As my friends all said: Really? I too was in the same predicament. This is not good at all.

We do not remember, or we remain silent, failing to at least organise a commemoration event. We should use the 70th anniversary to reflect upon the African journey – the journey to go beyond the difficult past in order to join all Africans globally together to give a united and renascent Africa a bright future.

We have to keep on reflecting on the African liberation journey: do we Africans know where we have been? Do we also know where we are now and indeed where we are going? If we want to know, we should look back and revive our history to draw lessons to facilitate our journey. Such historical moments provide the opportunity to reflect on how we can re-educate ourselves to move forwards and upwards by avoiding embarking on the wrong path towards making a free and well-being anchored future.

The first phase of the Pan-African movement

The first phase of the Pan-African Congress (PAC) movement started entirely in the world of the African diaspora. The Pan-African movement, first expressed as Ethiopianism, started in 1776, was followed by the preparation of the pan-African association in 1897, later launching the first Pan-African conference in 1900 in London. Subsequently a series of congresses were held, with the first Pan-African Congress being launched in 1919 in Paris; the 2nd in 1921 in London and Brussels, the third in 1923 in London and Lisbon; and the 4th in 1927 in New York.

The fifth Pan-African Congress was held from October 15-21 in 1945 in Manchester. Over 200 delegates drawn from trade unions, intellectuals, and the new rising liberation anti-colonial movements joined the Congress. It had many African delegates, including prominent African liberation leaders. Following this Congress, in 1946, the Pan-African Federation was formed, with Kwame Nkrumah and Jomo Kenyatta as its founding members.

The first three congresses addressed

mainly cultural and racial injustices. The resolutions higlighted the redress of injustices; they expressed the need for self-determination for all African peoples; for socialist economic systems; and for pride in all things African.

What makes the fifth Pan-African Congress distinctive and significant is that the Pan-African call to use any means necessary to de-colonise Africa and create African national liberation movements emerged as a manifesto, endorsed not just within the continent but also globally.

The fifth Congress was indeed a watershed conference. It rejected the partnership, trusteeship, guardianship and the mandate system of indirect rule – demanding freedom from colonialism by using force if necessary. The 1945 declaration called for total freedom for Africans in Africa and globally.

> We are determined to be free. Therefore, we shall complain, appeal and arraign. We will make the world listen to the facts of our condition. We will fight in every way we can for freedom, democracy and social betterment – Forward to the Socialist United States of Africa. Long live Pan-Africanism!

The second phase: interrupted and irregular

After the 1945 historic 5th Pan-African Congress anti-colonial struggles intensified and in 1957 Ghana became free. After Ghana's independence there was a movement from Pan-African Congresses to the All-African Peoples Organisation (Accra, 1958, Cairo 1960, Tunis, 1961). We can say that a second phase of Pan-African Congress began after the political independence of the 1960s.

The 1945 Pan-African Congress was organised mainly by the Trinidadian George Padmore and Kwame Nkrumah, with the presence of Africans both from home and abroad to pursue a global pan-African project.

George Padmore joined the Ghanaian government after Ghana's independence in 1957 and said that if he had another life, he would have spent it entirely in Africa and for Africa. But it took nearly 30 years to re-launch the 6th Pan-African Congress after

1945. Why it took so long is a mystery to many of us.

The OAU was born in 1963, involving a fatal compromise amongst the Brazzaville, Casablanca and Monrovia groups, and these trends prevented the unity of Africa by actually separating areas that were togther during colonial times. They became separate states with different policies and interests, failing to present a distinctive and unified African voice to respond as Africans to accelerate decolonisation. The moment of decolonisation could have brought the opportunity to consolidate unity, not to divide and fracture states that had been ruled together by the colonial powers. The OAU was established in 1963, but it cannot be said that it was the vehicle required to express a united African voice.

The 6th Pan-African Congress took place in Tanzania in 1974 and the 7th in Uganda in 1994. And during 2014 and 2015 the 8th Pan-African Congress was held in Johannesburg first and later in Accra. The organisers in Johannesburg, where I was also a participant, did not include Governments. They wanted to anchor Pan-Africanism to diffuse learning and awareness among the people, intellectuals and civil society. The session in Accra included Government involvement, and will be followed up in mid-2016. Participants are aware of the need to ensure that action follows words.

It is critically important to ensure that the significance of the 70th anniversary the 5th Pan-African Congress reaches the Global South; very much as we all tried to highlight the Diamond Jubilee of the 1955 Bandung Conference. (http://www.zehabesha.com/the-bandung-diamond-jubilee-time-to-rebuild-world-order-based-on-a-new-culture-and-civilisation/).

We need to persist with a new third phase of PAC by organising and making it very distinctive, original, essential, relevant, consistent and periodic. The PAC from here on should be linked as part of a comprehensive and unified movement to create African systems, governance and institutions for building African unity and renaissance – not to be talked about but to be fully realised by learning constructive

lessons from all the efforts of the past. Africa can only remove the resource curse if the state curse is removed for good with honesty, integrity, humility and sincerity. Trust and truth shall prevail over lies, corruption, greed and the pursuit of self-interest without any concern for the people and Africa.

As the 5th PAC influenced the creation of a post-colonial Africana world, the 70th year commemoration could have highlighted African unity and a new era of renaissance. This must be based on Africa's principal role to create a new humanity, new history and new civilisation by adding to the post-colonial objectives also Africa's deep values that can contribute to a better world. That the 5th PAC becomes revitalised and remembered means that the PAC remains as a powerful and relevant inspiration to promote sustainably the global pan-African project that is also a great contribution to creating a better world for all.

All the relevant stakeholders need to be reached, but who amongst them should anchor this global pan-African project? It must be primarily the people of Africa. The opportunity to re-think and re-engineer this process now must not be missed. "Africa, Unite!" should never remain a slogan; it can be converted into reality. The third phase of a revitalised Pan-African series of Congresses with structured and agreed time lines and well-thought out plans and outcomes is needed until Africa is fully united and the current fragmented existence is overcome for good.

Pan-African Congresses for Realising Africa's Full Agency

What is the potential to re-position the Pan-African Congresses to be one of the key drivers to enable Africa to achieve a fully post-colonial agency by exercising comprehensive economic and political independence and freedom?

The current African states have been good in declaring the need for African unity since 1963 by using the meetings and protocols of the heads of states and the ministers; but there has not been any systematic implementation, even in a few crucial areas. For example, it should have been possible to

create African labour mobility, boldly rejecting the cynical colonial borders that the existing 54 states spend so much protecting, even though many of us believe that these costly divisive schemes should have been removed a long time ago. Unity should have been an on-going process.

The Europeans had the Second World War. The French and the British as allies were at war with the Germans. They decided after World War II to establish NATO with the USA. Next they founded the European Union. They managed to create labour mobility, and now inter-European trade is said to have reached nearly 70%. Africa has more reason to unite than Europe, but it is very far behind in realising its unity project. Substantive commitment requires action. The people in Africa should be involved in making African unity. The Pan-African Congress can become a tool to educate for the Pan-African empowerment of the people.

In Europe, the people of a number of countries are invited to vote for membership in the EU or not. Some countries allow more than one referendum. Britain is going to have a referendum soon. The Pan-African Congresses should become the means to make African people the change-makers. African history can only be made by African people. The Pan-African Congresses should be the way to construct the future and not dwell in the past. It is time to move on; to bring new Pan-African achievements; to make the African future shine with moral well-being and radiance. We need new innovative initiatives to promote Africa's overall Pan-African development.

Some of the initiatives we have already taken can fall perfectly within a revitalised grand Pan-African Congress revival plan.

In 2010 we started the African Unity for renaissance conferences in South Africa. We held the conference in Soweto this year, and if this series of annual conferences rotate across Africa they will strengthen awareness for launching Pan-African congresses by linking this education with African liberation day in the month of May every year. We have produced a series of declarations, the latest being the Soweto Declaration. (http://www.forumdesalternatives.org/en/soweto-declaration). The 6th Pan-African Congress will be managed by TMALI and will be connected to African liberation by holding it around May 25 every year to remember the OAU/AU that started in 1963. Of course, even the AU still needs to be converted to realise real African unity and not merely in protocol versions.

One recent relevant activity is the Pan-African Talent initiative (PATI). Its main purpose is to turn Africa into a world talent innovation hub. Africa should be the talent destination, not the talent departure zone of the world. Talent retention, talent gain and not drain, talent reverse migration must be promoted. And all the stakeholders, and particularly the private and corporate world, must contribute substantially to raise funds to promote employable talented graduates by participating actively in the training process to avoid the current unacceptable skills mismatch. A PATI Returning Talent Fund (RTF) is already established. The first inaugural conference for PATI-RTF was held at the Tshwane University of Technology in Pretoria (www.pati-global.com) with the participation of private sector, students, professors and government to create sustainable collaboration to promote talent gain in and for Africa.

We have also opened an education platform for African unity and renaissance for an integrated development. (https://www.facebook.com/groups/1046983685329854/).

The contribution of Africa to the world is rich and platforms to educate Africans and the world using the current e-learning outlets to reach all must be promoted.

A new approach to generate positive understanding of Africa by challenging the current dominance of portraying Africa as a passive participant in the creation of knowledge is much needed. Africa has already contributed hugely to the whole world and will, without doubt, continue to do so, despite the lack of recognition and appreciation. The knowledge, struggle and spiritual narratives that are negative must be balanced to show the overall massively positive impact of Africa on the world. This requires the excavation of Africa's rich contributions from the past to the present as the foundation for the future. There is a need to research, educate and innovate, using the widest variety of learning platforms, including e-learning, formal, non-formal and community-based learning organisations and institutions.

Conclusion

It is about time to re-imagine Africa with the capacity to innovate unity and renaissance. No Pan-African unity means this: no African agency; if there is no unity and agency, there will be no African renaissance; no way for Africans to own their own economy today. And even in 2063! African unity is critical to realise the full synergy of political and economic independence.

This unity was necessary yesterday; but let the failure to unite yesterday become a commitment to stop delaying African unity and renaissance anymore and do it today. Let the future Pan-African Congresses be re-positioned like the 5th one to create a new paradigm shift to start a distinctive third phase by making the African unity and renaissance a reality now, not tomorrow!

Finally the 70th anniversary of the 5th Pan-African Congress should be used as a learning resource to reach millions both in Africa and across the world and should not be ignored or forgotten. Let us not only remember it, but also promote a great PAC moment to diffuse pan-African education to reach all in the world by using all available avenues and outlets. There is still time. Let us all try to do it and make it the means to re-imagine our innovative and renascent united Africa to become a reality now. ∎

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Ubuntu and the European Welfare State model

The welfare state was a distinctive combination of political democracy, social protection and general welfare and market economy (capitalism). As a reaction to the Great Depression in the 1930s, and the Second World War, many countries moved towards the welfare state concept.

By Stefan Schepers

Responsible African governments seek to develop social protection systems for their citizens. Without doubt this is a laudable effort, and necessary, because it has been proven that social stability, economic growth and citizen's welfare go hand in hand. But often African governments seem to simply follow the trajectory laid out by the former colonising powers and to try to copy European welfare state models. Yet, Africa has its own rich traditions of social cohesion and care, which are overlooked. This brings yet another form of colonisation, import of social models not rooted in own history and culture, this time not by outside powers, but by their own, well-intentioned but ill-informed governments. Would it not be better to develop an indigenous, truly African welfare state model, rooted in the history, cultures, societal paradigms and economic conditions of this rich and varied continent?

It is true that governments and civic society all over the world look with interest and envy at the concept and realisation of the welfare state in Europe. The widespread social protection provided by European governments to their citizens through extensive, high quality and expensive education and health systems, and unemployment and retirement policies which guarantee a basic quality of life, contribute definitively to social stability and to economic growth. Nowhere else has the state taken such a direct role, while respecting the functioning of a market economy, in the re-distribution of the wealth which it produces. Without such carefully designed government intervention and well-managed welfare systems, the wealth gap in society will only increase. There is a clear correlation between the existence and quality of welfare systems and the GINI coefficient, which measures inequality in countries.

While the various welfare state mechanisms can certainly provide useful examples for other countries, one should not overlook the typical historic, religious, cultural, economic and political circumstances which led to their emergence and development in Europe. The characteristics of the market economy, itself appearing in a great variety, depending on the same background reasons and on specific legal and economic circumstances, provide for differences in welfare systems too.

The multiple origins of the welfare state model as developed initially in Europe can provide inspiration, but its conceptual, philosophical and religious origins, which must be understood to appreciate its later appearance and organisation, also indicate that they result from typical European circumstances. Each civilization must find its own way to modernity.

Understanding the concept of the Welfare State

The 'Welfare State' is a public governance system, where the key role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of its citizens is entrusted to the government. This includes principles of equality of opportunity through high quality education at all levels, equitable distribution of wealth though based on merit, and public solidarity for those in need and unable to provide for themselves (disabled, elderly, sick,

unemployed).

The term covers different forms of economic and social structures. It involves transfer of state funds to the provider of welfare services as well as direct financial transfers to individuals in need. They all rest on the redistribution through taxation of the wealth generated in the market economy and through the organisation, either directly by the state or via public-private partnerships, of education and social protection services.

The welfare state can function equally well in a classical market economy or in a mixed economy, where the state is the sole or dominant shareholder in a number of companies in certain sectors, usually transport and utilities. In so-called socialist economies it has failed to develop the same quality level and the same variety of service provision, mainly because of the lack of competition and innovation in the economy and the cost of public bureaucracy in proportion to the smaller economic base, and of course because of the lack of democratic checks and balances and of respect for civic rights and freedom.

There are several models of the welfare state. They depend in practice on the three great political movements in Europe in the late 19th and first half of the 20th century.

The first model, the Social Democratic inspired welfare state, is rooted in the idea of universal access to benefits and services based on citizenship. It provides a relatively high degree of personal autonomy, limiting reliance on family and market, but creates dependence on the state. In such thinking, social policies are perceived to be as 'politics to correct the market.' The state takes all responsibilities for provision of comprehensive and universal welfare for its citizens. The northern European countries are close to this model though they are now changing it to reduce costs and to introduce some market mechanisms.

In the second model, of Christian-Democratic political inspiration, the welfare state is based on the principle of subsidiarity and the dominance of private social insurance systems, which proposes a high degree of social stratification. In this system of 'social protection', welfare is provided not only by the state, but by a combination of various types of (semi-) public or private services with a special status with the state. This type of welfare state exists in many Western European countries.

The third model is based on the principle of market dominance and private provision. In this case the state only interferes to reduce poverty and provide for basic needs, largely on a means-tested basis. It is not found in Europe but primarily in the USA, where the states provide 'survival' welfare to the needy, a much less solidary concept than the European welfare state model, which leads to far less redistribution of wealth, and a far higher number of people in need

> ❝The welfare state can function equally well in a classical market economy or in a mixed economy, where the state is the sole or dominant shareholder in a number of companies in certain sectors, usually transport and utilities.❞

or below the poverty line. Great Britain has been moving in this direction since the late 20th century, away from an originally social-democratic model developed in the 1950s, and the number of people living in poverty has increased in parallel.

Both the USA and Great Britain show that the pretence of neo-liberal economists that wealth creation will 'trickle down' to everyone is as much a fallacy as the pretence of socialist economists that they can create wealth for all. Both systems in practice lead to the emergence of privileged oligarchies, business ones in the first, political ones in the second. Wealth is created through entrepreneurship and innovation in states where governments create the right framework conditions for both and ensure that its benefits are shared in a fair way, and this requires democratic checks and balances. What is fair, is then a matter of political debate, but one must first bake bread before one can distribute a slice to everyone around a table.

The first two models constitute the real welfare state, the third one is really nothing more than government hands-out to those in need with little effect on the wellbeing of people or the humanistic quality of society.

Ancient philosophical roots

The modern European welfare state can be traced back to the time of ancient Greece, where key principles of the welfare society were for the first time pronounced in the framework of philosophical systems. These ideas were later taken up by the first Christian communities and religious thinkers.

The Hellenistic culture that spread around the whole Mediterranean Sea and even beyond it from the 4th to the 1st centuries BC disseminated these first ideas of the modern welfare society. Their contribution to the formation of European society was immense. However, in order to understand how these principles influenced the whole course of development of the European world towards the welfare state, some brief analysis of these philosophers is needed.

The intellectual 'fathers' of the welfare system ideas are Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Since not much is known about Socrates' ideas, only from the works of his student Plato and later his follower Aristotle can one start to look into it.

The maturity of Plato's philosophical teaching is presented in his work called *The Republic*, in which he discusses key principals for the conduct of human life. The work treats various issues that disclose the idea of the perfect society: ethical, pedagogical and political aspects of the ideal society are extensively discussed. The idea of justice and the other virtues are put in the core of an individual human being as well as in the structure of the society. The effective education and achievements of knowledge are

presented as the foundation of morality and welfare of the state.

Regarding the issue of formation of societies, Plato deems that they have always been shaped with a particular purpose. Since the individual human being is self-sufficient, the community dimension is vital for the creation of a social organisation from which individuals benefit. The interdependence between the individual and society is a concept found in all civilisations, and clearly in Africa too. However, Plato's society is organised into distinct classes (guardians, rulers, soldiers and people), discerned according to their functions, a concept related to the economic conditions of the time. Only smooth cooperation between them and their proper functioning in working together for common good is a guarantee for the efficient functioning of society. A condition sine qua non to ensure collaboration between the individuals of the society is good education.

The idea of private property in society does not carry any negative connotation, yet for certain classes like rulers and guardians it can be an obstacle for performing their function. In order that no one could seek any venal motive to take a position of leadership, these functions should earn no salary greater than necessary to supply their most basic needs.

Plato's ideas influenced Aristotle, yet he managed to develop his own perception of the perfect society with various mechanisms that regulate its efficiency. In his book *Politics* Aristotle states that 'every community is established with a view to some good; for everyone always acts in order to obtain that which they think is good'. He says further that there should be a union of those who cannot exist without each other. He stresses the family aspect of the society. 'The family is the association established by nature for supply of men's everyday wants'. It is the family and its household that are the core of the state. Regarding wealth, he says that 'the amount of property which is needed for a good life is not unlimited' and be used in a household or in a state. In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle explains that 'Wealth as a whole consists in using things rather

than in owing them; it is really the activity – that is, the use – of property that constitutes wealth'.

Regarding the government or the society, Aristotle considers that their final goal is to assist in the flourishing of the citizens, namely to help them realise their capacities, their potentials. In *Nicomachean Ethic* as well as *Eudemian*, Aristotle discusses one of the main principles that is a connecting bridge between his ethical and political theory. For Aristotle it is friendship. One type of friendship is based upon usefulness or utility. Aristotle deems it to be the inferior type of friendship, yet it has its own benefits. 'Friendship for utility's sake seems to be that which most easily exists between opposing groups, e.g. between poor and rich, between ignorant and learned; for

> ❝Both the USA and Great Britain show that the pretence of neo-liberal economists that wealth creation will 'trickle down' to everyone is as much a fallacy as the pretence of socialist economists that they can create wealth for all.❞

what a man actually lacks he aims at, and he gives something else in return'. This friendship asks something in exchange, for it is closely connected to commerce or exchange.

Regarding effective functioning of the society it is said that the state must promote a middle class in order to help people flourish, for excessive concentration of richness can be dangerous for the community and may lead easily to tyranny in various forms. It follows that there should be limit to the size of property and there is a need for a strong middle class, which is the best guarantor against revolutions. Aristotle speaks in favour of the middle class that has to be promoted by socio-economic policies that to some extent take from the rich and give to the

poor; taking from those with excess and giving to those with a deficiency. There is little that political government must refrain from doing, if it clearly contributes to human welfare. Aristotle is stating the essence of the future theory of the 'welfare state'.

No wonder that Europeans, and their offspring, Americans, like to trace the origin of their societal model back to these ancient Greek philosophers, whose ideas survived in the Roman Empire. Only in the 20th century did people start to call it 'the West', and the societal model of Occidentalism has been the subject of fierce defence and equally fierce criticism by intellectuals ever since. Nevertheless, the quality of life for the vast majority of people in the West has been the envy of the rest of the world.

With the spread of Christianity in the whole Mediterranean, the Hellenistic ideas of Plato and Aristotle were absorbed by the first Christian intellectuals. One of the most prominent and influential theologians in Early Christianity was St Augustine (354-430), who was of north African origin. His influence on the formation of Christian thought, and therefore on the development of European society up to the welfare state concept, is immense.

Regarding Augustine's teaching on poverty, he believed that in the religious society private property should be used not only for the welfare of its owners, but also for the support of the poor. Therefore, he understood wealth as a means to serve God. The poor had a right of support, yet in their turn they did not have to be envious of others' wealth or to be upset because of their poverty.

Christian Traditions

The further history of the Christian Church in Europe can be divided into two. The Eastern one was Greek speaking with the centre in Constantinople (now Istanbul) and the Western one was Latin speaking with the centre in Rome. In the first centuries, the two parts existed in union, yet political and cultural tensions brought disagreements over certain theological and political issues and over their mutual spheres of influence. Finally these discords ended up in a

schism (Great Schism of Photius, the Patriarch of Constantinople in 1054) that forced both traditions to follow their own life path and own doctrinal teaching, yet not without interactions.

Finally three Christian traditions contributed to the practical origins of the European welfare state, Eastern Orthodoxy, Western Catholicism, and a later one, Protestantism. Although their roots all belong to one philosophical and theological system, they left different imprints in the development of the European welfare state.

The Church became a centre for education not only for the clergy, but also for her believers, and it was under constant development. One of the first examples of so-called 'university' education in the East were the famous Schools of Edessa, originally founded in Nisibis in the 2nd century, then after the Persian conquest the school moved to Edessa (modern Urfa) in 363. They combined education in sciences with religious practices.

In the majority of cases the Church was also responsible for the education of people and it was a regulatory authority as well, with the power to influence and correct society in terms of moral and ethical issues. In the framework of coexistence with secular powers, it played the role of a reminder about a 'correct' path to follow. It acted also as a guide giving recommendations to the rulers of the country to remain loyal to high moral values, referring to the biblical tradition and prescriptions, as practised in monasteries in particular.

The regulatory role of the Church would have another far reaching influence. In 1152, Pope Innocent IV charged the institutions of the day, towns, universities, guilds, and others with the dual responsibilities of wealth creation and its equitable redistribution. The influence of the old Greek philosophers is evident. This concept dominated European views for nearly three centuries and led to its great medieval civilisation, itself the basis of the renaissance and again of later modernity.

However, because of their desperate need for funds, the English started to use a Royal Charter (allowing the setting up of markets and businesses) as an instrument to exploit wealth creation. They gave privileged and exclusive rights to individuals or institutions (eg. the City of London) to trade and to develop business in a particular place or sector and they then shared the profit with the holder of the Royal Charter. Thus was introduced the model of shareholder dominance. The two co-existed in Europe, though the British model was tempered for a long time by the political thinking of social-democrats (in the Labour party). However, the emergence of the USA as a global power started to spread, by all means, its model in which the welfare for all would be an almost accidental by-product of the market.

Christianity perceives human life and well-being as a gift from God. From their point of view, in salvation of the human being it is not only the soul that is saved by Christ, but the entire body, the 'vessel' that contains the soul and spirit. Therefore, Christian tradition developed a positive approach to the human body and the necessity of taking care of it. The idea of taking care of the sick, weak, poor, elderly, parents and needy finds its roots in this Biblical tradition; consequently the churches and monasteries were always shelters for poor, sick and needy people.

An important development, related to the later role of the state in providing social protection, is the separation of church and state in Western Christianity. It results from conflict between the Rome-based popes, who saw themselves as heirs to the Roman Empire, and they were in many ways (for example canonical law is based on Roman law), and the rulers of the Germanic empire, who wanted the same justification. They settled for a division of power: worldly power would belong to the emperor, spiritual to the pope. This fundamental separation of powers would prove of utmost importance for the later economic, social and political development of Europe and for its 'modernity' as it started to emerge as from the 15th century, itself the basis for its worldwide dominance in the 19th century.

Protestantism or Reformation is a contra-reaction movement against the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century. Martin Luther's (1483-1546) doctrine says that the justification of human being lies in the hands of God; it comes from outside through faith. His theology is much in line with Augustine's, regarding the earthly, secular kingdom which is ruled by means of law, whereas the heavenly, or spiritual one, Christians and their Church, is guided by the gospel or grace. It revolutionised the understanding of Christian authority. The true Christian was presented as the one who devotes his life to the painful, inconvenient, and humiliating service of others. In this way the Christian authority is demonstrated.

John Calvin (1509-1564) was a contemporary of Luther with whom he shared similar ideas; there are three main emphases in the teaching of Calvin: the glory of God, the authority of the Scripture and the historic-grammatical approach to the Scripture. Calvin also reveals the strong influence of Augustine on his teaching. The idea of predestination and justification by faith that is based on the mercy of God are found in Calvin's doctrine. Calvin's ideas on church government with a strong accent on a discipline were laid down in the foundation of the Presbyterian system of government. Discipline orders the church life in obedience to Christ and response to the teaching of Scripture.

Thus the spread of Christianity in Europe and its crystallisation into hierarchical structures and, finally, institutionalisation in the various churches, brought issues of education, health care and responsibility for the poor into the public sphere, outside the family, tribe or clan sphere. Although the understanding and methods of achievement of these key objectives differed in various epochs, the Church was a central promoter of these values.

With the arrival of the modern state, in parallel with the early industrialisation and its social effects on the farming and labour classes, these ideas would migrate to the secular domain and gradually become a state responsibility.

The 'Welfare State' in the Modern Times

Max Weber (1864-1920) was a German sociologist and political

economist, who revolutionised the social theory of the 19th and 20th centuries; under his influence, the roles of social protection, grounded in religion, shifted to the state, grounded in citizenship.

His ideas on the sociology of religion as well as economic sociology in his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* suggest that puritan ascetic Protestantism was one of the major engines for the rise of capitalism, and the modern state based on the rule of law in the Western world. Weber's understanding of society differs greatly from that of Karl Marx, who differentiated society into classes on the basis of their role in the production process. He stressed the importance of Protestantism with its values and beliefs in contributing to the industrial revolution. Weber deemed that the new values, such as frugality, independent thinking and self-reliance that Protestantism proposed were indispensable for the development of capitalist thinking and the industrial revolution.

The origin of the modern 'welfare state' model thus has to be dated to the 19th century because of key problems confronting the social policies of the state. He reckons these are the poor law, industrial injury, sickness, disability, old age and unemployment. However, the emergence of social policy itself was a result of the influence of the earlier, mainly religious, ideas about care for those in need within the emerging middle classes. Nearly all social-democratic thinkers and leaders were socially conscious middle class individuals. In particular in the UK and France, the early laws against child labour and those which followed were largely the result of their social action in various forms (pamphlets, demonstrations).

Later in the 20th century, the re-distribution of wealth itself became an element of development in a consumer-based economy. This was partly driven by manufacturing industries looking for ever increasing markets, in order to spread the costs of also increasing research and technology developments.

The social environment is a powerful mechanism that influences economic growth. Each technological revolution offers a quantum jump in productivities for industries which leads to establishment of new paradigms as a best-practice model for the diffusion of it. All this results in institutional changes and when the new creative potential unfolds in the economy, its logic leads to profound societal shifts.

One of the first welfare systems was in Germany, with systems for pensions, accident insurance, medical care and unemployment insurance for all German citizens. It was supported by German industry which aimed to find support in the working classes and which saw social stability as useful for investments. In the UK, the appearance of the welfare state system dates from the beginning of the 20th century, when the welfare reforms of 1906-1914 were launched by Liberal Prime Minister Herbert Asquith. Here too a national compulsory insurance contribution for employment and health benefits and the introduction

> ❝The true Christian was presented as the one who devotes his life to the painful, inconvenient, and humiliating service of others. In this way the Christian authority is demonstrated.❞

of school meals in 1909 boosted the British economy. In post war years, several other Acts, such as the National Insurance Act and National Health Service Act, created a basis for the British welfare state.

The welfare state was a distinctive combination of political democracy, social protection and a general welfare and market economy (capitalism). As a reaction to the Great Depression in the 1930s, and the Second World War, many countries moved towards the welfare state concept.

However, since the advance of so-called neo-liberal thinking, promoted by the Chicago School and others, the welfare state is under the twin attack of the shareholder value concept and demographic, social and technological change. In fact, this new theory is not liberal at all because liberal economists such as Adam Smith and others included also a clear ethical and humanistic role for markets. But there is clearly a need to amend the original model and to adapt it to the conditions of the global, digital driven economy. The countries which have already done so, such as the Scandinavian ones or Germany, are benefiting from their reforms and are ahead in terms of innovation, competitiveness and social happiness rankings.

Conclusion

This brief overview should make clear how typical the European welfare state models are and how difficult, if not impossible, it would be to simply copy them. However, the study of the historic philosophical and cultural basis of African societies would show surely a number of similarities. These could provide the building stones for a truly African model of social protection which responds both to its current economic conditions and societal expectations. That in turn would be an effective consolidation of political democracy and a social responsible market economy. ∎

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Spanish difficulties Basque opportunities

By Urko Aiartza

At the end of December 2015 there will be General Elections in Spain. These are probably the most important since the end of Franco's Regime and the starting of the so called Spanish transition. Why are they so important? Because Spain lives in a moment where the old has not died and the new is not yet born; what Gramsci once defined as "the end of a period without a clear view of what the next one will be". The period that is ending is the one that started at the death of Franco and that some defined as a "model transition". Indeed it was defined according to the balance of the forces at that time and as such was quite positive for the conservative ones.

Let us not forget that the dictator died in his bed in 1975 and the dictatorship had lasted 40 years. He was not removed from power. The apparatus of the state wanted to continue the dictatorship under the leadership of Franco's deputy Admiral Carrero Blanco. But this admiral was killed by ETA, creating a vacuum in the leadership of the dictatorship.

The labour unrest of the 70s and the revolutionary struggle of the Basque national liberation movement shook up the Spanish establishment, which included large sectors of the Spanish bourgeoisie who did not consider the continuation of the dictatorship as a viable option. As Vincenc Navarro states, "they wanted to be integrated in the EU, and even the Eurozone, and the dictatorship represented an obstacle to achieving that goal. King Juan Carlos, who had been appointed by Franco, was leading the demand for state changes that would guarantee the continuation of the Spanish financial and industrial establishments under a different political regime. He appointed Adolfo Suarez, who had been the general secretary of the fascist movement, as president of the country, with the mandate to establish changes in the Spanish state."[1]

These changes were aimed primarily at integrating the Social Democratic Party (PSOE) into the state apparatus and marginalising the anti-regime forces, those that considered that a rupture with the regime was needed, and a mere reform was not enough.

The Communist Party (PCE) and the Basque national liberation movement were the main forces demanding this rupture with the old regime, but there was no equilibrium among the forces.

The main difficulty was, as we have said, the balance of the forces. The Basque forces, strong in their area, were not significant at State level; and the Communists were not legalised until the very end of the process. The Spanish transition (unlike what happened in South Africa) was driven by the regime forces. Before dissolving the regime, the fascist movement had imposed a series of conditions. Those conditions included: the maintenance of the Monarchy (a Monarch who previously endorsed the principles of the fascist Movement); renouncing the Republic; accepting a two-party system that made it very difficult to establish the presence of other political parties like the communists; and a right-wing establishment which had full control of all the main branches of the state, including critically the judiciary and military as well as the media (press, radio, and television); and of course the denial of the right to self-determination of the nations under Spanish rule (mainly the Basque and Catalans) through Chapter VIII of the Spanish Constitution and the power given to the army to be in charge of the so-called national unity of Spain.

So the structure of power that existed during the dictatorship was solidified, and in a short time the forces that represented the old regime were able to adapt themselves to the new environment, particularly the Partido Popular (PP).

As it was said at that time Franco left everything tied up tight. As Vincenc Navarro stated

The major inheritor of the Spanish dictatorship is the governing party, the PP, a coalition of post-fascist groups (such as the Alliance Popular, with ultra-right-wing ideology), liberal associations ("liberal" in Europe means very right-wing forces representing the major business community, with antagonism toward labour), and conservative groups (such as Christian democratic institutions close to the Catholic

Church). The PP also has a large post-fascist, chauvinist, and anti-migrant component, which explains why Spain does not have a major chauvinist movement, since this movement is already within the PP.

The right-wing domination of the state has had two main consequences. One is the poverty of the welfare state and the very poor condition of the labour market, consequences of the lack of a real industrial revolution in Spain apart from in the Basque and Catalan regions. Unemployment has been a constant feature in Spain, and the public social expenditure per capita are among the lowest in the EU (Navarro). Another consequence has been the continuation of a vision of Spain, inherited from the dictatorship and previous monarchic regimes, which denied the existence of other nations, mainly the Catalan and the Basque nations. The Spanish Constitution recognised only one nation, the Spanish nation, and denied the historical demand of the progressive parties – the Socialist and the Communist Patries – that saw Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Galicia as other nations within the State along with the Spanish nation. Historically both parties had, during the Republic and later on, when operating underground, called for the right to self-determination for the different nations of the State.

The model established in the transition was successful for a period of time. In terms of the national question, while the central Government denied the right to self-determination of the Basque, Catalan and Galician nations, it was able to keep them contented through the model of autonomies, and the transfer of powers to the regions in consequence of a deal made with the Catalan and Basque bourgeoisie.

The only real force that did not accept the deal and kept on demanding the rupture of the old regime and the right to self-determination was the Basque national liberation movement representing the popular classes. As a consequence a long war of attrition was developed in the Basque Country where the regime spared no efforts or resources in its fight against the liberation movement. Its methods included the widespread use of torture, imprisonments, a shoot to kill policy, death squads, the banning of parties, the closure of media, etc.

On the other hand as Navarro says "during the dictatorship, Europe had been a dream for the anti-fascist democratic forces, struggling against the fascist regime under very difficult conditions. Democracy and the welfare state were then identified with Europe, and they were considered to be the objective to be reached when democracy was established. Europe was what Spanish democratic forces had always wanted. Europe was the dream to be realised later on. It has become, however, a nightmare." The 80s and 90s were the time for Spain to be included in the European Union as well as NATO. Spain became part of the club.

> **❝The Spanish Government must give a positive response to the demands that arise from the Basque Country. A policy of no dialogue, no talks, no negotiation cannot be accepted.❞**

But, in common with other countries of the South of Europe to become part of the club was not for free. As Navarro says, "the ECB money lending system was the cause of the enormous growth of the Spanish public debt. Consequently, the second item in the Spanish budget, after social security, is the payment of public debt interests. Germany lent 700,000 million euros to the PIGS (200,000 to Spain). This was the reason the EU lent up to 100,000 million euros to Spain with the understanding that Spain must pay back the debt to German banks. Meanwhile, public debt in Spain increased to an unpayable level.

But there was another reason the euro hurt the Spanish state. The Maastricht criteria had indicated that the public deficit of the state could not be higher than 3% of the GNP. Since it was 6%, it had to be cut. And it was cut, but not by increasing taxes or correcting tax fraud. Spain's tax fraud is among the highest in the Eurozone, with 80,000 million euros of tax evaded, 80% of which is done by the banks, individuals with large fortunes, and large enterprises whose sales are more than 150 million euros a year, representing 0.12% of all enterprises.

Instead, the cuts focused on public expenditure. Spanish entry into the Eurozone took place at the cost of weakening the Spanish welfare state, used primarily by the popular classes. These cuts of public social spending and the three labour market reforms carried out first by the socialist (PSOE) government, and later by the liberal conservative-liberal (PP) government, angered people, since not one of these measures had any popular mandate.

At the same time the national question in Catalonia became more urgent as a consequence of the lack of capacity of the central Government to give a positive response to the increasing demand of Catalan society for increased transfer of powers.

The decision of the Spanish Constitutional Court to reject a new Autonomy Statute approved by both the Catalan and Spanish Parliaments and supported by Catalans in a referendum fuelled the demands for self-determination. The Constitutional Court rejection was a consequence of a Partido Popular appeal to the Court. A decision democratically taken by Catalans and approved by the Spanish Parliament under Zapatero's Government was rejected by a totally politicised Constitutional Court. The refusal by the Conservative PP Spanish Government to enter into dialogue with the Catalan people and their banning of a referendum on the future of the region, together with their decision to prosecute the President of the Catalan Government created the conditions for a unilateral declaration of Independence in Catalonia.

In the meantime the attitude of the Spanish Government to the Basque Country has not been better. After a 50 year period of armed struggle the Basque national liberation movement in an unprecedented decision considered the option to end the

armed campaign in 2011. It was the consequence of a very carefully thought out decision which took into account the international and European environment as well as the propaganda that the Spanish State was using against the Basque Country. The liberation movement understood properly that the armed campaign modelled by the central government as a "war on terror", was being used as an excuse to ignore the legitimate demands of the Basque people. As such it was a serious brake for the development and expansion of the demands for democracy and self-determination in Spain and Catalonia. The new forms of international terrorism after September 11 provided the Spanish State with the chance to equate any dissidence with this new international trend.

So the end of the armed campaign by ETA and the call for a dialogued solution of the Basque conflict worked as a catalyst on all progressive and liberation forces in the State. The Basque liberation movement became quickly the second main political force in the Basque Country after its unbanning, ruling more than 100 city councils and with representatives at the regional level, Spanish Congress and Senate as well as the European Parliament.

During these four years of complete fulfilment of its commitments, ETA has clearly demonstrated its willingness to dismantle its structures and completely reduce its offensive capabilities. It has even taken steps, unilaterally, along with the International Verification Commission, to put its weapons beyond operational use. And it has done all this despite the ongoing attacks and barriers set by state forces.[2] Nevertheless, the Government ignores international and local calls for a positive approach and continues to display a hostile attitude to this organisation that has repeatedly called for dialogue, blocking all moves towards finding a peaceful resolution.

And so the real truth is that now, after PP's four years term in office, the situation is back at the same starting point where the Government found it. This Government has failed to solve one of the historic problems of Spanish modern history, the violent conflict in the Basque Country. And furthermore, it has missed a number of opportunities, playing a risky game for its own political interest and jeopardising the peace process with its provocative and unhelpful attitude. Only ETA's internal cohesion and complete attachment to its commitments has avoided a return to the previous scenario or splits inside the organisation.

ETA's attitude has brought us to a no return scenario. But everybody knows that to resolve the consequences of the conflict there is a need to address three main issues: the process of the decommissioning and dismantling of ETA; the process of reintegration of Basque prisoners (more than 450 spread out across Spanish jails far away from their homes); and the issue of the legacy of the confrontation period.

There is no lasting solution to the conflict, without dealing with these issues properly. And anyone, with a bit

> 66 In the next general elections new parties will challenge the regime both from the left and the right as well as from the Basque and Catalan nations. 99

of political sense, knows that to solve those issues there is a need to engage with the key stakeholders.

Regarding this issue (like with the Catalan one) the PP Government seems incapable of considering ceding independent Statehood. Four years later we face the same challenges and the same or bigger difficulties. The only outcome of these four years has been the absolute commitment of the Basque pro-independence movement to keep on with its strategy for peace despite all the attempts to derail it, the absolute commitment to close this page of our history, living up to the responsibility that Basque society expects from us.

Fortunately, despite the attacks, ETA has publicly stated that it remains committed to the generation of new scenarios and will keep all its commitments. At the same time it also warns about the severity of the attacks against it. ETA considers that the Spanish Government is even questioning the model for the ordered destruction of weapons and dismantling of stockpiles.

The Spanish Government must give a positive response to the demands that arise from the Basque Country. A policy of no dialogue, no talks, no negotiation cannot be accepted.

It is also in this new scenario that the indignados movement appeared and was able to quickly spread all over the country. It is in this context that new parties like Podemos were able to rise and become a real force for change. And it is in this scenario that the Catalan Pro-independence movement was able to grow.

All those movements demand a second transition, calling for an end to the 1978 regime (the political system established in 1978 when the dictatorship ended) and for the establishment of a new democratic order, a new order that will recognise the existence of the Basque, the Catalan and the Galician Nations as well as their right to self-determination.

The two party model is over; and in the next general elections new parties will challenge the regime both from the left and the right as well as from the Basque and Catalan nations. The Catalan and Basque demands for self-determination will grow and their time will come. We will see if the Spanish State is capable of solving the unfinished business of the first transition and become a truly democratic pluri-national republic; or alternatively it may collapse and give birth to new democratic Republics. The Irish people used to say that English difficulties are Irish opportunities. Let's see if that also works for us – the Basques. ∎

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2   On September 2011 the International Verification Commission for the ceasefire in the Basque Country (IVC) was presented to contribute to the verification of ETA's ceasefire through a serious and rigorous process.This Commission is formed by: Ronnie Kasrils, Aracelli Santana, Chris Maccabe, Ram Manikkalingam and Lieutenant General Satish Nambiar. The Commission, without the supportof the Spanish government, has verified that ETA has sealed and put beyond operational use a specified quantity of arms, ammunition and explosives as part of its willingness to move forward.

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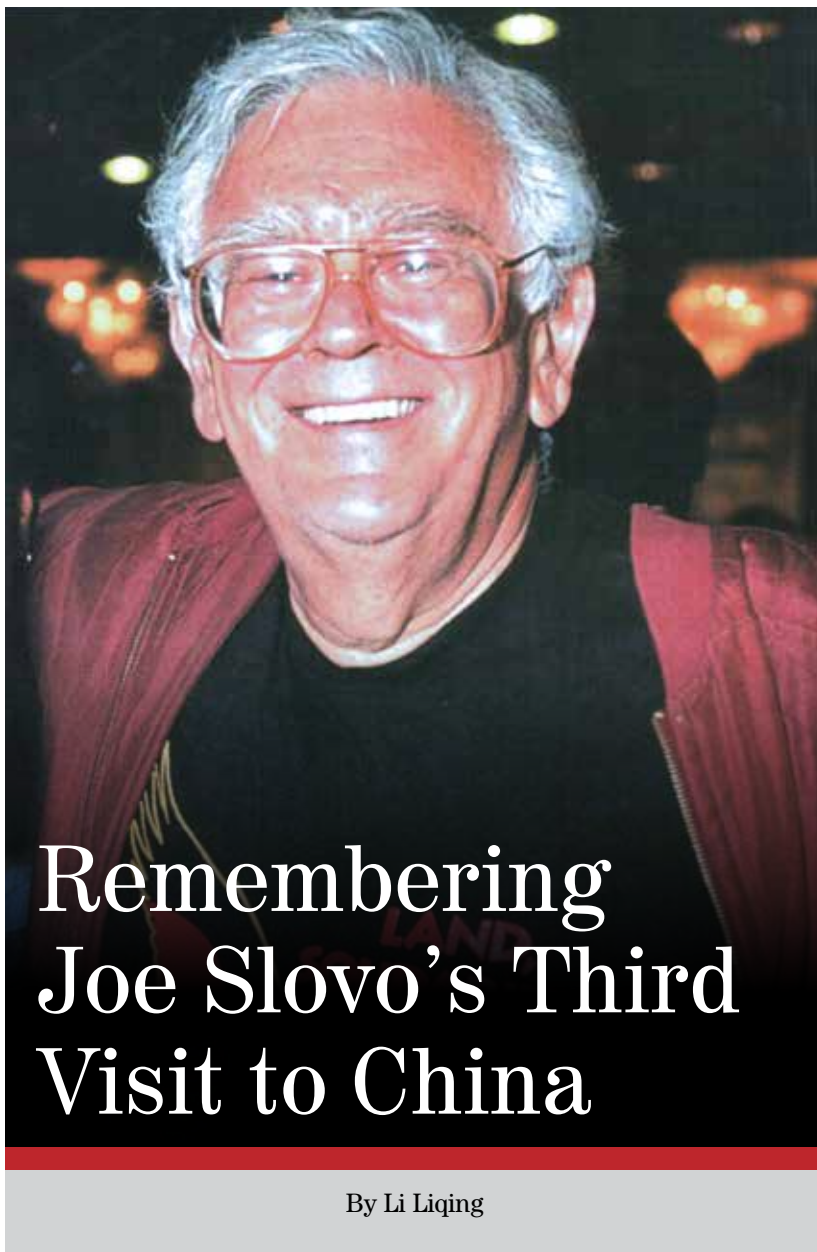
Remembering Joe Slovo's Third Visit to China

By Li Liqing

T his year marks the 21st anniversary of Joe Slovo's death. In his lifetime, Slovo visited China three times, and I had the honour to accompany him during his third visit to China. Although I merely spent half a month with him, I was so impressed by his wisdom and charisma that even to date my memory of him still remains fresh.

Arriving at Shenzhen Port

From August 6 to 20 in 1993, Joe Slovo, then chairperson of the South African Communist Party (SACP), came to China with his wife, Helena Dolny for a visit and holiday at the invitation of the International Department of the Central Committee, Communist Party of China (IDCPC). This was his third trip to China. As a staff at the Bureau of African Affairs, I was chosen to accompany him during his whole journey in China.

Comrade Slovo was no stranger to people like me, who were dealing with African affairs. Known as a theorist and thinker in South Africa, he was also a long-time leader of the SACP, a leading member of the African National Congress (ANC), and a commander of the ANC's military wing in exile. After returning South Africa, he was involved in the constitutional negotiations and played a key role in advancing South Africa's peace process. His first two trips to China in 1986 and 1989, at the invitation of the International Department of the Communitst Party of China (IDCPC), had already enhanced his popularity in China, but I hadn't met him by that time despite some knowledge about him from books and the press.

Madam Huan Guoying, then Deputy Minister of the IDCPC, and I received the couple on August 6 at Wen Jindu Checkpoint. Slovo, of medium stature and with grey hair, looked hale and hearty in spite of his cancer operation. He was articulate, slow-spoken but sharp-witted. His wife Helena, also white and 28 years younger than him, was an agricultural economist and had obtained her master's degree in the UK. Unlike other women in Africa, she dressed in a casual way, which was a bit of surprise for me.

We briefly greeted each other in the checkpoint's VIP lounge before Huan Guoxing welcomed the couple on behalf of the IDCPC and asked them about their specific requirements during the visit. He explained that due to his suffering of myeloma, coupled with a heavy workload at home, it wasn't convenient for him to head a delegation for an official visit, so the trip was arranged as a visit plus vacation. The purpose of his visit was to learn about China's reform and opening up, discuss issues like socialist theory and practice, meet Chinese leaders and convey a message from President Nelson Mandela. As to what the message was, however, he didn't disclose.

Visits Outweighed Holiday

With our company, the couple travelled to cities like Shen Zhen, Shanghai, Wenzhou of Zhejiang Province and Suzhou of Jiangsu Province, where they visited villages, Pudong Development Zone and enterprises of different ownership, as well as tourist attractions such as Yuyuan Garden in Shanghai and Suzhou Gardens. Their last stop was Beijing, where they met Chinese leaders and held discussions with IDCPC and experts on issues of China's

economic system reform and other matters.

Both in and outside Beijing, I found that their interest was truely focused on China's political and economic systems, including the concept of the socialist path with Chinese characteristics, the process of economic reform, differences and definitions of diversified ownerships, reform in rural areas and policies and roles of the ruling party. They had also prepared many questions prior to each visit. I still remember that during his visit to a joint venture in Shenzhen, Slovo kept asking about the functions of the labour union, the relationship between the union, employer and employees as well as the relationship between the union and the ruling party. On their visit to an air-conditioner factory, their questions focused on exploring the meaning of shareholding system, collective ownership and public ownership. His wife had so many questions on a visit to rural areas about the details of rural economic reform that she still kept asking when the discussion was about to end. The interpreter of Wenzhou, a business city of east China's Zhejiang Province, asked me on the quiet whether the Slovos really came for a holiday. Unlike other foreign guests, they posed so many questions during the visit. I explained to her in detail the history of South Africa and its Communist Party as well as the real purpose of Slovo's visit to China.

The Slovos were all ears to the inputs by the Chinese side. Both made notes and sorted them out immediately after returning to the hotel. Helena didn't join our visit one afternoon, as she said she would stay at the hotel sorting out her notes, which decision her husband respected. When she sometimes didn't quite catch the meaning of some jargon with Chinese characteristics, Joe was always ready to explain to her on the side, as he had been to China twice and was more familiar with China. Knowing his wife was interested in Chinese culture he made the best of his time to take his wife to the Great Canal, Suzhou Gardens, a Silk Factory and the Yuyuan Garden in Shanghai. They argued peacefully when they held different views on things about China, but mostly when agreement couldn't

be reached, it is Mr Slovo who first stopped arguing, which fully showed his tolerance and open-mindedness.

As a political leader, he was amiable and approachable, and he never put on airs. On top of his patience with my questions, he was also candid about his experience, family and his ex-wife Ruth First. He made no extra requirements about his reception by the IDCPC except stating that he didn't eat meat due to his physical condition. He kept swimming every day, his only way of exercise according to him, without which his health situation would be hard to tell. I was simply awestruck by his words. As an aged man with cancer who should have stayed at home for recovery, instead of the planned trip for vacation, he still went abroad for the sake of his party, spending most of his time working, discussing, meeting and making time for exercise. What great qualities of sacrifice and perseverance this man showed!

Theorist

During the trip, I was convinced that Slovo was a theorist, who was always pondering, talking little. In Beijing he discussed with the economist, Dong Fureng, questions such as what is socialism and public ownership. In the view of the interpreter Shuzhan, Dong argued that the international community held different views about socialism and people should rethink about socialism through practice so as to get a new understanding of it. Karl Marx's ideas may have been right in his time but some were outdated in ours, and some even never right at all. People's knowledge is in progress and Marxism and Leninism can't be expected to predict the future and provide all the answers without learning from practice. This approach may not have been consistent with Marxism and Dialectics. However, he told me that he had an agreeable talk with Mr. Dong, whose ideas were inspiring and thought-provoking.

I asked him about his opinion of the former Soviet Union, as I knew that he had once written an article entitled *Has Socialism Failed?*. He told me that he made several trips to the Soviet Union and the east European countries before 1989 and that socialism was

cold-shouldered after the collapse of the former Soviet Union and east European countries. He still didn't regard it as the failure of socialism though. With the cause of the collapse of the Soviet Union on his mind, he learned about theories and practices of socialism in various countries and compared socialist practices between socialist countries, especially between China and the Soviet Union, so as to find out regular problems in their socialist practice.

The problems he had in his mind were actually problems facing socialism in South Africa, for South Africa's tripartite alliance led by the ANC had a very good chance of winning the election in 1994. And the SACP was a member of the alliance.

Then what was his opinion of China's socialist model? I had no clue as to his ideas until he made a speech when meeting Chinese leaders in Beijing. He recognised China's efforts in exploring its socialist path and applauded the outcomes and significance of China's reform and opening up, while he was candid about the problems about to emerge in China. This was also a feature that separated him from other African leaders I had met.

He said that the visit enabled them to have a deeper understanding of the development path China has chosen and its relevant policies. They noted the abundance of commodities in China's markets, the improvement of people's lives, the happy go lucky people and the peaceful society, which was without doubt attributed to China's reform.

He elaborated that only two pages explain the definition of socialism in the classics of Marxism and Leninism, and actually there is no ready experience to follow in building socialism. Therefore, each socialist country must develop socialism in accordance with its historical and current conditions. It is now too difficult to give an absolute definition of socialism. No other theories are more important than the one that people in socialist countries should be provided with abundant commodities. Amid the many problems in China, one thing is clear, however, that China is providing more and more commodities to its people. He insisted

that China's future lies in the reforms led by the CPC, which will also have a fundamental impact on the whole world. The success of China's socialism is not only the success of its people, but it will also contribute to the socialist movements of the world.

He concluded by saying that he appreciated the Chinese leaders' rethinking of socialist theory and held it that China's policy to develop an economy of varied ownership is correct, while he also suggested that China should be clear-minded in dealing with capitalism and vigilant against corruption. In addition, he expressed his hope that China would pay attention to its political reform, indicating that the cause of the collapse of the Soviet Union and eastern European countries was the lack of political democracy within the communist party.

For my part, his opinions of Chinese socialism are consistent with the facts, without either exaggeration or diminishment. His vision and wide knowledge in theory surfaced when he addressed the problems facing China on its way of exploring socialism, which proved to be predictive.

Conveying a Message

Another purpose for Joe Slovo's vacation visit was to pass a message of which the content is unknown even to us. Later we worked out that the message must relate to Sino-South Africa relations because of the fact that the two countries had not established diplomatic ties at that moment. Furthermore, it was a message from Nelson Mandela, the ANC's President, to the Chinese leader, just after his latest visit to Taiwan. However, Slovo remained tight-lipped about the content of the message and it was not disclosed until he met Hu Jintao, Standing Member of CPC Politburo then, later to become President.

On August 17th Hu Jintao received them in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. After a short briefing of his impression of this trip, Slovo disclosed that, prior to his departure to China, the ANC President Mandela entrusted him to pass a message to the Chinese Communist Party and the Government. Then, he carefully produced a manuscript and read it

loudly: "President Mandela asked me to transfer his clear-cut stance to the People's Republic of China after his recent visit to Taiwan. He stressed that we will never abandon our old friend. We would not forget that, it is the PRC that had paid a huge price in fulfilling the international obligation on isolating apartheid and supporting our people's struggle. Nor would we forget that, it is Taiwan that had given continuous assistance to racism and apartheid in South Africa. When the new democratic system is established in the coming year, it is our policy which is clear and unchanged that the historical relationship between our people and the Chinese and the principles adopted by the PRC with respects to Taiwan will be respected. In a word, the new South Africa will correct the historical unfair treatment of the PRC caused by the diplomatic recognition of Taiwan by the apartheid regime. There will be no doubt that the

> **❝His thoughts and research on the socialist movement in the world will be passed on to future generations as valuable treasures.❞**

new South Africa will diplomatically recognise PRC as the sole and only representative of the whole of China. To put it another way, for us, there is only one China all along, one China which is solely represented by the PRC. We will proceed according to this policy. Therefore, whatever impression cast on his Taiwan visit, Mandela hopes that the above viewpoints could be understood as our clear-cut stance.

Hu Jintao gave his thanks to Slovo for that and expressed his appreciation for Mandela's message on further deepening and developing good relationships with China and of his declaration that the new South Africa will recognise People's Republic of China and stick to the One China Policy. He was confident that President Mandela and his people will proceed from our friendship forged in the

long-term struggle, and further enhance and develop the friendship between the two countries and peoples.

After the meeting, Slovo once again asked to make public Mandela's statement, claiming that it was requested by Mandela himself. We handed the script to our interpreter to put it into Chinese, and finally, the Chinese version of the statement was seen in the *People's Daily* the next day, which was encouraging to China. Later we saw that the democratic government didn't sever their diplomatic relationship with Chinese Taiwan immediately after coming into power.

Nevertheless, China and South Africa established formal diplomatic relationships on January 1, 1998, though it was a great pity that Joe Slovo passed away in January 1995, failing to witness the important moment. His efforts in promoting the normalisation of our bilateral relationship, and the message he conveyed in particular, will always be remembered by both countries and peoples.

Two months after Slovo's China trip, I was assigned to the Chinese Embassy in Botswana in October 1993. My routine work was to learn about the political and economic development trends in South Africa through TV and newspapers, which enabled me to take a closer look at the country's first democratic elections, the success of its tripartite alliance, the birth of a new South Africa and, of course, Slovo as the Minister of Housing. I was thinking at that time that South Africa and the ANC finally had their dreams come true, which deserved applause from all corners of the world.

I had planned to visit the couple in South Africa and extend my congratulations personally, but who could expect his departure from the world in January 1995. I was shocked at the sad news, for he still looked in the pink a year earlier on his visit to China. His efforts in promoting the relationship between China and South Africa as well as between the South African Communist Party and the CPC will always be remembered by the Chinese, and his thoughts and research on the socialist movement in the world will be passed on to future generations as valuable treasures. ■

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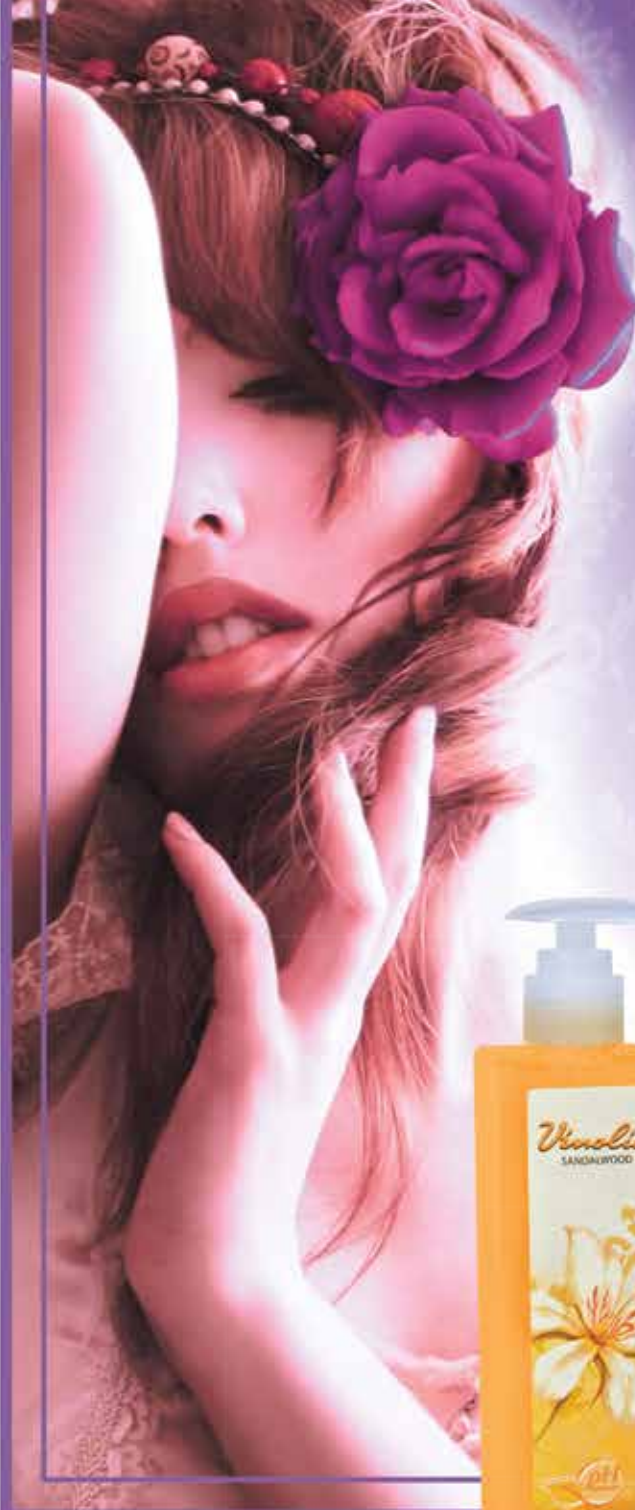
Reflections on the University versus TVET College Conundrum

Wide-ranging corrective initiatives must be undertaken at all levels of society to dislodge the prevalence of these negative attitudes towards TVET qualifications.

By Mokubung Nkomo, Ndivhuho Tshikovhi and Angelica Warchal

At the beginning of each academic year in South Africa, the public witnesses a dramatic swell of students seeking admission to universities. In some instances, the surge of students standing in long queues has resulted in injury or, in one tragic instance, even death. It is interesting to note that no similar spectacular clamour has been registered in the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector in the recent '#FeesMustFall' campaign. It is a telling narrative.

This spectacle is at once tragic and exciting. Tragic because it demonstrates the subjection of many students to archaic knowledge systems in an age of global epistemic transformations and sophisticated enrolment management technologies. At the higher end of the campaign is the quest for relevant, contemporary and post-colonial epistemology. The obverse side is the existential consequence of the rising expectations resulting from the increased access made available by progressive legislation and policies since 1997. Since 1994 enrolment figures at universities, especially for black and female students, have risen several fold.

In stark contrast to this intense desire

for university education has been the relatively poor enrolments at TVET colleges (which until recently were referred to as Further Education and Training (FET) colleges). Enrolment at TVET colleges has lagged significantly behind that at universities. For example, enrolment at TVET colleges in 2006 was 361,186 and it was estimated to be 538,000 in 2014. The growth rate over this period was low. In contrast, enrolment at universities in 2006 was 741,383, and in 2014, estimated to be 1,000,328.

According to the National Development Plan, "Public colleges enrol an equivalent of one-third (roughly 300,000) of learners enrolled in higher education, when ideally the situation should be the other way round". For example, unlike South Africa, Seychelles, Botswana and Mauritius have higher percentage gross enrolments in TVET institutions in relation to university enrolments. Most, if not all first world countries, invest more in further education and training than developing countries. The UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) states that the greater a country's Gross Domestic Product per capita, the greater its percentage of technical/vocational student enrolment.

In a country that is faced with a crippling skills shortage, considered to be of crisis proportions by many observers, this phenomenon constitutes a compelling case for further probing into the underlying reasons behind the attitudes and choices made by students as evidenced by the inordinate preference for a university instead of a TVET qualification. This oddity invites further reflection.

A short background is necessary to shed some light into this seeming inverted logic. In the mid-19th and early 20th centuries a debate raged in the United States around whether the recently emancipated slaves should pursue an academic or technical/vocational career. The protagonist for the former view was the sociologist W.E.B du Bois, and the latter was advanced by Booker T. Washington who established the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. The Institute's primary objective was to help former slaves

> **❝Despite substantial financial investment, enrolment figures at TVET institutions do not convincingly reflect the South African government's present-day interest or concern.❞**

equip themselves with marketable skills. To a large extent, this debate has never been completely resolved for a variety of reasons, which will not be engaged in this paper.

Nearly a hundred years later a similar debate that pitted the two streams of thought emerged shortly after several African countries achieved their freedom from colonial rule. In an attempt to gain insights into the seeming preference for academic instead of technical/vocational qualifications, Philip Foster undertook studies in Nigeria and Ghana.

Foster pointed out the role of missionary schools, in particular, that promoted agricultural education, but that these were, by and large, 'unsuccessful.' He observed that, "… the demand by Africans for Western education was and is predominantly oriented towards the provision of more academic-type schools. This preference springs…from a remarkably realistic

> **❝Too much needed to be changed; and too much was changed too fast for the staff in these institutions or the general public to keep up; and as soon as people began to understand something new, another change was introduced.❞**

appraisal of occupational opportunities generated within the exchange sector of the economy as a result of European overrule." Furthermore, he noted, "the strength of academic education has lain in the fact that it is pre-eminently a vocational education providing access to those occupations with the most prestige and…the highest pay".

The above observations also applied to Nigeria and other former colonies. This, therefore, seems to be the crux of the matter. In the case of South Africa, there is a veritable history that resonates with Foster's account.

Drawing from Elias's (1978) 'historical continuity' and Boltanski's and Evenot's (1999) 'social life' constructs, Wedekind (2013) analyses the history of apprenticeship in South Africa and efforts in the post-apartheid era to vigorously improve public attitudes and to encourage industry to collaborate in such efforts. Having done a historical analysis of South African labour history, he makes the important point that "apprenticeship has a very specific history linked to slavery, indenturing and the protection of white labour," and that: "These perceptions and values run deep in communities, and the ways in which the system benefited, exploited, excluded and included various categories of citizens have shaped those communities". It is in a sense the colonial/apartheid "historical continuity" factor that may, at least partially, explain the attitudes and choices made several centuries or decades later in contemporary South Africa.

Much of education provision in South Africa during the colonial era was a blend of academic and agricultural programmes. As in many colonies, a point also made by many including Walter Rodney (1974), the 'academic' education provided in South Africa was to train Africans in basic literacy and numeracy, enough to service the needs of the mining and agricultural industries. Accordingly, black careers were restricted to professions such as teaching, nursing and administration to staff the colonial/apartheid bureaucracies.

The ruling National Party's defence of the inferior education offered to black children under the Bantu Education

Act was encapsulated in former Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd's famous declaration that: "There is no place for (the Bantu) in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour…What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice? That is quite absurd. Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the spheres in which they live".

Verwoerd's injunction became a quintessential tenet of apartheid education ideology that has persisted through time and deeply affected, even infected, the present. Through this philosophy, along with a bevy of legislative measures such as the Mines and Works Act (1911), the Apprenticeship Act (1922), the Job Reservations Act (1926), Africans were kept out of certain technical/vocational jobs. The Bantu Education Act of 1953 buttressed the imperatives of this complementary assortment of restrictive laws. The cumulative effect of these discriminatory laws and social conventions precipitated perceptions that framed the assumed rationality of avoiding career paths that for blacks did not lead to gainful employment; an enduring existential reality authorised by apartheid prescripts.

Thus, a lack of employment opportunities in certain occupations constituted a set of legacy beliefs and behaviours that were transmitted inter-generationally. Comprehension of this phenomenon is facilitated through a set of theoretical and conceptual frameworks such as Bourdieu's 'cultural and social reproduction,' Elias's 'historical continuity,' and Boltanski's and Evenot's 'social life.'

In *Knowledge in the Blood*, Jansen (2009) provides a deep analysis by distilling the phenomenon in the "received knowledge" notion, only in his work the lens is trained on the inverted white psyche. Zapiro (2008) renders a poignant cartoon, a visual representation of the transmission of values and behaviours from parents to offspring around the University of Free State Reitz incident with the caption "white apologists and the University of Free State". The cartoon is suggestive of the subliminal messages that are transmitted from one generation to another from daily-lived experiences and observations. Though the messages are subliminal they leave a vivid imagery of how memory is transmitted.

In all these conceptual formulations, the operative principles and perspectives are convergent. But, of course, the conditions underlying these principles and perspectives are not immutable; they are also compromised by the dynamism of the inexorable logic of dialectics.

For blacks, occupational opportunities and remuneration were not in technical/vocational fields, but rather, as official diktat would have it, in occupations relevant to their 'own' communities; choices imposed by employment discrimination leading to the preponderance of blacks with teaching, nursing qualifications and

> **❝It is important as well to note that the low esteem in which TVET institutions are held in South Africa is not inconsistent with public attitudes in several other African countries.❞**

other 'soft areas'. These academic-type qualifications were similar to Philip Foster's findings in the case of Ghana and Nigeria, for all practical purposes, vocational.

It is only in the past two decades that research on student choices was conducted under the 'Student Choice Behaviour Project,' directed by Michael Cosser (and colleagues) at the Human Sciences Research Council. Although the studies focus on high school student behaviours and preferences for post-school destinations, they do shed light on what students plan to do academically after they complete Grade 12. The 2004 HSRC report indicates that in 2002 55.6 percent of the students were enrolled in universities, 44.4 percent in technikons". Nearly two decades later the situation has not changed substantially.

It is important as well to note that the low esteem in which TVET institutions are held in South Africa is not inconsistent with public attitudes in several other African countries. There is a general ambiguity. This less than enthusiastic public attitude has a powerful inhibitive effect on the vigorous and wholesome development of the sector.

Key markers of thriving political economies in the contemporary world include knowledge production and innovation. Developed, as well as developing, countries increasingly invest a considerable amount of resources in appropriate skills development (mostly medium- and high- level skills) initiatives. The technical/vocational participation rate in developed countries is generally higher than in developing countries. To underscore the high value of medium and high-level skills many countries engage in poaching activities in order to meet the needs of their knowledge economies. Strangely, South Africa's current immigration policy seems smitten by indifference, prevarication and schizophrenia and sometimes acts in contradiction to the skills challenge. That a country can employ aggressive short-term recruitment and invest in long-term strategic development of the required human resources seems to be a difficult proposition for the relevant authorities to comprehend.

Incidentally, the skills shortage phenomenon in South Africa is not new. Its roots extend back to the apartheid era when there were active campaigns to recruit skilled labour from Europe in order to meet the skills gap. Thus, 20 years into democracy, South Africa finds itself in the second decade of the 21st century with a huge skills development challenge. Successive post-apartheid administrations have, in the last 20 years, increasingly shown appreciation for the need to target and provide meaningful resources for skills development. Yet, despite substantial financial investment, enrolment figures at TVET institutions do not convincingly reflect the South African government's present-day interest or concern.

Of course there are many reasons why the democratic government has struggled to project TVET as a sensible

choice for students who want to qualify for well-paying jobs and be assured that their knowledge and skills will be in high demand. Initially, the prejudice against the technical/vocational colleges was underestimated, so this was not sold as an alternative to universities but remained an option only for those who 'failed' to get into universities, with a very low status attached. Funding was not easy to obtain, and the student loan system was frequently unreliable.

Changing the curriculum, amalgamating sites which had previously been racially-based and restructuring the staffing to attain a degree of transformation turned out to be a difficult process, and many of the new 'FET' colleges seemed to be totally dysfunctional, with the government pouring good money after bad. At one stage a lack of cooperation between the Departments of Education and Labour created confusion in relation to SETA funding, learnerships, apprenticeships and internships. The National Qualifications Framework standards-based qualifications, and later the 'occupationally directed' qualifications fought for full recognition and seamless linkage into other parts of the system, including trades and trade tests, university programmes and professional bodies.

Too much needed to be changed; and too much was changed too fast for the staff in these institutions or the general public to keep up; and as soon as people began to understand something new, another change was introduced. As in the schooling system, the introduction of a new curriculum was attempted without adequate re-training of the managers, lecturers and teachers who were supposed to implement the system. There was also a huge neglect in terms of the necessary advocacy. And, of course, the new FET colleges and then the TVET colleges had appalling failure rates.

That there is still an inordinate preference for a university academic education rather than the technical/vocational education is also possibly related to the Philip Foster observation that the objective reality of students in Ghana and Nigeria (1950s and '60s) was the perception that academic education was *vocational* as it provided

> 66 **For blacks, occupational opportunities and remuneration were not in technical/vocational fields, but rather, as official diktat would have it, in occupations relevant to their 'own' communities.** 99

a direct line to job opportunities. Similarly, during the colonial and apartheid eras, academic education was where job opportunities for blacks lay and technical/vocational education was forbidden fruit enforced through discrimination. Stubborn memory has ensured the persistence of these psychological and structural abnormalities.

Objectively then, it is this history of job discrimination that lingers in the collective psyche of many blacks despite the palpable change, to a great extent, in the political economy. Exacerbating this mind-set seems to be an appetite or a penchant for pursuing the academic track because it is perceived as ultimately leading to supervisory or managerial job opportunities rather than what is pejoratively viewed as menial jobs, which are broadly thought to be 'low status'.

There is clearly a dissonance between the historically informed lingering attitudes, and the opportunities availed

> 66 **Strangely, South Africa's current immigration policy seems smitten by indifference, prevarication and schizophrenia and sometimes acts in contradiction to the skills challenge.** 99

by the new democratic dispensation. Therein, perhaps, lies a significant part of the explanation; that is, the 'cultural and social reproduction', 'historical continuity', 'social life' and 'received knowledge' seem to be the operant constructs that lend plausible credence and offer explanatory power for the conundrum. In other words, the colonial/apartheid super-structural ecology has had far-reaching and enduring psycho-social effects on the subaltern.

Wide-ranging corrective initiatives must be undertaken at all levels of society to dislodge the prevalence of these negative attitudes towards TVET qualifications. Higher state allocations to TVET institutions are a necessary but insufficient condition. Underlying values that drive the choices must be identified and incentives schemes offered as pull factors. And, also importantly, the utility and efficacy of skills offered by TVET institutions need to be made a common understanding of high school students in particular, and the wider population in general. ■

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UNDERSTANDING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

A Local Government Perspective

It is important to understand that young people are not a burden to society nor a ticking time bomb, but rather a key component of human capital that needs to be maximised.

By Tsholofelo Koopedi

As we move towards the fourth democratic local government election in 2016 there will be many commentators and politicians alike who will be interested in capturing the so-called youth vote. Understanding youth development and how local governments, in particular metropolitan municipalities, can contribute to the development of young people is critical to stakeholders such as policy makers, politicians and administrators.

Let us first focus on the meaning of youth development. In order to get a clear meaning the two words need to be separated and discussed.

The United Nations define 'youth' as the age cohort 15-24 – which is estimated to be about 1.03 billion, or 18 per cent of the total world population. The majority of the world's youth population (84 per cent in 1995) lives in developing countries. This figure is projected to increase to 89 per cent by 2025. Jones (2008:16) argues

that "apart from the statistical definition of the term youth, the meaning of the term youth varies in different societies around the world". Definitions of youth have changed continuously in response to changing political, economic and socio-cultural circumstances. The difficult circumstances faced by the youth in many developing countries include "limited opportunities for education and training, viable employment, health and social services, and the growing incidence

of substance abuse" (Jones 2008:16). Such circumstances have contributed to developing countries, especially African states, defining youth as those between the ages of 14 – 30/35. In South Africa the term is used in relation to those between the ages of 14 and 35 years old.

Contemporary scholars such as Sen (2001:3) suggest that "development is an expansion of freedoms" that a population enjoys and such freedoms are determined by the social (education and health), economic, political and civil rights (democracy) arrangements that governments puts in place. Stiglitz (2004:239) further points out that "development as a democratic transformation" should not be limited to technical adjustments and economic growth. Rather, development should be a holistic and coordinated transformation of social and economic objectives, including the means for achieving them. Therefore it can be argued that if successful, democracy should reduce poverty and crime while improving the standard of living, health, and education, of the youth in particular.

Youth development

Hamilton, Hamilton, and Pittman (2000:1) discuss youth development as "a concept with the following three aspects: a natural *process, principle*, and *practice*".

- The natural process is the transitional state between childhood and adulthood. This means that human development is a natural unfolding of the potential inherent in the human organism in relation to the challenges and support systems of its physical and social environment. Through development, individuals lead a healthy, satisfying, and productive life.
- The principle of youth development emphasises "active support for growing capacity of the youth by individuals, organisations, and institutions". This principle would call upon government to take purposeful steps in organising young people through civic organs such as youth councils or forums.
- The concept of practice refers to the application of principles to

planned practices that foster the development of the natural process leading to youth development (Hamilton, Hamilton, and Pittman 2000:1).

The concept of youth development, gets a bit complex due to an addition of the fourth 'P' pointed out by Pittman, Irby, and Ferber (2000). This 'P' refers to Policy, which is a "course of action adopted by an organisation especially government institutions" (Hamilton, Hamilton, and Pittman 2000:2). Youth development influences policy at all levels of government and within government departments to include an *explicit* focus on young people. Government should put in place policies that are unambiguous and can champion youth development. It can thus be deduced that youth

> ❝The ways in which the challenges and potentials of young people are addressed by policy will influence current social and economic conditions as well as the wellbeing and livelihood of future generations.❞

development is a function of a natural process plus principle multiplied by practice through policy:

Youth Development = Process + Principle x Practice (Policy)

Sen (2001) and Stiglitz (2004), are explicit on the role of government in the creation of an enabling environment for development. Young people in all countries are human capital for development and key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation. Their imagination, ideals, considerable energies and vision are essential for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. Thus, there is a special need for new impetus to be given to formulation and implementation of youth policies and

programmes. The ways in which the "challenges and potentials of young people are addressed by policy will influence current social and economic conditions as well as the wellbeing and livelihood of future generations" (Jones 2008:17).

This implies that government, in particular local government, has a distinct role to play within the Youth Development agenda formulated above. The 1998 White Paper on Local Government defines the character of local government in South Africa as 'developmental'. This is explained as local government "committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic, and material needs and improve the quality of their lives" (White Paper on Local Government 1998:17).

Youth Bulge: a ticking time bomb?

The demographic landscape of South Africa shows a typical population pyramid of a developing state, "with 54 per cent of South Africans being younger than the age of 24 years"(Taljaard 2008:1). This places South Africa and Gauteng in a favourable position in terms of human capital development. This is one of the advantages of the 'youth bulge', which if properly tapped into could lead to a demographic window of opportunity for the years 2030 - 2060. Taljaard (2008:2) further defines the demographic window, "as that period of time in a nation's demographic evolution when the proportion of the population that is in the working age group is particularly prominent". Without venturing into demographic studies, it is important to understand that young people are not a burden to society nor a ticking time bomb, but rather a key component of human capital that needs to be maximised.

What Research tells us

Everatt (2000) argues that youth institutionalisation [and thus mainstreaming (Koopedi (2012)] failed primarily as a result of the inability of institutions such as the erstwhile National Youth Commission to enforce decisions. The National Youth Commission ended up having

to pressure and lobby government departments to design appropriate youth programmes, but it had no power to enforce decisions.

Prinsloo (2001:289) concludes that "marginalising effects of social inequity and that of a loss of moral values are linked to the loss of a safe and secure family life". Interestingly a report (April 2011) by the South African Institute of Race Relations supports the above argument and indicates that "Many children in South Africa are growing up in fractured families. Millions grow up living without one or even both of their parents. The consequences for young people – the country's future workers, entrepreneurs, and leaders – may be dire." (Holborn 2011:7).

Olawale and Abiodun, (2007:3) argue that "efforts to address the challenge posed by youths must move from platitudinous wish-list into formulation of coherent policy agenda that is consistent with the socio-economic and political realities of individual countries; in which youth themselves are active agents; and one which must be incorporated into the wider governance framework of nation-states".

In South Africa there is no indication of a coherent and consistent approach to how youth development is formulated, championed and fostered in metropolitan municipalities (Koopedi, 2012). Recently Thiti (2014) noted that "Even though there are challenges around structures and legislative frameworks in dealing with youth development, there are also underlying challenges that confront youth development." Such challenges seem to be impeding the full realisation of youth potential and the need to place the youth at the centre of development in government planning and processes.

To date (15 years into a democratic local government dispensation) there is no in-depth research on the consistency and predictability of implementation strategies for effecting youth development across municipalities. Notwithstanding, in December 2008 the Gauteng Department of Local Government tabled a report on the findings of its baseline study on the status of youth development in 14 Gauteng province

municipalities. Actually, the baseline study suggested that there is no consistency in the systems in place to foster youth development. This is evident in the different institutional arrangements that municipalities have adopted to meet the needs of young people in their jurisdiction.

It should be noted that the Gauteng Government has made tremendous strides on implementing youth development since 2008, with the introduction of its youth development programme 'Tshepo 500 000' which seeks to give empowerment, economic and employment opportunities to 500 000 young people in the province by 2019.

According to Spierings (2000:6) "political culture tends to be more

> **❝The guidelines provide for the establishment of Youth Units in municipalities to assist in planning, setting targets, resourcing, and mainstreaming of youth development as well as lobbying, and evaluating performance.❞**

comfortable with the framework of targets than legislated entitlements". As a result, youth development should influence policy at all levels of government and within government departments to include focus on young people (Pittman, Irby, and Ferber 2000). This implies that government should put in place policies that are unambiguous and can champion youth development if effectively implemented.

Since 1996 the following policies, institutions and legislation have been put in place nationally:
- The 1996 National Youth Commission
- The 1996 Interdepartmental Committee on Youth Affairs

- The 2000 National Youth Policy
- The 2002 – 2007 National Youth Development Framework
- The 2008 National Youth Development Act
- The 2008-2013 National Youth Policy
- The Youth Employment Accord
- The 2015-2020 National Youth Policy

Some of the findings captured in *The Status of Youth Report 2004* highlight the issue of youth marginalisation. The report acknowledged that although there are political and systemic changes many factors still make it difficult for youth to achieve their full potential. These factors include high dropout rates from school, high unemployment, and childhood poverty. Other factors such as rapid urbanisation, breakdown of families and communities as well as the impact of HIV and AIDS have compounded problems faced by youth. Further, the report discussed challenges affecting the implementation of youth development programmes. These included:
- The lack of an integrated youth development approach by departments.
- Resistance from some of the municipalities in relation to prioritising youth development in their Integrated Development Plans.
- The lack of adequate resources to deliver on youth development mandates.
- The lack of skills amongst youth to initiate programmatic youth development programmes.
- No identified youth development indicators and outcomes in crosscutting programmes.
- Poor communication on available resources and programmes to young people as well as no monitoring and evaluation of youth development interventions.
- Limited documentation and sharing of best practices on youth development amongst youth practitioners.

Legislative Entitlement – Impacting directly on Local Government
The 2004 Municipal Youth Guidelines
The guidelines provide for the

establishment of Youth Units in municipalities to assist in planning, setting targets, resourcing, and mainstreaming of youth development as well as lobbying, and evaluating performance. The guidelines advance the establishment of civic society organs such as youth councils and youth organisations to lobby and to hold the municipality accountable for youth development in their constituency.

The 2006 third National Conference on Youth Development at Local Level

This conference made the following four ground breaking resolutions:

- The first resolution focused on the institutionalisation of youth development not only as essential but also a critical and compulsory function, which is not negotiable.
- The second resolution focused on strengthening existing platforms of engagement between youth and local government for optimal use.
- The third resolution focused on supporting flagship programmes such as the National Youth Service and other institutions implementing youth initiatives and programmes by all municipalities.
- The fourth resolution focused on monitoring and evaluating findings and recommendations from youth sector research for implementation.

The 2008 Framework for Youth Development for Local Government and the 2010 Draft Youth Development Strategy for Local Government

The framework and the strategy were a build up from the 2004 Municipal Youth Guidelines and the 2006 third National Conference on Youth Development at Local Government. The 2010 Draft Youth Development Strategy for Local Government identified three main objectives:

- to provide a legislative framework through which youth development programmes could inform Local Government in relation to planning, implementing and monitoring youth development processes;
- to guide municipalities on the designing, implementing and monitoring of youth development; and

- to support municipalities and local government role-players to mainstream youth development into their plans and programmes.

Noting the above we can conclude that there are sufficient institutional arrangements and legislative obligations in place to foster youth development.

Youth Development beyond the 2016 Local Government Elections

As we move towards the 2016 local government elections all relevant stakeholders should ensure that youth development is at the centre of our developmental local government state as envisaged by the white paper on local government. This can be done through ensuring that youth development is mainstreamed in the local government process and most importantly that young people's energies are correctly channelled into public participation

> ❝Mainstreaming and public participation are independent but interdependent factors for advancing youth development.❞

processes. Mainstreaming and public participation are independent but interdependent factors for advancing youth development.

The interdependency of both these processes is anchored by the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). One cannot therefore divorce the IDP from the mainstreaming agenda, because it is through the IDP that the Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) is developed. All local government programmes are reflected through the SDBIP, which can be used to provide disaggregated data about budget allocation regarding youth development programmes. They can also be used to report and commit on Key Performance Areas or Indicators on youth development.

To this extent the three metropolitan municipalities in Gauteng have started to partially mainstream youth

development, through the following Mayoral Special Projects: Tshepo 10 000 (City of Tshwane), Minthiro (City of Ekurhuleni), and Vulindlela eJozi (City of Jo'burg). The impact of these projects in relation to mainstreaming youth development is only partial because they are all initiatives from the various Executive Mayors and they are not necessarily informed by public participation in the IDP process; they are however institutionalised in such a way that they form part of the quarterly SDBIP reports on the implementation of the IDP.

Public participation is a legislative imperative of the developmental agenda of local government enshrined in Chapter 7, Section 154 (1) (e) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The Municipal Systems Act Chapter 4 identifies the IDP as a tool for creating conditions for the community to participate in municipal affairs. Therefore mainstreaming and public participation are mutually supportive issues anchored in the IDP. Used optimally they could ensure that youth development is properly formulated, championed and fostered in local government.

As stated by Olawale and Abiodun, (2007) the "efforts to address the challenge posed by youths must move from platitudinous wish-list into formulation of coherent policy agenda". Participating in the IDP process certainly gives birth to a coherent agenda that is most critically implementable and measured throughout the SDBIP. After all, as the saying goes, 'if you cannot measure it, it does not count'.

Public Participation

Chapter 4 of the Municipal Systems Act is clear on how public participation should unfold. Section 16 (a) states that municipalities must "encourage, and create conditions for, the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality". This may include the preparation, implementation, and review of the IDP; the establishment, implementation, and review of performance agreements; and monitoring and review of municipal performance including the outcomes and impact of such performance.

The Municipal Systems Act warrants municipalities to build capacity in communities for public participation. Section 16 (1) (b) (i) states that municipalities must "contribute to building capacity of the local community to enable it to participate in the affairs of the municipality". In this context the institutional assessment by the Gauteng Provincial Government recommended the following:

• Instilling young people with awareness and respect for active participation in local government processes such as the IDP to enable them to contribute towards their development.

• Develop capacity of young people and provide them with access to information that will enable them to promote their own development and that of their broader society.

How to Mainstream

The mainstreaming of youth development in IDPs, SDBIP and Budget can be done through:

• ensuring that municipal priorities and departmental programmes in IDPs provide disaggregated data on beneficiaries of projects so as to clearly articulate the impact of youth development interventions; and

• building an integrated and sustainable approach to youth development through establishing interdepartmental youth development units to coordinate reports and commitments on Key Performance Areas and Key Performance Indicators on youth development.

Mainstreaming youth development can be defined as a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of the youth an integral part of designing, implementing as well as monitoring and evaluating the socio-economic-political policies, programmes and projects that should benefit the youth. The 2010 Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs Youth Development Strategy states that the ultimate aim of mainstreaming will be to achieve equality of youth development outcomes. The strategy proposes two levels of mainstreaming for every municipality: mainstreaming through IDPs; and mainstreaming through local youth development plans.

Below are some guiding principles for effective mainstreaming of youth issues into local plans and IDPs as proposed in the strategy:

• ensure that each IDP has as one of its key pillars the objective of youth development, with specific emphasis on youth empowerment and advancement;

• encourage young people to be involved in developing plans;

• mentor those participating in plan development;

• support and build capacity of young people to understand their roles;

• have a dedicated budget for youth participation;

• make better use of available

> **"Develop capacity of young people and provide them with access to information that will enable them to promote their own development and that of their broader society."**

resources and the strengths of young people;

• avoid duplication;

• ensure that plans are based on a robust audit of youth needs; and

• ensure that plans have clear roles and responsibilities as well as time-lines for delivery.

Koopedi (2012) used Hamilton, Hamilton, and Pitman (2000) and Bronfenbrenner (1977 and 1994) to hypothesise that youth development is a function of a natural process plus principle multiplied by practice through policy.

Youth Development = Process + Principle x Practice (Policy).

Based on this it can be deduced that the natural process which would be public participation is part of the microsystem and the practice; it would include the principle affirming that the humans needs of the youth have to be supported and guided. The practice of youth development would refer to the macrosystem, in particular the mainstreaming agenda, through the institutional partners who would be responsible for implementing the policy.

To summarise, mainstreaming and public participation are essential to the advancement of youth development in local government. Already one of the critical enablers (sufficient legislative framework that also articulates institutions of youth development) exists; the critical challenge is implementation. The implementation of youth development should be fostered in the Integrated Developmental Plans (IDP) of municipalities. However, the above can only be realised when there is optimal understanding of and use of mainstreaming and public participation by municipalities.

Implementation Issues

The proposals made on mainstreaming youth development into Strategies and Plans of municipalities, in particular, the Integrated Youth Development Plans should be implemented during the 2015/16 and 2016/17 IDP cycles. This will ensure that youth development is properly fostered, and is coherent. Implementing some of the above proposals will ensure that going into the 4th democratic local government dispensation youth development is at the heart of local government. This will happen where the youth is fully engaged through various phases of developing youth development policies and programmes, from conceptualising to implementing and monitoring and evaluating. This will give birth to a local government willing to support meaningful roles for young people in decision-making, (Power, et al. 2009). Such a system locates the crucial role local government has to play in youth development, within parameters prescribed by legislative obligations. It will impose the obligation upon local government to take cognisance of youth in all its business. ∎

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THE TIMBUKTU MANUSCRIPTS

Further evidence of Africa's contribution to Civilisation

It is a paradox of history that the majority of people today of all backgrounds, including those in the African Diaspora, tend to know little about pre-colonial Africa's contribution to our world.

By Mohamed Essa Suliman

After the decline of the Nile Valley civilisations of Egypt and Nubia, while Europe was experiencing its Dark Ages, several leading civilisations in Africa such as the Axum Empire, the Kingdom of Ghana, the Mali Empire, the Songhai Empire, the Ethiopian Empire, the Mossi Kingdoms and the Benin Empire emerged in a continent-wide renaissance. An online article published by the *Atlanta Blackstar* titled "Seven Medieval African Kingdoms Everyone Should Know About" details the formation of the Mali Empire which dominated West Africa. It states that:

The Mali Empire was founded by Mansa (King) Sundiata Keita and became renowned for the wealth of its rulers, especially Mansa Musa. He was the grandson of Sundiata's half-brother, and led Mali at a time of great prosperity, during which trade tripled. During his rule, Mansa Musa doubled the land area of Mali; it became a larger kingdom than any in Europe at the time.

The cities of Mali became important trading centers for all of West Africa, as well as famous centers of wealth, culture and learning. Timbuktu, an important city in Mali, became one of the major cultural centers not only of Africa but of the entire world. Vast libraries and Islamic universities were built. These became meeting places of the finest poets, scholars and artists of Africa and the Middle East.

When studying these leading civilisations in Africa there is sufficient evidence that established trading

networks existed between Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. This proves that economic, political and scientific development during this period was perhaps more advanced than in other continents.

Many historians have taken the view that Africa had no history, culture, or civilisation prior to its contact with the Europeans. The 19th century German philosopher, Hegel, simply declared: "At this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again. For it is no historical part of the World: it has no movement and development to exhibit". Over a century later Oxford university professor Hugh Trevor-Roper echoed Hegel when he stated "Perhaps in the future there is only the history of Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness, and darkness is not the subject of history".

This notion that Africans have contributed little to world civilisation is one which has often been taken for granted thanks to the narrow Afro-pessimistic depictions of Africa, which rarely extend past poverty, famine, war, genocide, political unrest and disease. It is a paradox of history that the majority of people today of all backgrounds, including those in the African Diaspora, tend to know little about pre-colonial Africa's contribution to our world.

Although Timbuktu was founded as a commercial centre for trade in the early 11th century, it played a significant role as a centre of learning and in the spread of Islamic Knowledge in Africa from the 13th to 16th centuries. The civilisations of the great West African Kingdoms reached their height in the same period, although their origins are much earlier.

Writing for National Geographic News on January 30, 2013, under the title, "Timbuktu's Vulnerable Manuscripts Are City's Gold", Peter Gwin said:

The written word is deeply rooted in Timbuktu's rich history. The city emerged as a wealthy center of trade, Islam, and learning during the 13th century, attracting a number of Sufi religious scholars. They in turn took on students, forming schools affiliated with Timbuktu's three main mosques.

The scholars imported parchment and vellum manuscripts via the caravan system that connected northern Africa with the Mediterranean and Arabia. Wealthy families had the documents copied and illuminated by local scribes, building extensive libraries containing works of religion, art, mathematics, medicine, astronomy, history, geography, and culture.

The Timbuktu manuscripts reveal that during the Middle Ages an advanced and highly literate culture thrived in Africa. This clearly refutes the stereotypical depictions of Africa as a primitive society with no written history, literature or philosophy, thus giving a new perspective on Africa's contribution to the development of

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human society.

The discovery and preservation of the Timbuktu manuscripts indeed marked a turning point in the history of Africa and its contribution to civilisation. In an address by then President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, at the opening of the Timbuktu Script and Scholarship Manuscripts on August 7, 2008 at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town he said:

They open up possibilities for thinking in new ways about the world. Indeed, the manuscripts from Timbuktu provide us with the opportunity to look at history afresh.

The libraries of Timbuktu force us to think anew about the very notion of a library and an archive. They help us to take a closer look at the manuscripts as documents reflecting human effort and communication,

and as documents with genealogies that include other works produced elsewhere.

Cumulatively, these items are a unique archive; they are an archive of their unique content but also an archive of the history of a unique tradition of book production.

The Timbuktu manuscripts point to a dense archive that is in reality only beginning to be unearthed and discovered in new ways and we are proud to be part of this exciting process.

In our effort to advertise this legacy we are also saying that there is an urgent need to rethink African history, there is an urgent need to do more research and produce a new body of knowledge about Africa and there is an urgent need for Africa to define herself.

The history of Timbuktu clearly shows that Africa and Africans have contributed to what we now consider Western Civilisation. The recent launch of the first two books in the Timbuktu Manuscript Series published by the Madina Institute and the Muslim Education Institute Trust in South Africa has once again kindled a new interest in Timbuktu and Africa's diverse Islamic history and civilisations. The books are *Qisaat-Dul Qurnain, Tale of the Two Horned one*, which tells the tale of Alexander the Great, his travels, battles and conquests; and *Curing Disease and Defects – Both Apparent and Hidden*.

It is however unfortunate that there is still so much denial of Africa's contributions to world civilisation in academic curricula and the popular media, despite growing evidence to the contrary. The mission of the Muslim Education Institute Trust states that it hopes to translate as many manuscripts as possible, and to publish at least ten books by the end of 2017. The translation of these manuscripts by the trust together with their partners will go a long way towards creating the paradigm shift needed, and provide an opportunity for academics, students of Islamic studies and African history to discover Timbuktu's contribution to history, and restore pride and honour to Africa's intellectual and Islamic legacy. ■

'Deadliest Terror in the World' – The West's Latest Gift to Africa

A former Chief of Staff of UK land forces, Major-General Jonathan Shaw, wrote that Colonel Gaddafi was a "lynchpin" of the "informal Sahel security plan", whose removal therefore led to a foreseeable collapse of security across the entire region.

By Dan Glazebrook

Nigeria's Boko Haram is now officially the deadliest terror group in the world. That it has reached this position is a direct consequence of NATO's war on Libya – and one that was perhaps not entirely unintended.

According to a report just released by Global Terrorism Index, Boko Haram were responsible for 7,512 deaths in 2014, compared to 6,073 attributed to ISIS, representing a quadrupling of their total killings in 2013. In the past week alone, bombings conducted by the group have killed eight people on a bus in Maiduguri; a family of five in Fotokol, Cameroon; fifteen people in a crowded marketplace in Kano; and thirty-two people outside a mosque in Yola.

In 2009, the year they took up arms, Boko Haram had nothing like the capacity to mount such operations, and their equipment remained primitive; but by 2011, that had begun to change. As Peter Weber noted in *The Week*, their weapons "shifted from relatively cheap AK-47s in the early days of its post-2009 embrace of violence to desert-ready combat vehicles and anti-aircraft/ anti-tank guns". This dramatic turnaround in the group's access to materiel was the direct result of NATO's war on Libya. A UN report published in early 2012 warned that "large quantities of weapons and ammunition from Libyan stockpiles were smuggled into the Sahel region", including "rocket-propelled grenades, machine guns with anti-aircraft visors, automatic rifles, ammunition, grenades, explosives (Semtex), and light anti-aircraft artillery (light caliber bi-tubes) mounted on

vehicles", and probably also more advanced weapons such as surface-to-air missiles and MANPADS (man-portable air-defence systems). NATO had effectively turned over the entire armoury of an advanced industrial state to the region's most sectarian militias: groups such as the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and Boko Haram.

The earliest casualty of NATO's war outside Libya was Mali. Taureg fighters who had worked in Gaddafi's security forces fled Libya soon after Gaddafi's government was overthrown, and mounted an insurgency in Northern Mali. They in turn were overthrown, however, by Al Qaeda's regional affiliates – flush with Libyan weaponry – who then turned Northern Mali into another base from which to train and launch attacks. Boko Haram was a key beneficiary. As Brendan O' Neill wrote in an excellent 2014 article worth quoting at length:

"Boko Haram benefited enormously from the vacuum created in once-peaceful northern Mali following the West's ousting of Gaddafi. In two ways: first, it honed its guerrilla skills by fighting alongside more practised Islamists in Mali, such as AQIM; and second, it accumulated some of the estimated 15,000 pieces of Libyan military hardware and weaponry that leaked across the country's borders following the sweeping aside of Gaddafi. In April 2012, Agence France-Presse *reported that 'dozens of Boko Haram fighters' were assisting AQIM and others in northern Mali.*

"This had a devastating knock-on effect in Nigeria. As the Washington Post reported in early 2013, 'The Islamist insurgency in northern Nigeria has entered a more violent phase as militants return to the fight with sophisticated weaponry and tactics learned on the battlefields of nearby Mali'. A Nigerian analyst said 'Boko Haram's level of audacity was high [in late 2012]', immediately following the movement of some of its militants to the Mali region."

That NATO's Libya war would have such consequences was both thoroughly predictable, and widely predicted. As early as June 2011, African Union Chairman Jean Ping

warned NATO that "Africa's concern is that weapons that are delivered to one side or another…are already in the desert and will arm terrorists and fuel trafficking". And both Mali and Algeria strongly opposed NATO's destruction of Libya precisely because of the massive destabilisation it would bring to the region. They argued, wrote O'Neill, *"that such a violent upheaval in a region like north Africa could have potentially catastrophic consequences. The fallout from the bombing is 'a real source of concern', said the rulers of Mali in October 2011. In fact, as the BBC reported, they had been arguing since 'the start of the conflict in Libya' – that is, since the civil conflict between Benghazi-based militants and Gaddafi began – that 'the fall of Gaddafi would have a destabilising effect in the region'."* In an op-ed following the collapse of Northern Mali, a former Chief of Staff of UK land forces, Major-General Jonathan Shaw, wrote that Colonel Gaddafi was a "lynchpin" of the "informal Sahel security plan", whose removal therefore led to a foreseeable collapse of security across the entire region. The rise of Boko Haram has been but one result – and not without strategic benefits for the West.

Nigeria was once seen by the US as one of its most dependable allies on the African continent. Yet, following a pattern that is repeated across the entire global South, in recent years the country has been moving ever closer to China. The headline grabbing deal was the $23 billion contract signed in 2010 with the Chinese to construct three fuel refineries, adding an extra 750,000 barrels per day to Nigeria's oil producing capacity. This was followed up in 2013 with an agreement to increase Nigerian oil exports to China tenfold by 2015 (from 20,000 to 200,000 barrels per day). But China's economic interests go far beyond that. A Nigerian diplomat interviewed by China-Africa specialist Deborah Brautigam told her that "The Chinese are trying to get involved in every sector of our economy. If you look at the West, it's oil, oil, oil and nothing else." In 2006, China issued an $8.3 billion low-interest loan to Nigeria to fund the building of a major new

railway, and the following year China built a telecommunications satellite for Nigeria. Indeed, of last year's $18 billion worth of bilateral trade between the two countries, over 88% was in the non-petroleum sector, and by 2012 Nigerian imports from China (it's biggest import partner) totalled more than that of its second and third biggest import partners, the US and India, combined. This kind of trade and investment is of the type that is seriously aiding Africa's ability to add value to its products – and is thereby undermining the Western global economic order, which relies on Africa remaining an under-developed exporter of cheap raw materials.

Nor has China's co-operation been limited to economics. In 2004, China

> **❝Is it such a stretch, then, to think that the US might actually want to cripple its strategic rival, China, by destabilising her allies, such as Nigeria?❞**

supported Nigeria's bid for a seat on the UN Security Council, and in 2006, Nigeria signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of a Strategic Partnership with China – the first African country to do so. It is a partnership with a solid base of support – according to a BBC poll conducted in 2011, 85% of Nigerians have a positive view of China; perhaps not surprising when even pro-US security thinktanks like the Jamestown Foundation admit that "China's links with Nigeria are qualitatively different from the West's, and as a result, may potentially produce benefits for the ordinary people of Nigeria". Symbolising the importance of the relationship, current Chinese Premier Li Keqiang made Nigeria his first foreign destination after taking up the role in 2013.

This growing South-South co-operation is not viewed positively by the US, which is witnessing what it once saw as a dependable client state

edge increasingly out of its orbit. The African Oil Policy Initiative Group – a consortium of US Congressmen, military officials and energy lobbyists – had already concluded in a 2002 report that China was a rival of the US for influence in West Africa that would need to be deterred by military means, and China has been increasingly viewed by US policymakers as a strategic threat to be contained militarily ever since. A report by US Chief of Staff Martin Dempsey in July 2015 highlighted China as one of the major 'security threats' to US domination, for example – although Obama's 'Pivot to Asia' policy had already made this clear back in 2013.

Is it such a stretch, then, to think that the US might actually *want* to cripple its strategic rival, China, by destabilising her allies, such as Nigeria? After all, despite continued US links to Nigeria, it is China, more than any other foreign partner, who has the most to lose from the Boko Haram insurgency, as the Jamestown Foundation makes clear: "Unlike most other foreign actors in the country, [the Chinese] are investing in fixed assets, such as refineries and factories, with the intention of developing a long-term economic relationship. Consequently, stability and good governance in Nigeria is advantageous for Beijing because it is the only way to guarantee that Chinese interests are protected". If the US increasingly sees its own strategy in terms of undermining Chinese interests – and there is every sign that it does – the corollary of this statement is surely that *in*stability in Nigeria is the only way to guarantee that Chinese interests are threatened – and, therefore, that US strategic goals are served. The US's lacklustre efforts in backing Nigerian efforts against Boko Haram – from blocking arms deliveries last year, to funding the fight in all of Nigeria's neighbours, but not Nigeria itself – as well as its suspension of Nigerian crude oil imports from July 2014 ("a decision that helped plunge Nigeria into one of its most severe financial crises", according to one national daily) would certainly indicate that. ∎

This article has also been published on RT.com.

Africa cannot advance without investing in science

By The Department of Science & Technology

Across the world, nations increasingly seek to harness the potential of science as an instrument for growth and development. Science is also an integral part of the global effort to advance sustainable development.

Against this backdrop Africa's inaugural Science Forum South Africa took place on 8-9 December, attracting scientists, researchers, academics, government leaders and other stakeholders from all over the world.

Held under the theme, 'Igniting conversations about Science,' the forum sought to foster public engagement on science and technology, showcase science in South Africa, and to provide a platform for building strong African and global partnerships.

"Our key motivation is to foster public engagement on science and technology, to showcase science in South Africa, and to provide a platform for building strong African and global partnerships," said Minister of Science

and Technology Naledi Pandor during her opening address in Pretoria.

The Minister said the primary rationale for the conference was the "conviction that science, technology and innovation can and must play a central role in achieving sustainable development.

"Africa cannot advance without investing in science. At present, there are efforts to enhance the status of science and to increase investment in research development and innovation.

"Unfortunately, science is still at the margins of government attention – seen as less significant than water scarcity, food security and disease burdens. Yet all of these can be addressed through science," the Minister explained.

Minster Pandor urged African Governments and institutions to devote increased attention to developing robust national systems of innovation.

"We must have eco-systems that allow a smooth flow and take up of creative ideas from knowledge generating institutions through to enterprises and industry. We need joint industry research, public private partnerships, technology diffusion and movement of human capital," said Minister Pandor.

The event was also attended by African Union Chairperson, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Mr Koji Omi, founder of Japan's renowned Science and Technology in Society Forum, Dr Jean Claude Burgelman, European Commission and Professor Gordon McBean, International Council of Science, among others.

Dr Dlamini-Zuma echoed Minister Pandor's sentiments, unpacking the AU's Africa Agenda 2063 (the AU's blueprint for sustainable development for the continent).

Agenda 2063 is a 50-year development framework for the continent, to build an Africa that is integrated, people-centered, peaceful and prosperous, and takes it rightful place in the world. Agenda 2063 does this by prioritising investments in people, including education and health.

Dr Dlamini-Zuma said that Africa Agenda 2063 also recognised the importance of investing in the continent's young people.

"We have to invest in their health. Secondly we have to invest in their education, with a major focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths skills as well as innovation and research since these are the skills we will require to modernise Africa. These skills will also bring prosperity. This outlook is rooted in a firm belief on education as an equaliser, in the context of poverty, inequality and underdevelopment. Education focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) is a definite equaliser as it's the quickest way you can break intergenerational poverty in families and communities. We must ensure that young people are skilled in these areas," said the AU Commission Chairperson.

Dr Dlamini-Zuma said Agenda 2063 is also looking to improve agriculture. "Science is critical in improving th quality and productivity of agriculture. African women who are 75% of the participants in the sector continue to use hand held hoes, so there is no chance of improving their productivity with such equipment. Science and engineering are very critical in ensuring that we have modern equipment, that we understand the soil, the seeds and the climate so as to revolutionise agriculture and to get into the full value chain up to and including agro-processing and businesses. She concluded by emphasising that "Science is critical!" ■

science & technology

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The Justification for Affirmative Action

The EEA therefore attempts to achieve a delicate balance between prohibiting negative discrimination and promoting reverse or positive discrimination.

By Anton A Fabbriciani

In the old South Africa many people were discriminated against unfairly and measures were required to address the inequalities of the past. In the workplace in particular it was (and still is) necessary to introduce measures to ensure equal opportunities for all those people who were disadvantaged by the discriminatory laws and practices of the past. It is a known fact that women and black people did not generally enjoy the same benefits and advantages as white men.

Hence the requirement in section 9 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa that measures be taken to protect and advance people who have been disadvantaged by unfair discrimination.

Affirmative Action is the measure introduced by law to create equal opportunities in the workplace for all peoples of South Africa.

Affirmative action is a programme or policy in terms of which a group of people are accorded preferential treatment on the basis of some common characteristic.

This means that affirmative action as such, inevitably discriminates against members of all groups who do not possess those characteristics. However, affirmative action is defensible because it seeks to make good the effects of past discrimination.

Objectively, evaluated affirmative action is defensible only while it seeks to attain its avowed objective.

To be defensible, therefore, an affirmative action programme must of necessity be temporary and its use must be limited to promoting the interest only of the previously disadvantaged.

The South African approach to affirmative action is embodied in the Constitution and the Employment Equity Act.

Section 9 (2) states:

"To promote the achievement of equality legislative and other measures designed to protect and advance persons, or categories of person, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken."

Affirmative action is defined in the Employment Equity Act as measures designed to ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal opportunities and are equally represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce of a designated employer.

This definition however, suggests further limits. Firstly, the beneficiaries of affirmative action must be suitably qualified. And secondly, they must be afforded equal, not greater opportunities than other groups.

Designated groups are defined as

black people, woman and people with disabilities. 'Black people' means Africans, Coloureds and Indians, and 'people with disabilities' means people who have a long-term or recurring physical or mental impairment which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in employment.

This article will demonstrate that justification for affirmative action is upheld in the Constitution of South Africa, and in the Employment Equity Act (EEA) which was designed to bring equality to the workplace and to re-address injustices. It will show that the EEA also provides for the defence in relation to any claim of unfair discrimination.

Affirmative Action in Court

Section 6 (2) (a) EEA serves to protect employers who apply affirmative action measures from attacks from other employees (mostly white males) who claim that they are being discriminated against.

To escape being branded unfair an affirmative action appointment must be consistent with the purpose of the EEA, which are the following:

- to promote the constitutional right of equality and the exercise of true democracy;
- to eliminate unfair discrimination in employment;
- to ensure the implementation of employment equity;
- to redress the effects of discrimination;
- to achieve a diverse workforce broadly representative of South Africans;
- to promote economic development and efficiency in the workplace; and
- to give effect to the obligations of the Republic as a member of the International Labour Organisation.

This in effect means that the granting of extravagant benefits that disproportionately enhance the position of members of formerly disadvantaged groups at the expense of others could conceivably go beyond the goals of the EEA.

Section 9 (5) of the constitution provides that discrimination on one of the prohibited grounds is unfair, *unless*

it is established that the discrimination is fair.

Section 6 (2) (a) of the EEA is more emphatic. It does not create a rebuttable presumption of unfairness, but states categorically that any affirmative action measures consistent with the purpose of the Act are not unfair.

This means that once the employer proves that an affirmative action appointment is consistent with the purpose of the EEA, it is the end of the matter.

The first claim by disappointed candidates to be heard under the EEA was *Coetzer & others v Minister of Safety & Security & another*. The applicants were highly trained and experienced inspectors in the bomb squad of the

> ❝To be defensible, therefore, an affirmative action programme must of necessity be temporary and its use must be limited to promoting the interest only of the previously disadvantaged.❞

South African Police Service. Due to the fact that they were white males they could apply only for certain posts open to non-designated employees. When these were filled they applied for designated posts. Their applications were rejected even though there had been no applicants from members of designated groups.

It has been held that when employees are discriminated against by the adoption of affirmative action measures the employer must be able to show that it acted in terms of a coherent and defensible plan. There was no such plan.

This was one of the grounds on which the Minister was held to have acted unfairly in *Public Servants Association of SA & Others v Minister of Justice & Other* in which the criteria adopted by the Department of Justice

to promote blacks and women before highly experience white men were stigmatised by the court as irrational.

The same approach was adopted by the arbitrator in *MWU obo Van Coller v Eskom* in which the applicant employee, a white woman, had been overlooked for promotion in favour of a coloured woman although the white woman had been recommended as the top candidate by a selection committee.

Affirmative action plans must be implemented fairly. An example is the case of *Du Preez v Minister of Justice & Constitutional Development & Other*, decided under the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000. The applicant, a district magistrate, claimed that he had been discriminated against by not having been given a fair chance to compete for one of a number of vacant posts of regional court magistrate in Port Elizabeth. He had not been put onto the short-list. Two black women each with less than two years' experience as district magistrates were appointed.

The department claimed that it had favoured black female candidates to fulfil its constitutional imperative to promote representatives on the bench.

While race and gender were irrelevant to the assessment of magistrates these criteria were acceptable in the light of the constitutional endorsement of the need to advance the previously disadvantaged.

However, the question in this case was whether the discrimination against the complainant by the appointment committee was fair?

In reply the court had to ask itself whether the discrimination reasonably and justifiably differentiates between persons according to objectively determinate criteria intrinsic to the activity concerned. Regional magistrates need insight and maturity for which experience is required.

A proper and fair assessment of the merits of the complainant's application could not have taken place without consideration of his previous experience as a magistrate against that of the other candidates.

No accounts had been taken of

the candidates' profiles and CVs or of their legal knowledge, leadership and management skills and other personal qualities. Ignoring these criteria during the final stage of the selection process was neither fair to the candidates themselves nor in the interest of society.

Judged against its own terms and objectives the selection policy applied in the selection of PE magistrates was, therefore, irrational. The criteria used in the short-listing process were set aside and the department was ordered to re-advertise the posts.

If challenged in court thus, an alleged affirmative action plan will be scrutinised to establish whether it is indeed consistent with its purpose as stipulated in the Employment Equity Act.

Furthermore, the Labour Court has developed certain principles for testing the validity of affirmative action measures.

The Labour Court reached a similar conclusion in *Municipal & Allied Workers v Greater Louis Trichardt Transitional Local Council* in which the only reason cited for the appointment of a black man to the position of town treasurer was that he was black.

The successful candidate had received a lower score during the pre-appointment test than other candidates.

The Court held that an employer can rely on affirmative action as a defence only if it has an affirmative action policy. In the absence of such a policy the failure to explain why an apparently weak candidate had been appointed gave rise to the presumption that there was no justification for the appointment.

The Court also observed that an employer also owed it to other previously disadvantage candidates to ensure that appointments were made from the best among the designated candidates.

Equal Opportunity

The EEA aims to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunity and the fair treatment of employees and applicants for employment and ensuring equitable representation of suitably qualified people from designated groups in all occupational categories and levels.

Court cases have shown that it is sufficient that the abovementioned factors are applied in a manner calculated to advance the legitimate aims of affirmative action.

It has further shown in court cases that the EEA gives a broader constitutional right to equality as enshrined in section 9 of the constitution.

Cases further show that the EEA is seeking to achieve this task by two means: firstly, to prohibit unfair discrimination; and secondly, to promote affirmative action.

The EEA therefore attempts to achieve a delicate balance between prohibiting negative discrimination and promoting reverse or positive discrimination.

The Code of Good Practice issued

> **❝Firstly, the beneficiaries of affirmative action must be suitably qualified. And secondly, they must be afforded equal, not greater opportunities than other groups.❞**

in terms of the EEA states that the objectives of an employment equity plan should be aligned with and included in the broader business strategy of the employer.

The Code of Good Practice on the Integration of Employment Equity into Human Resources Policies and Practices reiterates that employers can increase productivity, motivation and resourcefulness in the workplace when they invest in their people and treat them with fairness and equity.

Discrimination means different treatment of different people, as explored in the above discussion of affirmative action. Therefore, it is not discrimination *per se* that should be eradicated but rather unfair discrimination.

Furthermore, it is not differentiation as such that is prohibited by the Constitution and the Employment Equity Act but rather invidious differentiation or unfair discrimination. This can be done through the elimination of unfair discrimination and the implementation of affirmative action to redress disadvantages experienced by people from designated groups.

According to section 2 of the EEA the purpose is to ensure that people from designated groups enjoy equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels of an employer's workforce.

To achieve this objective the Act requires employers to eliminate unfair discrimination in their employment policies and practices.

Employers must also prepare and implement employment equity plans. These must contain specific affirmative action measures to achieve equitable representativity at all occupational levels. They must take measures to progressively reduce disproportionate income differentials and must report to the Department of Labour on their implementation and progress of employment equity.

Employers who fail to comply with their employment equity obligations will not be able to do business with the State.

The above discussion proves it is important to distinguish between the aim of employment equity and the manner which one goes about achieving it.

It also shows that, whereas the intention of employment equity legislation is largely uncontroversial, the means of achieving it are not. Consequently, one can expect constitutional challenges to certain aspects of the Act as well as to employers' interpretations of it and ways to implement it effectively.

So employment equity can broadly be summed up as a situation where all people truly have an equal chance in the workplace.

And how will this be achieved? By the implementation of the anti-discrimination measures as well as the affirmative action measures which are covered in Chapter II and Chapter III of the EEA and protected by the Constitution. ∎

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SOUTH AFRICA

On the Road to a Securocratic State?

It appears that our current JCPS cluster resembles the State Security Council of 1972. The SSC was established as a committee of cabinet, with the responsibility of overseeing the formulation and implementation of national policy and strategy in relation to the security of the Republic.

By Mohammed Haffejee

In April 2015, South Africa experienced a shock to its system from a geological point of view. Tremors in the Gauteng area have virtually been unheard of in the past. One theory is that a shift in tectonic plates resulted in the recent tremors.

Similarly, South African politics has experienced a series of tremors over recent years. So much so that theorists have attributed it to a tectonic shift in South African politics – constituting a paradigm shift in our political ideology. So what exactly is this paradigm shift and in which direction is it taking South Africa?

Different strokes for different folks

South Africa, for the last 20 years, has been a bastion of democracy, encapsulating human rights, freedom of speech, equality and tolerance. The Madiba vision of a shared value system raised South Africa to the zenith of diplomacy and negotiation across the global spectrum. Examples in this context have seen South Africa invited to various conflict centres around the world to steer disputing parties in the direction of peace and conflict resolution without violence. The Northern Ireland conflict and the Zimbabwean issue are great examples of South African diplomacy.

In Northern Ireland, the peace agreement between Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party and Gerry Adams' Sinn Fein laid the platform for a government of national unity. Adams went on record as telling his party members that the roles played by President Mbeki and Intelligence Minister Ronnie Kasrils amongst other notable South Africans, were

indispensable in establishing peace.

The Zimbabwe crisis presented Pretoria with an opportunity to employ its "quiet diplomacy" strategy. Certain International circles called for a robust aggressive approach to the crisis, by way of forcefully effecting a regime change in Zimbabwe. However, South Africa continued its strategy of "quiet diplomacy" resulting in relative stability in the region, and the eventual talks between the two parties involved in the crisis, that is the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF).

However, could the exportation of our democracy and values to other conflict zones imply the demise of democracy internally? Has the South African model reached its sell by date in that it is better suited to other entities and not to South Africa? Or has it changed?

Under the Zuma administration, the Protection of State Information Act, the "security upgrades" in Parliament and to the Presidential village in KZN seems to highlight a significant change in direction of domestic policy from inclusivity to that of exclusivity. In the previous administrations, civil society and other NGOs were given a platform to advise policy direction.

It was expected that this administration would follow suit if not be more inclusive. However, it appears that the direction has taken a significant shift. That vacuum, previously occupied by civil society, NGOs, universities and other free-thinkers has been filled by governmental securocratic think tanks such as the State Security Agency, SAPS, the Justice Department and the Department of Defence.

It appears that our current JCPS cluster resembles the State Security Council of 1972. The SSC was established as a committee of cabinet, with the responsibility of overseeing the formulation and implementation of national policy and strategy in relation to the security of the Republic.

Centralisation of Power

History seems to be repeating itself. State Security has been the nodal point for almost all decision-making matters in South Africa currently. Similarly

the previous nationalist government functioned in the same way.

State-centric security overshadowed matters concerning human or social security. In the past, scenes of Nyalas confronting and subjugating a group of protesting people is an example where state security took precedence over human security. A scene of that nature in a democracy of South Africa's calibre was something that people a decade ago would surely have assumed could never be seen or heard of ever again.

Unfortunately, the honest, brutal answer is an emphatic "YES". The Marikana massacre highlighted our domestic policy shift from negotiation and conflict resolution

> **"The militarisation of police and their unleashing violence on miners in Marikana represents the cold, hard truth that South Africa is a state at a very vital cross-road."**

experts to strong-arm securocrats. The militarisation of police and their unleashing violence on miners in Marikana represents the cold, hard truth that South Africa is a state at a very vital cross-road.

A Securocratic Foreign Policy

Let us take the example of South African foreign policy. The Post-Cold War period represented a "reshuffle of the deck" so to speak. International relations ideas had to be remodelled in shaping a new foreign policy.

The negative aspect of globalisation promoted free market economies on an unprecedented level worldwide. South Africa was no different, and government welcomed this new concept. The Madiba era premised foreign policy on the notion of the promotion of human rights, a result of the move away from extremist anti human rights ideology of the past, i.e. apartheid.

When Mbeki came to the helm of South Africa, a new genre emerged.

The African agenda was lobbied giving rise to the "African Renaissance". This foreign policy advance prompted the establishment of institutions such as the African Union (AU). Another complication in the Mbeki period was that pivotal point in world history known as "9/11".

The foreign policies of many states were now primarily dictated by a securocratic agenda. Pre-emptive strikes, invasion forces operating on foreign soil were now the order of the day. The new shift back to a bipolar logic seen previously during the Cold War seemed to confirm Samuel Huntington's theory, that of "a clash of civilizations", as first presented in 1992. This theory advocated that the West and Islam were on a collision course of magnanimous proportions highlighting the necessity of a security centred foreign policy agenda. This view was not embraced by the Mbeki cabinet.

However domestic politics saw Mbeki's leadership wane and an eventual loss to Zuma in Polokwane triggered a new mentality.

This new mentality gave rise to the securocratic nature of policy making. A new national interest doctrine had to be adopted. From Madiba's promotion of human rights to Mbeki's African Renaissance, Zuma's national interest which shapes foreign policy, which has yet to be publicised was recently developed by, (you guessed it), the State Security Apparatus.

Conclusion

South Africa can either pull itself back to an era of Madiba Magic, i.e. transparency and openness, values, principles and a common identity or continue into the direction where the state and particularly, state security takes the lead in all matters near and far. A conscious decision needs to be taken where democracy is limited to whatever the Securocrats deem fit, or the democracy of 1994 needs to be reborn.

The power struggle between democrats and securocrats is already present in almost all facets of South African political discourse. At this juncture, securocracy appears to have gained ground over democracy. However, it remains to be seen which will end up victorious. ∎

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Free State Public Works & Infrastructure Contributes to the Hlasela Basket of the Province through provision of sustainable infrastructure

Left: MEC D. Kotzee of Public Works & Infrastructure
Right: MEC Dora Kotzee of Public Works & Infrastructure and MEC Benny Malakoane of the Departmnet of Health in the Free Sate Province inspect one of the machines at the newly built ICU, Pelonmi Hospital in Bloemfontein.

By The Department of Public Works & Infrastructure – Free State Province

Infrastructure Development is a catalyst of sustainable economic activity and prosperity. Over the last 5 years the Free State Department of Public Works and Infrastructure has diligently carried out a its mandate, creating and maintaining key aspects of infrastructure that have kept the Free State Province on an upward trajectory towards defeating the stubborn challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

Through the implementation of public employment programmes such as the widely-appreciated Expanded Public Works Programme, the department has created thousands of work and training opportunities that keep residents of the Free State confident that they have a Government that is committed to realising the ideal of creating a better life for all.

Through our aggressive infrastructure development and EPWP initiatives, the Department has successfully completed over 242 capital projects, spent over R1.7 billion and created over 295 thousand work opportunities, reaching communities across the entire Free State. Through the Township Revitalisation Programme, the Department has paved over 70 kilometres of 16 township streets. In assisting municipalities to sustain service delivery, the Department has paid an amount of over R1.6 billion for Rates and Taxes; and this was all achieved between the period 2009/2010 and 2014/2015.

The core functions of the Department are:
- the planning, design, construction and maintenance of social and economic infrastructure;
- the management of provincial government owned property and facilitation of rented property;
- the provision of Provincial Government office accommodation;
- the coordination, implementation

and monitoring compliance to the EPWP principles; and

• the provision of Security Services in buildings occupied by more than one Department.

In collaboration with other departments, the Department has implemented infrastructure projects across all sectors in the context of the Government priorities of health, education, the fight against crime, the creation of decent work, rural development and land reform. These include new and special schools, hospitals, libraries, community halls, multi-purpose centres and crèches. Below we highlight some examples:

1.   The Seisa Ramabodu Stadium in Rocklands, Mangaung

Situated at the heart of the Mangaung Metro and home "Siwelele" Bloemfontein Celtics Football Club, the magnificent Seisa Ramabodu Stadium underwent a R340 million make-over. The stadium was demolished in 2012 after the pitch was deemed unsafe by the management of the Premier Soccer League (PSL) in 2011.

The new stadium has the following features:

• a world class roofed 18,000 seater multi-sport facility;

• eight kiosks constructed within the parameters of the stadium to cater for small and informal enterprises who wish to sell to stadium patrons during sporting events;

• a new water efficient reticulation system;

• upgrades to the tennis court;

• the construction of new running tracks;

• paving in and around the stadium;

• A new covered VIP / Media area; and

• new security offices and ticketing offices.

Over 541 work opportunities were created during the course of the project. Of those, 127 were local unskilled labourers who were given training and then contributed to the construction of the new stadium. R12m was spent on empowering local businesses and R17m was outsourced to BEE companies. This demonstrates the aggression at which the Department is pursuing the radical economic transformation agenda. We

are proud to have completed the project and are officially handing it over to the Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation on 21 October 2015.

2.   The Albert Nzula Hospital in Trompsburg, Xhariep

The brand new R380 million District Hospital is situated along the busy National Road N1, which is the main route between two major cities Bloemfontein and Colesberg. The Hospital features:

• an administration block;

• male and female wards with 74 beds and a linen bank;

• a maternity section and a paediatric ward;

• Emergency Medical Services and operating theatres;

• rehabilitation and occupational therapy;

• an Out-Patients Department ;

• an X-Ray department;

• a pharmacy;

• kitchens; a mortuary; and

• a beautiful staff housing complex, including revamped roads and attractive landscaping.

This project provided over 8779 work opportunities.

The hospital will greatly benefit the Xhariep District providing access to health care of premium quality without travelling long distances. Motorists traveling on the busy N1, which has a significantly high incidence of accidents, will also be able to get medical attention, thus decreasing fatal deaths on the N1. The hospital will also ignite the local economy and create many more job opportunities in various sectors.

3. The refurbished Intensive Care Unit at Pelonomi Hospital in Heidedal, Mangaung

The Pelonomi Hospital is a Tertiary Hospital, providing training for health professionals. Access to the hospital is mostly by referral from other institutions, although there is a casualty facility providing for acute emergencies. Pelonomi Hospital is also home to the Pelonomi Private Hospital which is the only private hospital in the Free State province situated in a previously disadvantaged community area.

The scope of the project was to revitalise and rollout functional changes to the existing Intensive Care Unit in Block E of the Hospital. The value of the project was R47.5m and 81 job opportunities were created; 18 of these were young people; 13 unskilled labourers were exposed to new job opportunities and 15 received formal building trade training.

4.   The Bainsvlei Combined School Hostel at Bainvlei, Mangaung

The project is part of a bigger Programme, led by the Department of Education, to roll out schools hostels in elegible farm schools across the Province. This will create an enabling environment for farm school learners to stay in school and continue education as opposed to leaving the schooling system to become farm labourers at an early age.

The Bainsvlei population, where the school is situated, is approximately four thousand and the school currently has 800 learners enrolled. The scope of the project was to construct a new school hostel to provide boarding facilities to 300 learners, 150 girls and 150 boys. The project started on 12 March 2012 and practical completion was taken in July 2015. The value of the contract was R42m. The project created 135 work opportunities. This project has recently used as a benchmark by the Limpopo Provincial Government which hopes to deliver such infrastructure in the future.

In collaboration with the Department of Education, the Department will expand this programme to the following schools:
o Trompsburg New Special School in Xhariep
o Fouriesburg Breda School in Dihlabeng
o Boitumelong Special School in Thaba-Nchu, Mangaung
o Leboneng Special School in Welkom, Matjhabeng

Through this project, the Department has managed to create job opportunities, training youth in different trades. There has also been an increase in economic activity around the project

5. The Housing Project in Ficksburg, Thabo Mofutsanyana

This project involved the construction of housing units in Caledon Park, Ficksburg, using the labour intensive massification method and the department of Public Works & Infrastructure's internal technical professional teams.

Caledon Park is situated between the slopes of the Imperani Mountains and the west banks of the Caledon River in Ficksburg, Setsoto Local Municipality. Caledon Park is largely populated by a Coloured Community, who occupy a relatively old segment of the township built by the Apartheid Government pre-1994.

The old Apartheid Government-built houses consisted of one four-roomed structure (55 square metres), sub-divided by a single wall and shared between two families, were demolished to make way for beautiful 62 square metre houses. These two-bedroomed houses have a lounge, a kitchen, a full bathroom, tiled floors, a tiled roof, aluminium door frames, a veranda and palisade fencing.

Perhaps the beautiful story behind these houses is that they were built using the Department of Human Settlement's housing grant of R137 thousand per house. These homes demonstrate the capability of the Department and call into question the quality of some of the basic housing contractors that have worked with the government in the recent past.

6. The Township Revitalisation Programme of the EPWP that has been implemented in 16 townships across the Province

The Expanded Public Works Programme remains our key programme for job creation and driving economic growth that meets the needs of our people, contributing to building sustainable livelihoods. We continue to intensify our efforts to fight poverty, develop skills and create work opportunities. The Department of Public Works & Infrastructure is the coordinator of all EPWP projects in the Province, including municipalities.

From 2009 to date, EPWP has created in excess of 295, 154 work opportunities. EPWP is made up of

No	Township	Length of road	Cost	Beneficiaries employed
1	Tumahole, Parys	2.1 km	R23m	122
2	Mokwallo, Vredefort	10.4 km	R62m	341
3	Ntswanatsatsi, Cornelia	6.3 km	R24m	233
4	Marabastad, Kroonstad	7.1 km	R35m	213
5	Itumeleng, Jagersfontein	5.6 km	R35m	185
6	Meloding, Virginia	2.1 km	R23m	122
7	Phomolong, Hennenman	4.7 km	R21m	152
8	Batho, Bloemfontein	5.8 km	R44m	242
9	Leratswana, Arlington	4.0 km	R34m	292
10	Kutlwanong, Odendaalsrus	1.4 km	R15m	139
11	Thaba-Nchu	4.4 km	R27m	270
12	Nyakallong, Allanridge	2.2 km	R23m	194
13	Bolokanang, Petrusburg	2.1 km	R23	122
14	Phiritona, Heilbron	1.6 km	R19m	80

various programmes, namely the Township Revitalisation Programme; Cemetery Cleaning Programme; Community Works Programme; Cash-for-Waste Programme and Contractor Development.

The Township Revitalisation Programme is unique to the Province of the Free State and involves the upgrading of low volume roads from gravel to paving utilising interlocking pavers to enhance the image of infrastructure in the townships. The TRP alone has created over 2 845 work opportunities and has seen over 70 kms of township streets paved across 16 townships since 2011. A total of 793 participants have been trained on Kerb laying, Concrete Batching and Health and Safety. In the 2014/15 financial year alone, the TRP project was successfully implemented in the townships in the table on the right.

In this year alone, we have extended the TRP project to Winburg, Excelsior, Tshiame, Dewersdorp, Wepener, Hertzogville and Tweespruit.

7. Administration

The achievement of a Clean Audit Opinion for the 2014/15 financial year is a clear demonstration of the genuine commitment of the Department to the principles of clean government. The Department gradually improved from a qualified audit opinion in the 2012/13 financial year; to an unqualified opinion in the 2013/14 financial year and finally achieving a Clean Audit in the 2014/15 financial year.

In conclusion

The Department will continue to ensure that the Free State's good story is allowed to sustain its presence and capture the imagination of the people of the Free State and South Africa alike by changing their lives for the better.

Siyaqhuaba!

Rea Hlasela!

public works & infrastructure
Department of
Public Works & Infrastructure
FREE STATE PROVINCE

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THROUGH A CREATIVE
LENS

So many people are forced to flee, leaving behind their homes, and often their families and friends and everything familiar and beloved. Forced into slavery, or fleeing from wars, famines, oppression, poverty…   Thousands of South Africans went into exile during the apartheid years. Now hundreds of thousands of Africans are fleeing the chaos and destruction caused by neo-colonial and imperialist interventions aimed at removing leaders who do not follow the dictates of Washington.

The three poems published below were written in the 1970s by John Samuel, who says writing poetry 'helped me to understand myself and what was happening around me'. John is an activist and a public intellectual, who after returning from exile became a Deputy Director General in the Department of National Education and was later Chief Executive of the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

By John Samuel:

Arriving in a New Land

I have come to a new land,
With the air uncertain.
To find the strangeness and loneliness
Cutting into the quiet corners of my soul,
Like the cold wind that blows through my thin cotton trousers.

I stand and see the grime,
And the houses broken in their dreariness,
Snow falls and covers the dirt.

Into the underground I, in a new world that cuts out the sky,
I descend.
And a demented woman, in circles muttering 'go home bloody niggers…'

Packing Crates

Yet again I sit in an empty house,
Surrounded by crates that catalogue
The journeys of my life.
Each crate storing an experience,
Packed and unpacking,
Living and attempting to live.

Elmina, Cape Coast, Ghana

The view from the top is attractive.
For fifty pesewas the guard will show you around.
I go down alone,
Even as his voice pours out the repeated phrases.
I go down alone,
To darkness that seizes life.
Darkness fused with the stones of the wall.
Into this darkness they took you.
You once went down alone. I stop to listen to your voice, catching only its whispers
As the seas whip lash outside.

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