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# The Thinker

A PAN AFRICAN QUARTERLY FOR THOUGHT LEADERS

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## Thabo Mbeki on

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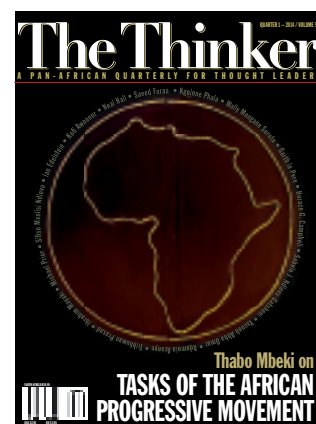
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# In This Issue

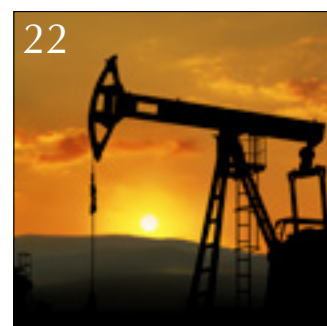
- 2 Letter from the Editor
- 6 Contributors to this Edition
- 8 Tribute To President Nelson Mandela: Hero Of Heroes  
Kgolone Phala
- 10 Madiba  
Wally Mongane Serote
- 12 Tasks of the African Progressive Movement  
Thabo Mbeki
- 22 A 'crude awakening': Revisiting the Political Economy of Oil in Africa  
Garth le Pere
- 28 Dismantle AFRICOM! The Need for a New Engagement with Africa  
Horace G. Campbell
- 34 Eurocentrism, Coloniality and the Myths of Decolonisation of Africa  
Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni
- 40 The Uprisings  
Yacoob Abba Omar
- 46 Empowering Women in a Global Value Chain  
Coca-Cola
- 48 Identity Defections and the Wretched Conflicts of Black "Earthlings"  
Ademola Araoye
- 54 SAB Youth Entrepreneurship Programme Participants Create Jobs  
South African Breweries
- 56 Copper Mining and Environmental Challenges in Zambia  
Dr Tribhuwan Prasad
- 64 The importance of infrastructure development  
Ibrahim Mayaki
- 66 One Africa, One Voice  
Pan African Parliament
- 68 Energy and Climate Change  
Michael Prior
- 74 The African National Congress and Internationalism: The Early Years  
Sifiso Mxolisi Ndlovu
- 80 Health Care Under Attack  
Ian Edelstein
- 86 Through a Creative Lens  
Poetry by Kofi Awoonor & Neal Hall
- 88 Readers' Forum  
Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika (God Bless Africa) by Saeed Furaa



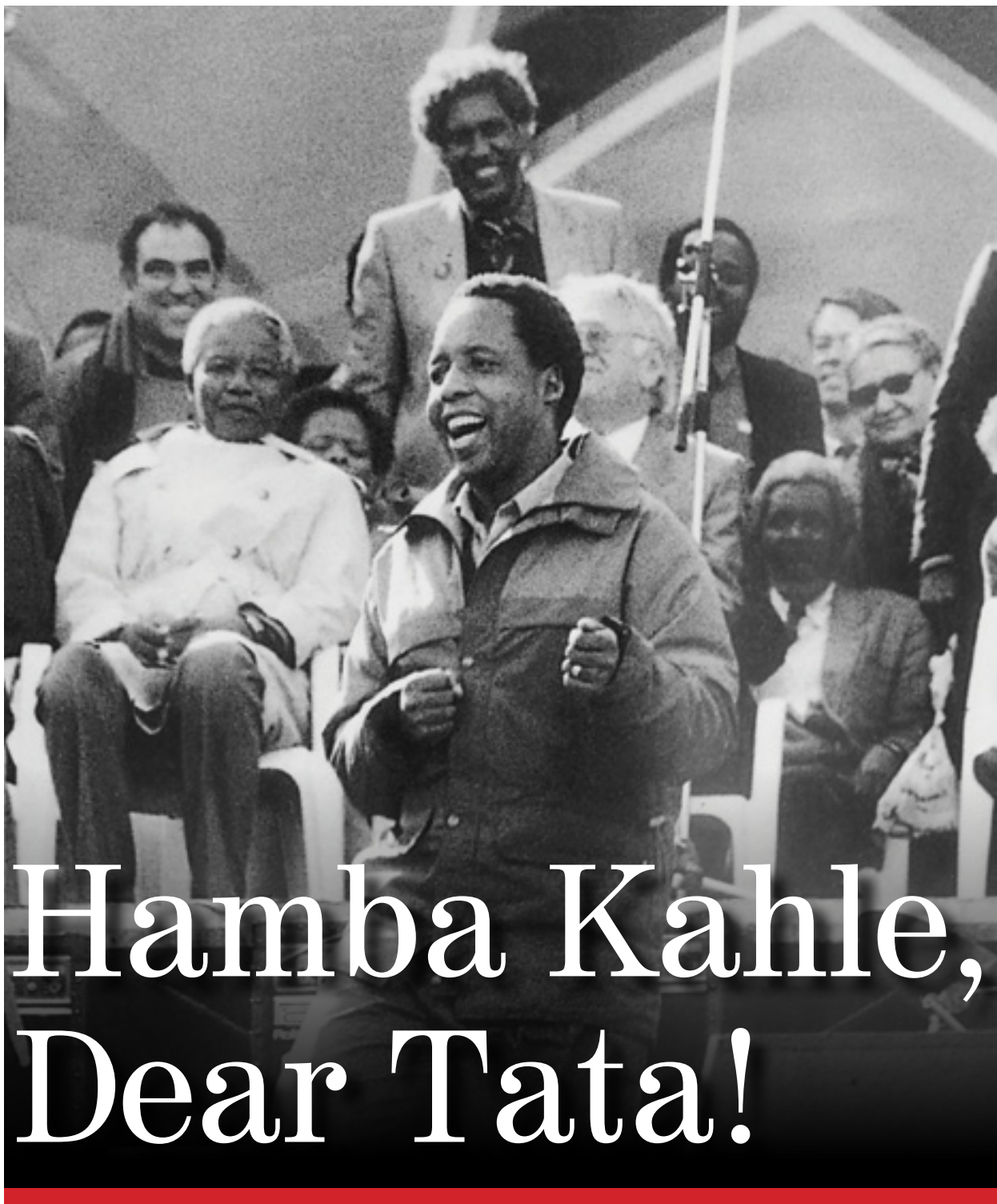
## On the Cover:

Solidarity and the Progressive  
Movement in Africa

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# Hamba Kahle, Dear Tata!

**T**he editor, staff, advisory council, authors and advertisers of *The Thinker* express their profound grief and sadness at the passing of the international icon, great freedom fighter, and humanitarian, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. His life has

inspired the world and set an example for all of us to follow. As he himself explained:

*To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.*

Madiba also said: "Death is something inevitable. When a man has done what he considers to be his duty to his people and his country, he can rest in peace. I believe I have made that effort and that is, therefore, why I will sleep for the eternity."

Comrade Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.  
 An icon of South Africa, Africa  
 and the world.  
 A Product of the People of South  
 Africa and the ANC Father  
 of our Nation.  
 The embodiment of the essence  
 of Humanity.

A man of his stature deserves a full issue devoted to his life, but Madiba passed on just before this Volume went to print. In lieu of an editorial we have decided to publish a small number of pieces that just give a taste of the feelings of reverence, love and gratitude inspired by the life and death of this great human being among people in all walks of life throughout the world. These include a statement released from the African Forum, extracts from the farewell speech to Nelson Mandela delivered by Thabo Mbeki to a Joint sitting of Parliament in March 1999, a poem by Mongane Serote written in April 2011 and a tribute sent to us from Kgolone Phala, an ANC MEC from Limpopo.

We also provide a moving tribute paid to Mahatma Gandhi by Jawaharlal Nehru. The extract applies with equal force to Nelson Mandela. The oppressed masses of our country, the ANC and the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses can take special pride that they produced these two great icons of the twentieth century. India sent us a lawyer; we sent back a Mahatma. And Madhiba's light will continue to illuminate our continent and the world for centuries to come.

#### **Africa Forum (Pretoria, 06.12.2013)**

*"We, members of the Forum for Former African Heads of State and Government (the Africa Forum) convey our heartfelt condolences and deep grief to the people, the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the family of His Excellency Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, the founding President of the Democratic South Africa, who passed away on 5th December 2013 at the age of 95.*

*We have learnt with immense sadness of the passing away of a national, continental and global icon that shall be remembered for the momentous efforts in promoting*

*freedom, justice, peace, security and stability in South Africa, in Africa and in the world. To Africa and the world, this is an extremely sad and tragic event. We, therefore, join the people, the Government and the family of the fallen combatant and hero Nelson Mandela in this moment of grief and reminiscence.*

*As we mourn the loss of this great African icon, we also celebrate his legacy. He was a man with a big heart, great vision, great humility and immense passion in promoting reconciliation, peace, justice and equality. He was admired by his friends and adversaries alike. The father of the South African Nation bequeathed us all with the most precious lesson in life - how to be free and how to respect freedom, and we shall never forget, among others, his wise message: "For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.*

*He was a profound thinker, a philosopher and an intellectual giant. He taught Africa and the World a lesson about freedom and justice, about reconciliation and common aspirations and about common destiny of mankind the world over. To him freedom and human dignity were at the centre of humanity. However, he warned "there is no easy walk to freedom anywhere, and many of us will have to pass through the valley of the shadow of death again and again before we reach the mountaintop of our desire.*

*As the Founding members of the Africa Forum, we would like to convey the message that we shall remember him as one of the greatest visionary and thought leader. His legacy shall remain an inspiration to us all and to the future generation of leaders in Africa and the world. As we join the people of South Africa and the peace loving people all over the world in this paradox of grief and celebrations, we pray to the Almighty Lord that his soul may rest in eternal peace together with his comrades who preceded him."*

#### **Farewell to the President, from Thabo Mbeki (26.03.1999)**

*"You have been where nobody should be asked to be.*

*You have carried burdens heavier than those who felt it their responsibility*



and right to proclaim you an enemy of the state.

You have had to convince your enemies to believe a story difficult to believe, because it was true, that your burnished spear glittered in the rays of the sun, not to speak of hatred and death for them, but because you prayed that its blinding brilliance would tell them, whose ears would not hear, that you loved them as your own kith and kin.

You have had to bear the mantle of sainthood when all you sought was pride in the knowledge that you were a good foot soldier for justice and freedom."

#### **Jawaharlal Nehru on Ghandi**

On 30 January 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in New Delhi, India.

*"The light has gone out from our lives and there is darkness everywhere. ...The light has gone out, I said, and yet I was wrong. For the light that has shone in this country was no ordinary light. The light that has illuminated this country for these many, many years will illumine this country for many more years, and a thousand years later that light will still be seen in this country, and the world will see it, and it will give solace to innumerable hearts. For that light represented something more than the immediate present; it represented the living, eternal truths reminding us of the right path, drawing us from error, taking this ancient country to freedom." (The Essential writings of Jawaharlal Nehru) ■*

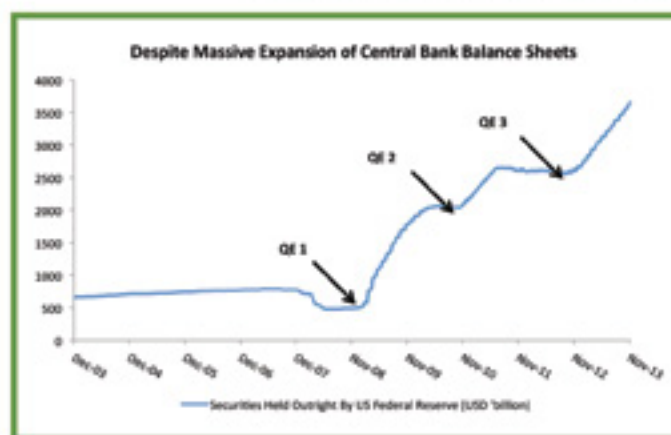
# Deflation risk and the role of quantitative easing

Public market commentary in recent months has on a number of occasions expressed concern over the threat of deflation in certain key advanced economies, including most notably those of the US and Euro-area.

This is in stark contrast to the debate just three years ago, which largely focused on the risk of a quantitative easing induced hyper-inflation in the years that lay ahead. One would be forgiven for emphasising this risk at the time; economic textbooks hold that there is a direct relationship between money supply and the price level. In the midst of a historically unprecedented and rapid expansion in central bank balance sheets, uneasiness over the future course of prices was thus particularly high. Nevertheless, the inflation hawks of yesteryear appear to have been largely placated. Consumer inflation in G7 economies has been on a steady downward trend for almost three years, with year-on-year headline CPI inflation rates (at the time of writing) standing at just 1% and 0.9% in the US and Euro-area, respectively. Hence the resurgence of concern over prices. Intuitively, it may seem strange to worry about deflation—no individual would rationally resist lower prices, which automatically

the company level, relates to what Keynes referred to as 'sticky wages'. Keynes observed that, for various contractual, social and psychological reasons, wages tend to be stickier than other prices, in that they respond more slowly to underlying economic conditions. Behavioural economists have refined this observation further, by noting that the phenomenon is especially clear for downward movements in the wage rate. More specifically, individuals are far more willing to accept real wage cuts through higher inflation than through nominal wage decreases. This is supported by an analysis of the distribution of wage changes in the US, which shows a significant degree of negative skewness – implying that it is a much more common practice to adjust monthly wage growth from 0.5% to 0% than it is to adjust from 0% to -0.5%.

The implication for employers is clear; when prices are rising revenues will benefit, while the sticky property of wages will ensure that operational leverage is exploited and profit margins generally rise. By contrast, when prices

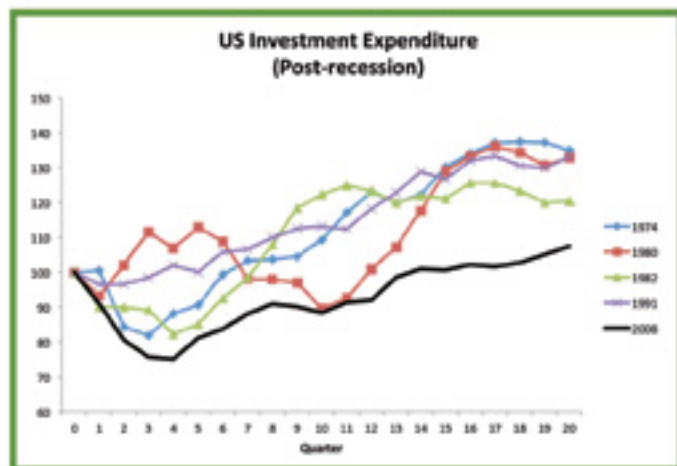


are falling revenues will be negatively affected, so that profit margins are compressed as employees dig their heels into the ground. The incentives to employ, invest, and generally continue operations are greatly reduced in the latter scenario, harming actual and potential economic growth. A second important concern over deflation relates to the direct impact on consumer and investor behaviour. When prices are declining, consumers may be less willing to purchase durable goods, as they rationally wait for further discounts in the future. Additionally, investors may be less willing to expose their surplus to any significant risk when a virtually risk-free bank deposit generates positive real returns by simply preserving capital. These forces are widely believed to be amongst the many reasons for Japan's two-decade stagnation, an empirical case which highlights the risks currently faced by G7 nations.

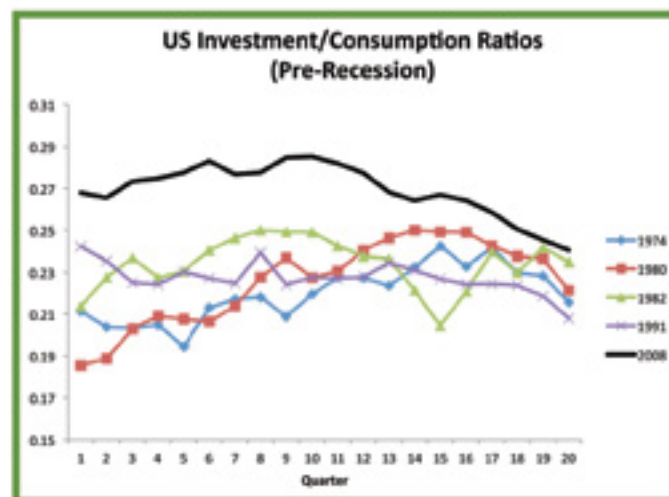
boost real wealth by growing the basket of goods and services that a fixed income can afford to purchase. On aggregate however, there are a host of problems that manifest in a deflationary environment. One problem, at

Having understood the risks involved, it is important to understand why inflation has slowed to such a large extent. Looking superficially at the evidence for the US, such an inflation slowdown appears counterintuitive. In particular, investment expenditure has on a relative basis fallen more sharply than in previous recessions, so that one would expect a greater likelihood of capacity constraints and subsequent inflationary pressures, rather than the opposite scenario taking hold. Even when shown in relation to changes in consumption demand, the shakeout in capacity does not appear to have been out of line with previous post-recession periods, implying that prices would rebound to an inflationary state relatively briskly as excess capacity is removed from the economy.

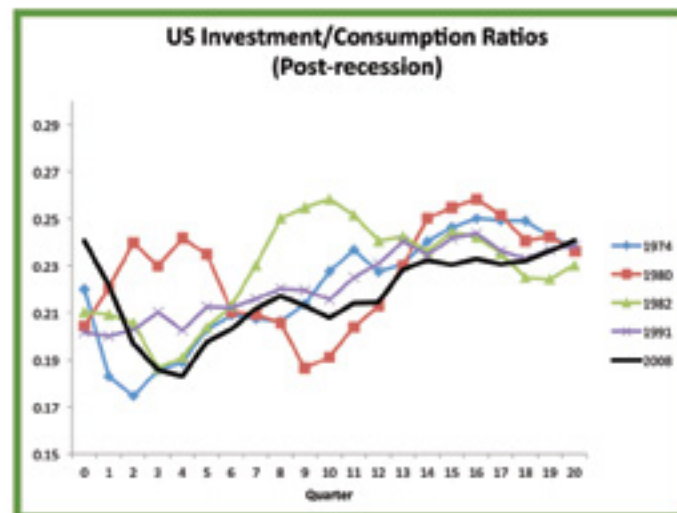
To get the full picture however, one needs to consider pre-recession trends in the US investment/consumption ratio. Importantly, the period of 20 quarters prior to the latest crisis showed significant overinvestment relative to other pre-recession periods. This implies that the shakeout in capacity, which roughly tracked the median path of previous post-recession periods, may not have been severe enough to address the mismatch between global supply and demand. Quantitative Easing, in its efforts to depress the cost of capital, has allowed a significant surplus of inefficient capacity to remain on-line in a number of important sectors across the world.



Source: Oasis research using Bloomberg, December 2013; Dates shown are recession periods.

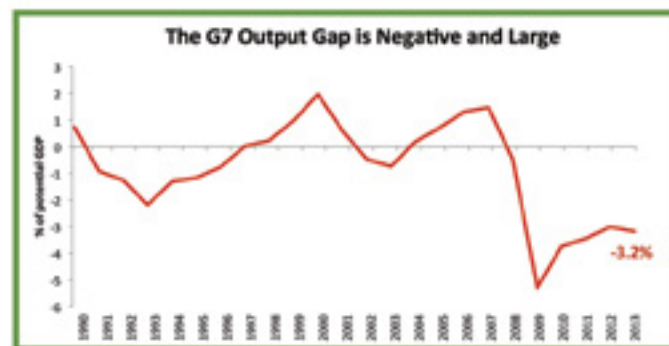


Source: Oasis research using Bloomberg, December 2013; Dates shown are recession periods.



Source: Oasis research using Bloomberg, December 2013; Dates shown are recession periods.

The net result is that the output gap across G7 countries, which measures the difference between actual and potential output, is still negative and large five years on from the global crisis period. The downward pressure that this puts on prices needs to be addressed if the Western world is to avoid a lost decade of disappointing growth.



Source: Oasis research using IMF, October 2013

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operations in the Central African Republic in October, 2013.

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**Dr Garth le Pere** is visiting Professor at the University of Pretoria and a Senior associate of Gabriel and associates. He received a BA from Rutgers University (USA) and did post-graduate work in political science at Yale University from which he holds MA, MPhil and PhD degrees. His areas of interest include international relations theory, multilateral trade and emerging markets, South African foreign policy, the politics of Africa and the Middle East, and China's increasing role in the world. He has just completed a book, *China's Global Emergence: Reconstructing Power after the Cold War*.

**Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki** is the Chief Executive Officer of the Secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), head-

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**Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki** was Deputy President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999 and President from 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, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Ivory Coast and Sudan and Southern Sudan. Currently he chairs the UN Economic Commission on Africa panel to investigate and report to African leaders on the illegal export of capital and money-laundering.

**Dr Sifiso Mxolisi Ndlovu** obtained an MA in History at the University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg) and a PhD in

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History at the University of the Witwatersrand. He is currently the Executive Director at the South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET). He is one of the authors of *The Road to Democracy in South Africa* series. Dr Ndlovu's other main research fields focus on youth, labour and pre-colonial history.

**Yacoob Abba Omar** is Director: Operations of the Mapungubwe Institute (MISTRA). He was South Africa's Ambassador to Oman from 2003 to 2008, and then to the United Arab Emirates from 2008 to December 2012. Abba worked as the Deputy Director-General of Government Communications (GCIS) from 1998 to 2002 and prior to that as General Manager, Corporate Affairs of Armscor. During this period he was appointed onto the South African National AIDS Council and facilitated the Presidency's Scenario Project in 2002 and in 2007. He worked for the ANC from 1985 to the first democratic elections.

**Kgolane Alfred Rudolph Phala** is presently serving as MEC for Finance in Limpopo Province. He studied at the University of the North, Turfloop Campus where he obtained a B. Juris and an LLB. He later completed a Master's Degree at the University of Port Elizabeth. In 2004 he was elected to the Limpopo Provincial Legislature where he was chairperson of the portfolio committee on Local Government and Housing, and later the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA.) He previously served as a Speaker of the Limpopo Provincial Legislature from 2009 to 2013. He also served on the PECs of the ANC and SACP for many years.

**Dr. Tribhuwan Prasad** is Assistant Professor, Department of African Studies, University of Delhi, India. He has been teaching African geography for the last seventeen years. His research interest includes Environment, Natural Resource Management and India-Africa relations. He has written books and research papers on various socio-economic aspects of Africa. He has organised number of International and National Conferences and Seminars and also workshops and talks on contemporary issues in Africa. He was research fellow at the Africa Institute of South Africa, Pretoria, in 2013.

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## TRIBUTE TO PRESIDENT NELSON MANDELA

## HERO OF HEROES

By Kgolone Phala

**W**e join the people of South Africa and the world who have received with heavy hearts the sad news of the passing on of former President Nelson Mandela, a hero of heroes, an outstanding freedom fighter, a giant colossus and an extraordinary nation-builder, reconciler and patriot. President Nelson Mandela served the nation as a freedom fighter, ANC President and as President of the country. We dip our banners in tribute and honour to the everlasting memory of this warriors' warrior, leaders' leader and giant of giants. We wish his spirit to live long amongst us and to live in the hearts and minds of future generations forever more. No grave is big enough to swallow this African legend. His unmatched contribution to humanity,

his unequalled contribution to the freedom struggle and his outstanding contribution to the building of a non-racial, non-sexist, united, democratic and prosperous South Africa will never be forgotten.

The passing on of President Nelson Mandela represents the closing of an era of giant, heroic and committed freedom fighters. Already gone before, we can count many, many of his revolutionary generation - Oliver Tambo, Inkosi Albert Luthuli, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Yusuf Dadoo, Elias Motswaledi, Wilton Mkwayi, Moses Kotane, JB Marks, Duma Nokwe, Moses Mabhida, Bertha Gxowa, Henry Makgothi, Joe Modise, Alfred Nzo, Ruth First, Billy Nair, Joe Slovo, Chris Hani, Brian Bunting,

Ray Alexander, Jack Simons, Flag Boshielo, Mark Shope, Albertina Sisulu, John Phala, Harry Gwala and many others.

At the funeral of his great friend Walter Sisulu in May 2003 Madiba said, "In the last few years we have walked this road with greater frequency, marching in the procession to bid farewell to the veterans of our movement, paying our last respect to the fallen spears of the nation from a generation now reaching the end of a long and heroic struggle. Those of us from that generation who are singled out to stay the longest have to bear the pain of seeing our comrades go. Their going must leave an emptiness with those of us who stay behind. Our sadness over them is tempered by the comforting knowledge that, the

separation will not be interminably long."

It is this generation that planted deep in the soil the roots of building a giant people's movement out of the ANC in the 1940s and '50s based on the principles of solidarity, volunteerism, unity, selflessness, honesty, discipline, loyalty, hard-work, truthfulness, sacrifice, humility, respect, reputation, magnanimity, integrity, generosity and courage. They lived by these principles throughout their lives. Madiba was himself an embodiment of them all.

Madiba suffered arrest, detention, torture, banning and imprisonment, but as a mature man he bore no grudges and had no anger towards the people who perpetuated the fascist white minority regime for decades and perpetrated apartheid, oppression, exploitation, segregation, suppression, repression and genocide in South Africa. He saw the demonic side of the apartheid system, experienced the trigger-happy and bloodthirsty terrorism of the nightmarish white-minority rule. He worked tirelessly towards reconciliation, national unity, new patriotism and peace.

It is for this time-tested work that Nelson Mandela is known throughout the world as a giant of giants. That is why he has a town, streets, avenues, parks, squares, buildings, wards, branches, clinics, a region, a hospital, a municipality and a university named after him. Even more spectacularly many more things have acquired his name including racehorses, a sea slug (*Mandelia micocomata*), two spiders (*Singafrotypa Mandela* and *nelisimus nelson*), a nuclear particle, a tree (in Colombia), an orchid (in Singapore), a rose (*Madiba*), and a woodpecker (*Australopicus Nelsoni Mandelai*). He has also had bestowed on him all categories of honours, awards, medals, ranks, degrees, diplomas, decorations and other forms of recognitions from all over the world.

As Madiba said about himself on the occasion of his farewell speech in closing the 50th National Conference of the ANC in Mafikeng, 1997, "Comrades and friends, more often than not, an epoch creates and nurtures the individuals which are associated with its twists and turns and so a name

becomes a symbol of an era. As we hand over the baton, it is appropriate that I should thank the ANC for shaping me as a symbol of what it stands for. I know that the love and respect that I have enjoyed is the love and respect for the ANC and its ideas. I know that the world-wide appreciation of South Africa's miracle and the dignity of its people is appreciation, first and foremost, of the work of the ANC."

Nelson Mandela joins the ranks of the giants that once trod the earth - such as Mahatma Gandhi, Julius Nyerere, Jawaharal Nehru, Jomo Kenyatta, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu, Chief Albert Luthuli, Kwame Nkumah, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Vladimir Lenin, Mao Zedong, Che Guevara, Ho Chi Minh, Marx and Engels. The angels in heaven must be singing Hosana! Halleluya! and dancing on the arrival of this great man, a messenger of goodwill, a peace negotiator, a nation-builder and a reconciler.

President Nelson Mandela, allow us to talk to you directly: We will always be reminded of your poetic and prophetic words at the Rivonia Trial in 1964 that, "during my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people, inspired by their own suffering and experience. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die." You laid the firm and unshakeable foundations of such a society in 1994. We are busy building on that foundation to create a better life for all.

We will fight to ensure as you said about the 1994 major democratic breakthrough that, "never, never and never again should the sun set on so glorious a human achievement." In your memory and as a tribute to you, we will do all in our power and strength to ensure that a democratic South Africa you fought for and established is sustained, advanced and prospers. We vow not to take for granted the democracy, freedom, peace and equality we enjoy today which you

fought for so much for your entire adult life.

You have just ended your long walk but you have left us to continue with the long long journey. We hope and wish that you will guide us all the way. And that you will be our sun in the day, and our moon and stars in the night. With you we will not be lost. You are an icon of our time, you are a legend of all times. Your birthdays will always remind us to dedicate ourselves and our lives to the service of the people. You have shown the world outstanding magnanimity. You were singled out by history to be bequeathed with the unmatched responsibility to symbolise humanity's search for equality and justice.

We say: Hamba kahle Isithwalandwe-Seaparankwe, you the wearer of feathers of a very rare bird given to African warriors who have distinguished themselves in battle.

We sing with the entire nation and the World together.

*Nkosi sikelel iAfrika, maluphakanyisw' iphondo lwayo, Yizwa imithandazo yethu Nkosi sikelela, thina lusapho lwayo. Morena boloka setshaba sageshu o fedishe dintwa le matshwenyego. O se boloke setshaba sa, South Africa! Uit die blou van onse hemel, uit die diepte van ons see. Oor ons ewige gebertes, waar die kranse antwoord gee. Sounds the call to come together, and united we shall stand, let us live and strive for freedom, in South Africa our land!*

We hope, wish and pray that like the old religious singer promised, we say, "Shala botse, mme re fiwe go bonana gape Moreneng" (goodbye with a hope that we are given a chance to meet again in the Lord.)

Etela hi ku rhula, nhena ya tinhena!!  
Kha vha edele nga mulalo muhali wa vhahali!!

Mokgapa o mogolo o wele, dithaga rella boshogshogo!!

Ah Dalibhunga!!  
Mativha o xa! Xunu!!

We pay due tribute to your undying memory!!

Rest in peace son of the soil!!! Hamba kahle, dear father, dear leader!!

Robala ka khutso senatla sa dinatla!!  
May the spirit of President Nelson Mandela live long!! ■



# madiba

we must accept  
 you will walk  
 stop  
 sit a bit  
 and then  
 you will lie down  
 you will take a deep breath  
 a relief  
 and say  
 oliver how are you  
 you will  
 we must accept  
 and oliver I can see him  
 with his pondo marks  
 and a bright warm smile and laughter  
 he will hug you  
 he will say  
 welcome nelson  
 and you both will take a walk  
 as he introduces you  
 or reminds you  
 this is dube  
 this is mamphosho remember  
 kate  
 walter will come just now  
 he is in council  
 with thabo and zuma on earth  
 i can hear you both  
 break into laughter  
 he holding your hand to cross  
 you must cross over to become an  
 ancestor  
 you will look back at us  
 and you will wonder  
 when will we learn  
 that everything comes to pass  
 but you madiba will be light kilometers  
 away  
 and  
 although still near us

The poem “Madiba” imagines the afterlife as a gathering of old friends reunited. It is a celebration of the unique human qualities of the giants of our liberation movement – the warmth and laughter as well as the integrity and dignity which we so much value. The positive images remain, keeping these heroes and heroines alive in our memories to sustain us in the face of our own challenges.

By Wally Mongane Serote

we will not hear what you and fischer  
talk about  
what you and dadoo talk about  
and when you ask shaka  
with your husky voice and guttural  
laughter  
how are you  
and all of you will break into this  
laughter  
which signals the joy in your beings  
you will be amused by what you all left  
behind  
us  
flesh and blood  
brain and spirit  
still struggling to make sense about all  
of this  
and you  
then  
will be in communion with hundreds  
and millions  
and billions of freedom fighters  
generations upon generations of them  
we hope  
you will then remember  
do ancestors have memory  
you will remember  
that we mean it when we say  
freedom  
peace  
we mean so because there is no other  
you all of you died so  
so many different types of death  
mini  
singing to the gallows  
sizobadubulangembaibai  
and fisher the chess man  
with that most beautiful smile of his  
and those starry eyes which were like  
windows into his soul  
agrees for cancer to take him away  
and kotane  
allows stroke to wrench his life away  
how come I only remember you all  
in smiles  
and eyes filled with laughter  
and facial expressions filled with joy  
oh  
it is because your senses

your sight  
your touch  
your sense of smell  
your sense of taste  
and your sense of hearing  
all of these things madiba  
exude from deep down your spirituality  
you all men and women of sacrifice  
must we remember you like that  
all I know  
is that you will walk  
you will stop  
and then you will lie down a little  
you will take a deep breath  
a relief from this earth  
you will have passed on  
into communion  
i do not know if dadoo still needs his  
pipe  
to smoke  
does he  
does tambo need his spectacles and his  
pondo marks  
does mamposho still need her blue-  
black beauty spot on her cheek  
does Shope still need his hard rough  
palms which were like hard stone  
all of you had such clean facial  
expressions  
all of you had such quite whispering  
eyes  
perhaps that is what we must remember  
about you  
you fighters for freedom  
you who spoke with amplified voices  
that the world heard  
you who strode the world and straddled  
it with great familiarity  
you who starred into the distant  
horizon  
whose speech looked like a wink  
and you focused in attention  
because you knew that the sun rises  
you knew that the sun sets  
the moon rises and sets  
because nothing is for ever  
even the birds as you know  
and that is why they migrate  
they hop

they perch on distant trees  
they glide above clouds  
they ride different breezes  
and they know even different billows  
of the seas  
even ants know this  
that is why they gather food all the time  
they disappear a little  
and they come back again  
when the heat of the sun talks to  
different types of life  
madiba  
you and others disappeared for 27  
years  
you came back  
do you remember how tambo left with  
his stern face  
and elias disappeared like a snowflake  
so did omgog  
and you also watched mhlaba and  
mqayi leave  
often I wondered what you thought  
as one by one your peers left  
you used to look watchful and at times  
starry eyed  
and one day  
like the good soldier you are you  
handed over the baton  
and now you have walked off the  
screen  
and now and then your shadow  
appears  
i is tall this shadow too tall  
it elongates along the earth  
and it walks like the second arm of the  
clock  
i  
i smile at times  
as I imitate your dignity and integrity  
as I rehearse your wisdom in my head  
we must accept  
you will walk  
stop  
you will sit down a bit  
and then you will lie down and sigh  
it is ok tata ■

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# Tasks of the African Progressive Movement



I would like to insist that the task to achieve the fundamental social transformation of our Continent – its renaissance – belongs to the African people as a whole.

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By Thabo Mbeki

All Africans throughout our Continent are fully aware of the fundamental challenge all of us face that we must successfully and urgently address, namely, the interconnected phenomena of the eradication of the poverty of the billion African masses and the underdevelopment of the African Continent.

At the same time, I am certain that all progressive persons throughout the world agree with Africa that it is imperative that our Continent

must engage in the fundamental social transformation processes that must end this pervasive poverty and underdevelopment.

I would also like to believe that all Africans throughout our Continent are fully aware of the specific challenges all of us face relating to these interlinked tasks of the eradication of African poverty and underdevelopment.

Accordingly, it must therefore be that the principal task we face is to answer the critical question –

what must be done to achieve the objectives which all Africans and progressive humanity accept as being of fundamental importance to the renewal and renaissance of Africa!

Everybody familiar with the fundamentals of African history over at least the last half-a-century knows that central to the ebbs and flows in the evolution of independent Africa, in all its elements, has been the task of successfully responding to the fundamental social transformation to which I have referred.

### Elements of the African progressive agenda.

Immediately, with no intrusion even by our own intelligentsia, political parties and organised civil society, the African masses know that *some* of the major challenges our countries face, constituting the strategic national and therefore African interest, are:

- establishing genuinely democratic systems of government, including accountable State systems;
- entrenching peace, security and stability;
- achieving national and social cohesion as well as social development;
- eradicating poverty and underdevelopment through sustained and sustainable economic growth and equitable economic development;
- ensuring African integration and unity; and
- securing Africa's rightful place among the world community of nations.

All these outcomes, which are critical to the realisation of fundamental social transformation, can only be achieved through conscious, purposeful and concerted action by ourselves as Africans.

I argue and firmly propose that the goals I have listed above constitute the core of *the contemporary African progressive agenda*. It therefore follows that to achieve them demands of *the African progressive forces* that they discharge their responsibilities to ensure their realisation.

Naturally, if this has not been done already, these progressive forces within each of our countries would have to detail how the goals of the African progressive agenda would be achieved, taking into account the national conditions.

However, at the same time, I would like to say some things about these goals.

### Democracy and accountable governance

It is true that the overwhelming majority of our countries now have elected governments, contrary to what happened in earlier decades when millions of Africans were ruled

by military governments or lived in One-Party States.

This is an important positive development which the African progressive forces helped to bring about.

However it is important that as Africans we should make a serious effort critically to examine *the quality of our democracies* to determine whether they actually live up to the strategic perspective – *the people shall govern!*

It seems clear that in some instances the democratic process in our countries has served to hide the reality of *the entrenchment of antagonistic tribal or ethnic divisions* perpetuated by politicians to gain power through 'democratic ways and means'.

“It seems clear that in some instances the democratic process in our countries has served to hide the reality of *the entrenchment of antagonistic tribal or ethnic divisions* perpetuated by politicians to gain power through 'democratic ways and means'.”

It is self-evident that this development is fundamentally inimical to the achievement of the genuine democracy our Continent needs, and must therefore be resisted and defeated.

It also seems clear that there has emerged in our countries a '*professional political class*', concentrated in the many political parties we celebrate as a manifestation of a progressive system of multi-party politics.

This 'professional political class' seeks election to political positions merely to ensure that its members earn a State salary at the end of the month, make the living for which it will fight

whatever the cost, and use its positions to dispense such patronage as will ensure its perpetuity.

In addition it also seeks such election because in many of our countries the governance system is abused by this 'professional political class' as the only or most easily accessible and available route to corrupt self-enrichment.

Further, this 'professional political class' is part of and a representative of a dominant political, economic and social elite in our countries which has little interest either in changing the lives of the millions of people for the better, or empowering these masses actually to make their voices count in effective ways in the system and process of governance.

On our Continent this translates into the marginalisation and disempowerment of important social strata which constitute the majority of our population, including the peasantry, the working class, the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie operating in both the formal and the informal economy, and the professional echelon.

All this is also directly related to what I referred to in the goals I listed earlier as – accountable State systems!

The African democratic State can only derive its legitimacy from its commitment to serve the interests of the masses of our people and its practical activities in this regard.

However, what I have said above relating to our politics means that in reality many of our African State systems have been reduced to a predatory elite, controlled by its self-serving 'professional political class'.

In earlier decades, the progressive African intelligentsia warned us about the threat of the emergence and domination of this predatory elite, at whose core would be an admixture of a '*bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie*'.

It is vital that we revisit these propositions, taking into account the actual African experience and reality, as an important part of the process of assessing the quality of our democracies.

With the domination of our politics and societies by the '*bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie and its attached political class*', it became inevitable that

the African State would be corrupted to enrich the elite I have mentioned, with little serious concern that it should serve the interests of the masses of the people.

Government employees, the civil servants, taking the cue from the political leaders, join in the scramble for corrupt self-enrichment and treat themselves as masters of the masses they should serve as public employees, rather than their servants.

Consequently, and of importance, the State also becomes an instrument of repression and intimidation against the people, to stop them from rebelling against what becomes, relative to their interests, a predator State.

It is also the same predator State, or at least elements of this State, controlled by the self-serving African elite, which cooperates with international capital among other things to enable and facilitate the illicit export of the capital from our Continent. We need this capital for our development.

Thus does the putative democratic State become a social institution which serves the interests of a 'rent seeking' elite whose goals amount to no more than preserving its political power and using this power to extract the 'rent' which ensures its enrichment.

It is for this reason that I have said we must seriously assess the quality of the democracies which Africa is striving to establish, and therefore reflect on the developments I have mentioned, among others.

In this regard, fortunately, as an important example, detailed and instructive assessments have been made by fellow Africans about the circumstances, among others, in North Africa, which led to the popular 2011 uprising in Egypt which led to the defeat of the Hosni Mubarak government and regime, and the subsequent developments to date.

In this context, obviously, we also have to consider what our democratically elected Governments actually do to maintain regular contact with the masses of the people – the electorate – and to listen and respond positively and practically to the views of these masses.

#### **Peace, security and stability**

We must also celebrate the fact that

over the years of African independence for the bulk of our Continent, violent conflicts on our Continent have been significantly reduced, guaranteeing the vitally important greater peace and security for large numbers of our fellow Africans.

At the same time, we must also confront the reality that these conflicts have not ended.

Given that one of our strategic tasks remains achieving peace among Africans, we must also make a serious effort to understand the fundamental causes of the violent conflicts among ourselves.

Necessarily, in this regard, our first objective must be the prevention of the outbreak of these violent conflicts.

“ In addition it also seeks such election because in many of our countries the governance system is abused by this ‘professional political class’ as the only or most easily accessible and available route to corrupt self-enrichment.”

In this context we must break with what seems to have emerged as Africa's established response to its challenges of peace, security and stability. This is to help negotiate ceasefire agreements among belligerents and then deploy troops to police the implementation of these agreements.

Necessary as such interventions are, we must make a determined effort systematically to understand the root causes of these conflicts, the better to inform us about what we should do to stop them from breaking out.

The central point I would like to make in this regard is that fundamentally the violent conflicts in our countries are born of our fractured societies.

This represents what the outstanding African scholar, Professor Mahmood

Mamdani, has described as the failure to build “a common political citizenship and a law-based order...a nation-state equal to realising social justice.”

In this regard I am certain that an honest examination of such violent conflicts as those in Mali, the eastern DRC, the CAR, Sudan, Somalia and Kenya in 2007, and others, would confirm the correctness of the observation made by Professor Mamdani.

Accordingly we must take this fully on board: that successfully to accomplish the strategic task to ensure peace, security and stability on our Continent we have to address the various challenges I have mentioned relating to such matters as the quality of our democracies, equitable economic development, national and social cohesion, and so on.

In addition to all this, we must also integrate into our thinking and confront a development that originates from outside our Continent.

This is the seeming determination of major Western powers to intervene on our Continent to address our challenge of peace and stability, ostensibly on the basis of a shared objective to advance the supposedly non-antagonistic national interests both of our countries and these Western powers.

We must answer the questions seriously – what are these national interests and to what extent are they non-antagonistic, especially in the context of practically affirming our independence as individual countries and as the Continent!

Related to this, we must continue seriously to address the important matter of constructing a correct relationship between the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the UN Security Council (UNSC), within the context of all the provisions contained in the UN Charter and our own Protocols.

It is also in this context that we should consider what should be the correct relationship between Africa and such bodies as the International Criminal Court (ICC).

#### **National and social cohesion and social development**

The national and social cohesion I

have mentioned, of concern in part to the challenge of peace and stability, is also directly related to the observation made by Professor Mamdani as cited earlier.

It requires focused attention as a strategic task we must pursue in its own right.

Thus indeed should we, in each of our nation-states, work to nurture and cultivate a common sense of nationhood and a shared patriotism. We have to do this attending to both the subjective and the objective spheres.

Our nation-states are constituted as diverse societies. It is therefore imperative that a conscious and sustained intervention is made to give practical expression to the principle and vision of achieving *unity in diversity*.

The specific actions to be taken in this regard in the context of the subjective sphere might vary from country to country but would surely include such matters as:

- what is taught in our schools;
- what is done not to marginalise any language or culture; and
- avoiding the abuse of the fact of the co-existence of different ethnic groups and religious faiths as a means to divide the people, and so on.

On the *objective plane*, we have to attend to such challenges as ensuring balanced regional socio-economic development, also bearing in mind that in many of our countries these regions also coincide with the ethnic dispersal of our populations.

There is of course also the important challenge of the balanced relationship between the urban and rural areas, especially taking into account that in many of our countries the overwhelming majority of the population is rural.

As all of us will surely agree, the national and social cohesion we have to achieve demands the inclusion of women in the equitable socio-economic development I have mentioned. It is not possible that we can speak of such cohesion in the objective circumstance of the social exclusion of women.

It is partly for this reason that earlier

I mentioned the matter of social development related to the national and social cohesion I have been discussing.

As this relates to women, this social development means that we must implement sustained programmes effectively to achieve gender equality, based on the objectives to empower the women of Africa and realise their emancipation.

In general, such social development also means that, among other things, we must take all necessary measures to ensure that all our people achieve the necessary levels of literacy and numeracy, and have access to health care, first of all through an effective primary health system.

“Government employees, the civil servants, taking the cue from the political leaders, join in the scramble for corrupt self-enrichment and treat themselves as masters of the masses they should serve as public employees, rather than their servants.”

#### **Economic growth, development and equity**

All available information suggests that for many years during our years of independence, the aggregate African economy declined. This meant that liberated Africa was generating continuously reduced volumes of wealth, even as the African population was increasing significantly.

Practically what this represented, perversely, was that African political liberation was accompanied by the growing material impoverishment of the liberated African masses.

However, and fortunately, again available information has communicated the firm message that from the 1990s to

date, this aggregate African economy has changed course.

Accordingly, it is now expanding, and therefore creating new wealth, at very encouraging relatively high rates of growth. It goes without saying that this is a very positive development, which all of us must welcome and encourage.

However, in this article we will not discuss the sources of this welcome outcome, which important matter has to be addressed in a specific and focused presentation.

Only for the purposes of this article, I will take it as given that the fact is now established that Africa has the capacity and will in practice to continue to develop an economy that will grow at positive rates, thus to create new wealth.

However it is surely a critically important part of the progressive agenda to focus in detail exactly on this matter – sustainable economic development.

In this regard, the progressive agenda must prioritise:

- the progressive transformation of the rural areas, including through the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP);
- industrialisation, including beneficiation of raw materials, to move away from Africa being a mere exporter of raw materials;
- comprehensive infrastructure development relating to transport, energy, communication technology and economic and social infrastructure in both urban and rural areas;
- human resource development, aimed among other things, at reducing levels of youth unemployment;
- environmental protection, including the struggle against desertification and the degradation of agricultural land, the protection of our tropical forests and marine resources, proper management of our water resources; and
- ending the seepage of capital from our countries especially through illicit financial outflows.

The critical matter on which we must comment in greater detail is

the challenge that must be addressed with regard to what I have referred as *equitable economic development*.

The naked reality is that despite the higher and sustained rates of economic growth I have mentioned, this has not impacted to any significant degree on such important progressive socio-economic goals as:

- reducing the general levels of poverty;
- reducing income and wealth disparities;
- providing resources for comprehensive infrastructure development;
- reducing unemployment levels; or
- helping to accelerate progress towards the fundamental restructuring and modernisation of the African economy.

With regard to all this, one of the major points I must make is that the sustained higher economic growth rates I have mentioned have been driven by sustained demand for African raw materials, especially by China and India.

In the main, these raw materials are extracted and exported from our Continent by foreign companies.

Accordingly this has meant that a good amount of the revenues due to Africa from the export of raw materials, including those without any value addition in Africa, accrues outside our Continent as dividends and other legal and illicit disbursements to the foreign companies.

In addition, some of these revenues accrue to a small group of domestic ‘*rent entrepreneurs*’, who are only interested in private wealth accumulation, with virtually no commitment to national economic development. These also participate in the export of the capital we need for our development.

It therefore seems obvious that to address the strategically important matter of equitable economic development, the African progressive movement must attend to the challenges:

- to ensure that significant volumes of the revenues from the export of raw materials are retained within our countries, while respecting the legitimate interests of the foreign investors in this sector;

- to add value to these raw materials as part of the process of industrialisation, thus to end our status as exporters of raw materials;
- to minimise the proportion of these revenues that accrues to our domestic rent-seekers; and
- to direct the revenues generated by the export of raw materials to finance the fundamental transformation of our economies, rather than pay for increased recurrent non-capital expenditures and add to the growing income and wealth disparities and inequality in our societies.

It is therefore a central strategic task of the African progressive movement to help ensure that the greater wealth

**“For each of our countries even truly to maintain their independence and implement a progressive transformation agenda requires that they enjoy solidarity support from other African countries, thus to defeat the forces of neo-colonialism.”**

which Africa is producing is used:

- to benefit our rural and urban working people, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the African population, not merely a privileged elite; and
- to act as a motive force or motor driving the sustained socio-economic transformation of our Continent.

I am certain that, in this regard, the African progressive movement understands very well that the achievement of these and the other socio-economic goals we have mentioned will entail a challenging struggle that must answer the question: – who sets the national agenda!

This is a vitally important and

strategic question to which I will revert later.

### **African integration and unity**

Earlier I suggested that the African progressive movement must take seriously as one of its strategic tasks the acceleration of progress towards achieving African integration and unity.

For well over a century, the broad African liberation movement, including the African Diaspora, has recognised the importance of the integration and unity of Africa as a vital strategic imperative for the achievement of the liberation and renaissance of Africa and the Africans.

The contemporary African progressive movement must understand that it inherits this legacy as one of its most valuable heritages, on which it must build.

We enjoy the very fortunate outcome that centuries of the export of millions of Africans as slaves, especially to the Caribbean and the Americas, and the fracturing of African communities into colonially created nation-states, have not destroyed the sense of cohesion among ourselves as Africans in Africa and in the Diaspora.

The African progressive movement must build on this historic reality.

Early political economists such as Adam Smith and Karl Marx identified *the process of globalisation* as an important driver in all future global socio-economic development, though it would not distribute the benefits equally or equitably.

Thus even as the global genuinely progressive movement since the 19th century argued for the right of nations to self-determination, thus to end imperialist and colonial domination, it also sought to encourage the voluntary integration of these independent nations in political federations or unions.

Centrally this was because this progressive movement understood the need for these independent States to develop sufficient strength to defeat the predatory practices of the system of imperialism, especially globalising capital, which had denied them their independence in the first place.

During the current period, the process of globalisation has accelerated

enormously, leading to some among the world intelligentsia and 'political class' wrongly to characterise this phenomenon as a new development.

Within this context, we have seen examples across the world of countries grouping themselves together in various economic/political blocs the better to enhance their prospects for economic growth and development. Some of the better known among these blocs are the EU, NAFTA, ASEAN and Mercosur.

I mention all this because Africa is characterised by a large number of small States which need to belong to African multi-country economic blocs to acquire the required and necessary economic viability, bearing in mind the fact of the process of globalisation.

Experience during our years of independence has also confirmed that for each of our countries even truly to maintain their independence and implement a progressive transformation agenda requires that they enjoy solidarity support from other African countries, thus to defeat the forces of neo-colonialism.

Indeed we can say that our Continent as a whole cannot guarantee its independence and its possibility to realise its transformation agenda unless it acts in unity!

The absolute need for this unity has been confirmed for instance during the now aborted WTO negotiations to implement the Doha Development Round and the contentious negotiations that have attended the conclusion of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between Africa and the EU.

It is imperative that existing decisions to strengthen the African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are implemented, thus accelerating African regional integration.

The general position our Continent has taken is that the RECs are the fundamental and critical building blocs we need to advance towards achieving African unity. Accordingly, they should address both economic and political integration.

The African progressive movement must therefore address this matter, in particular to help address the obstacles to the required regional integration.

Acceptance of the general proposition to build African unity

from below, through the RECs, does not and should not mean that this is in contradistinction to interventions from above to help accelerate progress towards this unity.

This means that part of the African progressive agenda must focus on strengthening both the institutions of the African Union and enhancing the capacity of the Union to ensure that all its Member States actually implement agreed Continental policies and programmes.

One advantage we have in this regard is that through policies they have adopted through both the OAU and the AU, African countries have accepted the principle and practice of the limitation of state sovereignty in the process to achieve African integration and unity.

However, one of the serious challenges to give effect to this is

“The major Western powers feel that they have the freedom to act individually or collectively to determine the destiny of our Continent.”

illustrated by the fact that the bulk of the funds to finance the programmes of the AU, without exception, are provided by non-African donors rather than contributions from the Member States.

Practically this means that our preeminent Continental organisation, the AU, cannot properly implement the transformation programmes contained in the agreed all-Africa policies unless external donors agree to finance these programmes. This is unsustainable!

The conscious African masses are committed to the vision and strategic objective – *Africa Must Unite!*

It is imperative that the African progressive movement must also understand that one of its historic obligations is to help ensure the realisation of this strategic objective.

As originally argued by the political

economists Adam Smith and Karl Marx, Africa is fully integrated within the rest of the international community.

Our Continent cannot extricate or subtract itself from this fact of global integration, which is centuries old. Neither can nor should it seek to achieve a state of autarky as an island, sufficient unto itself. In reality such autarky would bring disaster to the billion Africans.

However, in many instances, and arguably in the main, our integration among the world community of nations disadvantages us, the Africans. Accordingly, we have a strategic task to intervene to help define the terms and conditions of our integration within the international community.

It is for this reason that the African progressive movement must accept that yet another of its strategic tasks is to help secure Africa's rightful place among the world community of nations.

#### **Africa's place in the world**

In this context we cannot overemphasise the fact that to achieve our goals in this regard will require the united action of our Continent.

The *Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)* held a Summit Meeting in Beijing in November 2006. The Meeting adopted a Declaration and an Action Plan for 2007-2009.

Among other things, the Declaration said:

*We hereby solemnly proclaim the establishment of a new type of strategic partnership between China and Africa featuring political equality and mutual trust, economic win-win cooperation and cultural exchanges...*

*“We urge that diversity of the world should be respected and upheld, that all countries in the world, big or small, rich or poor, strong or weak, should respect each other, treat each other as equals and live in peace and amity with each other, and that different civilisations and modes of development should draw on each other's experience, promote each other and coexist in harmony.*

I believe that all this describes exactly the kind of relationship Africa should establish with the rest of the world to achieve what I have described

as *securing Africa's rightful place among the world community of nations*.

This re-emphasises the need to have a strong African Union capable of defending, representing and advancing the interests of our Continent.

In turn, this underlines the related imperative for our Continent to act decisively to implement its agreed socio-economic development programmes, such as NEPAD, which, among other things, visualise ending Africa's status as an exporter of raw materials and capital and an importer of manufactured goods.

We are also faced with the critical importance both of helping to build strong and effective multilateral institutions and the transformation of these institutions so that they are properly representative of the developing countries, including Africa.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the European socialist countries, and therefore the end of the Cold War, meant a radical redistribution of global power and the emergence of what was called 'a unipolar world'.

More recently, and certainly as this relates to Africa, this has translated into what seems to be a 'new reality' that:

- the major Western powers feel that they have the freedom to act individually or collectively to determine the destiny of our Continent;
- they are therefore ready to intervene anywhere on our Continent regardless of our views as Africans;
- they view the involvement in Africa of other countries, and especially China, as a strategic threat to their interests, which include unfettered access to the ever-expanding proven reserves and deposits of natural resources on our Continent; and
- they would like to use the historical relations between our countries and themselves, including those imposed on Africa during the colonial period, to preserve our Continent as their exclusive sphere of influence, in their interest.

We should add to this the fact that the process of globalisation, driven by dominant Western drivers, has resulted in the further unequal integration of Africa within the global community

on terms and conditions that are essentially defined by the West.

Earlier I cited part of what appeared in the 2006 FOCAC Summit Meeting Declaration. This same Declaration also said "*Faced with the growing trend of economic globalisation, we call for enhancing South-South cooperation...*"

It went further to call for global negotiations, including through the WTO, "*to promote balanced, coordinated and sustainable development of the global economy to enable all countries to share its benefits and realise common development and prosperity.*"

I refer to this because the post-Cold

**“It is imperative that existing decisions to strengthen the African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are implemented, thus accelerating African regional integration.”**

War period has also enhanced the possibility for more effective South-South cooperation, to achieve the mutual benefit indicated in the FOCAC Summit Meeting Declaration.

To this we must add the potential for Africa to redefine its place in the world as represented by BRICS and the Africa-Arab Cooperation Forum.

In summary I would suggest that for it successfully to help address the historic challenge to secure Africa's rightful place among the world community of nations, the African progressive movement must attend to such challenges as:

- strengthening the AU, to enable our Continent effectively to act as a united entity capable of advancing its interests;
- implementing the agreed African socio-economic development programmes, as represented for instance in NEPAD;
- acting to defend the right and

possibility for us, the peoples of Africa, individually and collectively, freely to determine our destiny consistent with international law which prescribes the right of nations to self-determination;

- strengthening and democratising the multilateral institutions, to ensure respect for international rule of law even by the most powerful countries in the world;
- constructing equitable North-South relations especially as these relate to Africa; and
- enhancing South-South cooperation.

### **About the African progressive movement**

This article has focused on the tasks of what I have identified as the objectives of the African progressive movement.

It seems obvious that we must also answer the important question – who constitutes this African progressive movement?

The answer to this question is also directly relevant to another question I posed earlier – who sets the (national) African agenda?

Throughout the years of the African struggle for liberation against colonial rule it was not difficult to define both the African progressive liberation agenda and the African motive forces – the African progressive movement – which would engage the offensive to achieve the objectives specified in this African liberation agenda.

The historic African victory which caused the complete global collapse of colonialism and therefore the independence of all nations, posed new challenges.

These include the challenge to answer the questions:

- what are the progressive goals which the independent African States must aim to achieve; and
- what forces in our independent States can ensure the realisation of these goals?

In this article I have tried to elaborate on the progressive agenda which independent Africa must address, which is largely and essentially consistent with decisions our Continent has already taken through its inter-



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governmental institutions.

However I would like to insist that the task to achieve the fundamental social transformation of our Continent – its renaissance – belongs to the African people as a whole.

Accordingly, it cannot be sub-contracted only to our Governments, even if these are put in place through democratic elections.

It is because of this that the question arises – what progressive movement exists to engage in struggle to address the agenda I have sought to detail in this article?

Obviously, this is also to ask the question – who in our countries will benefit from the implementation of the all-Africa programme I have suggested?

The fact of the matter is that our years of independence have confirmed that in practise it is impossible to maintain our *'national unity'* exactly in the manner and form in which this manifested itself during the era of struggle for our national liberation.

In good part this is due to the undeniable reality that African independence has resulted in the emergence in our countries, as I mentioned earlier, of a *dominant predatory political and economic 'class'* as a *rent-seeking elite* which pursues selfish interests that have nothing to do with the fundamental aspirations of the generality of the African masses.

In practice this elite acts as a junior partner in the perpetuation of an all-round neo-colonial relationship between Africa and the major Western powers.

It is in this context that the challenge arises to ensure the strengthening and/or establishment of an African progressive movement that must struggle to achieve the objectives detailed in this article.

This progressive movement must understand that to achieve its objectives it must defeat the neo-colonial project, fighting against the resistance of its domestic African representatives and the foreign patrons and beneficiaries.

Recognition of this reality imposes the obligation to identify and organise the social forces on which we can rely to pursue the African progressive agenda I have tried to detail.

It is obvious that here we are talking of

those in our African society who would have a material interest in the successful implementation of this agenda. In reality, this is the overwhelming majority of the peoples of Africa.

I am certain that the masses of the African people are directly very interested in the outcomes I have mentioned as part of the African progressive agenda, such as:

- involving the people in the political processes that help to determine their destiny;
- ensuring peace and stability among all Africans;
- generating sustainable economic growth and development which benefit the people as a whole;
- advancing towards the integration and unity of Africa; and

“We still need the united action of the very same forces to achieve the objectives in the progressive agenda I have sought to detail, which are fundamental to the process of advancing towards the renaissance of Africa.”

- restoring the dignity of Africans among the peoples of the world.

Accordingly, as has happened for decades, it would be incorrect to leave the task to pursue these historic goals only to our Governments. Instead, we should understand and determine that their achievement is part of the people's agenda for the renaissance of Africa.

This is exactly why it must be driven by the African peoples themselves through what I have characterised as the African progressive movement.

We are therefore confronted by the strategic task to build this movement.

Practically this means that our African progressive political formations have an obligation to work consistently

and urgently to draw into one active process or movement, around an agenda such as I have suggested, other formations genuinely representative of the African peasant masses, workers, women, youth and students, religious communities, the indigenous petty and bigger bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia and workers in culture and the media.

We achieved our liberation from colonialism, leading to the universal collapse of this system, through the united action of these forces, which constituted our broad movements for national liberation.

We still need the united action of the very same forces to achieve the objectives in the progressive agenda I have sought to detail, which are fundamental to the process of advancing towards the renaissance of Africa.

In this regard, our first task is to demonstrate this practically: that we have the progressive political formations that must take the lead in terms of building the broad progressive movement to which I have referred, united around a shared vision and programme!

### Conclusion

One of the most recognised and popular statements made by our late leader and distinguished African patriot, Amilcar Cabral, is what he wrote as a *Party Directive* to PAIGC cadres in 1965, that:

*“Always bear in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children...”*

These are exactly the goals which must unite the broad African masses behind the progressive movement we must build!

The same *Party Directive* contains the similarly famous injunctions:

*“Hide nothing from the masses of the people. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories.”*

Neither should our contemporary African progressive movement tell lies by making claims about easy victories that are not possible! ■

## Aspen and Sifiso Nxasana Paediatric Trust provides welcome financial boost to Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital



Pictured at the inaugural Nelson Mandela Sport and Cultural Day, FNB Stadium, from left: Fikile Mbalula, Minister of Sports and Recreation; Bangi Mthethwa, CEO Nelson Mandela Children's Fund; Sifiso Nxasana, Group CEO FNB Rand; Dr. Judith Ekama, Chairman Aspen Pharmacare Group and Sifiso Nxasana Paediatric Trust; Stephen Saad, Group CEO Aspen Group; Tini Rennie, Deputy Director General of Health; Paul Mashatile, Minister of Arts and Culture; Ordan Nemesandani, SAMA President; Stavros Nicolaou, Senior Executive Aspen Pharmacare Group.

Aspen Pharmacare, a leading JSE-listed pharmaceutical company in the southern hemisphere, raises R5 million through its Sifiso Nxasana Paediatric Trust for the Children of Africa

Saturday 17 August, Nelson Mandela Sports & Cultural Celebration, was a propitious day for the Nelson Mandela Children's Trust, as Aspen's Group Chief Executive, Stephen Saad, handed over a cheque for the substantial sum of R5 million to the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital. Also present at the event were Former Presidents Thabo Mbeki and FW De Klerk, Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe, Minister of Sports and Recreation Fikile Mbalula and Minister of Arts and Culture Paul Mashatile.

Throughout his presidency, Nelson Mandela shared his vision for sports as a powerful and unifying force in society and it is behind this backdrop that the Unite4Mandela "One Man, One Nation, One Celebration" campaign was conceived. The campaign aims to unite South Africans in celebration of our global icon's vision and it culminated in the inaugural Nelson Mandela Sport & Culture Day, which was hosted on 17 August 2013 at the FNB Stadium in Johannesburg amidst scenes reminiscent of the 1995 Rugby World Cup.

The proceeds from this day will go towards the building of the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital, which will be only the second paediatric hospital in Southern Africa.

The Sifiso Nxasana Paediatric Trust was founded by Saad in 2012 following the tragic death of Sifiso Nxasana, son of Aspen's Chairman, Dr. Judy Dlamini and her husband Sifiso Nxasana. "Sifiso's untimely demise brought home to me the desperate need in our country for quality healthcare for our children, and I realised that Aspen could make an invaluable additional contribution in its healthcare capacity by supporting the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital through this Trust," Saad explains.

South Africa still has some of the highest disease burden and disproportionately high infant and child mortality and morbidity in the world. This is not surprising considering that there are no or very limited specialist paediatric healthcare services in the South African public sector. As a consequence of this the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital has become a flagship initiative for our country.

"As Aspen, we aim to help honour Madiba's wish of providing specialist paediatric healthcare for the children of Africa", explains Stavros Nicolaou, Aspen's Senior Executive. "This hospital will strengthen the overall healthcare system and provide hope to many thousands of children who would otherwise be denied access to such healthcare facilities", Nicolaou adds.

In addition to fundraising, the Nelson Mandela Children's Trust provides for the sustainability and appropriate resourcing of both the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital and the KwaZulu-Natal Children's Hospital, developing adequate management capacity and human resourcing while contributing to the overall strengthening of the South African Public Healthcare system.

"We wish to acknowledge and commend all donors for their contribution, which will provide much needed impetus to this initiative and in particular, we wish to thank Ministers Motsoaledi (Health), Mbalula (Sports and Recreation) and Mashatile (Arts and Culture) for their vision in conceiving and successfully executing the Mandela Sport and Cultural Day. The scenes of nation-building in the stands on that day will live long in our memories," concludes Nicolaou.

ASPEN expresses its profound sadness at the passing of our icon Nelson Mandela.

## A 'CRUDE AWAKENING'

# Revisiting the Political Economy of Oil in Africa



The extant literature on the 'resource curse' in both its classical and revisionist forms does not adequately focus on the role of social and political dynamics in shaping the landscape of resource abundant countries in Africa.

By Garth le Pere

No other natural resource in Africa has provoked as much controversy and debate as oil. A vast cottage industry of academic research and media commentary has developed and provides differing and often highly tendentious interpretations on the implications of Africa's oil largesse for economic development and political stability. Perhaps representative of the general interest provoked and in what has now become the most authoritative and seminal work on the subject, Duncan Clarke's *Crude Continent* runs into over 600 pages.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the literature pivots on whether oil is indeed the most

egregious consequence of the 'resource curse'. This is usually accompanied by various apocalyptic forebodings in different analytical accounts which emphasise the central role of oil but also other mineral resources, especially diamonds in perpetuating violent conflict, blighting the social and economic landscape with higher levels of poverty, fuelling institutional weakness and endemic corruption, acting as a disincentive to peace and stability, and providing the impetus for authoritarian rentierism among ruling elites.<sup>2</sup> Even Hollywood saw commercial opportunity in the 'resource curse' with the production of *Blood Diamond* as an almost cynical

paean to Africa's primordial excesses.

This cottage industry has thus been complicit in spawning a mythology around African oil that has become highly influential not only in shaping research agendas and public perceptions but also in helping to define relevant policy responses by international financial institutions and Western governments alike where the influence oil is very much viewed in pathological terms. Such responses have typically turned on the symptoms associated with the 'resource curse'. These include raised expectations and the proclivity of governments to increase public spending; oil is held responsible for price volatilities which

impede growth, distribution, and poverty alleviation, thereby impairing governments' ability to deal with inflationary pressures and to maintain fiscal control; the oil sector is said to subvert growth in manufacturing and agriculture because of the 'Dutch Disease'<sup>3</sup> effect; and due to its inherent rent-seeking nature, it exacerbates problems of transparency and accountability.<sup>4</sup>

However, the effect of the 'resource curse' is often grossly exaggerated and labours under the burden of the available evidence. Generally, a reductionism which borders on sophistry pervades many studies where development performance and economic growth are explained by the size and nature of countries' natural resource assets. Intervening social and political factors and historical considerations are conveniently ignored. Most crucially, there is a fallacy of composition problems where the political economies of eight oil-producing African countries are often thought to represent an entire genus of 54 countries, whether they have natural resource wealth or not. We thus concur with Clarke's observation that "...the idea that oil is a curse in Africa is a shallow and misplaced one, devoid of historical perspective and adequate empirical validity."<sup>5</sup> Yet the mythology of oil persists and has even gathered a certain resonance in the public mind. For example, a BBC Africa survey in June 2007 chronicles some hysterical reactions of respondents to the discovery of oil in Ghana. A sampling makes the point: "...the discovery of oil in Ghana made me weep...oil benefits only the ruling elite...the people are doomed to suffer a curse...oil corrupts absolutely...it creates rebel groups...it will be the kiss of death for many in Ghana...it brews wars...oil attracts more enemies than friends...it's never a blessing..."<sup>6</sup> Oil is thus held responsible for much of the insidious malaise and travails that afflicts the continent.

This essay will explore the different dimensions of the 'resource curse' argument. There is a vast literature to draw on but here we will be concerned with three overarching themes. The first is a critical assessment of the

different accounts which have proven influential in defining the terms and contours of the 'resource curse' debate and its empirical veracity. Given the extent to which Africa's oil economies are incorporated into the sinews of the energy global capitalist matrix and its production system, the next section provides an overview of how its political economy functions and which interests are served. Then in the third section, there is a reflection on how the Gulf states 'late rentier' model of development could be instructive and hold policy lessons for Africa's oil producing countries and those whose economies are dependent on commodities.

**“There is considerable variation in the development trajectories of resource abundant countries in Africa: they have taken different paths to democratisation depending on their colonial and post-colonial legacies; and very importantly, not all have descended into factional, corrupt, predatory or rentier states.”**

#### Assessing the 'resource curse'

There are three strands which can be disaggregated in scholarly accounts that attempt to explore the linkages between the paradox of resource abundance and economic performance and conflict. Firstly, protagonists have argued that countries with rich mineral resources in sub-Saharan Africa were subject to slower growth than those less endowed.<sup>7</sup> Others were of the view that mineral economies did not do well in terms of agricultural

growth, export diversification, and inflation compared to their opposite non-mineral economies, and were likely to suffer from poor savings, high unemployment, high external indebtedness, and high export earnings vulnerability.<sup>8</sup> The second strand has to do with natural resource abundance being associated with the onset of civil war and the intensity of violent conflict. The most celebrated studies in this genre are those by Collier and Hoeffler who variously examined natural resource abundance as a major determinant in starting civil wars, and in encouraging secessionism and sectarian strife.<sup>9</sup> Thirdly, a number of studies suggest that there is a correlation between natural resource abundance and low levels of democratisation. The archetypal African countries are said to experience breakdowns in, or stalled transitions to, democracy, and to be more likely than not to revert to authoritarian forms of rule.<sup>10</sup>

As with all good social science, several counter-studies have emerged to challenge the hegemony of the 'resource curse' literature. The evidence had to be treated with caution on several fronts. There was concern about the robustness of difference in measuring resource abundance; when different measures have been used, the results tend not to support the resource curse idea. For example, if levels of production and reserves rather than exports to GDP ratios are used, natural resource wealth does not significantly influence economic growth. Similarly, if measured in terms of natural resource stock per capita, there is no relationship between the onset of civil war and resource endowments.<sup>11</sup>

In short, a major bone of contention is whether ratios of natural resource exports to GDP, on the one hand, and natural resource exports to total exports, on the other, are the correct and relevant measures of resource wealth. If this premise is challenged, then the conceptual and empirical logic of the 'resource curse' rests on a weak foundation and the causal links in the hypothesis that natural resource abundance results in poor economic outcomes or civil wars are by no means conclusive or convincing.

These analytical and normative

deficits on the relationship between natural resource abundance and economic performance and conflict have focused much greater attention on the role of political variables as mediating or intervening factors in the relationship. As such an interesting revisionist literature has taken shape which variously draws its inspiration from behaviouralism, public choice theory, institutionalism, and dependency and world systems theory, among others. Behaviourists argue that resource booms generate myopia, over-exuberance, wishful thinking, and false optimism among ruling elites which leads to excessive government spending and fiscal profligacy.<sup>12</sup> By contrast, those of the rational actor persuasion hold that the problem is not irrational behaviour on the part of political actors but rent-seeking that results from resource booms. Rent-seeking encourages wastage in ceremonial projects, and perverse incentives such as providing benefits to particular groups, gaining control over allocation of rents, and avoiding accountability.<sup>13</sup>

An allied statist perspective asserts that rentier states are more concerned with the political distribution of rents rather than promoting private investment, production, and economic growth. Consequently, natural resource abundance leads to poor governance where ruling elites engage in predatory and oligarchic behaviour.<sup>14</sup> And finally, there are arguments about developing countries with abundant resources being presented with a Hobson's choice with regard to their forced incorporation into a global capitalist system on terms that suit the interests of developed countries. This structural relationship of dependence explains persistent poverty and underdevelopment among resource rich countries and their asymmetric reliance on developed countries for all sorts of assistance, be it economic, development, technological, or military.<sup>15</sup>

There have also been interesting revisions in the nexus between natural resources and the causes of civil war. Economic incentives and opportunities are not sufficient on their own but interact with social and political grievances, inter-ethnic tensions, and

security dilemmas in the outbreak of warfare and communal strife. In order words, there is less support for the greed and grievance thesis when alternative causal mechanisms are considered, such as land expropriation, environmental degradation, joblessness and levels of poverty, and, critically, foreign intervention.<sup>16</sup> State and institutional weakness and dysfunction also enters the analytical equation here in a two-stage process. In the first, predatory states emerge from resource abundance and as such, are less concerned with issues of growth and development. This is a recipe for conflict and the onset of civil war in the second stage, encouraging military opposition from disaffected groups, where lootable resources can quickly spawn organised militias capable of challenging the state and ruling elites.<sup>17</sup>

“Africa’s oil-rich states form an integral part of a complex and opaque transnational web of relations with global powers which ensures the exploitation of ‘enclave investments’.”

A general critique, however, emerges from these brief considerations which of course hardly do justice to the complexities and nuances of the debates. Firstly, the extant literature on the ‘resource curse’ in both its classical and revisionist forms does not adequately focus on the role of social and political dynamics in shaping the landscape of resource abundant countries in Africa. There is the mistaken assumption that ruling elites have a high degree of autonomy from domestic social formations mainly through financial and fiscal means and rarely do they have to confront pressures from below. This is patently false since corporate and organised social and political groups existed well before resource wealth became manifest and hence, notwithstanding the rentier

effects of resources, different groups—whether professional, class, ethnic, or religious—have continued to make various demands on the state. The social and political terrain thus matters as much, if not more, in explaining poor economic performance, lack of democracy, or recourse to violence.<sup>18</sup>

Secondly, there tends to be a general silence about the extent to which the external environment impacts on resource abundant countries in Africa (see next section). Certainly, this has been a theoretical concern of dependency theorists but no one working in this tradition has made a direct connection between external factors as an intervening variable and resource wealth and development performance. As a consequence, performance is viewed mainly through the prism of domestic issues and internal dynamics, and hence a crucial structural and functional external linkage is missed. And finally, there is the problem of resource determinism where resource rich countries are viewed as homogenous in terms of the causal linkages between economic performance, regime type, and potential for civil war. However, there is considerable variation in the development trajectories of resource abundant countries in Africa: they have taken different paths to democratisation depending on their colonial and post-colonial legacies; and very importantly, not all have descended into factional, corrupt, predatory or rentier states. This has profound implications for the utility of the analysis for policy-relevant discourse, especially as concerns why some resource abundant countries in Africa have fared better than their counterparts or even resource-poor countries.<sup>19</sup> It has been argued, therefore, that institutions matter a great deal in managing the ‘resource curse’ and averting conflict, and this includes the rule of law, the quality of bureaucracy and the civil service, anti-corruption agencies, and the general regulatory environment such as appropriate competition and investment policies.<sup>20</sup>

#### Locating Africa in the global oil nexus

For the most part, oil and gas

originate in developing countries but are mainly consumed and processed in developed countries. In 1990, global demand for oil was 66m barrels a day (b/d); by 2000 it had risen to 75m b/d; by 2010 it was 100m b/d; and if current trends continue, is expected to rise to 120m b/d by 2030.<sup>21</sup> Hydro-carbon fuels, mainly crude oil and petroleum, continue to be the main source of energy in the world and are the quintessential touchstone of modern capitalism and its consumer-driven culture. Hydro-carbon resources are thus essential for global economic growth and constitute a core strategic interest of developed countries and emerging powers alike.<sup>22</sup>

It is against this backdrop that Africa has emerged as a geo-strategic zone of increased relevance in the global production chain of oil even though it only has about 9 per cent of proven world reserves compared to 62 per cent in the Middle East. Africa's leading and established oil producers include Nigeria, Angola, Sudan, Algeria, Congo Brazzaville, Chad, Libya, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Egypt. However, Ghana's Jubilee oil field, the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, and the Lake Albert Basin of Uganda have recently registered major oil discoveries. As a measure of growth in the sector, Africa's oil production is set to increase by more than 50 per cent from a current 11m b/d to 17m b/d by 2025.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the commercial costs of oil production and exploration in Africa are relatively low and a major attraction for oil companies is the high success rate in exploration and drilling for new sources. African oil also tends to be of a very high quality with its much sought after low-sulphur content. And then in terms of logistics and supply-chain management, crude oil from Africa is generally closer to the markets of the United States and Europe compared to the Middle East.<sup>24</sup>

Of interest is also the growing diversity and influx of mostly state-owned oil companies which Clarke calls the 'antelopes in the food chain'.<sup>25</sup> These include Brazil's Petrobras, China's National Offshore Oil Corporation and the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation, India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation,

Malaysia's Petronas, Japan's Teikoku Oil Company, South Africa's Sasol, Ireland's Tullow Oil, Canada's Petro-Canada, and the Korean National Oil Corporation, among others. These new players increasingly challenge the dominance and have encroached on the territories of the giant 'Big Five' multinational companies, namely, Exxon-Mobil, Shell, Total, Chevron, and BP, whose market capitalisation ranges from US\$150bn to US\$500bn.<sup>26</sup>

Africa's oil producing countries have thus provided the gravitational pull for the continent's emergence as a key node in the calculus of global energy security and the supply of other strategic natural resources. The United States already depends on Africa for nearly 25 per cent of its crude oil imports which is more than the entire Persian Gulf, while China accounts for more than 30 per cent as its energy security becomes a major determinant of its involvement in Africa. Indeed, the two countries actively compete for access to Africa's resources in what *The Economist* has labelled 'A New Scramble'.<sup>27</sup> The US has gone as far as putting in place an Africa Command (AFRICOM) as the bridgehead of its military-security apparatus in Africa which is primarily concerned with securing America's energy interests (see Horace Campbell's article in this volume). The US military base in Djibouti and the Bush administration's Pan-Sahel Initiative are seen as complementary to AFRICOM's role.<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, China has overtaken both the United States and European countries to become the continent's main trading partner while the top five recipients of US investment are oil-producing countries (Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Angola, Chad, and Nigeria).

The BRICS countries have also stepped into this competitive fray for the continent's hydro-carbon resources. China is the dominant player with more than US\$13bn invested in 63 oil-generating projects.<sup>29</sup> Then Brazil provides Angola with an oil-backed credit line for US\$580m over three years which is paid for with 20 000 barrels a day and India has similarly offered oil-producers lines of credit worth more than US\$1bn for

infrastructure projects in exchange for oil. And while South Africa's trade with Africa is heavily skewed in its favour, oil forms the bulk of its imports from African countries.<sup>30</sup>

All these considerations highlight the extent to which the continent's oil producers are locked into a global configuration of upstream and downstream production networks and attendant power relations where the 'Big Five' continue to dominate the technology of production as well as the logistics chains and supply routes. In this manner, as Obi argues, Africa's oil-rich states form an integral part of a complex and opaque transnational web of relations with global powers which ensures the exploitation of 'enclave investments'.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, certain oil-governance initiatives have hardly ameliorated this situation and if anything, have merely compounded the obfuscation and malfeasance that are part of multinational company's conduct in Africa's oil industry. Of note here is Transparency International which was founded in 1993 in order to raise awareness about corruption and advocate anti-corruption laws, in addition to developing measures of corruption in the form of the Corruption Perception Index. In 1999, it created the Bribe Payers Index and in 2003, the Global Corruption Barometer. Then in 2002, the billionaire philanthropist, George Soros, established a "Publish What You Pay" initiative to encourage oil companies to make public what they pay to governments of oil-exporting countries but as far as can be divined, this has had little moral force in eliciting compliance through mandatory disclosures. A third initiative was led by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and resulted in the establishment of Extractive Industries Transparency International in 2003 whose main goal was to promote revenue transparency at local level. This was to be achieved through increased transparency, reducing the risk of corruption, and improving macro-economic management in the extractive sector.<sup>32</sup>

Notwithstanding these governance initiatives, the continent has continued to suffer from the flight of capital which has mainly been a consequence

of commercial tax evasion, trade mispricing, accumulated debt, and weak tax enforcement and compliance regimes rather than outright corruption. By one estimate this amounted to US\$854bn between 1970 and 2008, with oil exporters bearing the brunt of losses. Nigeria alone is said to have lost capital at a rate of US\$10bn a year.<sup>33</sup> This capital flight from Africa has been occurring in the context of oil companies recording exceptionally high profits, some of which have been labelled 'obscene'.<sup>34</sup>

In the broader scheme of this global political economy of oil, Africa's geo-strategic locus is one of supplying cheap oil to world markets in a production cycle that is subject to the vagaries of price volatility and domination by multinational companies. In this characterisation oil is not a 'curse' but "...is cursed by the high premium placed on it by global capitalism, spawning inequalities and contradictions fed by an insatiable greed for finite hydrocarbon resources by the world's industrial powers, and often at huge environmental and social costs to its victims."<sup>35</sup>

#### Reviewing the 'rentier-state' model

The fact that African countries have experienced real and consistent growth rates of 5 per cent on average over the last decade has largely been attributable to hydro-carbon revenue bases and growing corporate oil investments, especially by the new players. Together with the push of democratisation and other regional and continental transformative strategies, most African countries have registered improved economic and political governance and have been able to overcome structural impediments although worrisome symptoms of misrule, poverty, inequality, and corruption remain. Implicit in our argument here is that while oil as a strategic African resource has suffered from tabloid-style sensationalism, it has the potential to drive Africa's quest for development and growth; in Clarke's opinion, "the industry could and should be central to Africa's reconstruction."<sup>36</sup> The question is how?

Here we can usefully refer to the political economy theory of rents

which are commonly royalties and other payments for oil and gas exports that accrue to governments. Much of the research evolved out of the oil boom periods in the Middle East that began in the mid-1970s. Rent-seeking behaviour has often been linked with neo-patrimonialism by which the allocative state distributes oil wealth and ensures elite solidarity in sustaining new versions of state capitalism in the face of market reform pressures and globalisation.<sup>37</sup> However, studies of the politics of Arab Gulf states whose economies have increasingly been integrated into global financial and investment circuits have led to a review of the traditional rentier state model, resulting in what has been called 'late rentierism' and which has applicability for Africa's oil producers as far as its

“This capital flight from Africa has been occurring in the context of oil companies recording exceptionally high profits, some of which have been labelled ‘obscene’.”

policy relevance is concerned.

While features of the rentier state remain intact such as its centralised nature and earning a large proportion of its revenue from unproductive external sources, non-rentier aspects have also assumed growing prominence in foreign and economic policy, political reform, welfare and service provision, and in relations with society. In short, there is recognition in late rentierism that more active development policy and entrepreneurial state capitalism can not only promote state legitimacy but can also be salutary for long-term economic growth and industrial diversification since oil is a finite resource.<sup>38</sup>

There are thus several characteristics of the late rentier model which challenge the 'resource curse' thesis and which might be germane to Africa

by providing compelling normative and policy pointers:

- *A responsive but undemocratic state:* the state becomes more responsive to societal welfare because of growing demographic, welfare, employment, and distributive pressures. In the case of Africa, there has been growing popular repudiation of authoritarian rule and calls for greater democratisation and political liberalisation.<sup>39</sup>
- *An incremental opening to globalisation:* from being considered introverted and isolationist, rentier states of the Gulf Region have increasingly become integrated and active in spheres of global trade, investment, finance, consumption, sport, tourism, transport, and communications. Because of their colonial and post-colonial legacies, African countries are much more incorporated into global circuits but oil wealth gives them greater leverage to act relatively autonomously in driving their own development and growth agendas.
- *Active economic and development policy:* the later rentier state in the Gulf has assumed a more active role in monetary and fiscal matters, national infrastructure projects, trade and industrial policy, creating more business-friendly environments, and generally in economic diversification strategies. This has increased the institutional and managerial competence of the state and its agencies.<sup>40</sup>
- *Changing energy focus:* where Gulf states were once 'energy-centric' because oil and gas constituted their lifeblood, the economies of late rentiers are more 'energy-driven' in the sense that oil and gas are increasingly being used to encourage or crowd in sectors that feed into or relate to the oil and gas industry. This helps to circumvent the effects of the 'Dutch Disease' phenomenon, and improve the prospects for economic diversification and more efficiently run and managed state-owned enterprises.<sup>41</sup>
- *New forms of state capitalism:* the state remains the most powerful economic force in society and

controls most of the levers of production which are the hallmarks of neo-patrimonial practice. However, it has increasingly allowed market mechanisms to operate by putting in place goals and strategies for export-led economic growth and investment beyond oil and gas as well as for the private sector to thrive under conditions of a carefully regulated environment.<sup>42</sup>

- *A long-term perspective*: late rentiers are concerned with the long-term survival and political stability of the regime. Planning tools thus include managed diversification and partial-marketisation of economic sectors, creating a wider employment base, and introducing low-risk taxation schemes as a strategic response to the final depletion of hydro-carbon assets and the rents that accrue from these. The large sovereign wealth funds of the Gulf countries can be seen as regime responses to the long-term imperative.<sup>43</sup>

The interface between rents and neo-patrimonial behaviour by ruling elites is held culpable for much of the corrosive effects of natural resources in Africa, particularly oil. As such political institutions have been corrupted, poverty has been exacerbated, there is a lack of ethical norms, and the environment has been degraded. Most tellingly, oil players have provoked conflict and internecine war. We have questioned the merits of this critique but as the late rentier model demonstrates, there is much scope and hope for a progressive agenda based on greater transparency, accountability, and social responsibility that are not necessarily guided by the servile nostrums of oil governance initiatives.

## Conclusion

Across Africa, an early harvest is apparent from the great promise and positive effects of growth, and improved levels of democratisation and governance. However, while Africa's growth has largely been propelled by the recent super-commodity cycle of global demand, economic conditions are likely to remain difficult, especially in view of a burgeoning population of youth. The political economy of Africa's abundant resources will continue

to labour under the paradox of problematic capital flows and terms of trade, uneven growth and employment opportunities, and an unstable peace and security environment.

Africa's crude and natural resource bounties will continue to inspire negative and specious stereotypes unless the symptoms of the 'resource curse' are squarely and openly confronted. Bold domestic and continental visions in both policy design and implementation are critically needed. With the guidance of continental charters such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Union's Vision 2063, this must include ongoing monetary and fiscal discipline, macroeconomic stability, promoting entrepreneurship, good governance, and effective institutions. They provide a virtuous circle for building developmental states in Africa that are capable of enhancing the prospects for economic growth, political stability, and democratic accountability.

There has been a critical ideological and normative shift in Africa and globally. This firstly relates to Africa taking greater responsibility for its own destiny and seriously adhering to the injunction to seek 'African solutions to African problems'. At the global level and given its increased geo-political significance, the mood has changed from what external actors can do for Africa to what they can do with Africa. Ironically, Africa's oil and natural resource futures rest with both! ■

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DISMANTLE AFRICOM!



# The Need for a New Engagement with Africa

AFRICOM is not what the people of Africa need and it is not what will achieve long-term stability on the continent. The recent experiences of Africans defeating western supported elements in the DRC should open more possibilities for increased activities of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

By Horace G. Campbell

There is a growing body of opinion in the US and Africa that will require popular mobilisation to reduce the US military presence in Africa and new engagement by the peace movement to fight against the austerity measures designed to protect bankers who profit from US militarism.

The struggle against the United States Africa Command that is being carried out in the peace movement must be joined by the progressive forces in Africa who want the complete demilitarisation of Africa. This kind of

transnational peace alliance will be able to reignite the forms of solidarity and achievements of the anti-apartheid era. It will be the task of a literate peace and social justice movement to work for the dismantling of the US Africa Command; and to pursue goals that support education, health, the building of infrastructure and the cleaning up of the environment in Africa.

It has become clear that the existence of AFRICOM has not provided a security environment conducive to good governance and

development. Drawing from the short five years of the existence of this Africa Command, the author agrees with those African policy makers who have argued that the US military is one of the principal obstacles to peace and stability in Africa. In addition to this destabilisation of Africa, the way in which the militarisation of the study of Africa has affected genuine academic research about Africa in US universities must be considered.<sup>1</sup>

The small group which organised resistance to AFRICOM in the past

must work with those who call for an end to the militarisation of African politics. These peacemakers have been joined by an international movement opposing the drone strike policies of the United States. In the past year the exposure of the eavesdropping capabilities of the United States and the role of the National Security Agency (NSA) has made it clear that the calls for the dismantling of Africom must include all aspects of demilitarisation of international politics. In many senses it was the very success of the peace and justice forces that opposed the deployment of US military personnel overseas that forced the militarists to turn to drones and targeted killings. Calls for the US Administration to publicly report on civilian casualties from U.S. drone strikes deserve support so that this policy of killing with impunity can be brought to an end.

Peacemakers are convinced that recent events in Africa as well as the current phase of the end of the war on terror provide the context for the dismantling of the US Africa Command. There are four platforms for this US military engagement with Africa. These are through:

- the US AFRICOM Social Sciences research agenda;
- the information gathering apparatus of the National Security Agency (NSA) which is also linked to the forward planning for US transnational corporations;
- the promotion of the private military and security contractors along with complicit non-governmental organisations; and
- traditional networks such as the International Military Education Program (IMET) designed to ensnare African militaries in order to sell outdated ordinance.

When the idea of the United States Africa Command was first mooted in 2007 there was so much opposition to the idea that there was only one country in Africa, Liberia, that promised to host this command. Other states and leaders who had been drawn into the various military training and education programmes continued their relationships but the US military involvement in the war against the peoples of Libya raised the question

of the role of the US military in Africa to a new level. The recent military collaboration between the foreign intervention brigade (comprising Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania) in the restoration of the road to peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has opened the way for more robust forms of African military cooperation against destabilisers and looters. This collaboration was one more indication that the people of Africa do not need the US Africa Command and that peace and reconstruction in Africa can be given greater impetus with the dismantling of the US military apparatus in Africa.

#### **Tracing the confused rationale for AFRICOM**

In February 2007, President Bush had announced that the Defense

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Department would create a new Africa Command (AFRICOM) to coordinate U.S. government interests on the continent. Under this plan all governmental agencies of the US would fall under the military, i.e., USAID, the State Department, the US Departments of Energy, Treasury, and the Department of Education, etc.<sup>2</sup> In pursuit of the plans for the remilitarisation of Africa, the US Department of Defense announced the appointment of General William “Kip” Ward (an African American) as head of this new military command.

At the end of the era of formal apartheid, the US military established the Africa Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) with the goal of supporting humanitarianism and ending genocide.

This was the same US government that had lobbied the United Nations to withdraw troops from Rwanda in the midst of the fastest genocide in Africa.<sup>3</sup> Throughout this period the US military had been cautious about involvement in Africa in the aftermath of the painful experience in Somalia in 1993. This cautious stance changed after the events of September 11, 2001. In the next year, the USA updated its ACRI plans to organise the African Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA). Under ACOTA, African troops were supposed to be provided with offensive military weaponry, including rifles, machine guns, and mortars. The Africa Regional Peacekeeping Program (ARPP) was also established in order to equip, train, and support troops from selected African countries that are involved in “peacekeeping” operations. Additionally, the US government launched a Pan Sahel anti-terrorism initiative (later called Trans Sahara Counter Terror Initiative).

Although General William Ward had been placed as the head of AFRICOM when the planning for the NATO intervention in Libya was maturing, Ward was removed because in the situation of a war against Africans, an African American general could not be trusted to prosecute this war. General Carter Ham was appointed to oversee the US and NATO war against Libya, but after the disastrous episode of the death of US Ambassador Stevens, Carter Ham was himself relieved of his position. It was in the midst of this removal that General Carter Ham was making Public Relations Speeches about the role of the US military in fighting terrorism in Africa. This was the context of his appearance at a colloquium in honour of Chinua Achebe.

#### **Enter General Carter Ham**

At the outset of his presentation General Ham acknowledged his lack of experience and knowledge on matters relating to Africa before he took up the position of Commander of the US Africa Command. Stating that the Command came into existence less than five years ago and was the youngest of the six geographic commands,<sup>4</sup> he told the

audience that in the twenty months that he had served, he had travelled to 42 different African Countries. Of the other 13 states he said, “some don’t want me to come visit, and others my government doesn’t want me to go.” What was significant was that his mandate did not make the artificial division of the US State Department that divides sub-Saharan Africa from North Africa. Ham rearticulated the talking points that everyone could read on the website of AFRICOM, viz: “Africa Command protects and defends the national security interests of the United States by strengthening the defense capabilities of African states and regional organizations and conducts military operations, in order to deter and defeat transnational threats and to provide a security environment conducive to good governance and development”.<sup>5</sup>

General Carter Ham then categorised key US security interests in the continent of Africa in four areas:

- Addressing and countering a variety of violent extremist organisations that are in Africa. He accorded this the highest priority.
- Maintaining global access, improving access for own economic growth and for the international community.
- Preventing or deterring conflict. Keeping a clear understanding of the many non-state actors fomenting conflict.
- Humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, mass atrocity and response options.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Violent Extremists in Africa*

From this introduction, the General went on to elaborate on his first point of the growing threat of violent extremist organisations in Africa. This is a theme that has been recurring in the speeches of US policy makers and General Rodriguez, Ham’s successor, has been making the same claims in public. Of the evolving threats, Al Qaeda’s core has been weakened and resulted in affiliates growing in importance. Carter Ham spelt out for the Colloquium audience the existence of the “network of Al Qaeda and its affiliates,” warning that these networks are changing in ways that “increase threats to states but

also regional stability.” In his words, what was particularly worrisome was not each individual group, but the growing connectivity between groups. General Ham told his audience that the Al Qaeda networks were starting to form a network with indications of communications of training, sharing funding and weapons. He spelt out that this process was most mature in the Maghreb where Al Qaeda was well funded by outside financing and that they increased their capabilities through kidnappings and criminal activities. The three dominant extremist groups that were featured by the General were: Al Shabaab in the Horn of Africa, Boko Haram in Nigeria, and AQIM (N. Africa and Mali). These groups were increasing collaboration and he cited developing linkages between Al Shabaab and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Yemen.<sup>7</sup> What

“General Ham told his audience that the Al Qaeda networks were starting to form a network with indications of communications of training, sharing funding and weapons.”

was left unsaid by the General was the role of the US allies in the Gulf of Arabia in financing violent extremism in Africa. There are now many books and studies that have identified the role of foundations and organisations in Qatar, the Gulf of Arabia and Saudi Arabia in financing these extremist groups.<sup>8</sup> US allies, especially Saudi Arabia, are financing groups such as Boko Haram in Nigeria and for the past decade there have been studies exposing Wahhabi ideology and the massive infusions of Saudi cash that are rapidly transforming the once syncretic and peaceful Sufi inspired sub-Saharan Islam into militant Islamism.<sup>9</sup> The US government has now named Boko Haram as a foreign terrorist organisation.

#### *African Success in Combatting Extremism*

Despite the gloomy picture of the growth of extremism presented by General Ham, he went on to praise the regional efforts to counter extremism in Africa, especially in East Africa. He noted that, “it was easy to get captured by the negative, but also there were very good efforts underway.” The AMISON mission of the African Union in Somalia was a success story because the situation has changed to the point where the people of Somalia and their representatives have been able to elect a president, a parliament, and have begun to establish embassies overseas. Al Shabaab has largely been removed from Mogadishu and the port of Kismayo in just a year. For General Carter Ham, the important lesson was that the nations of East Africa and the African Union decided to take action. “It was not the international community and certainly not the United States; it was regional states making that decision.”

General Ham pointed out that AMISON was not the only success story of regional initiatives in Africa to combat extremism and insecurity. He drew attention to the increased political will inside the African Union since 2007 and pointed to the fact that patience is necessary for these AU operations and that one should think of the long term.

#### *Maintaining Global Access*

On the point of maintaining global access, General Ham addressed the need for maritime security in Africa.<sup>10</sup> Private shipping has increased security so that instances of piracy have declined since 2009. He spoke of the great expense in fighting piracy and that only two wealthy states in Africa, Nigeria and South Africa, had the capacity to deploy maritime resources. African scholars however have pointed out that the piracy of the rich, especially the banks and pharmaceuticals, is far more damaging to Africa than the petty pirating of the poor in Somalia.

#### *Non-state Actors Fomenting Conflict*

Of the third and fourth points, General Ham highlighted the role of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) as

a non-state actor terrorising citizens in Eastern and Central Africa. He revealed that the AFRICOM has provided special communication networks so that villagers could call for help if threatened by the LRA. As a result of this assistance, there have been increased defections from the LRA and fewer attacks and increased cooperation. "But he is still at large," and the "fundamental mission is to bring him to justice."

#### *Mali and Insecurity in West Africa*

General Ham expanded on the threats to the peoples of West Africa since the Malian military coup in March 2012. This was before the elaborate charade that was orchestrated and organised with various allies of France to destabilise the entire region of the Sahel. At the Achebe colloquium, Ham communicated to this audience that since the coup and the collapse of the government in Bamako, there had been a breakdown in security with the establishment of a safe haven for Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Carter Ham reported that AFRICOM was working to address four interrelated problem sets in Mali. First was the restoration of a constitutionally based government; second, was the need to address legitimate concerns of an underappreciated and often neglected demographic group in Northern Mali, mostly Tuareg; third, there was a terrorist problem in Northern Mali. He noted that there was a "relatively small hardcore of Terrorists." And fourthly, there was the need for continuing humanitarian assistance in the Western African region of the Sahel.

#### *Developing Partnerships with Africans*

General Carter Ham concluded his presentation by justifying the mission to advance US security interests across Africa. This was best achieved by advancing African countries. General Ham drew from the updated US National Security Strategy in Africa that document signed by Barack Obama. It was stated that the United States will partner with sub-Saharan African countries to pursue four interdependent and mutually reinforcing objectives:

- strengthen democratic institutions;
- spur economic growth, trade, and

investment;

- advance peace and security; and
- promote opportunity and development.

General Ham stated that stability and security were necessary preconditions for all the objectives to be realised.

#### **Was this a case for or against the US AFRICOM?**

The first question to General Ham was related to the importance of oil from Africa. The questioner told the audience that it was necessary to grasp the conjuncture why there was the deployment of the US Africa Command at this time. It was brought to the attention of the Colloquium that up to 25 per cent of the petroleum needs of the United States were supplied by Africa and that Africa was now more important than the Middle East in the

**“Whether it was the placing of Nelson Mandela on the list of terrorists or the collusion in the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the experience of the US military has been to lay the basis for genocidal violence and the plunder of resources in Africa.”**

supply of oil. The speaker from the floor then drew attention to how the United States was a major weapons supplier to Africa and that these weapons undermined the stability of Africa. The point was made that there was near universal opposition in Africa to the hosting of AFRICOM and that only one state, Liberia, offered to host AFRICOM. The speaker made references to the plunder of resources in Eastern Congo and the relationships between the US military and the militaries in Rwanda and Uganda.

After listening to the presentation, I

brought to the attention of the General the inconsistencies in his argument by pointing out that the successes that he referred were generated by African peacekeepers. Granted, the General claimed that these successes were possible with the collaboration of AFRICOM, but from my point of view, most of the "partners" of the United States military were states that did not derive their legitimacy from democratic participation and expression. I raised the fact that the General did not comment on the ongoing war in the Eastern Congo and the role of "allies" of the US such as Rwanda and Uganda in supporting the rebel group M 23 in the Eastern Congo.

I reminded the General that his presentation omitted any mention of Libya which is now overrun with militias; and that one year previously, AFRICOM was claiming credit for the "success" of the NATO intervention. I drew the attention of the audience to the reports in the US government press that the President had appointed a new Commander for AFRICOM after the investigation of the attack on the embassy in Benghazi on September 11, 2012.<sup>11</sup>

I reminded the audience that the insecurity in Mali emanated from a military coup d'état that was carried out by a captain who had repeatedly received military training in the United States.<sup>12</sup> Bearing in mind the fact that the United States had expended more than one billion dollars in Mali on "development and military training," I reflected on the musings of one former US Ambassador to Mali who wrote and posted pictures of himself and Captain Sanogo under the caption, "Sanogo: A hero or a mutineer?"<sup>13</sup>

At the colloquium, I repeated the call for a thorough evaluation of the role of the United States and the NATO mission in Libya and for a full disclosure of the relationship between the US AFRICOM and the instability in Mali. It was the incongruence between the media hype about AQIM and the reality that the present insecurity in the Maghreb was generated by past US military activities from the period of the Pan Sahel Initiative to the NATO intervention in Libya that is one of the most persuasive arguments for the

dismantling of the United States Africa command. None of the member states of NATO want a proper inquiry of the impact of the NATO intervention on West Africa. It has been the South African representative in the Security Council that has been calling for a proper acknowledgement of the direct impact of the NATO intervention in Libya on the Sahel, as well as an appreciation by the Council of the role of the AU in bringing the problems to the Council's attention.

I enquired from General Ham whether he agreed with Jeh Johnson that there were reduced terror threats around the world and that the War on Terror could be dealt with as a law enforcement matter instead of a military counter-terror matter. Carter Ham said that he agreed with Johnson that it was time to have this debate.

### More arguments for dismantling AFRICOM

Since the end of the war against the people of Vietnam, the government of the USA has been reluctant to deploy massive numbers in armed combat. The neo-conservatives under the George W. Bush administration attempted to reverse this caution and experimented with the occupation of Iraq. This failed. After this failure the US military and the Obama Administration resorted to drone warfare. There is now a massive movement against drone warfare internationally and hence the US is embarking on a new tack of engaging African militaries through bilateral exercises such as the August 2013 Operation Shared Accord.<sup>14</sup> But far more important than the joint military exercise has been the massive onslaught on South African society to promote the neo-liberal ideas of individualism, greed, capitalism and the unlimited right of capitalists to exploit workers. Beside the US humanitarian agents there are some international non-government organisations that are linked to private military contractors, who are in turn linked to Wall Street.

Numerous writers have drawn attention to the criminal activities of the financiers and the banks in promoting insecurity globally. These financiers have now moved to control

private military firms and are busy planning to expand their activities in Africa. The instability and looting in societies such as the Central African Republic and across Central Africa cannot be separated from the primitive forms of accumulation undertaken by western financial institutions. Many of these financiers are integrated into the military-financial-information complex.

Charles Ferguson in his book, *Predator Nation: Corporate Criminals, Political Corruption, and the Hijacking of America*, spelt out how the ivory tower and the academic establishment have been corrupted by the Predators. The Concerned Africans Forum have joined in the critique of the US military in Africa, drawing attention to the increased funding for the military and the diminished resources for established Title VI centres. Through the financing of programmes such as the Minerva Research Initiative and the Human Terrain System (HTS), millions of dollars have been diverted from genuine scholarly research to priorities determined by the military.<sup>15</sup> Though

“General Ham’s speech made a very good case for why the US Africa Command should be wound down and dismantled.”

the United States has 5,458 “distinct and discrete military installations” around the world there are pressures from the military-industrial and oil complex for the US to have more effective resources in Africa to defend US capitalism.

It is difficult for the researchers and western experts to start from any serious historical background because from the moment there is serious engagement with the history and culture of Africa it can be understood that the US Military has always been on the wrong side of history in Africa. Whether it was the placing of Nelson Mandela on the list of terrorists or the collusion in the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the experience of the US military has been to lay the basis for

genocidal violence and the plunder of resources in Africa. Patricia Daley brought out the reality that Africans have to learn from the protracted processes for peace such as that which was guided by Julius Nyerere and Nelson Mandela in Burundi.<sup>16</sup>

In the final analysis of the intended benefits versus consequences of the establishment of AFRICOM, the balance sheet weighs heavily against Africa’s continental good. The current instability in Libya and Mali are directly related to the military planning and activities of AFRICOM. A number of books demonstrate that US Africa Command has increased resource exploitation, imperial expansion, instigated violence, intensified regional conflicts and undermined the authority of regional organisations like IGAD, SADC, EAC, and eventually the African Union. As such, AFRICOM is a formal vehicle of US imperialism and a disaster.

Of the three areas of “terrorist” activities in Africa (Mali, Nigeria and Somalia – with overflow to Kenya), the case can be made that military engagement by Britain, France and the United States will only provide the rationale for increasing militarisation. It should be of the highest importance for activists and scholars to push back from the argument that represents Al Qaeda groups in Africa as “present significant threats to the United States.” This is a distortion because the real dangers are to the African societies that are being disfigured.

### Conclusion

The establishment of AFRICOM has not served the best interests of the African peoples, and the argument that this military command is fuelled principally by humanitarian motives is flawed. What was important about the speech of General Carter Ham at the Achebe colloquium was that the General was entering the space of intellectuals from Africa. General Ham had praised the patient and consultative mechanisms of the African Union and spoke of future “partnership” with African states. In his speech, General Carter Ham repeated claims that have gained currency in the western media that Northern Mali had become a

“terrorist haven” and that Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) posed such a danger that, “as each day goes by, Al Qaeda and other organisations are strengthening their hold in Northern Mali. There is a compelling need for the international community, led by Africans, to address that”.<sup>17</sup> This was before the French intervened in Mali in an exercise that is still unfolding. Elsewhere, I have expressed my opposition to the intervention of France in Mali.<sup>18</sup> General Ham’s speech made a very good case for why the US Africa Command should be wound down and dismantled.

The United States Military Strategists Association (USMSA) and the journalists inhabit the same world where they uncritically reproduce the press releases from the information centres that fit into the propaganda war against Africans by AFRICOM. Africa is past the stage of failed states. Wall Street is looking at the megadeals between Brazil, China and Africa and wants to find a way in. Unfortunately, many African activists uncritically repeat the assertion that Africa is a hotbed of terrorism and insecurity.

The military calculation of the conservative sectors of US imperial centres and war profiteers is better understood when viewed within the larger context of the global planning by these elements for the kind of war that is intended to perpetuate US military management of the international system. The capitalist crisis that started in the US in 2007 has exposed further the weakness of the US as a global economic power, putting the dollar in a more precarious position as currency of world trade. AFRICOM is not what the people of Africa need and it is not what will achieve long-term stability on the continent. The recent experiences of Africans defeating western supported elements in the DRC should open more possibilities for increased activities of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. It is fitting that it is in the year of the fiftieth anniversary of African Unity when Africans are calling for the dismantling of AFRICOM.

A section of the US foreign policy establishment attempts to intensify the militarisation of US-Africa policy through AFRICOM and neo-liberal

private military companies in order to ensure that Africa is secured for US hegemonic assertion/access to strategic resources and global political capital – for the preservation of the US empire. The recent experiences of the foreign intervention brigade in the DRC augur well for the moment when there is a United Africa that can neutralise foreign military forces. I have outlined this argument in my book *Global NATO and the Catastrophic Failure in Libya: Lessons for Africa in the Forging of African Unity*.

Faced with the dynamic changes underway in Africa, the current US administration has sought to retreat from overt militarisation of US relations with Africa. In his 2013 tour, President Obama announced the launch of the Africa Power Plan to strengthen the electrical grid system in Africa and to expand the delivery of electricity to the most rural areas. This attempt to reshape US-Africa policy challenges the traditional power brokers in Africa and seeks to catch up with the dynamism of the current transformation of Africa. The struggles against militarism and exploitation in the United States cannot be advanced by a military command that serves the interests of oil companies and private military contractors. There is now space for those forces inside Africa to intensify the political, intellectual and diplomatic work to diminish the militarist forces of the old imperial order. Today, it is not only the peace and justice forces in Africa who are against militarisation. African capitalists now know that their own room for expanding commercial operations is hampered by US militarism.

Mo Ibrahim spoke for many Africans at the Colloquium when he said that it was time that US oil companies be as aggressive in cleaning up the African oil spills as they were aggressive in opening new oil platforms. The call for resistance can now bring up to date the concrete experiences of the US military and mobilise for the dismantling of the US Africa Command. General Carter Ham sought to use the space of a scholarly platform to justify the need for the existence of the US Africa Command. Instead, the content of his message provided some of the clearest

reasons as to why the War on Terror has passed the tipping point. ■

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# Eurocentrism, Coloniality and the Myths of Decolonisation of Africa



Fifty years after the celebration of decolonisation the 'European game' which denied Africans agency continues to prevail. Coloniality remains a reality.

By Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni

Decolonially speaking, Euro-North American modernity unfolded in terms of the colonisation of space, time, being and even nature. It announced its presence through the usurping of world history by Europe and North America. It expanded, institutionalised and consolidated itself into a global phenomenon through mercantilism, the slave trade, imperialism, and colonialism. Economically, Euro-North American modernity was carried forward and globalised by capitalism. At the spiritual level, it was propagated through Christianisation. At the epistemological level, Euro-North American modernity consolidated itself through appropriation and monopolisation of all useful existing knowledges as well as through the displacement, subjugation and silencing of other knowledges that challenged Eurocentrism. To survive until today, modernity evolved and unleashed a very persuasive global programme underpinned by discourses of democracy and human rights as it sought to routinise and naturalise itself as the only natural order of life.

The long-term consequences of all these processes were far-reaching and devastating for Africa. They resulted not only in epistemicides but also in the re-articulation of modern human history in terms of the 'Athens-to-Washington' historiographical narrative as the logical consequence of the usurping of world history (Zeleza 1997; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013a;). Once world history was usurped, the Euro-North American world pushed for the globalisation of Eurocentrism and coloniality. This is why the philosopher of liberation Enrique Dussel categorised the constituent elements of Eurocentrism as including 'Hellenocentrism' which privileges and articulated Greece and Rome as the original centre of human civilisation; 'Westernisation,' which identifies Europe and North America as the centre of the world and the paragons of human progress; and 'coloniality' which underpins Anglo-Saxon claims to being superior human beings ordained by God and history to dominate and exploit other human beings (Dussel 2011). By usurping world history Europeans were able

successfully gain ontological density as the only complete human beings while at the same time doubting the ontological density of all those peoples found outside Europe.

Samir Amin defined Eurocentrism as a modern construct that is constituted by a bundle of Western prejudices with respect to other peoples. Eurocentrism became one of the banal forms of ethnocentrism informed by European mistrust of non-Europeans and a discursive terrain of racism, chauvinism and xenophobia. While Eurocentrism is a deformed ideology, it has been used to confer upon Europeans and North Americans the right to judge and analyse others (Amin 2009: 177-178).

Amin added that Eurocentrism is 'expressed in the most varied of areas: day-to-day relationships between individuals, political formations and opinion, general views concerning society and culture, social science' (Ibid 179). Eurocentrism gave birth to coloniality. Nelson Maldonado-Torres defined coloniality as a global imperial power structure that survived the end of direct administrative colonialism. Coloniality exists through long-standing patterns of power which consistently work to define culture, labour, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. He elaborated that coloniality 'is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day' (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 243).

The reality which is often missed by Africans is that the post-1492 modern world system is resistant to decolonisation. The world orders it produced — such as the post-1648 Westphalian order, the post-1945 United Nations normative order and the post-1989/post-Cold War order — have all remained resistant to deimperialisation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013b). This is why even though Africans launched some of the most protracted and heroic anti-slavery

and anti-colonial struggles, often these struggles became ensnared by the same inventories and grammars fashioned by the immanent logic of modernity, imperialism and coloniality. Ramon Grosfoguel argued that the idea of a decolonised world is one of the most powerful myths of the twentieth century which erroneously assumes that the complex 'heterogeneous and multiple global structures put in place over a period of 450 years' suddenly evaporated 'with the juridical-political decolonisation of the periphery over the past 50 years' (Grosfoguel 2007: 219).

Inevitably, African efforts to make history are constrained by their entrapment in global coloniality. This means Africans are making history

“Coloniality ‘is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience’.”

within a stage set by Euro-American modernity that was not of their making (Marx 1898: 12). Amin (2009: 13) understood modernity to mean that human beings armed with secular thought and science, 'individually and collectively, can and must make their own history.' But the ability of Africans to do so was doubted, as their humanity had been continuously denied to the extent of even being reduced to commodities during the slave trade. The reality is that since 1492, Europe and North America gained a long-lasting victory 'not only through the force of its weapons: it remains so through its "models" of growth and development, through the statist and other structures which,

having been created by it, are today adopted everywhere' (Castoriadis 1991: 200).

#### **African loss of ontological density**

Today Africans are entrapped within a modern world system that is racially hierarchised, patriarchal, sexist, Christian-centric, Euro-American-centric, hetero-normative, capitalist, and colonial in architecture (Grosfoguel 2011). Denial of the humanity of Africans was based on misreading the African being as lacking souls, rationality, writing, history, civilisation, development, democracy, human rights and ethics (Grosfoguel 2007: 214).

At the institutional political level, as Euro-Americans were busy producing modern nation-states in the wake of the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 and recognising each other's sovereignty and institutionalisation and 'norming' of a particular modern world order as a juridical political formation, they continued to intensify expansion beyond Europe in violation of other non-European people's dignity and freedom. The most important point is that under the Westphalian order, African people were not considered part of humanity that was expected to enjoy national sovereignty. The Berlin Conference of 1884-5 was the culmination of a long-process of writing African people out of the 'zone of being' into a 'zone of non-being' where they were available not only for enslavement but also for colonisation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013b).

The Berlin consensus was in fact an agreement among European powers to divide Africa among themselves. While the institutionalisation of the slave trade became the first manifestation of the dark side of modernity, the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 enabled colonialism and laid a firm basis for global coloniality (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013a: 45-50). The scramble for and partition of Africa among European powers amounted to an open disregard and disdain for the African people's dignity, rights and freedoms (Mazrui 2010: xi). The Berlin Conference was hosted by the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck who is credited for unifying Germany. The unifier of

Germany presided over the process of the partition of Africa.

The partition of Africa as noted by Mazrui 'unleashed unprecedented changes in African societies: political, economic, cultural, and psychological' (Mazrui *Ibid* xi - xii). African people of different ethnic backgrounds were forcibly enclosed into one of the demarcated colonial boundaries of the colonial state. At another level some African people with common ethnic background were randomly fragmented into different colonial states.

The Berlin Conference dramatised and confirmed the fact that Europeans did not consider those people found in Africa to be human beings that deserved to be treated with dignity. The logic that informed the slave trade also informed the partition of Africa. It is a logic of dismissing not only the humanity of African people but of considering them to be a 'present' that was 'absent' in considerations of world affairs. This logic was informed by what J. M. Blaut calls the 'myth of emptiness' which was constituted by four major Eurocentric propositions: that Africa was empty of people; that where people were found they were mobile, nomadic and wanderers without any sense of political sovereignty and territorial claim; that African people had no idea of private property; and finally, that African people lacked rationality (Blaut 1993: 15).

The long-term consequence of the Berlin consensus is that African people found themselves enclosed in territorial boundaries that were decided in Europe. Attempts to exercise their political agency had to be performed within 'iron cages'. But even within the confines of colonial boundaries, African people deployed pan-Africanism and nationalism as they fought to project their agency in contesting the immanent logics of the slave trade, imperialism and colonialism.

### **Is extra-structural African agency possible?**

Transcending the edifice of Euro-North American modernity, particularly its globalised grammars, inventories and rhetoric has proven to be a major challenge for Africans,

breathing, as they do, modernity and coloniality every day. The institutions that were bequeathed by modernity on the world such as the nation-state and the capitalist economic management have somehow been naturalised. Euro-normativity has routinised and naturalised itself. Euro-North American epistemology has been globalised. African minds have been colonised. These imposed realities make it very difficult for Africans to exercise extra-structural agency.

But Africans have not given up the struggle to regain their lost ontological density. For example pan-Africanism emerged as a counter-hegemonic international movement that sought to contest articulation and projection

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of Euro-American power and interest at the expense of black people (Lumumba-Kasongo 1994: 109). Realities of the slave trade, imperialism and colonialism provoked the rise of pan-Africanism in the Diaspora to counter the dominant and hegemonic Euro-American worldview. Euro-American racism produced the idea of black people as a racial category that was exposed to racial abuses (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013c). This is evident from the concerns of the series of Pan-African Congresses that were held between 1900 and 1945. The main point about these Congresses is that they provided black people from the diaspora and continent a space to announce their presence in the Euro-

American dominated modern world.

During the Congresses leading black people consistently demanded an end to racism and the abuse of black people. The Pan-African Congress that was held in 1945 in Manchester in Britain not only brought together pan-Africanists from Africa and the diaspora but also made a bold statement rejecting colonialism. Pan-Africanists made sure that whenever Europeans and Americans met to decide the future of the world excluding black people's views, they organised their own meeting to articulate black people's demands. Three important objectives of pan-Africanism could be identified: pan-Africanism as a protest against Euro-American racism that was ranged against black people in the diaspora and on the African continent; pan-Africanism as a terrain for waging anti-colonial struggles; and pan-Africanism as a dream for African unity (Esedebe 1970).

After the 1945 Pan-African Congress the leading advocate of pan-Africanism became Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. He convened the All-Africa People's Conference in 1958 in Accra, Ghana. Two issues dominated the conference: the decolonisation of Africa and the unification of African states and peoples into a United States of Africa. The conference became a precursor to the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963 (Murithi 2009). However, pan-Africanism continues to intersect with African nationalism paradoxically as some Africans continue to be reluctant to sacrifice territorial nationalism for the greater goal of pan-African unity.

### **African nationalism and the challenge of coloniality**

African nationalism has its social base in Africa as well as a derivative genealogy (Chatterjee 1986). It is rooted in African realities of encounters with imperialism and colonialism. But the derivative component is equally important to note. Perhaps a balanced assessment of the character of African nationalism is to depict it as both a derivative discourse as well as a new creation of the African people as they responded to colonialism. It was never insulated from what Benedict

Anderson (1983) termed 'modular' forms made available by Europe and America. At the same time, contextual African historical realities and conditions dictated that producers of nationalism became innovative and creative as its grammar had to appeal to diverse African constituencies (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009: 23).

But the derivative character of African nationalism partly informed Fanon who actively participated in the anti-colonial liberation struggle in Algeria to warn of the mutating quality of African nationalism into 'ultra-nationalism, to chauvinism, and finally to racism' (Fanon 1968: 125). Kuan-Hsing Chen amplified Fanon's argument when he noted that Third World nationalism became largely shaped by the immanent logic of colonialism, which made it fail to 'escape from reproducing racial and ethnic discrimination; a price to be paid by the coloniser as well as the colonised selves' (Chen 1998: 14).

Coloniality and racism as driving forces of the colonial state enabled colonialism to produce what Mahmood Mamdani (1996) termed 'citizens and subjects.' Mamdani described colonial statecraft as underpinned by the practices of defining and ruling cascading from the fear of the 'Indian disease' where the attempt to introduce direct colonial rule premised on eradication of difference between the coloniser and the colonised provoked active resistance (Mamdani 2013).

But what indicated that African nationalism was more of a product of modernity than revival of African pre-colonial formations was that it embraced modernist inventories and concepts such as universal franchise that cascade from Western bourgeois struggles of the seventeenth century. The horizon of African nationalism was the production of a postcolonial nation-state as part of existing Euro-American nation-states born out of the Westphalian consensus. Africans could be said to have had three options: reproduce pre-colonial formations; embrace existing colonial states; or create a new pan-African political formation. They settled for the embracement of the existing colonial state as the template of the postcolonial

state. This led Basil Davidson (1992) to write of 'the black man's burden' and 'the curse of the nation-state.' What was at play was display of colonised imagination and constrained agency.

### Myths of decolonisation

The post-1945 United Nations sovereignty replaced the Westphalian sovereignty order that excluded smaller states of Eastern and Central Europe that subsisted under the imperial Romanov, Hapsburg and other empires. Africa was not eligible for enjoyment of sovereignty. It was still enveloped in the paradigm of difference that informed direct colonialism. The other problem that Europe and North America wanted to resolve was that of Adolf Hitler's practice of racism at the centre of Europe, and its consequences. Hitler's cardinal crime was that of importing the paradigm of racial difference that was practiced in the colonies and deployed it in the centre of Europe resulting in what became known as the 'Holocaust'.

It was the practice of racism in Europe rather than its practice in the colonies that provoked Western powers to take such actions as the production of the Atlantic Charter; the Nuremberg Trials; the formation of the United Nations; and the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Hitler's application to white people of colonial procedures and technologies of subjectivation aroused the Western world to the dangers of narrow nationalism and racism as though they had not been practicing it against non-Western peoples for centuries (Du Bois 1947: 230).

The rise of the post-1945 United Nations sovereignty order provided Africans with a platform to critique and exposes the hypocrisy and double-standards of Western colonial powers (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2001). Therefore the struggles for decolonisation proceeded as claims for inclusion of Africans in the post-1945 human rights normative order. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 was closely studied by African freedom fighters and its linguistic inventories were used to put pressure on Europe to decolonise Africa.

When eventually decolonisation was realised from the 1960s onwards, the reality was that postcolonial states were admitted into the lowest echelons of the hierarchised and asymmetrically organised global international system. Consequently, the decolonisation process ushered into the post-1945 modern world order a group of the world's weakest and most artificial states (Clapham 1996). The post-1945 United Nations sovereignty order succeeded in accommodating some of the anti-systemic movements that had arisen in the peripheries of the Euro-American-centric world system. This is why Mamdani depicted decolonisation as a 'preoccupation of two groups that propelled the nationalist movement: the intelligentsia and the political class. They set out to create the nation, the former to give independent states a history and the latter to create a common citizenship as the basis of national sovereignty' (Mamdani 2013: 85).

But African nationalists used modernist inventories that denied Africans not only history but sovereignty and citizenship. Admission to the United Nations was part of the process of realising state sovereignty. The question that has always escaped proper analysis is that even at the United Nations the states are hierarchised with the Euro-American powers monopolising permanent seats and the exercise of veto power.

The second issue that must be raised is that the United Nations is part of the Euro-American-centric world system constituting another world order accommodative of anti-systemic political formations from the Global South and in the process shielding the world system from decolonisation and deimperialisation.

When the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) at its formation in 1963 embraced the principle of inviolability of existing boundaries in the process upholding the Berlin consensus 1884-5, it became clear that the decolonisation struggle was permeated by practice of 'repetition without change' (Fanon 1968: 23-25). Indeed 'pitfalls of national consciousness' and coloniality prevented Africans from abandoning the 'European game.' The crisis of

'repetition without change' is in fact the crisis of agency and imagination.

### The Cold War as a site of imperialism and coloniality

The Cold War provided Africans with two ideological options: the capitalist path or socialist path within an un-decolonised modernist-imperial world order. Africans tried to navigate this binary through such initiatives as the Bandung Conference of 1955 that emphasised decolonisation as a central choice for the Global South; the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM); the push for a New International Economic Order (NIEO); the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA); Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery; the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programme for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP), the African Charter for Popular Participation for Development; right up to the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

These initiatives constituted what Ali Mazrui (1967) termed Pax Africana (African solutions to African problems). The intellectual resource for these initiatives was the dependency theory and the active agent was the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) under the leadership of Adebayo Adedeji.

Adedeji explains that all these initiatives failed because they were 'opposed, undermined and jettisoned by the Bretton Woods institutions and Africans were thus impeded from exercising the basic and fundamental right to make decisions about the future'. He identified what he called 'the operation of the development merchant system (DMS) under which foreign-crafted economic reform policies have been turned into a kind of special goods which are largely and quickly financed by the operators of DMS, regardless of the negative impact of such policies on the African economies and polities'. What emerges clearly here is that what Adedeji describes as DMS carry coloniality which actively works to deny agency to Africans to chart an autonomous path of development (Adedeji 2002).

The Western powers' economic grip on Africa was intensified in the 1970s as they underwent prolonged recession. The Washington Consensus emerged as a Western initiative of managing the economic recession. Western welfarism informed by Keynesianism was replaced by neoliberal principles that privileged market forces in the struggle against inflation.

### Coloniality of market forces

The Washington Consensus was constituted by a set of ideas and institutional practices that began to dominate the world economy from the 1970s onwards. The world order brought about by the Washington Consensus became known as

**“The two movements – decolonisation and deimperialisation – intersect and interact, though very unevenly. To put it simply, deimperialisation is a more encompassing category and a powerful tool with which we can critically examine the larger historical impact of imperialism.”**

neoliberalism. What was distinctive about neoliberal advance was its anti-statism philosophy which culminated in the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in Africa. The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank directly intervened in African economies through impositions of what became known as 'conditionalities' that eroded the social base of the postcolonial state and exposed it to attacks by the poor African people (Laakso and Olukoshi 1996). The imposition of SAPs took away the little that was remaining of African people's control over economic policy.

Inevitably, the 1990s have become dominated by new African initiatives to regain the lost policy space. The African

Renaissance together with the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) was meant to be the basis for African drive to own its developmental trajectory in the 21st century. These initiatives emerged within a context of revival of pan-Africanism that witnessed the transformation the OAU to the African Union (AU) in 2002 (Mathews 2007). The other initiative is that of intensifying regional integration as well as South-South solidarity that was laid down by the Bandung Conference of 1955. South-South solidarity is taking the form of such blocs as the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS). The objective is to speak with one voice at such multilateral platforms as the United Nations where Africa is fighting for a permanent seat, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and others where global governance issues are discussed.

All these initiatives are taking place within a modern global order governed by what David Slater terms 'imperiality of knowledge' (Slater 2004). The role of 'imperiality of knowledge' is that while it concedes to the ideas of difference and limited juridical-political independence, it does not concede to the right of peoples of the Global South and their leaders 'to negotiate their own conditions of discursive control, to practice its difference in the interventionist sense of rebellion and disturbance' (Richard 1995: 211). This means that imperiality of knowledge governing the Western initiatives can only be changed through a radical double move towards decolonisation and deimperialisation.

### Towards pluriversalism

Pluriversalism speaks of a world system in which different worlds are accommodated on an equal basis. Such a world cannot exist without the completion of the decolonisation and deimperialisation project. The current world system, its global orders and epistemologies have entered a terminal crisis since the attacks of September 11, 2001 and deepened with the global financial meltdown of 2008. This prompted Slavoj Žižek to declare that liberalism died twice — as a political doctrine and as an economic theory (Žižek 2009). These realities

led such scholars as Patrick Chabal to write about 'the end of conceit' and to declare that 'Western rationality must be rethought'. The end of conceit is understood as taking the form of the 'end of certainty: Western societies are no longer sure how to see themselves' (Chabal 2012).

The West is beginning to feel and grudgingly accept the falsity of claims of being the centre of the world. The forces of China are bringing 'de-westernisation' and the shifting of centre of the world back to Asia as it revives the 'Sinocentric system' (Chen 2010: 5).

Kuan-Hsing Chen is the proponent of the simultaneous processes of decolonisation and deimperialisation as portending a global future of genuine democracy. To him decolonisation did not simply mean modes of anticolonialism that were expressed mainly through the building of a sovereign nation-state, but is also an attempt by the 'previously colonized to reflectively work out a historical relation with the former colonizer, culturally, politically, and economically. This can be a painful process involving the practice of self-critique, self-negation, and self-rediscovery, but the desire to form a less coerced and more reflexive and dignified subjectivity necessitates it' (Chen 2010: 3).

Deimperialisation is a task to be performed by the former colonisers involving a genuine examination of 'the conduct, motives, desires, and consequences of the imperialist history that has formed its own subjectivity. The two movements — decolonisation and deimperialisation — intersect and interact, though very unevenly. To put it simply, deimperialisation is a more encompassing category and a powerful tool with which we can critically examine the larger historical impact of imperialism. There can be no compromises in these exercises, if the world is to move ahead peacefully' (Chen 2010: 4).

The deimperialisation entails abandoning the Eurocentrism and the spirit of imperial domination. It entails abandonment of the Western arrogance which breeds and perpetuates a feeling that Europe and North America have everything to teach non-Europeans

and nothing to learn from other people and their civilisations.

### Conclusion

Fifty years after the celebration of decolonisation the 'European game' which denied Africans agency continues to prevail. Coloniality remains a reality. This is why this article ends with a call for a simultaneous process of decolonisation and deimperialisation. Deimperialisation is meant to de-structure the racially hierarchised modern world system and re-structure if not re-humanise the existing asymmetrical power relations that facilitate the domination and exploitation of Africa by Euro-North-American industrialised nations. Decolonisation remains a future that Africa must fight for, as it deals with cultural, psychological and epistemological aberrations. Without these processes taking place, the possibility of African people exercising extra-structural agency remains 'pie in the sky'. Deimperialisation entails the acceptance of non-Western people as human beings with an ontological density equivalent to that of European people. In short, both Africans and Europeans have to decolonise their minds if another world predicated on pluriversalism and new humanism is to emerge. ■

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# The Uprisings

In recalling the Arab uprisings or the Occupy Wall Street movement, there may be a tendency to forget how widespread the mass actions were. It is estimated that just the occupying movements touched millions of people in about 950 cities in 82 countries.

By Yacoob Abba Omar

Tahrir Square or Taksim Square, Gezi Park, Zucotti Park or Pearl Roundabout: all these urban landmarks have become reference points for the waves of demonstrations, uprisings and protests which have shaken regimes, stirred hitherto complacent elites and opened up prospects for change, sometimes superficial, often transformative. How do we understand this singularity which led *Time* magazine to declare 'The Protestor' the person of the year for 2011? Are there underlying forces common to all of them?

Writers have been struggling to get to grips with these various movements, some giving up the attempt at a common explanation, suggesting it is too early to do so. Perry Anderson reached back to the 1810 to 1825 Wars of Liberation in Latin America, the European Revolutions of 1848-49 and the unravelling of the Soviet bloc from 1989 to 1991 to describe the Arab Uprisings of 2011 as a "concatenation of political upheavals, one detonating the other, across an entire region of the world".<sup>1</sup> Alain Badiou took a similar broad historical view, seeing

the various uprisings around the world as a moment marking the rebirth of History, with the riots trying to stop the post-1980 re-assertion of imperialism and the rebirth of the only Idea capable of halting capitalism, namely the Idea of Communism.<sup>2</sup> Manuel Castells reached back to his *Communication Power* (2009) for his 2012 analysis of the various social movements which had erupted across the globe, arguing that there was a 'deliberate attempt to change power relationships... by reprogramming networks around alternative interests and values, and/or disrupting the dominant switches while switching networks of resistance and social change'.<sup>3</sup>

In recalling the Arab uprisings or the Occupy Wall Street movement, there may be a tendency to forget how widespread the mass actions were. It is estimated that just the occupying movements touched millions of people in about 950 cities in 82 countries. This does not even include the Icelandic, Brazilian, Turkish or Chinese protests let alone the many in South Africa, the latter being dubbed 'social delivery protests'.

This essay argues that there are two paradigms under which the different countries need to be examined:

- Civic protests: this took various forms, including the riots, such as those in London and Paris, and which has seen violent reaction from the state in some cases. Citizens were using space that was being created by the expansion of democratic rights.
- Pro-democracy movements: again largely peaceful in origin, many of these movements have had to resort to some form of violence in pressing for democratic rights from repressive or authoritarian, undemocratic regimes.

In countries like Iceland, Tunisia, China, Brazil, South Africa, the Occupy Wall Street movements, protests could be explained by the first paradigm where a multi-class movement is able to push for demands being met through open, peaceful mass action. Syria of 2011 falls under this paradigm, whereas the situation has morphed to such an extent that it now falls into the latter category. Egypt of 2013, where

emboldened sections of the population have been staging pro- and anti-regime demonstrations, is very much like what has become the hallmark of Thailand's politics.

Bahrain, Yemen, Iran in 2009, Egypt in 2011 fall under the latter where the exceedingly brave, unarmed masses took on well-armed repressive regimes, some of which had not hesitated in using violence to suppress opposition. Egypt is an example of a country which, with the removal of Mubarak in 2011 fell under the latter category and then having opened the political space, was able to manifest the first paradigm in achieving the removal of Morsi in June 2013, albeit in a manner which smacks of a coup. As the 29 June 2013 editorial of *The Economist* notes, in trying to explain the various demonstrations, and especially their multi-class nature: "In the emerging economies rapid real growth has led people to expect continuing improvements in their standard of living".

Asef Bayat recalls the 1989 formulation of Timothy Garton Ash to suggest that what we are seeing in the case of Egypt, Yemen and Tunisia is 'refolutions' i.e. 'revolutions that push for reforms in, and through, the institutions of the existing power regimes'. Bayat reminded us recently that most pathways of change follow the same familiar route: reform, insurrection, or implosion. In most cases movements work within state institutions, putting pressure on it to reform. The insurrection path requires a revolutionary movement. Examples of these include the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and that of Libya, with NATO help, in 2011. Regime implosion is often the result of mass upheavals with new elites taking over hurriedly e.g. Romania in 1989.

The jury is still out on whether there is a unifying logic to the two paradigms but I am willing to argue that when looked at it in broad societal terms the following could form the bedrock of the various movements:

- Frustration with material and non-material deprivations.
- Growing identity across similarly minded sectors of society.
- Realisation of the power of new communication technologies to

organise and mobilise.

Analysts have alleged that the uprisings were spontaneous and unexpected, that they have been leaderless movements and largely as a result of the power of social media. The essay examines these three allegations and then concludes with what is to be expected over the next few years.

### The Arab world: surprise! Surprise?

The successful call of the Occupy Wall Street movement, and its rapid spread to other centres, took many by surprise, including the magazine *Adbusters* which issued the original call to occupy. Similarly, the impact of the self-immolation of a street vendor in Tunisia and the flame he lit across the Arab region took many by surprise. Likewise the London Riots, the Brazilian marches, and the protests in India took usually well-informed analysts by surprise. The surprise elements may be due to blinkered views, which have blinded some to the arc of resistance that communities and entire peoples have been expressing over the past few decades. Commentators have also noted the multiclass nature of the protests, where huge sections of the middle class are involved.

The Arab world cannot be seen as a passive, backward world which was waiting to be ignited by Mohammed Bouazizi, the Tunisian street vendor. As Anderson points out, "Below the commotion now shaking the Arab world have been volcanic social pressures: polarisation of incomes, rising food prices, lack of dwellings, massive unemployment of educated – and uneducated – youth...In few other regions is the underlying crisis of society so acute, nor the lack of any credible model for development, capable of integrating new generations, so plain".<sup>4</sup>

The Arab world has been undergoing many 'dress rehearsals' for the uprisings which occurred during 2011 and 2012. To cite a few examples:

- In Sudan in 1985 an uprising of students, workers and professional ended President Numeiri's military-led government;
- In Egypt in 1992 local leaders with an Islamist agenda took over Imbaba, the poor urban quarters in Cairo. The area was subjected

to a military siege before eventually relenting.

- The Palestinian *Intifada* of 1987 to 1993 saw a widespread solidarity movement emerge in many parts of the Arab world.
- In 2003 it is estimated that about a million people marched in Yemen to protest the invasion of Iraq by the United States.
- The Lebanese 'Cedar Revolution' of 2005 saw the active mobilisation of 1.5m people, leading to the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon.
- Around the same time the *Kifaya* (Enough!) movement saw large scale, multi-class, multi-sectoral mobilisation which Asef Bayat described as 'post-national and post-ideological'.
- In April 2008 there was the Egyptian April 7 Movement, largely a youth-based movement, using the Internet and Facebook as its main tools of communication. It came out in support of the striking textile workers, achieving a general strike which lasted several days.

It is no wonder that Rami Khouri, editor-at-large of the Beirut-based *Daily Star*, has banned the use of the word 'Spring' to describe the uprisings saying that it gives the idea of awakening after winter's slumber. It also makes it sound like an ephemeral moment. He describes the lumping together of all the uprisings under the banner 'Arab Spring' as 'some subtle Orientalism at work'.<sup>5</sup> There is no doubt that the developments of the past few years represent an important shake-up in the foundations of sovereignty and power structures in the respective countries. They also have important implications for the constituting of national identities. Observers have indicated that the success of the Egyptian and Tunisian cases may be due to them being largely homogenous societies, a factor which accounted for the early stirrings of nationalism in these countries in the 19th and 20th centuries.

On the other hand the protracted and divisive nature of the Syrian situation bears testimony to its colonial legacy where disparate people were thrown into a country whose

boundaries were drawn between the French and British according to the infamous Sykes-Picot Agreement. The Syrian regime's reforms opened up the space for the civic protests to take place. However, the involvement of a variety of powers has put a halt to the reforms. The make-up of the opposition, ranging from secularists to Salafist agendas makes the outcome of this conflict a highly uncertain one. It can go in the direction of Tunisia or follow the route of Egypt.

In the aftermath of the success of Tunisia's Islamist Al Nahda Party and the Egyptian parliamentary election, which was won spectacularly by the combined forces of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists, several issues were thrust onto the agenda. The primary one was the kind of society that Islamists in Egypt and Tunisia, or for that matter in Libya and Yemen, envisaged for their countries.

The Muslim Brotherhood, having ridden the tiger of the Tahrir Square movement to its own benefit, came to power through the slenderest of margins. It then proceeded to squander a huge opportunity through the heavy-handedness of the Morsi government. As Adam Shatz points out, while Muhammad Morsi wanted to see himself as an Egyptian Erdogan, he antagonised just about every sector of society, even the Salafists to his right.<sup>6</sup> The Tamarrod, a youth movement even broader than that which occupied Tahrir Square, collected a petition of 20 million signatures, urging Morsi to resign. On the other hand the Al Nahda, under the wise leadership of Rashid al Gannouchi, has taken a much more pragmatic approach trying to bridge the gap between the Salafists and the secularists, while trying to deepen democracy.

### Multi-class spontaneity

Commentators have also commented not only on the seeming spontaneity of the protests but also on the seeming irony of the middle classes of Brazil taking to the streets in the manner they have. Commenting on these protests, Vincent Bevins in his blog on 13 August 2013 argued: "Just because they happened doesn't mean they were *waiting to happen*,

or that they had to happen based on political/economic circumstances".<sup>7</sup> Peter Hakim wrote: "No one saw the protests coming. No one seemed to have had an inkling of the depth of anger and frustration of ordinary Brazilians...Even the organisers of the initial demonstrations, who were responding to a six percent rise in bus fares, were stunned by the huge numbers that joined them".<sup>8</sup>

Vincent Bevins argues of the Brazil case: "There is no such thing as 'the protesters'. ... People have dropped out, come back in, become disgusted with new elements; the focus has moved between cities, then returned, and marches have varied vastly in size and tactics and have stood for a very large number of different political causes, some contradicting the other ones".<sup>9</sup>

**“This is not a struggle between secularists and Islamists...It is abuse of power, by Mr Erdogan's government, straight and simple, that unites the protestors.”**

The Turkish establishment was also taken by surprise by the ferocity of the protests they had to deal with. What began as a campaign to save a grove of sycamores in Gezi Park, close to the famous Taksim Square, quickly spread to a protest against Prime Minister Erdogan's authoritarian rule. As Dani Rodrik, who has familial connections with Turkey, wrote: "This is not a struggle between secularists and Islamists...It is abuse of power, by Mr Erdogan's government, straight and simple, that unites the protestors".<sup>10</sup> He reminds us that nearly half the electorate did not vote for the moderately Islamist Justice and Development (AK) Party in the June 2011 elections. It is important to note that the Turkish uprisings were also multiclass, multi-faith occurrences with the majority of the participants

being young people. Erdogan tried casting aspersions on this motley crowd, describing them as alcoholics. A tweeter replied that if drinking alcohol makes you an alcoholic, then being in power makes you a dictator.

Whilst countries in Asia have not occupied the headlines in quite the same manner as the cases cited above, there have been many instances of social movements involving large masses of people. India saw mass protests against the gang rape and killing of a student in Delhi in December 2012. Also, largely middle-class protestors took to the streets to join Anna Hazare's campaigns against corruption in India. Organised through the Aam Aadmi (Common Man), it has mobilised millions. In Vietnam, Le Quoc Binh has been organising 'flash mobs' of young people dressed in similar attire, to promote the cause of lesbian and gay rights.

One can end this section of looking at the issue of the surprise around the manifestations actually occurring and their multi-class nature by concluding tentatively that given the worsening economic and political conditions people have been facing on a daily basis, there was a degree of certainty about them occurring. Their rapid spread and the involvement of a variety of sectors was a real surprise, especially for those in the left used to notions of the proletariat or the peasantry taking direct action. The preponderance of the middle class could possibly be explained by the resources they have at hand in terms of time and money. Also they tend to feel the pinch of corruption more directly. Most importantly is that they have the skills – be it legal, financial, medical, organisational etc.

### Action without leadership

Another charge directed at the global uprisings is that they lacked leadership or clear demands or that iconography and slogans played a more important role than content. Slavoj Zizek said that only these political happenings, without hegemonic organisations, charismatic leaderships, or party apparatuses could create the 'magic of Tahrir', while Alain Badiou has called this the 'communism of movement'. Commentators have

pointed to the ubiquitous presence of the Guy Fawkes masks in the OWS and Turkey demonstrations, making them the symbol of these modern day revolutions. The roots of this symbol lay in the anti-government character 'V' of a graphic novel from the 1980s.

What is clear from the various manifestations is that in many parts of the world people depend much less on organised formations such as trade unions, civic organisations or even political parties to take their causes forward. In places like Tunisia trade unions, professional associations and political parties played a crucial role in providing leadership to the protests.

Perry Anderson has described the mass demonstrations by unarmed citizens as the "lance of the uprisings". Furthermore, as Partha Chatterjee has argued "Modern statecraft cannot resolve 'the very real tensions' which are apparent in the political life of every postcolonial nationalist regime in the world". The social movements which are thus spawned reject capitalism for its "association with modernism and the West and preaching either a cultural revival or a utopian millennialism".<sup>11</sup> Holston, on the basis of experiences in Brazil, proposes the concept of insurgent urban citizenship, where residents of a city turn into active citizens "that confront entrenched national regimes of citizen inequality".

David Graeber, a key organiser of the OWS, argues that their movement had no option but to work outside the prevailing system. He suggests that only when they stepped outside the traditional path, "rejected the existing political order entirely as inherently corrupt...that occupations immediately began to blossom across the country".<sup>12</sup> Martin Sandbu argues that in an ironic twist of the strategies available to resisters – between voice or exit – the OWS chose to "turn voice into a means of exit".

This allows us to widen the lens of discussion a little more. Chatterjee uses the concept of 'political society' to refer to a realm which is independent of civil society – he sees civil society as part of the liberal democratic order used by capital to maintain hegemony. In 'political society' the subaltern

makes claims on the state for rights and benefits which are being enjoyed by more privileged sectors of society. This should open up discussions about the position of large swathes of marginalised people in our society such as migrants, the unemployed, women – especially as people at the receiving end of daily assaults.

Asef Bayat, even before the Arab Uprisings, wrote of 'non-movements' of masses of people. He pointed out that non-movements are built on the day to day experience of thousands upon thousands of individuals. Hence the youth develop/forge collective identities in public spaces such as cafes, colleges, schools etc. but linked to one another passively and spontaneously. He also analyses such movements amongst women and other categories. Non-movements, according to him, are action-oriented, seek redress through direct actions (unlike organs of civil society which use protest); their actions are merged into routines of society such as selling goods where the law does not allow it, or just channelling electricity illegally etc.

Fabio Malini spoke of a project which had been monitoring the topics being tweeted in Brazil, using the hashtags as proxy for the issues being communicated around. He points out that the data showed a "dynamic of territorialisation of these movements. In other words, the movement in São Paulo became one thing, while the movements in Vitória, Recife, and Salvador emerged in different ways... In our analysis of millions of tweets in late June and early July, the most common hashtag used was #protestoRJ [protestRJ]. It's interesting that this hashtag became the diagnosis of the political crisis in Brazil, which moved from São Paulo to Rio".<sup>13</sup>

Striking a contrarian note to Malini is Peter Hakim's view that "while presenting a long list of grievances, the Brazilian marchers offered no concrete prescriptions and made few specific demands... The *New York Times* reported that when one young female protestor was asked about her aims, she said, 'we want it all, and we want it now'".<sup>14</sup> Paula Daibert pointed out that "a survey carried out by *Al Jazeera* found that Brazilians have broader

demands apart from local grievances such as the proposed hike in bus fares".<sup>15</sup> Putting an end to government corruption was the most visible demand of demonstrators, followed by calls for more transparency in public service spending; an end to police violence and a more participatory political system. At the same time, 77 percent of respondents said they strongly agree or agree that popular interests should be prioritised over economic ones related to World Cup and Olympics projects.

### **Mobilise, organise to educate, communicate**

The third charge against the uprisings is that social media played a huge role in their success. On the side of the prosecution is no personage less than Turkish PM Erdogan who called social media "the greatest scourge to befall society".

There are many advantages to the use of social media. Malini, emphasising the role of social media in Brazil, pointed out that "Instead of spending hours watching TV, (people) spend more time in front of the computer or accessing the internet on their phones. ...To be constantly connected to people discussing politics and criticising daily life in their city aids political change and in a way adds a new component to the media scene". They can mobilise people quickly, even before the authorities can galvanise their troops to respond to protestors. Footages of protestors can also be distributed quickly, sending the message that, unlike what the state is claiming, the demonstrators are really ordinary people demanding things that everyone wants. Social media also provoke the established media into covering such issues. For example CNN's Turkish affiliate aired a documentary on penguins at the height of the demonstrations. Social media photo-shopped that into depicting what the protestors were going through.

Social media has its down sides. Author of *The Net Delusion* Evgeny Morozov has argued that the internet as a tool for liberation is limited, that the powers that be can just as easily use it to limit freedoms. Mobilising in this open way results in arbitrary gatherings, having a mix bag of demands. Footage

is very easily monitored by the police, especially through the use of face-detection technology. Also, mobile phones have their own fingerprints, making it easy for the authorities to figure out who is in which areas. In response activists are developing their own counter tactics such as showing responsibility by filming protestors from behind or using a new tool on YouTube which allows them to blur faces.

A further downside David Runciman points out is that "Social networks have made it much easier for individuals to form shallow connections of shared concern and vicarious experience".<sup>16</sup> He cites author Malcolm Gladwell who had argued that in the case of Iran social networking had played a limited role, declaring that "The revolution will not be tweeted". His point is that the bystanders, and those following what's trending on twitter, simply cannot have the experience of on the ground activists.

### Whither the uprisings?

To start looking at what the fortunes of these movements and uprisings will be let us conclude about the charges levelled against them:

- At the broadest level we should not be surprised at the lengths to which humanity is capable of going, the sacrifices it is willing to make to improve its lot and that of future generations. It is perhaps hubris surrounding what has been assumed to be neoliberal orthodoxy that led some to conclude that convulsions which shook up entire social orders were a thing of the past; that the dictators being propped up would serve the needs of imperialism forever. Hence the confusion in Washington when the Arab Spring broke out, and the often undemocratic postures taken by leading democracies of the West during subsequent developments.
- The multi-class nature of the protests is understood in terms of both the paradigms of social protests and pro-democracy movements. As for the former the middle classes, they have been stung into action by decades of abuse of power, be it in India, Brazil, Turkey or Tunisia. It

required a high level of frustration for the middle class to become involved in assaults on the citadels of repressive regimes like that of Mubarak.

- The charge of being leaderless is highly debatable. However in many parts of the world progressive organisations continue to uphold the flag for humanity while sadly in many other parts organisations have become part of the establishment. The shared experience and aspiration of so many millions did become very obvious, creating the possibility of a level of spontaneous coming together. What was required was a rallying call – whether it was a 'Day of Rage' or 'Occupy!'. Social media did become a 'collective organiser' but not quite in the mould of *Pravda*. Rather it displayed the principles of 'democratic de-centralism' where it served as the spinal cord of many tributaries of the nervous system, to cite Malini.
- This then brings us to role of social media. There can be no doubt that it played a huge role in the surprise element, in the multi-class nature of the protests and in the seeming absence of leaders. At the same time we need to recognise that it is not a discerning mobiliser, which worked for most of the movement because they wanted to mobilise people broadly against entire power edifices. Also, as has been noted above, it is a double-edged sword which can be used by oppressor and protestor to equal effect. Lastly, we cannot count on the ephemeral connections of people to events through social media. As Gil Scot Heron proclaimed in 'The Revolution Will Not Be Televised':

*The revolution will be no re-run brothers;*

*The revolution will be live.*

In looking at the way forward we could take for example Perry Anderson's perspective that "Democracy...has become a common denominator of the various national movements"<sup>17</sup>. However, the fact that many of the movements tended to avoid articulating clear demands and programmes creates its own problems.

As Sandbu argued about the OWS: "The more the movement withdraws from actual politics into what it sees as a 'liberated' social sphere, the more difficulty it will have in playing such a role. It is not even clear that it can withdraw".<sup>18</sup>

As far as the Arab world is concerned Anderson argues that "The strategic priority for a re-emergent left in the Arab world must be to close the rift in the revolts by fighting for the forms of political freedom that will allow these social pressures to find optimal collective expression". Peter Hakim has argued that "the protests should be viewed as an encouraging development for Brazil and leave one more optimistic about Brazil's future... Brazil – a more robust and capable country today than it has been at any time in its history – is in a better position than ever to sustain its successes".

An interesting feature alluded to in the opening of this essay is the manner in which the various demonstrations came to be associated with specific points in the urban landscape. While that should not delude us into thinking of them as localised uprisings, but just as the localised peasant uprisings of the 1800s in Europe and parts of Asia were harbingers of more broad, even nationalist transformations, we need to appreciate the current and recent uprisings in their global context. How deep the transformation will be remains to be seen. ■

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Women.

"Every day, everywhere, women entrepreneurs are changing the world. At The Coca-Cola Company, we know that they are the secret to building thriving communities for all and to

"I was raised by independent businesswomen – my mum and grandma – and ever since I was a young girl, I have always been an entrepreneur. It all started with a bag of oranges. I was raised by independent businesswomen – my mum and grandma – and ever since I was a young girl, I have always been an entrepreneur. It all started with a bag of oranges. I sold each one to make a profit and when my mom found out she told me to use the money to replace the bag. Much to her dismay, I then used the change to buy sweets to sell to all my school friends. It seemed I took after my grandmother who owned a butchery, a grocery store and other shops. Later, I got married and had children, but then found myself single and unemployed raising three sons by myself. In 2005, I opened a "tuck shop" in a one-room shack. It was a difficult time but I was determined to work hard for my family. I did not go to school and learn business skills but I had passion and determination. I did not think I needed training because I was already running a business, but then, I went to a Coca-Cola 5by20 business skills training course and realized I had a lot to learn. It was my stepping stone. I learned to crawl, to stand up, and to walk as a businesswoman."

– 5by20 Beneficiary



achieving sustainable business growth. That's why we are committed to making them prosper. Our goal is to enable the economic empowerment of five million women entrepreneurs across our value chain by 2020," explains Therese Gearhart, President of the Southern Africa Coca-Cola Business Unit.

"Creating a climate of success for women globally is a smart business strategy for a consumer-products company. Women have been identified as the most dynamic and fastest-growing economic force in the world today. I believe multi-national businesses can be agents of global women's empowerment through the promotion and support of women's entrepreneurship, leadership and empowerment," says Vukani Magubane, Director of Public Affairs

**"Education and training – these are the best gifts we can give young girls and women entrepreneurs the world over. Thank you Coca-Cola for giving me this opportunity."  
– 5by20 Beneficiary**

and Communications for Coca-Cola Southern Africa.

Women play a powerful role in the Coca-Cola value chain. In many African countries, up to 86% of Coca-Cola's small shops are owned or managed by women.

However, women continue to face significant barriers to business success and growth in Africa. Coca-Cola Southern Africa's solution to these barriers is to help support their access to business opportunities and to business training and skills development. Through the 5by20 programme, Coca-Cola South Africa offers these services to small independent business owners, spaza shops, informal traders, hawkers and food and beverage outlets.

5by20 is aimed at enabling women entrepreneurs throughout Coca-Cola's global value chain, to break down social and economic barriers by providing them with access to skills training, financial services and support networks of peers and mentors. This means all small female-run businesses the company works with, from fruit farmers and retailers, to artisans.

"Women do 66% of the world's work but earn only 10% of the world's income. Yet, they reinvest 90% of their income into family and community. Providing skills, education, training and opportunity to women helps communities to thrive and helps to reduce poverty – the ripple effect of women's empowerment is incredibly powerful," comments Therese Gearhart.

5by20 is already underway in 12 countries across the globe. In South Africa to date, 5by20 has provided business skills training and business infrastructure to more than 10,000 women entrepreneurs. The initial results from the programmes indicate that participating entrepreneurs are able to generate an income that is three to nine times greater than

the minimum wage. Because of the success of the program in South Africa, it is now underway in Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia, Namibia and Malawi, and making great progress in those countries.

Coca-Cola will continue to partner with key institutions, such as government, banks, NGOs and other companies, to drive the initiative. In South Africa, the Company has recently partnered with UN Women to support the expansion of the training programme.

"As the Company moves toward its goal of doubling its business by 2020, small-scale retailers and distributors will be an important contributor to Coca-Cola's success. We understand that enhancing the economic opportunities for women will result in increased incomes, enhanced skills in business, increased stature within the community, and improved potential for communities. By investing in their success, the Company is investing in its own," says Therese Gearhart. ■

**"There are young women in my community who now look up to me. I have started mentoring them and sharing with them what I have learnt. Hard work and passion alone was never enough. I needed someone to give me education but had no one to give that to me. I didn't need money our handout. All I needed was a hand up".  
– 5by20 Beneficiary**



**Coca-Cola**  
**5by20**

# Identity Defections and the Wretched Conflicts of Black “Earthlings”



Emancipation of a people entails the simple task of self-validating the integrity of its own identity against the odds. In this, African societies would seem to have failed.

By Ademola Araoye

**T**he Oba (King) has flagrantly objected to all pleas for him to respect traditions and the culture of our people and has vowed that as a born-again Christian, he will never indulge in or encourage ... traditional rites throughout his reign.

The above quotation is part of the explanation given by youths from Ogbagi-Akoko, in the Akoko South-West Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria, about why they chased away their monarch, the Owa of Ogbagi, Oba Victor Adetona, from the palace on 1 November, 2012.

The quest for global domination by competing external Others would seem to begin with the subjugation of

the most vulnerable: the black Earthling who is compelled to seek security, including psychical and spiritual, from the unending travails of her subjugation to powerful forces. Since it has been argued that security depends on how identities and associated interests are chosen, a deconstruction of the process of the reconstruction or defection of identities in African societies since the coming of the competing external Others and their conflicting orders is compelling. This is especially so in light of the dysfunctional consequences that have profoundly altered the sociological construction and psychological profile of societies in sub-Saharan Africa. Many of the conflicts in this region,

principally in Nigeria, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, Guinea Bissau and Mali, reflect the intrusions of tumultuous undercurrents unleashed by the process of wholesale and radical changes in cognitive appreciation of the Self leading to the emergence of new communities reborn through defection from the old self and community. Confrontation is inherent in the new fluidity and the uncertainties in hitherto certain relations in this unstable universe undergoing tectonic reconstructions. This implies that contemporary conflicts in Africa are instigated and fuelled by a disequilibrium of stable social interactions in transformed communities that are now founded on their new allegiances to conflicting hegemonic values, norms and worldviews that motivate action. These implanted hegemonic articles have vacated and displaced the authentic epistemological and ontological moorings, and values of the old Self and communities.

Societies are transformed from their original secular bearings to virtual theocracies, given the psychological state of the converted black Earthling. The objective through their violent and strident advocacies is to subvert the integrity of the essences of black humanity. The goal is to induce a process of repudiation of the core senses of black humanity, infuse in the black being a new caricature of the self through transformation into a vassal of foreign myths. Accordingly, the African had to be “born again”. This born again disoriented black creature unwittingly becomes an agent for the protection of concrete material interests of their new lords and masters. This is what they call being born again. The intense allegiances of born-again African societies to competing global forces born out of contact with the external Others illustrate the vulnerability and success of the enduring process of the radical induction to self-repudiation and ultimate defections that transform structures and relationships. This defection effectively drafts the converted African community into a proxy in a war of the hegemonic external Others in pursuit of ancient antagonisms.

The raging conflicts of the wretched black Earthling are the continuation of an ancient and continuing violence and engagement of competing external Others deploying the converted identities as its new battalions in the trenches of conflicts that are senseless in the context of the objective challenges facing the global black Earthling. The trenches of the ancient war have been shifted to new theatres and with the new contingents of the black converted on the battlefield tele-guided as the proxy killing machines for their distant masters. The black Earthling was to be captured, transformed in the image of whichever of the competing dominant external Orders subjugated him first.

The recurrence of numerous and intense violent face-offs between the two sharp divides across sub-Saharan Africa are no more than the direct transfer of ancient antagonisms of competing hegemonic external Others to Africa. This includes the frenzied madness of the Al Qaeda-linked Boko Haram terrorising Fulani and Hausa communities in northern Nigeria. The conversion of members of Boko Haram to the radical salafist sect trumped two former principal identities of its members as Hausa/Fulani or even as Muslims! More salient to the identity defectors is waging a jihad to establish a puritanical Islamic Nigeria based on ancient Islamic codes. Al Qaeda had long announced the objective of islamising Nigeria – the largest single geo-political space in the black world. Boko Haram is thus a force to achieve plans to enlist Nigeria in the ancient war between two competing hegemonic forces. But there is not much to choose between the two. If any difference exists between Boko Haram and Christian evangelisation in Africa, it is a tactical one. One is stuck with the use of mindless physical violence while the other deploys mind-bending psychological violence. In the final analysis, they have the same consequences on African societies.

A more subtle campaign had begun long before now through the instrumentality of *mission civilatrice* and assimilation. Richard Gray noted that in 1870, apart from the ancient kingdom of Ethiopia and the settlements of returned slaves of Sierra Leone and Liberia

as well as in South Africa, Christians were an insignificant minority in nearly all sub-Saharan societies. By 1970, doubling at about every twelve years, Christianity had become the dominant religious influence among many African societies, and their political influence far exceeded that warranted by their numbers.<sup>1</sup> He projected that if the trend continued there may well be over 350 million Christians in Africa by 2000. At a recent conference in Morocco, Italian sociologist, Massimo Introvigne, revealed that African practicing Catholics not only outnumber their European counterparts, Christianity has become the African continent's number one religion, clearly surpassing Islam. Christians account for 46.53% of the African population compared to the 40.46 % represented by Muslims and the 11.8% represented by traditional African religions.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, the study states that among African countries, 31 have Christian majorities, 21 have Muslim majorities and 6 have populations which adhere mostly to traditional African religions. In 1900 Christians in Africa totalled ten million; in 2012 this number reached five hundred million. In 1900 only 2% of Christians in the world were African; today, this figure has risen to 20%. In ten years, African Christians will be the largest continental bloc within Christianity, outdoing Europe and the Americas.<sup>3</sup>

This virtual wholesale spiritual defection of black Africa contrasts sharply with the demonstrated tenacity of other communities elsewhere to protect the integrity of the essences of their communities and identities. Of a population of 1.5 billion, only a marginal 18 million Christians are identified in China. In Japan less than one percent of the population is Christian even though the religion was brought to the country over 150 years ago.<sup>4</sup> This contrast with black Africa is further demonstrated by the situation in India. Christians constitute the second largest religious minority in India next to Islam. The 21 million Christians in India account for 2 percent of the total population of 1.3 billion. The heaviest concentration of Christians is in the state of Kerala, which is one of the oldest Christian communities

in the world. One of the gravest problems facing Christianity in India is the problem of adaptation. Despite Hindu willingness to adapt Christianity into their religious system, Christians have encountered difficulties with Indians unwilling to compromise their own beliefs. Many Indians refused to believe in the absolutism of Christian theology. The doctrine of Christianity that was most problematic was the proclamation of Christianity as the only true religion. Indians, unlike black humanity, viewed it as a manifestation of the hated colonialism.<sup>5</sup> The civil resistance to Christianity in India says something about the variations in the resilience and the tenacity of different cultures to resist foreign assaults on the integrity of their essences. The resistance is of course through the agency of the people and community. The tenacity of other peoples' resistance to foreign impositions, no matter how well packaged, profoundly contrasts the case of black humanity globally. African communities have proven to be the least loyal to their corporate essences – the integrity of culture, including religion. Africans, both at home and in the African diaspora, may thus be said to have a very low threshold of resistance to servitude and very high gullibility quotient. We are enthusiastic clients to all kinds of nonsensical garbage sold to us from abroad.

The distortions of the identities of African societies are manifest all over the continent and in its diaspora. This tragedy is abundantly expressed in the founding, evolution and unfortunate state of affairs of the state and society in Liberia. As a product of the process to find a solution to 19th Century white America's extreme discomfort with non-whites in their midst, the tenacity with which the community of descendants of slaves from America have held to their identity as children of the rejects of white America has been troubling. Nicholas Guyatt notes that the presence of non-whites in America was fretted upon as the source of degeneration in the American society. He cites that Thomas Jefferson argued that the putatively slow development of indigenous peoples in the New World was attributable to 'subjugation

and ill-treatment' rather than innate inferiority. About blacks he then made the opposite point, insisting that their inferiority is not the effect merely of their condition of life. Guyatt suggested that colonisation, also implying removal to Liberia, was the political extension of a well-developed racism that was expressed in Jefferson's idea of a double emancipation- blacks would be freed from slavery, then whites would be freed from blacks. The freed black slave was to be removed from beyond the reach of mixture.<sup>6</sup> The removal of freed slaves to Providence Island, now a small and decrepit site in present day Monrovia, Liberia, helped to answer the problem of what to do "with the idea that blacks should be kept apart from whites that had a strong popular appeal before 1835, but also the question of black inferiority that brought America's political ideals into tension with its social realities".

The brutal struggle pitting the so-called indigenous peoples against the descendants of freed slaves, Americo-Liberians, has been characterised by unimaginable cruelty that has taken place in Liberia. This state of affairs reached an ugly crescendo from 1980 when a Master Sergeant, an indigenous Liberian, wrested power from the minority Americo-Liberians. The violent takeover ushered in a long period of bloodletting in the country. The situation has been made more complex by the identity of a Christian state that the minority Americo-Liberians has virtually imposed on a Liberian state that has a significant proportion of Muslims and the majority of citizens as traditionalists. The Christian church, whether that which claimed the catholicity of its teachings in cathedrals that refused to honour the sanctity of black humanity, or the protestants and their latter-day Pentecostals, partook in purveying the sub-humanity of the black Earthling.

In the mid-nineteenth century, when the questions of what to do with its freed blacks was raging in the United States, the bible-derived popular notion of the inferiority of the black race was a critical element in denying blacks the status of full humanity. While many of the churches had validated this popular view in their

teachings, a few doctrinaire churches formalised it in their doctrines. In some others, it was the bedrock on which the church was founded. This included the Church of the Latter Day Saints – the Mormons. The Mormon Church today has a sizeable congregation of black converts in a number of African capitals. It would be interesting to see a historically anti-Semitic Church grow roots in Israel.

There are questions in relation to the predilection of black humanity to totally immerse itself in identities with foreign connotations and dominant belief systems and to adopt these identities as the motor driving its devastated societies all over the world. The levers of foreign religions, in redefining and in imposing false identities and strange conceptions of the cosmos that elevate every strand of creation save that of black humanity which is denigrated, have proven to be the greatest source of carnage at all levels of human interaction among black peoples. They are central to the inability of black humanity to emancipate itself from the debilitating existential conditions in which it is universally trapped. It was easy to let go of the heavy metal contraptions around the necks, wrists and legs of black humanity, after he had internalised toxic influences that keep him bound to precepts and dehumanising worldviews that essentially denigrate his being. Black people remain trapped in chains of servitude of their own volition. In many ways they even help to tighten the shackled contraptions.

Kofi Awoonor enunciates this danger when he states that if you come to a people and take away their religion, which is their first line of defence and protection, you dislocate them completely.<sup>7</sup> Surveying the dehumanising mental landscape created by extraneous influences and now perpetuated by black humanity, he laments that "Africans are the only people who forget".<sup>8</sup> Finally, given the existential situation of black humanity, he calls for some kind of reconstruction of the mental landscape around our objective historical reality.

Femi Komolafe, who writes profusely on these issues, confesses that he would never know what African

Christians ever hope to achieve by claiming that the collections of absurd lies and forgeries, they call a Bible, is the word of an omnipotent and omniscient god. He affirms the indisputable fact that what the Christians today call a Bible was put together at the Council of Nicae conference in AD 325. It is also known that the conference was called at the instigation of one of the most murderous rulers ever, Emperor Constantine. Sadly, Komolafe further observes, it is mostly Africans who remain inflexibly dogmatic, incomprehensibly bigoted and totally blinded to reason; most priests in Europe today no longer believe in the literal correctness of the Bible.

Of course, zealotry is an essential element of African conversion to Islam and Christianity as the convert seeks to prove the repudiation of their old selves. These proclivities unfortunately are peculiarly mostly associated with black humanity. The process of instigating identity defection adapted as the deadly games of the aspiring dominant forces evolved. But the end goal has not changed. Accordingly, the reflexive structure of the identity of the black Earthling is constantly being processed and his social order is constantly fluid and unstable. These transformations are driven by overt violence, if considered necessary to attain the goal in a cost-effective manner, or subtle engagements instituted by the external Other to change the cognitive appreciation of Self, the destruction of entrenched social practices and habits that constitute and define behaviour as well as give structure to everyday relationships. In essence, the induced genetic modification of core values and understandings of the universe are embedded in the self-appreciation of the locus of the black Earthling in this cosmos.

This type of defection, replacing the normative epistemological and ontological certainties of the previous Self and identity, is the essence of the born again. Religious identification offers a distinctive 'sacred' worldview and 'eternal' group membership, unmatched by identification with other social groups. The post-transformed community that has emerged relies on unreflective acceptance of transformed

common practices and norms signalled by common identity markers such as religion. These transformations first alter the perceptions of self-interests as identity. They can be perceived as pivotal to interest articulation. There is no persuasive explanation as to why people should develop and change some habits of community as distinct from others unless self-interest is included as habit, dynamically interacting with cognitive dimensions of identity. Meanwhile, as a social identity anchored in a system of guiding beliefs and symbols, religion ought to serve a uniquely powerful function in shaping psychological and social processes, unmatched by identification with other social groups. This has been the case in much of Africa, and more importantly in sub-Saharan Africa.

Flowing from this was the convenient validation provided by the abuse of black humanity. The intensity of this continues to fluctuate. With this comes the denigration of every phenomenon associated with this devaluated humanity. The survival of black humanity is thus infused with conditionalities expressed in a concrete ultimatum that constitutes one polar end of the two fundamental choices before them as human beings: as individuals, as collectives, communities and societies, and ultimately as a race. These preconditions have underpinned the construction of the universe of the black Earthling and his social institutions in relation to the larger universe of the construction of the dominant external Others. This polar end terminates with the coerced and, lately, willing submission of the Black Self and of the totality of his being through a process of self-repudiation of the very essence of his humanity. This has been the precondition to survive on the margins of human existence. This choice leads to a totalistic defection from the Self. The migration is consecrated in the acceptance of the concept and terms of being born again by the defector from the Self. The alternative pole is simple: the defiance of a conscious self-validated black being and self that stands to fight or perish standing.<sup>9</sup>

It is a radical choice without avenues for compromise that is imposed on every black Being, often unconsciously.

The dilemma can however be stark and defined by the compelling imperatives confronted by the individual, groups or a social institution, including the state. Often they entail conscious choices associated with dire consequences.

At the tail end of the last century and more pronounced in this millennium, black humanity has begun to face the consequences of its massive choice to self-repudiate and defect from the Self to be consigned as a willing proxy to the margins of the sphere of the dominant external Other. The massive flight has been *from the Self* rather than a fight *for the validation of the Self*.

The manifestations of this self-denigrating choice are explicit and the implications continue to haunt it. The core of this toxic defection

“The goal is to induce a process of repudiation of the core senses of black humanity, infuse in the black being a new caricature of the self through transformation into a vassal of foreign myths. Accordingly, the African had to be “born again”.”

is the coming spiritual whitening of the entirety of black humanity. The political expression of this defection is a willing complicity in the execution of neo-imperialist agenda of the metropole. The massive defection of black humanity to the side of his oppressor is reminiscent of the impact of the early gin, gifts from the agents of the invisible benevolent lord, to the African chief who got all intoxicated. In this state of involuntarily induced stupor, the drunken chief sold every subject into slavery. In essence, black humanity continues to reel under the influence of the toxic in the numerous variety of intoxications from all manner of foreign brews, following the choice

to defect from its authentic moorings and his dissociation and alienation from its timeless understanding of the universe. The unfortunate truth is that massive black identity defection and flight from the Self is the ultimate nadir of a comprehensive ugly phenomenon orchestrated, with his complicity, against his being. This unceasing and unyielding assault is a permanent undercurrent of all facets of our human endeavours – across the complete a spectrum of the economic, social, political and spiritual.

For instance, in the economic realm, the experts talk of a contrived dependency syndrome long unveiled by Walter Rodney in his classic incisive book entitled *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Franz Fanon was on hand fifty years ago to adumbrate the horrors associated with the bloody colonial enterprise to keep *The Wretched of the Earth* perpetually down. More important was his prophetic vision of our own complicity in the externally inspired project of our self-denigration and self-destruction.

These are all strands of an all-encompassing arrangement contrived to keep us vassals to our foreign lords and masters. In our day and time, the services of expert economic hit men are deployed to guarantee our continued dependence. John Perkins provides a compelling narrative of how this works. Economic hit men are the paid sanctified apostles of the consolidation of continued black bondage in this vital department. Like bible-wielding cassock-clad priests of old, they are missionaries of western economic unorthodoxy (the West do not practice what they preach to us) to confuse the political and financial leadership of underdeveloped countries and to saddle their countries forever with debts they cannot hope to pay. This is to make them vulnerable to the political control of their masters. Perkins affirms that through the activities of hit men, developing countries are effectively neutralised politically and their economies crippled in the long term.

Also, in the social realm, the airwaves are filled with carefully packaged seductive informationals that only exalt the white look. Hooked, our traditional Obas bleach, our political

leaders bleach, our mothers bleach, our wives bleach, our mistresses bleach, our daughters bleach, the Imam and muezzins bleach, the pastors bleach, our artistes and actresses bleach. Finally, all our daughters, wives and mistresses must look and be sacks of brittle bones with no flesh to have and to hold, as encouraged by equally disoriented brothers, sons, husbands and fathers and uncles, black women relentlessly pursue a misguided concept of white beauty. This dysfunctional mental landscape is integral to the spiritual whitening of the black universe that has lately assumed epidemic proportions. At this point, no foreign hit men are needed in our ruination as the local academy propagates western inspired toxic economic principles as adjunct affiliates of western designs to perpetuate control. In the same manner, local priests, both traditional cassock clad brethren as well as their bogus vendors of dubious spiritual prosperity of the Pentecostal mould, bleat noxious theologies in strange tongues that lead uncritical mass of black humanity down spiritual pit latrines.

The struggle for self-validation has, therefore, been in the order of a compelling imperative for the continued existence and the consecration of the integrity of the inner core of the black Being that remains defiant in the face of the massive assault and the visible capitulation to the external Others. Yet, viewed from a longitudinal span of history, the struggle has been a Babylonian dance: for every step forward, black humanity has taken two steps backward. From slavery to the contemporary era of a resurgent renaissance, progress has been fitful. The deck has certainly been stacked against black Earthlings. Emancipation of a people entails the simple task of self-validating the integrity of its own identity against the odds. In this, African societies would seem to have failed.

Karen Armstrong, a renowned authority on religion, observes that this is what has happened in the modern world. She notes that the Axial sages have an important message for our time, but their insights will be surprising – even shocking – to many who consider themselves religious today. In *The Great Transformation*, she asserts

*It is frequently assumed, for example, that faith is a matter of believing certain creedal propositions. Indeed, it is common to call religious people 'believers', as though assenting to the articles of faith were their chief activity. But most of the Axial philosophers had no interest whatever in doctrine or metaphysics. A person's theological beliefs were a matter of total indifference to somebody like Buddha. Some sages steadfastly refused even to discuss theology, claiming that it was distracting and damaging. Others argued that it was immature, unrealistic, and perverse to look for the kind of absolute certainty that many people expect religion to provide.*

The immediate question to ask is where this leaves the mass of black humanity that has repudiated its own understandings of the cosmos, only to find there are no certainties on that plane anywhere, including in the hegemonic faiths that have ensnared it with the false promises of absolute certainties. In the final analysis, every religion preaches the truth of propositions for which it has no evidence. In fact every religion preaches the truth of propositions for which no evidence is even conceivable.

As such in succumbing to the assault of foreign powers and their faith about the superiority of their religion and accepting the denigration of African traditional forms of worship, black humanity has been duped and fallen victim to the toxic propaganda of foreign and hegemonic theologies. The central tenet of every religious tradition is that all others are mere repositories of error or, at best, dangerously incomplete.<sup>10</sup> Only black humanity has been intoxicated on this toxic foreign brew and fallen flat on its face, deceived by this propaganda common to all religions. The price of the historic capitulation of the black Earthling to the hegemonic external Other, among others, is the pervasive proneness to instability and conflict in her communities.

The good news however is that Africans are beginning to wake up to the hollowness of foreign inspired campaigns for spiritual liberation. In

August 2013 Nana Kwaku Bonsam, a prominent traditional worshipper in Ghana, exposed the hypocrisy of many local pastors in that country. He explained how several Ghanaian pastors consult him for his traditional spiritual powers to hoodwink their flock. According to him, such hypocritical solicitation is typical amongst many church leaders in Ghana. He also blasted African Pentecostal pastors for disingenuous prophesies. He claimed that several pastors whom he knows personally are only greedy and are not the men of God they say they are. This act is being replicated in Nigeria. Ifayemi Elebuibon, a highly respected traditional priest in Yorubaland, has also affirmed that a lot of Christians and Moslems, even pastors and Imams come to consult Ifa and use Ifa to solve their problems. But because he believed in fidelity, it is forbidden for him to start mentioning their names. The moral turpitude inundating the global Church at large is too well known. Perhaps the seeds of disenchantment will emerge from this decadence, providing a wakeup call to black humanity, illuminating the emptiness of the whole enterprise of its flight from the Self and the repudiation of its own soul on the altar of false gods. Hopefully, this will begin the process of a holistic emancipation and liberation; and the re-appropriation of the Self by black humanity away from its course of self-assured condemnation to eternal subservience and servitude to the interest of every External Order. ■

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# A tribute to Nelson Mandela

## 1918 - 2013



**uTata Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela** made a profound and lasting impact on our country. Madiba's contribution to South Africa irrevocably changed the shape of each of our lives and that is the legacy that he left us with. Even in this moment of grief, we can only reflect on Madiba's contribution with great admiration and respect; cherishing the ideals which he lived for.

Madiba lived a life single-mindedly focussed on the achievement of equality and freedom, having witnessed the injustice and violence of the apartheid regime. Madiba's determination to uphold the principles and objectives of the Freedom Charter made him willing to sacrifice his life towards achieving this just cause. The arduous journey to overcome adversity, violence, pain, suffering, racism and inequality is a testament not only to the subsequent political achievements of the ANC; but of his ability to personally triumph over his hardships against all odds; releasing himself from the shackles and bitterness of the past and reconciling our great country. After spending 27 years in prison for resisting an unjust Apartheid rule, Madiba emerged from confinement in 1990, not in anger as one may expect, but with a forgiving and reconciliatory attitude towards the very people who were responsible for his incarceration.

Madiba's life's work was based on the principle that all people should be free. From this principle flowed his ideas, which the apartheid government tried to repress for decades. They did everything they could to suppress Madiba, not even allowing a photograph of him to be circulated. Yet they could not suppress Madiba, his ideas, his personality and the power of the whole movement. The leadership of the movement, supported by millions of South Africans who played their own role in the struggle, brought about a wave of democratic change that scripted the future of our country.

Madiba was charming and charismatic, and dedicated his life to protecting the rights of the oppressed. He was a leader of great moral stature, respected globally. Leaders from around the world and millions of South Africans gathered at the poignant memorial service to pay their respects to uTata. They came to show their solidarity with Madiba and to show that they shared in the spirit of freedom which he symbolised. This spirit of freedom will continue to live in the people of South Africa.

The event reminds us of Madiba's first public appearance after imprisonment when he delivered his historic speech at the Grand Parade in Cape Town on 11 February 1990. The ANC had just been unbanned and there was keen anticipation to see this iconic leader of the liberation movement. Madiba's release was a watershed for our country, achieved through tenacity, perseverance, determination and immense patience.

We all stood on the Grand Parade on that day of Madiba's liberation, or watched it on our TV screens; ready to receive his guidance on how to take the country forward. The excitement of seeing Madiba, of knowing his appearance after it had been concealed for 27 years, and then listening to his every word was a euphoric moment for our country. Madiba opened his speech by recognising that it was through the efforts of his comrades that he was standing as a free man. And on that day Madiba started charting the way forward for the New South Africa, inspiring our people to realise the great potential of South Africa. Due to the subsequent efforts of our people, South Africa has made remarkable progress since 1994.

Truly, our achievements as a country and the opportunities which have been opened to us and our children would never have been possible unless Madiba and the leaders of the movement had embarked upon this remarkable journey. As the first democratically elected President of South Africa, he inherited a country with deep rooted economic and social exclusions. In the face of these challenges, the Mandela administration successfully laid the foundation for justice and prosperity, drafting one of the most progressive constitutions in the world and fully integrating the South African economy with the Global economy. Lifting millions of people out of poverty and entrenching institutional stability were among the many achievements of his government, and the Mbeki and Zuma governments, building the platform for future generations of South Africans to enjoy an unprecedented degree of freedom and attainment.

We should never forget those fallen comrades like uTata Mandela who sacrificed their lives to realise freedom in our lifetime. The legacy of Madiba and his fight for justice and equality shall continue to guide this great country. The values which Madiba upheld will live on and his memory and the memory of all those who fought for liberation will live on.

Our moral character should be influenced by the virtuous qualities which Madiba embodied - integrity, upholding justice and ensuring fairness and equality for mankind. While striving to realise our dreams we must always remember our humanity. This appreciation of humanity, and the humility that it brought, is what set Madiba apart.

**uTata. We salute you.**

**Hamba Kahle. Lala Ngoxolo.**

**“ What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.” - Nelson Mandela**



# SAB Youth Entrepreneurship Programme Participants Create Jobs



South African Breweries

The Top 14 national finalists in the South African Breweries (SAB) youth entrepreneurship development programme, SAB KickStart, have created a total of 68 jobs during 2013. These constitute full time and part time employment created.

The finalists were announced earlier in the year and have since undertaken an intensive 12-month journey of personalised business mentorship and business development support during which there were a number of interventions to place each business on a growth path.

The SAB KickStart Class of 2013 is the first to complete the re-engineered model of the programme focused on developing and supporting sustainable businesses and high impact entrepreneurs who are able to make a contribution to South Africa's job creation needs.

"Our top 14 finalists represent dedicated individuals whose connection to SAB KickStart yielded more empowered entrepreneurs capable of taking their businesses from start-ups to growing SMEs. The jobs they have managed to create, although a small contribution initially, is an indication of their potential to make a substantial impact moving into the future," says Boipelo Nkadimeng, SAB Manager Enterprise Development.

Some notable numbers of jobs created by the SAB KickStarters include young entrepreneur, Ricardo Hood from Vereeniging outside of Johannesburg, whose welding training business, SIH Training, created an additional 23 jobs during his participation in SAB KickStart. This is up 18 from only 5 before entering the competition.

Juandre Jephta's Cape Town-based vegetation management and control business, Garden & Organics, today employs 46 full time and part time people, up 35 from just 11 before participating in SAB KickStart.

Anda Maqanda's business, AM Group in Port Elizabeth, which

specialises in electrical design for the mining industry, created 10 additional jobs during SAB KickStart, up from only 5.

The Top 14 finalists were selected from a total of 60 candidates shortlisted across the country following an intense business training workshop. At the workshop, participants are schooled on how to develop a comprehensive and effective business plan. The best plans pitched at the end of the training were

**“Our top 14 finalists represent dedicated individuals whose connection to SAB KickStart yielded more empowered entrepreneurs capable of taking their businesses from start-ups to growing SMEs. The jobs they have managed to create, although a small contribution initially, is an indication of their potential to make a substantial impact moving into the future.”**

then chosen by an independent panel of adjudicators, resulting in the Top 14 finalists.

A thorough needs analysis conducted on the finalist businesses helped define a growth strategy for each. This strategy in turn informed the seed capital awarded to each business, as well as the programme and terms of individualised business mentorship.

Meanwhile, the top 3 winners were announced with Maqanda from AM Group.

In 2nd place is Lyle Truter of Cape Town, owner of Tru PVC Products, which specialises in PVC pipe fabrication and fittings; and in 3rd place, is Ricardo Hood.

As the SAB KickStart 2013 winner, Anda receives a grant for his business of R500 000, as well as an international business learning trip to Beijing, China, worth R100 000. This is in addition to an initial grant of R157 000 which he received for his business after reaching the national and final phase of SAB KickStart earlier this year.

Lyle and Ricardo receive grants of R250 000 and R150 000, and international business learning trips to Utah in the United States and Tokyo, Japan, respectively valued at R100 000 each. Each received a grant of more than R100 000 at the start of the national phase.

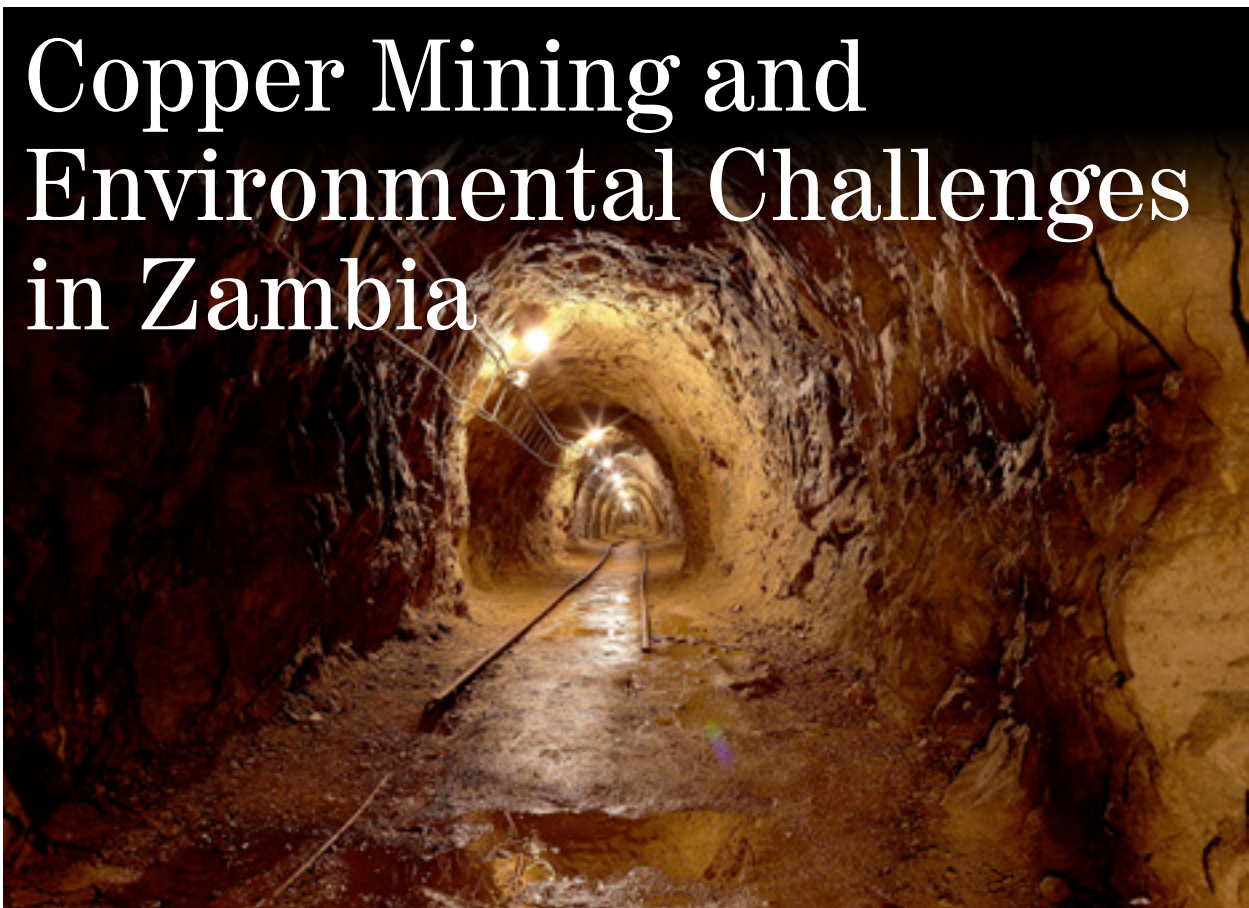
The independent panel of judges who selected the final three winners commended Anda for breaking into a challenging industry and addressing a critical skills shortage in the engineering industry. He was also praised for having improved his businesses operational capability and asset base. Furthermore, the judges commented that Anda had shown the ability to overcome prejudice in the business world and his maturity as an entrepreneur had grown since entering SAB KickStart.

"It is a proud moment for SAB to celebrate the strides each of the SAB KickStart finalists have made as entrepreneurs, as well as the growth their businesses have experienced during this journey.

We are confident that they now have the right tools with which to move into the future in order for them to have an impact on South Africa's economy and in society," says Nkadimeng. ■



# Copper Mining and Environmental Challenges in Zambia



In order to maximise the socio-economic benefits of the mining sector, the focus of the SNDP will be to enhance value addition, safety and health; and safeguard the environment through the review of the Mines and Minerals Resources Development Policy.

By Dr Tribhuwan Prasad

**N**ature can be conquered only by obeying her – Francis Bacon. Mining and mineral industries as sources of primary export income play an important role in the economic and socio-political development of many developing countries. Zambia is a good example of such a country. The mining of minerals, including copper, is generally considered to be an environmentally unfriendly activity as all the components of the environment are affected by operations in mining and its associated activities. At the same time the mining of minerals

is essential for the development of society as it provides the basic raw materials for almost all industrial activities.

However mines and mining activities inherently disturb the environment, because they involve the excavation and processing of rock and soil. The environmental deterioration caused by mining occurs mainly as a result of inappropriate and wasteful working practices and poor rehabilitation measures. Mining has a number of common stages or activities, each of which has potentially adverse impacts on the natural environment,

society and cultural heritage, the health and safety of mine workers, and communities based in close proximity to operations.

## Objectives

The mining industry has become the economic and social backbone of Zambia since exploitation of the Copper belt's Cu-Co deposits commenced in the early 1930s. At present copper mining and environmental challenges are interlinked, hence the objectives of this article are to:

- visualise mining practices in Zambia;

## Flow chart : Basic understanding of environmental challenges.



- determine the impact on components of the environment;
- find how mining affects the people and their culture;
- determine whether the process of mining is environmental friendly;
- evaluate environmental aid and the role of local, national and international organisations; and
- suggest viable solutions.

### Copper Mining in Zambia

Zambia has a long history of mineral dependence, with copper and associated products (e.g. cobalt and gold) currently providing nearly eighty percent of exports (Carmody, 2009). Zambia is the fourth largest copper producer worldwide, holding some six percent of global deposits (World Bank, 2011). At independence in 1964, Zambia had one of the strongest economies and one of the highest per capita incomes in Africa, due to its mining sector (Auty, 1991). However, a combination of factors, such as the nationalisation of the copper mines in 1969 and the oil and mineral price shocks of the 1970s, threw the Zambian economy into recession and crisis for most of the next three decades (Carmody, 2009).

In 2010 Zambia was ranked as the 7th largest producer of mined recovered copper in the world

| Sl. No. | YEAR | PRODUCTION (Metric Tonnes) |
|---------|------|----------------------------|
| 1       | 2002 | 251100                     |
| 2       | 2004 | 320300                     |
| 3       | 2006 | 350000                     |
| 4       | 2008 | 383000                     |
| 5       | 2010 | 700000                     |
| 6       | 2012 | 824976                     |

Source: Bank of Zambia, Zambia.

(source: US Geological Survey - 2009 production 697,000 tonnes Cu). The same source estimated that in 2008 Zambia ranked 9th in the world in terms of identified copper resources, with 3.7% of the known world total, and was ranked 10th in the world in terms of identified reserves with 3.9% of the world total. This mining chiefly occurs in the Copper belt region.

Business Monitor International has forecast that Zambia's copper output will reach 1.3m tonnes in 2015,

Table 2: Percentage contribution of mining sector to national GDP

| Activity                                    | 2002 | 2007  | 2012  |
|---|------|-------|-------|
| % Contribution to GDP                       | 7.9  | 8.0   | 8.7   |
| % Contribution to foreign exchange earnings | 61.9 | 70.00 | 75.00 |

Source: Budget 2013, Zambia.

which would likely place it among the top 5 copper producers worldwide. Production of copper in 2012 was 824,976t compared to 881,108t in 2011, although exports rose from 832,145t in 2011 to 903,138t in 2012.

It is important to look at the contribution of the mining companies to the national GDP in order to get a clearer picture of the economic contribution of copper mining. Table 2 presents the percentage contribution of the mining sector to national GDP for the last few years.

The contribution of the mining sector to GDP has generally been increasing marginally. The mining sector continues to be a primary source of earnings for the Government, which acknowledges that apart from generating employment and tax revenues, the sector generates approximately 75% of Zambia's export earnings.

The survey established that employment by the surveyed enterprises stood at 95,845 in 2011. On a sectoral basis the analysis showed that the mining sector had the highest number of employees of 30,129 (31.4 percent). The copper mining companies are at the centre of local community development in all the towns where these mining companies are located. The mines are involved in various community projects which include school rehabilitation and management, the management of hospitals; and road rehabilitation programmes in which the mines claimed to have invested millions of dollars. Most of all the mining companies on the Copper belt have projects that are aimed at improving the lives of the people in this mining region. MCM is actively involved in malaria and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programmes in Mufulira and Kitwe. Suffice to say the programmes are mostly targeted at their employees as the majority cannot afford to pay for these services. Mbwana Mkubwa, in Ndola, like MCM, is involved in a malaria control and prevention programme in which they claim to be working in collaboration with the Ndola District Health Management Board.

### Copper Mining and Environmental Challenges in Zambia

During the past years, the environment of Zambia was affected to various degrees by the mining and processing of copper and cobalt ores. Environmental problems may be local or global depending on the scale or magnitude of the area involved. The World Bank in their report, *Mining and Development: Treasure or Trouble? Mining in Developing Countries* noted that the mining sector by its nature leaves behind a "footprint" of its environmental, social, and economic impacts.

**Table 3: Tailing Deposition by mines**

| Mine           | Tailing Dam  | Monthly tailings Deposition Dry Tonnes (millions) | Annual tailings depositions (millions tonnes) |
|----------------|--------------|---|---|
| Nchanga (KCM)  | Muntimpa     | 1.300   | 15.6  |
| Konkola (KCM)  | Lubengele    | 0.180   | 2.16  |
| Mufulira (MCM) | TD11         | 0.260   | 3.12  |
| Nkana (MCM)    | Musi         | 0.245   | 2.94  |
| Luanshya       | Mindola 15A  | 0.230   | 2.76  |
| Chambishi      | Musakashi    | 0.017   | 0.204   |
| Mbwana Mkubwa  | Bwana Mkubwa | 0.585   | 7.02  |

Source: Environmental Council of Zambia, 2008, Zambia.

*Mines and the Land surface*

Irrespective of the kind of mining employed for extracting copper, mining always results in mammoth land disturbance which encompasses large scale excavation, “removal of top soil, dumping of solid wastes, cutting of roads and creation of derelict land”. As noted by Mining, Mineral and Sustainable Development (MMSD, 2002) the waste generated as a result of mining has the long-term effect of reducing the productivity of land which ideally could have been used for other economically vital sectors like agriculture.

Table 3 shows the rate of tailings disposal from the mining companies. In order to produce one ton of copper, it is interesting to note that 350 tonnes of unwanted earth material are generated, together with 147 tonnes of tailings and 3 tonnes of slag, therefore illustrating the destructive nature of copper mining. This implies that in 2007 alone Zambia produced 523435 tonnes of copper and this came with 260.15 million tonnes of waste. The environmental problem which arises is caused by seepage and runoff. This was brought to light in the interview with Mbwana Mkubwa.

All the mining companies operate dumps (see Table 3) for which they have licenses. However, there is no regular monitoring of these dumps to ensure that seepage into ground water and runoff into water systems is taken care of. Concern was raised

by residents in these mining towns. In addition, the huge amount of waste from the mines pollutes the cities.

Human induced activities resulting from mining, construction and quarrying are common, especially in the Copper belt and Lusaka province. The main aspect of land degradation in mining activities include deforestation, unfilled mine pits and trenches, uncontrolled disposal of mine waste and tailing, and soil erosion leading to the blockage of stream water courses, destruction of river banks and siltation.

*Mining and the Hydrosphere*

Water is essential to life on our planet. A prerequisite of sustainable development must be to ensure that streams, rivers, lakes and oceans are not contaminated. Mining affects fresh water through heavy use of water in processing ore, and through water pollution from discharged mine effluent and seepage from tailings

“Migration is possibly the most devastating of all the effects of large-scale mining on social relationships as this makes a local community go from being relatively coherent and stable to a situation where local people feel they are in a minority.”

and waste rock impoundments. Increasingly, human activities such as mining threaten the water sources on which we all depend. Water has been called “mining’s most common casualty”.

Thus in countries like Zambia where only 58% of the population have access to improved water sources, while the rest consume water directly from water bodies such as rivers and streams which maybe be polluted, there is a constantly increasing health risk.

Additional pollutants from the mines which end up in rivers and streams impact negatively on aquatic biodiversity.

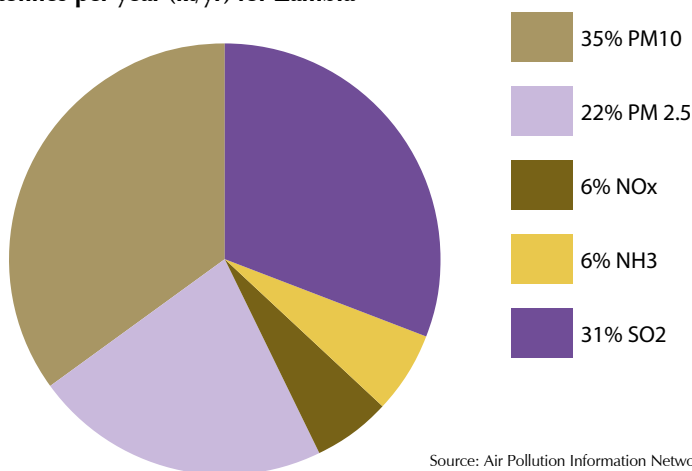
According to the environmental standards set by ECZ, the limit of copper concentrations to be discharged into aquatic environments is 1.5mg. The mining companies are not complying; for instance MCM discharge amounts as high as 5mg/l which, they are quick to state, goes straight into the wetlands

**Table 4: Percentage contribution by emission types of total emission in kilo tonnes per year (kt/yr) for Zambia**

| GAS                             | % CONTRIBUTION BY EMISSION |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Particulate Matter 10 (PM10)    | 35                         |
| Sulphur Dioxide (SO2)           | 31                         |
| Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM 2.5) | 22                         |
| Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)           | 06                         |
| Ammonia (NH3)                   | 06                         |

Source: Air Pollution Information Network for Africa

**Figure 1: Percentage contribution by emission types of total emission in kilo tonnes per year (kt/yr) for Zambia**



Source: Air Pollution Information Network for Africa

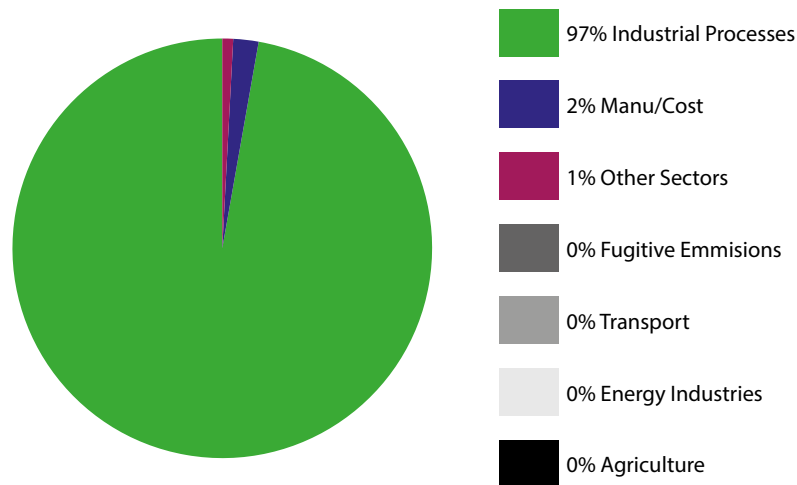
mining is essentially due to the fugitive emissions of particulate material and gases which include, carbon monoxide, methane, oxides of nitrogen, sulphur dioxide and dust. These gases endanger the lives of the people who get exposed either through their work or through living around the mining sites. Human health problems and environmental degradation may arise through direct inhalation from the air, soil deposition, or accumulation within a water body. High levels of dust in the air increase respiratory diseases such as chronic bronchitis and asthma in the exposed population. Additionally, uncontrolled dust from the mines pollutes nearby surface waters and affects crop growth by shading and blocking the pores of the plants.

**Table 5: Percentage contribution by sector to total Sulphur dioxide (SO2) emission**

| SECTORS                           | % CONTRIBUTION TO TOTAL SO2 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Industrial Process                | 97                          |
| Manufacturing/cost                | 02                          |
| Other sectors                     | 01                          |
| Agriculture/Energy/Transport etc. | 00                          |

Source: Air Pollution Information Network for Africa

**Figure 2: Percentage contribution by sector to total Sulphur dioxide (SO2) emission**



Source: Air Pollution Information Network for Africa

for purification. However, other discharges of 2mg/l, which is still higher than the limit, go straight into streams and rivers.

*Mining and the Atmosphere*

Around the Mufulira smelter there

is enormous air pollution, with sulphur dioxide in the part of the town where the miners live. Head of the Planning and Information Department, Zambian Ministry of the Environment, March 2009.

Air pollution as a result of mineral

“All the mining companies operate dumps for which they have licenses. However, there is no regular monitoring of these dumps to ensure that seepage into ground water and runoff into water systems is taken care of.”

In Zambia copper mining plays a critical role in the economy. There has been a rise in copper (and other minerals) production levels, with new mines becoming operational; this has implications in terms of sulphur related emission associated with smelting.

Sulphur dioxide (SO2) emissions from smelters cause human respiratory diseases in addition to acid rain which damages rivers, streams and trees. This causes enormous problems for local communities who rely on these resources for their livelihood.

*Mining and the Biosphere*

Mining operations have an adverse impact on the biological diversity of the area as the operations involve the

clearing of vegetation and topsoil which can lead to accelerated desertification. Vegetation removal alters the availability of food and shelter for wildlife. Consequently, mining operations bring about habitat loss and fragmentation for animals. On a broader scale, however, mining has the capacity to impact negatively on biodiversity by altering species composition and structure. For instance acid drainage and high metal concentrations in rivers generally result in an impoverished aquatic environment.

Ultimately much of the discharge of this heavy metal (copper) ends in

the Kafue River which is one of the major fisheries in Zambia and supports thousands of households whose livelihoods depend on fishing and the cultivation of food crops on the river banks. In addition, the river offers life support to the industrial, mining and agriculture sectors. The Kafue River is also a source of potable water for approximately 40% of the Zambian population.

The bioavailability and bioaccumulation of copper in water and sediments facilitates their absorption by fish. It is worth noting that the Kafue Fishery alone accounts for 10% of the

total fish produced in Zambia and over 6000 self-employed fishermen rely on the river. Research conducted revealed that the concentrations of copper in the Kafue River sediments exceeded that found in other polluted river sediments worldwide with concentrations ranging from 11,028 to 12,855  $\mu\text{g/g}$  dry mass in the mining area. One of the ecological consequences of this has been reduced fish stocks in the river (see table 6). It is evident from the results presented that the fish catch in the Kafue River has declined by 2.5% between 1996 and 2003 and this could be adduced to reduced fish populations.

Research has established that the mortality rate of young juvenile fish is high in highly polluted water with copper and it is reported that young Tilapia fish cannot live in the Kafue River water located in the mining area due to high copper concentrations. It is

**Table 6: Percentage change in Fish production**

| Year       | 1996 | 1997 | 2002 | 2003 | %change |
|------------|------|------|------|------|---------|
| Production | 6293 | 6479 | 6316 | 6137 | 2.5     |

Source: Sub-Regional Trade Expansion in Southern Africa: Supply Survey on Zambia's fish and Fish products and Field survey, 2008

© Shutterstock.com



Contaminated mine water pollution of a copper mine exploitation

also worth mentioning that the Kafue River is home to 122 fish species. Zebra fish is one of the fish species found in the Kafue River which is seriously endangered and this has been attributed to changes in the environment by Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ).

#### *Unemployment resulting from Privatisation*

During the heyday of the mines, many rural people migrated to the Copper belt province for jobs and their livelihood. With time, the migrants lost ties with their rural roots. After the sale of ZCCM, their only source of income, many people defied the government's policy of 'go back to the land' that encouraged retirees to return to villages and take up farming. This resulted in the Copper belt Province being the most urbanised region in the country. According to Fraser and Lungu (2007) 15% of Zambia's population live in the Copper belt. Out of these, about 80% live in urban areas. The number of the unemployed increased after the sale of the mines.

#### *The Impact of Mining on Local People*

Even when mineral development results in national economic growth, the benefits are not always equitably shared, and local communities closest to the source of mineral development suffer the most. In some cases, mining has provided jobs in otherwise economically marginal areas. However, typically these jobs are limited in number and duration. Mining development tends to hoist wage levels for their employees, leading to displacement of some community residents and existing businesses. Additionally, mining may also trigger indirect negative social impacts, such as alcoholism, prostitution, and sexually transmitted diseases.

Mining brings about in-migration which is the major cause of disruption to social relationships and cultural identity around mining regions. Migration is possibly the most devastating of all the effects of large-scale mining on social relationships as this makes a local community go from being relatively coherent and stable to a situation where local people feel they

are in a minority. Large-scale mining tends to impact on local communities, leading to dislocations and displacements, effects on employment, health and safety, a reduction in corporate social responsibility and an increase in environmental degradation. Contestations over access to mineral wealth have implications for human security and how these issues are handled may affect the relationship between local communities and mining companies, on one hand, and the people and their government, on the other.

As one resident put it:

*...due to the establishment of the mines our land was taken over, and many of the family members were forced to move to the city because they*

“Additional pollutants from the mines which end up in rivers and streams impact negatively on aquatic biodiversity. In Zambia for instance young Tilapia fish species cannot survive in the water in the Kafue River around the mining area.”

*couldn't get jobs from the mines (due to old age).*

#### **Change in Population Dynamics**

Invariably the skilled and semi-skilled work required for mining activities act as a magnet for people come to the mining areas; and over the years therefore the population dynamics have changed.

#### *Mining and Women*

Women are working in various capacities in the mining industry in Africa and certainly in Zambia. For example 8% of the workers in the Kansanshi mine are women. The freedom of movement of the women living in the mining compounds

is very limited as a result of social acceptance and legal factors. Only very limited access to resources is given to women. Moreover, making an independent living by themselves is extremely difficult, whether or not the business conducted is legal. Women are expected to have a financially supportive male partner, and without this support their lives can be very hard.

#### **Policy Measures and Planning Action**

The mining sector remains the major contributor to Zambia's economic growth with its average share around 10%. The Government has adopted a pragmatic mineral policy which is designed to enhance investment in the mining industry and to ensure the development of a self-sustaining minerals-based industry. The key objectives of this policy are to make the private sector the principle producer and exporter of mineral products by putting in place a private sector incentive in the development of new mines in order to increase and diversify mineral and mineral based products and exports.

Zambia's *Sixth National Development Plan (2011-2015)* addresses this: The mining sector will focus on increasing exploration projects and sustainable production; and on the management of mineral resources and increasing productivity so as to maximise economic benefits from the sector. In order to maximise the socio-economic benefits of the mining sector, the focus of the SNDP will be to enhance value addition, safety and health; and safeguard the environment through the review of the Mines and Minerals Resources Development Policy.

*The Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ)* is a statutory body created under an Act of Parliament, the Environmental Protection and Pollution Control Act of 1990, Cap 204 of the Laws of Zambia. The Council, established in 1992, is mandated to protect the environment and control pollution so as to provide for the health and welfare of persons, and the environment.

*Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)* is often used to promote voluntary corporate initiatives as an alternative to additional or existing

mandatory regulations. It is a vital tool in promoting and improving the public image of companies. Konkola Copper Mine (Vedanta Group) has taken many active steps under their Corporate Social Responsibility Programme.

### Findings and Discussion

*Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed* – Mahatma Gandhi.

It is an established fact that different types of social organisations and institutions could be developed on the basis of natural (environmental) resources. According to Zimmerman, Resources are not, they are made." Suffice to say that despite the identified economic benefits of income and employment copper mining activities offer in Zambia, it has impacted negatively on the environment and the people. The industry is making profits from copper mining. However, the revenues generated are externalised and do not benefit the local economy and people.

Copper mining has many direct and indirect impacts on society. One of the major indirect impacts of mining in Zambia has been the urbanisation of the population, with the country being the second most urbanised in sub-Saharan Africa. This has largely been the result of the establishment and growth of mine towns. The direct impact is related to air, water and land pollution, degradation of land, deforestation etc. The article, therefore, acknowledges that copper mining is an important activity in Zambia. It also demonstrates that the local community does not fully benefit from of this industry. Rather they experience a negative impact derived from the social and natural environment.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

During the past years, the environment of Zambia has been affected to various degrees by the mining and processing of copper. The impact of copper mining is related to both the natural and social environment. Since the late nineties, however, the situation significantly changed with the establishment of the state environmental agency, the Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ). As a result of regulatory

“There is a constantly increasing health risk owing to the consumption of polluted water.”

reporting by companies to the ECZ and the requirements for EIA before start-up of any project, the state of the environment is gradually improving.

A year ago following a successful transition of power, the new Government announced that it “would make Zambia a better place for all”. But this is not possible without a clean and sustainable environment. There is a need for government to synchronise mining and environmental laws and policies in Zambia so as to improve the conditions for the local communities and ensure economic, social and environmental sustainability. So, there is need for the policy and legal frameworks pertaining to mining to be overhauled in order to impress upon the mining companies stringent environmental and social accountability and liability.

Thus there is need to promote equity and fair allotment of the benefits from copper mining, through enhancing transparency, accountability and monitoring in the management of copper revenue flows. It is also imperative for the country to come up with policies that are aimed at economic diversification in sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and tourism in an attempt to reduce the dependence on copper. As Ellen Churchill Semple says:

*Man is a product of the earth's surface. This means not merely that he is a child of the earth, dust of her dust; but that the earth*

“High levels of dust in the air increase respiratory diseases such as chronic bronchitis and asthma in the exposed population.”

*has mothered him, fed him, set him tasks, directed his thoughts, confronted him with difficulties that have strengthened his body and sharpened his wits, given him his problems of navigation or irrigation, and at the same time whispered hints for their solution.*

Thus we need to use our natural resources in a sustainable manner. ■

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# The importance of infrastructure development

Studies have shown that poor road, rail and port facilities add 30 to 40 per cent to the costs of goods traded among African countries, thus adversely affecting the private sector development and the flow of Foreign Direct Investment.

By Ibrahim Mayaki

The story of Africa's development is changing. Six of the world's fastest growing economies are in Africa! Democratic governance has been strengthened over the last five decades, enabling a platform for stable growth and prosperity in most parts of the continent. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is happy to be part of this upward transformation process, through the implementation of its Programmes.

But while we boast of having some of the fastest growing economies, what we don't generally say is that we also have seven of the ten most unequal economies. If we look at the GINI coefficients (an index which measures the extent to which the distribution of income or consumption expenditure among individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution) Africa is the most unequal continent in the world.

In addition, 75 per cent of Africa's population is under 25 years old.

This growing youth population, most of which has access to modern and rapid communications systems, and requires instant results, could impact adversely on the Africa nation state, if social inequality and the current systems of governance are not revised. Inclusive policies are an absolute prerequisite for political stability.

By 'inclusive' I mean creating jobs

for the youth and facilitating access to public services. The combination of the most unequal yet youngest continent is one that could be explosive.

Tunisia is an interesting model that failed. The North African country was praised for its good transport system, highest penetration of IT on the continent, good ports, relatively good airports, fairly good agricultural production, highest literacy rate of girls... but the country imploded.

Fundamentally, the majority of the population did not perceive the level of inclusion of the youth as satisfactory. This is why whatever we do in agriculture, infrastructure, ICT, if we do not resolve the key issue of inclusiveness, we are carrying very fragile systems that at one moment or another will implode. So inclusiveness is really fundamental.

But for real development in every sphere to happen, we need to improve our infrastructure. At NEPAD, we believe that infrastructural development is the key to all aspects of social and economic transformation.

Antonio Estache and Grégoire Garsous, both experts in infrastructure investment in Africa, state in *The impact of infrastructure on growth in developing countries* that there is, indeed, a plethora of anecdotal and more technical evidence that better quantity and quality of infrastructure can directly raise the productivity of human and physical capital and hence growth. For example providing access roads can:

- improve education and markets for farmers' outputs and others by cutting costs;
- facilitate private investment; and
- improve jobs and income levels for many.

Despite the gains registered in improving regional infrastructure connectivity across the continent since the establishment of the African Union along with NEPAD, Africa still faces serious infrastructure shortcomings across all sectors, both in terms of access and quality.

For instance, only 38 per cent of the African population has access to electricity; the penetration rate for internet is less than 10 per cent while only a quarter of Africa's road network

is tarred. Studies have shown that poor road, rail and port facilities add 30 to 40 per cent to the costs of goods traded among African countries, thus adversely affecting the private sector development and the flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

Furthermore, a recent World Bank study found that the poor state of infrastructure in many parts of Africa reduced national economic growth by two percentage points every year and cut business productivity by as much as 40 per cent, making Africa – in spite of its enormous mineral and other natural resources – the region with the lowest productivity levels in the world.

In order to boost intra-African trade, we need to improve infrastructure. That is why we designed PIDA – the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, a 30-year strategy by NEPAD, the African Union and African Development Bank, focusing on regional trans-boundary projects. The good thing about PIDA is that it was designed from the bottom up. The priorities are consensual. Given our global context some of the minimal conditions for structural economic transformation require a less top-down approach in our planning processes.

The 4 500 kilometre highway from Algiers to Lagos, for example, would not have been possible without the political and technical support of each of the affected countries. Ten years ago a private sector operator who wanted to discuss a regional project with two governments would be lacking a rational framework.

PIDA is that rational framework. Jointly coordinated by the African Union Commission (AUC), the NEPAD Agency, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), PIDA provides the strategic framework for priority projects to transform Africa through the construction of modern infrastructure into an interconnected and integrated continent that is competitive domestically and in the global economy.

PIDA also forms the basis for the Financing Summit for Africa's Infrastructure, which will be held early in the year. The Summit will

take decisions to accelerate the mobilisation of both domestic and international financial support for the implementation of high impact regional infrastructure projects in Africa.

We picked 16 out of 51 largely programme-based PIDA projects that are to be discussed at the Summit. The objective of this Summit is to create a dialogue between policy makers, heads of government and private sector operators. Financing will develop from public-private partnerships.

The 51 projects require an estimated US\$ 68 billion for their implementation up until 2020 whilst an additional US\$ 300 billion is envisaged as the requirement for the PIDA projects to be implemented through to 2040. With such quantum resource requirements in the long term, there exists a huge financing gap which needs to be addressed for the successful realisation of PIDA projects.

When the high level politicians, business entrepreneurs, industry experts and researchers meet in Dakar, they will produce results in terms of new approaches to project preparation that will lead to an increased level of funding being directed to PIDA projects within a shorter timeframe.

The Summit will highlight the need to scale-up Africa's domestic financial resource mobilisation. It also provided a unique high-level platform to convene and engage African leaders, businesspersons, regulators and policy makers on specific issues that have hampered the roll out of transformative regional projects across the continent.

Working closely with the private sector, the Summit is expected to produce tangible outputs that will, over time, contribute to regional transformation. It marks the beginning of a strong collaboration between public and private capital, based on effective project risk mitigation and project structuring to match different investor groups with a range of investment securities. The expected significant outcomes will provide an opportunity for NEPAD to be the key point for investment in Africa. The Summit will introduce new approaches to tackling the changing landscape of Africa's shifting development paradigm. ■



# *One Africa, One Voice*



Hon. Bethel Amadi – President



Hon. Roger Nkodo – 1st Vice-President



Hon Sulama Hay Emhamed – 2nd Vice-President

**OVERVIEW**

The Pan-African Parliament (PAP) was inaugurated on March 18, 2004 at the African Union (AU) Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as one of the 10 Organs of the AU. It moved later to its current Seat in Midrand, Johannesburg in South Africa. Membership is open to all AU Member States who ratify the PAP Protocol. Currently, membership stands at forty-nine (49). Each National Parliament designates five of its Members to the PAP, at least one of whom should be a woman.

The ultimate aim of the establishment of the PAP is for it to evolve into an institution with full legislative powers, whose Members are elected by universal adult suffrage. At present, it exercises advisory and consultative powers.

Despite this restrictive mandate, the PAP is continuing to play a key role in promoting democratisation, good governance and the harmonisation of laws on the continent. This will lead to more stability, an important precondition for investment, and consequently, development and prosperity for the peoples of Africa.

The objectives of the PAP are mainly to promote the principles of human rights, democracy, good governance, transparency, accountability, peace, security and stability in Africa. The PAP is also expected to promote collective self-reliance and economic recovery, in

addition to facilitating cooperation and development in Africa. Furthermore, it is expected to strengthen continental solidarity and build a sense of common destiny among the peoples of Africa.

**STRUCTURE**

The authority to make decisions of the PAP is vested in the Plenary Session. However, the main work which results in the decisions is performed by the ten Permanent Committees, which also meet to oversee the work of the AU.

The Bureau of the PAP, which is responsible for the management of the Parliament, is composed of the President and four Vice-Presidents, who represent the five regions of Africa. The current President of the PAP is Hon. Bethel Nnaemeka Amadi, from Nigeria. The First Vice President is Hon. Roger Nkodo Dang from Cameroon, The Second Vice President is Hon. Suilma Hay Emhamed Saleh from Saharawi, the Third Vice President is Hon. Loide Kasingo from Namibia and the Fourth Vice President is Hon. Juliana Kantengwa from Rwanda.

The Bureau is supported by a Secretariat of permanent staff members who are headed by the Clerk of Parliament, Adv. Zwelethu Madasa from South Africa.

**TRANSFORMATION**

The PAP is currently undergoing a review process. It is hoped that this

will culminate in awarding it some legislative functions to make model laws that would contribute to the harmonisation of policies across the continent. This is seen as the first step in the full transformation of the PAP into the legislative body of the African continent.

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One Africa, One Voice



Hon. Loide Kasingo – 3rd Vice-President



Hon. Juliana Kantengwa – 4th Vice-President



Adv. Zwelethu Madasa – Clerk of PAP

# Energy and Climate Change



Unless worldwide carbon emissions are reduced, within twenty years, hundreds then thousands of people in Africa alone will die unpleasant deaths whilst a lot of land will become barren.

By Michael Prior

Readers of *The Thinker* will need little reminding as to just how serious is the problem of climate change for the future of Africa. The latest analysis suggests that if global warming only reaches the 2°C level conventionally considered reasonably 'safe' then African food production will drop by at least 10%. There has been a considerable degree of research on this topic with probably the most detailed coming from the International Food Policy Research Institute which has published three monographs on the impact of climate change on agriculture in east, west and southern Africa as well as some country specific research.<sup>1</sup> Such detailed work

inevitably produces conclusions which are too complex to easily summarise. As the Institute's presentation at the Warsaw conference on climate change in November 2013, suggested there is 'the good, the bad and the ugly' as in some places, particularly those with a great deal of irrigated agriculture, some impacts may actually be beneficial. In places with the 'bad and ugly' impacts (and these are the majority) African agriculture could adapt by adopting different crop varieties, increasing irrigation, even changing the whole crop balance of a region. However it will cost a great deal. A report, also presented in Warsaw, by the United Nations Environment Programme

(UNEP) suggested that at least US\$350 billion would be needed by 2070 if climate change moved much above the accepted target level 2°C. Even if this target was met costs of US\$200 billion could be incurred.<sup>2</sup>

This is just the impact on agriculture based upon transition to a new stable climate regime. In the interim period, huge costs will arise from the extreme weather events – droughts, floods, storms and so on – which are an increasing feature of the African weather. A number of coastal cities will also partially disappear under the rising sea.

Greater warming would prove even more catastrophic. Yet readers will also need little warning after the debacle of the Durban climate conference (*The Thinker* February, 2012) that negotiations on a global carbon-reduction plan are moving at a glacial pace, if at all. In April, 2013 the European Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) effectively collapsed. Introduced in 2005, the ETS was heralded as providing a market-based system for reducing carbon emissions rather than any top-down regulatory system. Under it, industries were required to purchase carbon credits to compensate for excess carbon emissions thus providing an incentive to greater efficiency. Unfortunately under business pressure, shed-loads of free permits were issued which, in times of economic recession, has led to the collapse of the price for permits to under £3/tonne when it is believed that a price closer to £30 is required to force genuine reductions. When the European Parliament rejected a plan to shore up the price, Milton Catelin, chief executive of the World Coal Association, called the European parliament vote "a triumph of common sense and balanced policy". Engh said.

In November, 2013, nearly 200 countries met in Warsaw on the annual jamboree known as the Conference of the Parties to the UN Climate Change Convention, this year COP 19, and, as has become wearily familiar, they essentially agreed that they would meet again next year, this time in Peru, though important negotiations have been deferred until the end of 2015 in Paris. In the first quarter of the

year, nations will be expected to put forward their planned “contributions” to cutting global emissions. These will be the centrepiece of a proposed global agreement agreed in Paris. The obviously-underwhelmed executive director of UNEP was quoted as saying “If delegates leave here (Warsaw) with a sense of how much is left to do, then maybe that will focus efforts in the coming 12 months because without that sense we all have reason to be very concerned”.

The main topic of the negotiations in Warsaw appears to have been a very deep-seated conflict between two groupings: those countries who wish that the distinction between developed, industrial countries and the developing world, which was embedded in the Kyoto protocols in 1997, be abolished now that China, in particular, has become the biggest global emitter; and those who wish to see the distinction maintained, arguing that, although there may be some degree of parity now in emissions, historically the developed industrial countries have contributed by far the

greatest share of carbon dioxide still in the atmosphere. There are no prizes for guessing which countries belong to which camp. Whether this conflict will be patched up in Peru is very much an open question.

Just how limited have been the measures taken to reduce carbon emissions in the 20 years since climate change became officially recognised as a problem requiring global international action is shown by recent work by scientists at Lancaster University in England showing growth in long-term energy use.<sup>3</sup>

They estimate that growth in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions has been fairly constant at about 2% p.a. ever since the mid-nineteenth century and shows no signs of slowing down in the past decade. It is revealing that whilst the Great Depression of the 1930s did produce a distinct slowing in the rate of growth, the post-2008 recession has shown no comparable effect with emissions going remorselessly upwards. It is not entirely bad news as emissions in 2012 have been reported as significantly below previous years.<sup>4</sup> This report

suggests that “The small increase in emissions of 1.1% in 2012 (including a downward correction of 0.3% for it being a leap year), may be the first sign of a more permanent slowdown in the increase in global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and ultimately of declining global emissions”. Even so, what is needed is cuts rather than a slowdown and this remains a very distant prospect.

An oblique look at the chances of emissions being reduced comes from a study co-authored by the Carbon Tracker think-tank and the Grantham Research Institute<sup>5</sup> into the valuation of energy-resource companies. This shows that “Between 60-80% of coal, oil and gas reserves of publicly listed companies are ‘unburnable’ if the world is to have a chance of not exceeding global warming of 2°C”. Yet these ‘unburnable’ reserves are included in the stock-market valuations of these companies and they spent \$674 billion in 2012 discovering yet more potentially stranded assets. Prof. Stern, one of the authors, claims that “Smart investors can see that investing in companies that rely solely or heavily on constantly replenishing reserves of fossil fuels is becoming a very risky decision. The report raises serious questions as to the ability of the financial system to act on industry-wide long term risk, since currently the only measure of risk is performance against industry benchmarks.” This is the optimistic conclusion. The pessimistic is that financial markets see little possibility of controls over carbon emissions and are valuing companies in this light.

Reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions whether by direct control or market-based mechanisms have always rested upon four legs: various technical solutions, energy conservation, renewable energy and nuclear power. Now that the wackier schemes have been dropped, technical solutions come down to carbon capture and storage (CCS) and electric vehicles. The latter are making steady, if slow, penetration into vehicle use in richer countries, mainly one suspects as town runabouts in two-car families, but will not make much progress in the galloping car markets of China and India. In any case, their low-carbon rating depends crucially upon

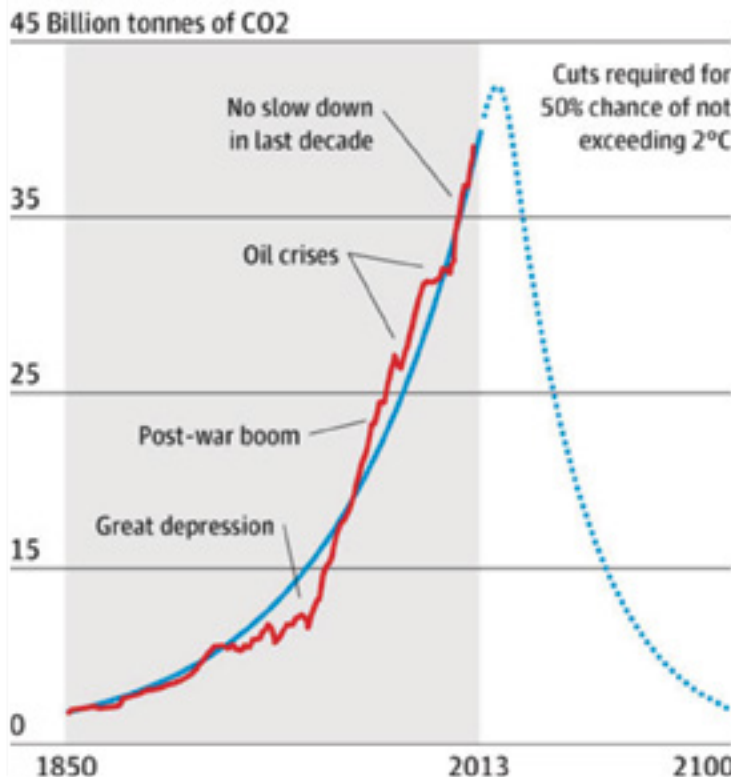


Fig 1: Annual Global CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions since 1850  
Source: Jarvis et al

equivalent electricity which simply throws into relief the central problem of all low-carbon energy strategies: how to generate electricity.

CCS has always been the possible key technology allowing both unrestricted use of fossil-fuels in power-generation and reductions in GHG. However progress on CCS remains slow. There are essentially three approaches: post-combustion in which CO<sub>2</sub> is removed from exhaust gases by dissolving it in a solvent; pre-combustion in which the fossil fuel is converted into a syngas composed of hydrogen and carbon monoxide which is then burnt; and oxyfuel-combustion in which fuel is burnt in pure oxygen, in both cases giving exhaust streams of water and CO<sub>2</sub> which are easily separated. All give rise to a final stream of CO<sub>2</sub> which has to be stored underground either in depleted hydrocarbon fields or deep aquifers.

The advantage of the last two approaches is that they produce purer streams of CO<sub>2</sub> which require, in principle, much less energy to separate. Post-combustion technology is quite well-understood but is hugely energy intensive requiring around 25% of a plant's energy. It can be retrofitted to old stations but would reduce the output of older coal-stations running at around 35% efficiency to derisory levels.

There is a big pilot scheme being built at a Canadian power station at a cost of \$1.24 billion which will recover a million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually from an old 139 MW unit. It has the advantage that some of the cost will be recovered from using the recovered gas to produce more oil from nearby depleted fields but even so the cost is eye-watering. At the moment, it is the use of the derived gas in enhanced oil and gas recovery which drives project development mainly in the USA.

In the end, cost is the problem for CCS particularly in places which have no nearby underground storage opportunities. If translated into market terms, it would require a carbon price well above \$50/CO<sub>2</sub> to be viable, nearly twenty times above current European levels.

Energy conservation remains hugely important in GHG reduction and it is without doubt the area of quiet

improvement which has done most to limit GHG emissions in the past few decades. The gradual elimination of incandescent light-bulbs, tighter building standards, the much greater fuel-efficiency of cars, improvements in efficiency of appliances, these and many other improvements have done much. However, as Fig 1 shows, by itself, energy conservation has done little to halt the inexorable rise of CHG emissions. The central problem remains the insatiable desire for electricity in most countries of the world. In Africa, electricity demand in 2012 grew by 5.3% over 2011, the largest continental increase. It would have been greater had not demand in South Africa, the continent's largest consumer actually dropped slightly. However, South African power generation, largely coal-fired, has increased from 141 TWh in 1985 to 263 TWh in 2011.<sup>6</sup> Other African countries show even higher growth rates whilst in the obvious example, China, generation has grown more than tenfold in the same period and shows no sign of slowing with an annual growth of 11.7% in 2011. The International Energy Agency forecasts that global electricity demand will grow by 70% by 2035.<sup>7</sup>

Given the central role that electrification plays in development there is no reason to doubt that such growth will continue well into the future. The issue is how to grow without generating carbon, particularly if a growth in the use of electric vehicles stimulates even greater growth. In principle, there is little problem in doing this. In the 1970s and '80s, France removed about 80% of carbon emissions from its power system with the result that French emissions peaked in 1973 at 544 million tonnes and in 2011 were down to 375 million. The practical issue is the means whereby France achieved this goal: nuclear power; and the widespread and visceral opposition to this power source.

At the other end of the spectrum of popular acceptability, at least in principle, are various kinds of renewable energy including wind, photovoltaics, passive solar and, though often less acceptable in practice, hydropower. This last – although the only renewable power source which has made a

significant impact of global generation 16% of the total in 2011 compared to less than 2% from wind – is subject to constant environmental criticism to the extent that large dam construction has slowed to a snail's-pace in many countries. Issues of land acquisition and population displacement, together with ecological and archaeological damage have dogged many schemes. A taste of the kind of opposition can be seen in the critique of Southern African schemes by Mary Galvin, a South African activist:

*Dam-affected communities in Southern Africa are calling for access to water, sometimes from the very dams that displaced them, for recognition of their situation, and for reparations. While there has been engagement in the [World Commission on Dams] WCD process and signs of government action, communities are generally frustrated by the failure to move past merely talking and actually respond to these calls. Yet this is far from surprising – the LHWP [Lesotho Highlands Water Project] is proceeding with more modern versions of the same damage wrought by colonial and apartheid governments. Problem-ridden programmes for dam-affected communities, as well as a disregard for wider distribution and equity issues, require civil society vigilance and action... The key question is whether activists in Southern Africa can learn from social movements that have arisen around dam struggles in other parts of the world, and organise communities that are geographically and culturally isolated from one another to respond to these life-impacting issues.<sup>8</sup>*

The author has no intention of taking sides in this contentious issue except to note that it would be easy to find similar expressions of opposition in countries as far apart as Mexico and India, whilst in the U.K., environmental opposition to the one potential large-scale hydro project in the country, the Severn Barrage, has stalled its development for decades.

In Africa, the potential for hydropower is very large but, as elsewhere, it remains contentious. For example, the so-called Renaissance dam on the

Nile in Ethiopia which will generate some 6,000 MW when completed in 2017 has raised serious concerns in Egypt about its impact upon water supply to that country. An even larger project is the Grand Inga (Fig. 2) which if fully completed would be the world's largest hydroelectric plant with more than twice the power generation of the Three Gorges Dam in China, in principle up to 40,000 MW from six separate generating stations. Situated about 50 km from the mouth of the Congo river in south-west DR Congo, it is a huge undertaking only made feasible by the participation of South Africa which has agreed to take around 2,500 MW of the 4,800 MW produced in the initial phase due to be completed in 2020. However, around 30,000 people will be displaced by the dam's lake, probably more in later phases, and there have been reports of unease about just how expensive the project will prove and how little local people will benefit. The cost of this first phase is put at US\$11 billion.

The problem is that hydro-power is the one renewable source that is capable of providing steady and predictable base-load generation. Whilst wind, sun and waves are able to provide significant amounts of fluctuating generation, they all require backup fossil capacity and cannot readily touch base-load operation.

Spain and Germany, for example, probably the most successful countries in the world in developing renewable energy thanks to their abundant wind and solar, are able to generate around 10% of their total demand from these sources. There are European targets to meet 20% of total energy consumption from renewable sources by 2020 which includes a substantial contribution from biofuels in the transport sector, a now rather discredited source because of its impact on food production. In the poorer countries of the world, China has made huge efforts to increase its renewable generation particularly in the last five years and generated 78.3 TWh in 2011 or 9.1% of the world total. But this achievement rather pales beside the 4700 TWh generated by the entire system. South Africa, the largest African emitter, manages to do badly in any of these comparisons, consuming

just 0.4 million tonnes of oil equivalent (mtoe) in all renewables in 2011 compared with 92.9 mtoe of coal and even 2.9 mtoe of nuclear.

Most energy analysts looking objectively at the issue would now recognise that to effectively decarbonise electricity generation worldwide by, say, 80% of its current levels will require a large contribution from nuclear power which currently provides about 12% of world supply. Yet, on current policies not only is nuclear power not going to increase in the future but it is likely to diminish. In 2011, following the Fukushima incident, the German government announced that the eight oldest nuclear plants, closed immediately after the incident, would never re-open whilst the remaining nine stations would be closed by 2022. No new plant would be built. The likely impact on German carbon emissions of this decision has been hotly debated since, but the

best technical judgement is the most obvious: that much of the closed capacity will be filled by new coal-fired stations however much renewables are pushed by increasing the already large subsidies. Backing this analysis is the fact that in 2013, Germany will open 5,300 MW of coal-fired plant, the largest such increase for twenty years.

It is difficult to believe that this action by the German government, mirrored by comparable movement in Japan and by a general shift in many countries towards at least delaying nuclear development, is based upon any rational assessment of the risks of continuing to operate plants which have operated safely for some decades. What one has to look at is the ingrained hostility to nuclear power which exists in a sizeable and influential part of environmental movements in these and other, largely European, countries. The origins of this hostility lie in the confused and fractured politics of the



Fig 2: Inga dam project  
Source: [bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24856000](http://bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24856000)

1970s given that up to this time nuclear power had been generally welcomed and seen as an appropriate power source for a new industrial era.

One important source was the linkage which existed between nuclear power and nuclear weapons in all the major countries (USA, UK, France and Russia) which then had lead place in developing both technologies. This linkage is exemplified by the British claim that the Calder Hall reactor, opened with much fanfare by the Queen in 1956, was the first civil nuclear power station. In fact, the primary purpose of the station was to produce plutonium for weapons just as the primary purpose of the original uranium enrichment plants was to produce weapons-grade U235. This linkage has never been entirely broken. Only Israel of the world's nuclear powers has developed nuclear weapons without also having uranium enrichment facilities. There is strong evidence, however, that Israel collaborated with apartheid South Africa in the production of nuclear weapons and South Africa did possess enrichment facilities probably associated with nuclear weapon development. The current impasse over Iran's nuclear ambitions centres around the dual role of enrichment in civil and in military use.

There is no doubt that in the 1970s, this link coupled with the strong anti-nuclear (weapons) protests of the times in Europe and, to a degree, in the USA, meant that civil nuclear power lost its aura as the clean fuel of the future and became instead a symbol of military-industrial capitalism at its worst. The central fear became one of the possible devastation of a nuclear disaster, devastation closely connected in people's minds with the known effect of nuclear weapons. This fear was deepened by the partial reactor-meltdown at the Three Mile Island plant in 1979 and finally made only too real by the catastrophe at Chernobyl in 1986 which effectively put a stop to any further nuclear development in Europe. Fig. 3 is a photograph of a model of the Chernobyl reactor after its lid blew off. The Fukushima incident in March, 2011, the only other event ever given a Level 7 or Major Incident rating by the



Fig. 3: Model of Chernobyl reactor after accident

International Atomic Energy Agency, was in some ways an echo of Chernobyl.

Let's rewind a little. There have been four reported nuclear incidents with the capacity to cause widespread harm. (It is possible that there were also unreported accidents in Soviet waste-disposal sites). The first was at the British Windscale establishment in 1957. Windscale was then a purely military establishment and there was a limited release of radiation following a reactor fire caused by an unexpected surge of energy in the graphite reactor-core. The Three Mile Island incident, potentially very serious but in the event fairly harmless, was caused by an unexpected chemical reaction, in this case between high-temperature water and the uranium fuel-rods which caused a hydrogen cap to form above the reactors following a stuck valve in the cooling system. Chernobyl, the only incident which caused immediate loss of life, was caused by an unauthorised experiment by the reactor operators, most of whom died, on the graphite-moderated RBMK reactors. The subsequent fire caused a very large radiation release over a wide-area and the evacuation of thousands of people from land much of which remains off-limits. At Fukushima, the critical problem following an earthquake and subsequent tsunami was that the backup generators necessary to supply power for cooling water circulation after grid failure were located, inexplicably for a seaside plant, in

low-lying rooms and were flooded in the tsunami. As a consequence, three of reactors were exposed, caught fire and caused hydrogen explosions which released large amounts of radiation. No people were directly killed by this (though several plant workers were killed in the initial tsunami) but there are likely to be increased cancers in some of the exposed population. In total, 31 immediate deaths in 56 years plus an unknown number of associated cancers, certainly hundreds in the case of Chernobyl though probably much lower in the other three incidents. (In passing, it should be noted that most of those who died at Chernobyl were the very courageous fire-fighters).

Is it relevant to compare this record with, say, just major incidents in South African coal mines alone? 417 deaths in 1960 at Coalbrook North colliery; 64 deaths in 1983 at Hlobane Colliery; 53 deaths in 1993 at Middelbult colliery, a total of 534 in 53 years. In 2012, there were 18 deaths, a kind of continuing background noise. Or is a comparison with the most important renewable resource, hydropower relevant? In 1975, the Banqiao Reservoir Dam in China collapsed killing some 26,000 people directly after Typhoon Nina dropped huge amounts of rain on the region. In this and associated dam failures, an estimated 171,000 people died, 11 million people lost their homes and there was the sudden loss of 18 GW of power capacity. Dam collapses are not unusual nor are

deaths associated with these though not usually on the scale of Banqiao. They are even on YouTube<sup>9</sup>

Well, probably not. In public perception, coal-mining is a 'dangerous job' where death is seen as part of normal business whilst dam collapse is one of those things which 'just happen' usually because of abnormal weather. Yet memories, even inherited, of looking down into the fires of hell at Chernobyl just will not go away or be put into the category of stuff which happens. There is, after all, the correction perception that one of the impacts of nuclear release could be some level of accelerated cancer cases, maybe small, maybe not, plus the issue of long-term land sterilisation. Yet throw into this mix, the certainty, not possibility, that, unless worldwide carbon emissions are reduced, within twenty years, hundreds then thousands of people in Africa alone will die unpleasant deaths whilst a lot of land will become barren then the balance of perception really ought to change. Will it? As things stand probably not unless there is some strong political leadership. And at the moment, governments in countries such as Germany and Japan are running scared of existing hostility to nuclear power and are, at the same time, refusing to face up to the urgency of reaching some international agreement on a programme of GHG reductions. At the moment, South Africa is the only African country in which nuclear power is a realistic option to fossil-generation but it is all other nations act.

The fact is that even if there were to be immediately a big push for new nuclear plant, it would hardly begin to have an impact before 2020 and even later if the retirement of old nuclear plant, much of which approaches 40 years-old, is taken into account. Nor is there now any real chance of a new international treaty to limit CHG being implemented before 2020 given that the most optimistic assessment is that it could be agreed in 2015.

The International Energy Agency, recognising both the inevitability of these time-lags and also the fact that "Climate change has quite frankly slipped

to the back burner of policy priorities"<sup>10</sup> as well as the urgency of some action to reduce CHG, has published a four-point plan the for actions which could be undertaken without too much investment. It calls this a 4-for-2°C Scenario, in which four energy policies are selected that can deliver significant emissions reductions by 2020, relying only on existing technologies and have already been adopted successfully in several countries. In this 4-for-2°C Scenario, global energy-related greenhouse-gas emissions are 8% (3.1 Gt CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent) lower in 2020 than the level otherwise expected on existing policies.<sup>11</sup>

They include:

- Targeted energy efficiency measures in buildings, industry and transport account for nearly half the emissions reduction in 2020, with the additional investment required being more than offset by reduced spending on fuel bills.
- Limiting the construction and use of the least-efficient coal-fired power plants which deliver more than 20% of the emissions reduction and helps curb local air pollution. The share of power generation from renewables increases (from around 20% today to 27% in 2020), as does that from natural gas.
- Actions to halve expected methane (a potent greenhouse gas) releases into the atmosphere from the upstream oil and gas industry in 2020 provide 18% of the savings.
- Implementing a partial phase-out of fossil fuel consumption subsidies accounts for 12% of the reduction in emissions and supports efficiency efforts.

Perhaps the most important of these in some parts of Africa, particularly the south and especially in South Africa, much the largest emitter of CHG on the continent, is the future use of natural gas along with more use of the renewables in which to date its progress has been less than convincing. It already imports a little gas from Mozambique and there have been major new discoveries there. In 2012, Michael Bagrain, president of the Cape Chamber of Commerce said "The significance for South Africa is that these discoveries should wipe the nuclear

option off the table. We now have enough gas on our borders to generate all the electricity we could ever use. It will be the easy way to reduce our carbon emissions".<sup>12</sup> In addition, South Africa is believed to have substantial shale gas reserves in the Karoo Basin, with technically accessible reserves well in excess of 1 trillion cubic metres.<sup>13</sup> With current consumption below 7 billion cubic metres annually, there is clearly a lot of headroom for growth from both sources. There are both environmental and water-resource issues about shale-gas production but in 2012 the government cleared the way for it despite these concerns by lifting a moratorium on development.

However not many countries are sitting on top of a gas bonanza. In any case, although increased gas use, particularly if it replaces coal, may limit carbon emissions, it will not decarbonise power generation in the same way as nuclear can.

It is a reluctant conclusion. The author helped organise the expert opposition to the major nuclear-power projects in the U.K. in the 1980s and still recognises the negative sides of the industry. But in the face of growing evidence for the direct and immediate harm of climate change, there is really little alternative to its global development and, in Africa, for South Africa to regard it as a serious option alongside increased use of natural gas. ■

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## THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND INTERNATIONALISM

# The Early Years

By promoting Pan Africanism and African solidarity throughout the continent, the ANC operated outside the limits posed by narrow nationalism.

By Sifiso Mxolisi Ndlovu

Emphasising the centrality of black transnationalism in transnational interactions and political mobilisation, Kwame Nkrumah paid homage to Pixley Isaka Seme during the first International Congress of Pan Africanists held in Ghana on 12 December 1962. Calling for the Pan Africanists to work for a complete emancipation of the mind from all forms of domination, control and enslavement, Nkrumah proclaimed:

*Your meeting here today as Pan*

*Africanists from various countries of the world is truly historic. It emphasises the idea that knowledge transcends political and national boundaries. It is incumbent upon all Africanist scholars, all over the world to work for a complete emancipation of the mind from all forms of domination, control and enslavement. I cannot leave you today without referring to the distinction achieved by a Zulu student – Isaka Seme – when he won the first prize of the Curtis Medal*

*Orations at Columbia University on the 5th of April, 1906. Distinguished Scholars let me confess, with humility, that it is not my usual practice to quote others. On this occasion, however, I feel that I have a duty to place on record at this first Africanist Congress taking place here in Africa, the oration of Isaka Seme which, although made some fifty years ago, is still relevant to the postulates of our present situation in Africa...<sup>1</sup>*

The fact that Seme, the founder



In 1914 an ANC delegation consisting of (left to right) Dr. W. Rabusana, T. Mapikela, Rev. J. L. Dube, Sol Plaatje, and S. Msane, visited Britain to put their protests before the British government and public.

of the ANC, is extolled by Nkrumah, whom Thabo Mbeki defines as an outstanding African patriot<sup>2</sup>, has to do with the fact that the founders of the ANC recognised that internationalism or international solidarity was the main pillar of the struggle for liberation during the early 20th century. When the Union of South Africa was established in 1910, prominent Africans such as John Dube made diplomatic overtures to resolve the national question peacefully. A multiracial deputation to London failed to get the colour bar clauses removed from the Union's constitution.<sup>3</sup> But this setback did not deter the ANC from seeking a negotiated solution

and, in 1914, another diplomatic mission to the UK was undertaken. This democratically elected ANC deputation, which included among other luminaries, the writer Sol T. Plaatje, was also unsuccessful. A third attempt was launched in 1919, when the ANC again appealed to the British government on behalf of black South Africans. But their peaceful mission for social and political rights for all South Africans failed to reach its noble goal.<sup>4</sup> Eventually (especially in the wake of apartheid's violent repressiveness), this well-meaning and non-violent approach—an approach that recognised that the struggle for emancipation was necessarily international – proved unsuccessful.

During the early 20th century, after

“After the 1919 Peace Conference in Versailles, the right to self-determination (in the aftermath of the demise of empire and the rise of American imperialism) excluded Africans on the continent and in the diaspora.”

the First World War to be precise, African students such as Z.K. Matthews rebelled against gross injustices perpetuated in the name of peace and democracy by leaders of powerful countries such as the United States. Matthews wrote:

*When President (Woodrow) Wilson (of the US) published his 14 Points, the phrase, 'self determination for small nations' caught the ears of Africans. Did the 'nations' to which he referred include us? Did they mean us, the black peoples of Africa, too? At Fort Hare we talked of little else. The consensus was that the makers of the world did not count us as a nation or as part of any nation... We lived in South Africa, but we were*

*not regarded as part of the South African nation. Indeed when white leaders spoke of the nation of South Africa, they meant only the white nation. When they gave population figures of the nation, they only gave the number of Europeans.*<sup>5</sup>

It is important to note that during the early 20th century, heated discussions about the African diaspora, solidarity, race and racism were the order of the day within the ANC structures. It is captured in the question posed by Matthews; 'did the 'nations' to which he (the president of the US) referred include us? Did they mean us, the black peoples of Africa, too?' The phrase 'black peoples of Africa' refers to Africans in various parts of the continent and in the Diaspora. The African intelligentsia in South Africa were venting their political anger at what they considered to be a local aberration; they were compelled to rethink their assumptions when after the 1919 Peace Conference in Versailles, the right to self-determination (in the aftermath of the demise of empire and the rise of American imperialism) excluded Africans on the continent and in the diaspora.

The ANC, in solidarity with Africans in the diaspora certainly focused their attention on Garveyism and the 'Return to Africa' movement, including Ethiopianism. Most of these vigorous and engaging debates took place at the African Club, located at No 34 Anderson Street in Johannesburg and founded in 1915 as a 'lively centre for political and social meeting'. It was apparently under the control of the ANC and the inspiration was Seme, who had enjoyed club life while a student at the University of Oxford. The African Club, like the Bantu Men's Social Centre, provided a space where members of the African political elite could meet to discuss, listen and rehearse their experiences, ideas, fears and dreams.<sup>6</sup>

Explaining existing deep friendship and relationships which defined black transnationalism and transnational interactions, Bhekizizwe Peterson notes that when Plaatje could not attend the 3rd Pan-African Congress in Paris in February 1921, Du Bois read Plaatje's address to the congress.

Plaatje and Du Bois' relationship was to become one in a very long line of associations and interactions between black South African artists and intellectuals and their counterparts in the black diaspora. Lionel Abrahams, for instance, worked with George Padmore from Trinidad, in organising the 5th Pan-African Congress in 1945 in Manchester. Ras Makonnen, Jomo Kenyatta and Kwame Nkrumah were already part of the circle of Pan-Africanist associates in London, corresponding with C.L.R. James who was based in the US during this time. The Manchester congress was opened by Du Bois and also attended by Julius Nyerere and Tom Mboya from Kenya. For purposes of this discussion, the most pertinent forms of engagement between black South Africans and the international community are those that involved the circulation of intellectual and ideological precepts, as well as political and cultural imaginaries that in turn were crucial in making different types of affinities and alliances possible.<sup>7</sup> As Anthony Bogues suggests, we should:

*think not just of geographic movements but flows of ideas between Africa and the Americas. Secondly, within these flows new political ideas were generated. In this case many ideas generated at one site criss-crossed, in a process of 'motion of the notion', landing and adapting themselves.*<sup>8</sup>

To keep the anti-colonial struggle Pan Africanist flag flying high, in October 1945, shortly after the end of the Second World War, and also in 1947, ANC delegates attended the fifth and sixth Pan African Congresses, in Manchester and in Dakar. This was not surprising because Alfred B. Xuma, the then president of the ANC, had established a warm, firm and lasting friendship with Nkrumah.<sup>9</sup> They met as university students in the USA and probably it was through Xuma that Nkrumah knew about Seme's achievements. Ghana became independent in 1957 Nkrumah wasted little time in convening two important conferences in 1958 that moulded his foreign policy position towards African states.

The first was the Conference of Independent African States (CIAS), held

in Accra, attended by the then eight independent African countries on the continent in April 1958 and organised by the Bureau of African Affairs (BAA), headed by Padmore.<sup>10</sup>

During the early 20th century, Seme's *Abantu-Batho* newspaper (including *iLanga lase Natal*) was used by the ANC as a platform to circulate revolutionary ideas throughout the country. Political slogans and songs were also creatively used by the ANC's founders to dissipate Pan Africanist ideas. The ANC's official slogan 'Mayibuye Africa' coined immediately after 1912 and popularised by its newspaper *Abantu-Batho* unashamedly promoted the organisation's internationalist, Pan Africanist and unwritten foreign policy ideals. This Pan Africanist slogan was coined during the militant early days of the African National Congress in 1912-1913. Its meaning translates to 'let the

“The slogan was a call for compassion, human solidarity and human dignity to be restored to African people.”

continent of Africa Return to its rightful owners' or, more specifically 'let the land/soil of Africa return to its owners'. The slogan was a call for compassion, human solidarity and human dignity to be restored to African people. This was also the case with the ANC's first official anthem 'Silusapho lwase Africa', meaning we are the children of Africa, composed by Reuben Caluza in 1913. It was later replaced by 'Nkosi Sikelela i Africa', meaning, God bless the African continent, composed by Samuel Mqhayi in 1927.

Significantly, both ANC anthems and the official slogan are about the centrality and importance of the African continent to our lives, including the philosophy of ubuntu, African culture and heritage. If this was not the case, slogans and anthems would focus on the Union of South Africa established in 1910 and would be titled 'Mayibuye i Union of South Africa'; 'Silusapho

lwase Union of South Africa'; and 'Nkosi Sikelela i Union of South Africa'. To emphasise its Pan Africanist roots, the organisation also changed its name from the South African Native National Congress to the African National Congress in 1923. The meaning of the term African here is both geographical and symbolical representation of the anti-colonial struggle.

Bhekizizwe Peterson defines the use of slogans and the national anthems as 'symbolic processes, forms and tools that we use to narrate or signify experience and ideology'. He further argues that he 'particularly has in mind the cultural, imaginative, performative, visual, linguistic and aesthetic codes and repertoires that we rely on daily in order to create and communicate our political visions and subjectivities, particularly in relation to the interactions, relations and identities that inform our lives as individuals and as social groups'.<sup>11</sup> As the struggle against apartheid gained momentum, the oppressed used other forms of representation to articulate the struggle for national liberation. These included prints, posters, postcards, T-shirts, story quilts, apparels and community murals. Trade unionists and student activists, among others, were engaged in orally produced community narratives and ritualised expressed speech forms which included the toyi-toyi.

By promoting Pan Africanism and African solidarity throughout the continent, the ANC operated outside the limits posed by narrow nationalism. This point becomes clear when we peruse Chapter 6, Sections 82-85 of the SANNC's (ANC's) 1918/19 constitution which read as follows:

- Membership of the Association (ANC) shall consist of three classes, to wit, ordinary members, honorary members and Auxiliary members
- Ordinary membership will be opened to all men belonging to the aboriginal race of Africa and who have attained the age of 18 years
- Auxiliary membership will be opened to all women of the aboriginal races of Africa over the age of 18 years who shall be members of the Bantu Women's National League of South Africa (later to be known as the ANC's

Women's League).

In his introductory notes of the ANC's constitution of 1918, Richard Msimang notes that:

*The constitution is now ready for operation pending final adoption by the National Congress. The only criticism that has been made against this constitution is that it is lengthy. But it is impossible to provide a couple of sheets regulations by which control of affairs of a big National Organisation whose scope and activities will cover a great portion of the African Continent...I crave indulgence to place on record the invaluable assistance rendered to me by Mr E. Tshongwane of the Transkei and Mr B. Nxumalo of Swaziland (in compiling this constitution).<sup>12</sup>*

Note that the 1919 constitution of the ANC reads "men and women of the aboriginal race of Africa", not of the aboriginal race of the Union of South Africa. Why was the ANC's membership predicated on Pan-Africanism and extended to indigenous Africans from all over the continent? Why was it that its national executive included monarchies from Southern Africa including the Barotse, a Sesotho speaking group that had migrated and settled in the present day Zambia?

The history of the 19th century migration routes to the North during the early 19th century are important for us to be able to understand why the ANC's policies were unashamedly Pan Africanists. These migration routes from the south (from the area now referred to as KwaZulu-Natal) to the north developed during the early 19th century by the likes of Soshangane wakwa Nxumalo, Zwangendaba wakwa Jele, Nxaba kaMbekani Vundla and Mzilikazi wakwa Khumalo, among others, later guided African migrant labourers from as far as Tanzania, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia to move in the opposite direction, from the north to the south, after the discovery of minerals in South Africa during the late 19th century. These human migrations and connections influenced early 20th century writings of both R.V. Msimang and Pixley Isaka ka Seme and their publications were characterised by the view that a united and strong ANC was necessary for both African solidarity and renaissance.

These southern Africa connections later influenced the formation of the South African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) which was officially launched on 1 April 1980 in Lusaka.

To consolidate the ANC's Pan Africanist bias and solidarity with other Africans in different parts of the continent, in 1918, the special SANNC conference of amakhosi sent a memorandum to the British king emphatically stating that South Africa, Germany and Belgium should keep their hands off South West Africa (Namibia) and East Africa, and the Congo, respectively, until the wishes of indigenous Africans were met. Later

“As a result of the effective political traditions developed by the founders of the ANC, the organisation developed a sophisticated strategy that garnered support from influential multi-lateral organisations such as the UN, Non-Aligned Movement and the Organisation of African Unity.”

in 1946, Xuma addressed the United Nations on the national question in Namibia. In 1923, disgusted by the repressive policies of Jan Smuts in South West Africa and in Bulhoek in the East Cape the ANC resolved to fight for the establishment of a Republic.<sup>13</sup> But this move was curtailed by the class division within the ANC – the fact that some of its Cape Province members had a right to vote.

To conclude, it is not a coincidence that the ANC identified international solidarity as one of the pillars of the struggle for national liberation in South Africa. The fact that the world wide anti-apartheid movement extended its tentacles to Europe, the United States

of America, the Caribbean and other parts of the African diaspora is linked to the transnational politics of the early 20th century. As a result of the effective political traditions developed by the founders of the ANC, the organisation developed a sophisticated strategy that garnered support from influential multi-lateral organisations such as the UN, Non-Aligned Movement and the Organisation of African Unity. Such astute political acumen and dexterity, predicated on international solidarity, was a strength that kept the liberation movement abreast to rivals such as the Pan Africanist Congress and also a step ahead of poisonous western super powers such as the USA, UK, France, Italy and West Germany who wanted to strangle it to death. I am of the view that we still owe the founders of the liberation movement a commemorative site specifically dedicated to their revolutionary ideas, commitment and sterling work which they carried out on our behalf – Mayibuye iAfrica! ■

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# Health Care Under Attack



A young patient awaits treatment in the paediatric ward of the Kaga Bandoro Hospital which has re-opened its doors to provide some urgent services.

By Ian Edelstein

Today, in Central African Republic, a woman wanders through her burned out, abandoned village, down the only road in the region. There are no cars travelling on the road that day; they fear to move. She has no choice; her young baby is sick with malaria. The baby is dehydrated and refuses to eat. The weather is hot and humid and the child may die before the sun sets. Only 15km away in Bouca, there used to be a functioning regional hospital with transportation services. Before her village was burned, she would always sleep with her baby under a bed net, reducing risk of exposure to mosquitoes. Now, she and her fellow villagers sleep hidden in the jungle, in the rain, the mud, and damp

night air thick with mosquitoes. It is safer there than in their village, affected by the latest surge of violence in her country.

Another villager reports, "We live in the bush just like animals now. We are no different; it is a fight for survival. We kill the animals and have something to eat or we starve. We are always sick and without any way to get treatment; we are no better than animals. "Access to health services alone does not replace the security and livelihood stolen away by violent conflict. But it may serve to restore thin shreds of dignity, of humanity in the midst of horror that Henry Dunant witnessed in Solferino, Italy in June 1859 and the Movement of

the Red Cross and Red Crescent have sought to ameliorate over the past 150 years:

"Toward the end of the day, when the shades of night began to cover this immense field of slaughter, many a French officer and soldier went searching high and low for a comrade, a countryman or a friend. If he came across someone he knew, he would kneel at his side trying to bring him back to life, press his hand, staunch the bleeding, or bind the broken limb with a handkerchief. But there was no water to be had for the poor sufferer. How many silent tears were shed that miserable night when all false pride, all human decency even, were forgotten!"<sup>1</sup>



In Kaga Bandoro, this latest coup hit the regional hospital hard. Nearly all of its 73 beds were looted of their mattresses, ambulances stripped of their engines, the hospital generator and radio communication equipment looted, and staff threatened when they did not produce keys for the remaining machinery.

Burnt homes in the abandoned village of Gbagueme, outside Botangafo, Ouham prefecture.

In Nana Outa, the ICRC has started a mobile clinic to provide some basic health services for the 2,700 villagers in the area, most of whom have gone into hiding. Every Thursday, hundreds of them walk 8km or further from their hiding places in the bush to the shade of a canvas tent that serves as the intake room for the Nana Outa Mobile Clinic. They mostly come presenting symptoms of malaria, a preventable disease under more stable circumstances. They will be examined, diagnosed, and given medicine before beginning the long walk back into the bush.



The intake tent at the Nana Outa mobile clinic, run by the ICRC, Nana-Grebizi prefecture, Central African Republic.



"Nearly the entire population of CAR contracts malaria each year. Now, it comes in great waves toward the end of the rainy season. I do feel that we are really saving people's lives but it is frustrating that they will probably return again in a few months with the very same problems. Living in the bush is really difficult, children suffer upper-respiratory tract infections from sleeping in the cold and have not yet developed the same resilience to malaria that some adults have."

Geo Balmor, ICRC Health Delegate in the Kaga Bandoro sub-delegation examines a baby for signs of malaria at the Nana Outa Mobile Clinic.

He says, "We have been living in the bush for a long time, I am sick, I was afraid to come out of the bush to get treatment. Some villagers told me that the ICRC is providing treatment and medication so I came. We have been in the bush because of the armed men, we are afraid to go back to the village. We are all suffering, especially the children. At night, we use the tree leaves to cover ourselves from the mosquitos. The children have bites and itch because of the mosquitos. We drink dirty water. We eat wild fruits and roots and we move around when there is no food left. Our hands are full of blisters because of digging in the soil looking for roots to eat. We are tired of being on the run all the time, every time we hear that armed men are coming. We will come back to the village when there is peace. Before, we lived in the village, we produced honey; we made a living. Life is too difficult now, we are suffering."



Charles Semago, a father of 9 children, waits for consultation at the Nana Outa mobile clinic.

"My baby has been sick for one week. I heard that the ICRC has a clinic every Thursday. I came out of the bush to get medication".



Pulcherie Amadi with Egriole, her young baby, later diagnosed with malaria and a respiratory infection, Nana Outa Mobile Clinic.



Dr Serge Doctor

Today, Doctor Serge Doctor (given the name by his grandfather who hoped his progeny would one day fulfil their namesake), Chief Doctor for the Nana Grebizi prefecture, returns to Kaga Bandoro for the first time since the coup. He has waited in Bangui for the situation to settle enough to return and assess the damage. While away, he has been robbed three times in the chaos. He was hopeful, "I have been too long away from my post. My work is there and I know that I am needed. While it is not safe for me, this is my country. I can move to France because my wife has citizenship but I want to make a difference and see an improvement." A day later, Doctor has become less sanguine. "I cannot believe what I have seen; the hospital is in ruins and people are desperate. My home here has also been looted and is now occupied by arms carriers. Without any emergency transportation, it is like an invitation for sick people to die."



Volunteer actors from the Central African Republic National Red Cross Society perform a play in Kaga Bandoro town centre to demonstrate the dangers when arms carriers enter medical facilities with their weapons.

Despite the challenges, Kaga Bandoro Hospital has re-opened. The ICRC is helping to repair the roofs of the hospital wards and erect a security fence, both to prevent arms carriers and grazing animals from entering the premises. But it will also require education. Arms carriers need to learn that weapons can never enter a hospital. Villagers need to accept their share of responsibility for taking part in the lootings in the wake of the violence, and seek to permanently protect their hospital.



Local women in Kaga Bandoro, Muslim and Christian, enjoy a lighter moment during the Red Cross play on protecting hospitals from weapon bearers.



Overcrowded vehicles move civilians and arms carriers along the roads and through the security check points, Northeast of Bangui.

A Health Care in Danger Experts Workshop will be held in April 2014 in Pretoria, South Africa, co-hosted by the South Africa Department of International Relations and Cooperation and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), with the intent of developing recommendations for the protection of medical facilities in situations of conflict and unrest. Doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals, as well as humanitarian experts, legal advisers, government officials, members of the armed forces, and weapons and security experts will be invited to participate. The recommendations from the Pretoria gathering will be presented at a major conference in 2015 involving all States Party to the Geneva Conventions and the entire International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Those interested in getting involved with the Health Care in Danger project or contributing to the expert workshop may contact the ICRC in South Africa ([pre\\_pretoria@icrc.org](mailto:pre_pretoria@icrc.org)) or have a look at the Health Care in Danger website ([www.healthcareindanger.org](http://www.healthcareindanger.org)).



## water affairs

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Department:  
Water Affairs  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

# BLOW

The Department of Water Affairs: Gauteng Region is working tirelessly to stop unlawful water use and prevent pollution of water resources in the Upper Vaal Water Management Area.

Any activity that uses water for commercial purposes needs to be authorized. For example, irrigation agriculture, disposal of mining related industrial wastewater, taking substantial water for domestic purposes (municipalities), etc. must be authorized under section 22 of the National Water Act, 36 of 1998. In addition, a person in control of any activity (e.g. sewage works, mining, etc.) that is likely to cause pollution of a water resource needs to take measures to prevent and/or control the pollution.

The public is asked to report emergency incidents such as the dumping of substances that may pollute or has the potential to pollute a river, wetland, groundwater, etc. to the Department of Water Affairs and their nearest South African Police Stations.

**WATER IS LIFE - RESPECT IT, CONSERVE IT, ENJOY IT.**

# THE WHISTLE ON WATER CRIMES

**Offenders and polluters face imprisonment and/or fined if convicted.**

Please report the details (farm name, number and portion, nature of unlawful water use and/or pollution, alleged unlawful user name/polluter) of suspected cases of unlawful water use and/or pollution to the Department through:

**The Regional Head: Gauteng,  
Department of Water Affairs,  
Private Bag X995,  
PRETORIA, 0001.**

**for the attention of  
Ms. M.J. Musekene.  
Tel: 0800 200 200, Fax: 086 666 6217  
e-mail: [gautengcme@dwa.gov.za](mailto:gautengcme@dwa.gov.za)**



# THROUGH A CREATIVE LENS

## DR. NIGGER

by Neal Hall

Dr. Nigger  
Can you cure me without  
touching me with nigga hands

Can you save my life  
without changing my life

Can you dance soft-shoe while  
humming those negro tunes  
when my white life codes blue

Can you reach inside yourself  
beyond the shit we put in you...  
past painful moments we put in you...  
past despair and hopelessness  
we've put in you and  
find that old black magic in you  
to save my life without changing  
all the shit we put in you

Dr. Nigger

Can you breathe in me  
air free of nigga  
from a nigger not free  
to breathe in free air

Can you stay on the colored side  
of the color line and reach across  
without touching me with nigga hands  
to restart my blue heart without  
changing my cold heart

Can you reach past the life  
we've taken from you to  
save my life and not  
let white life pass me by

Dr. Nigger can you  
save my life  
without taking my life

Cure me without  
touching me with nigga hands

Dance soft-shoe while  
humming negro tunes  
while you save my life  
without changing my life  
when my white life codes blue

Neal Hall is a graduate of Cornell University where he was a brilliant athlete. He specialised in ophthalmology at Harvard and is now a successful surgeon, writer and poet. His award winning book, *Nigger For Life*, "reflects his painful discovery, that in 'unspoken America,' race is the one thing by which he is first judged; by which he is first measured; against which his life and accomplishments are metered.

**ACROSS A NEW DAWN**

By Kofi Awoonor

Sometimes, we read the  
lines in the green leaf  
run our fingers over the  
smooth of the precious wood  
from our ancient trees;

Sometimes, even the sunset  
puzzles, as we look  
for the lines that propel the clouds,  
the colour scheme  
with the multiple designs  
that the first artist put together

There is dancing in the streets again  
the laughter of children rings  
through the house  
On the seaside, the ruins recent  
from the latest storms  
remind of ancestral wealth  
pillaged purloined pawned  
by an unthinking grandfather  
who lived the life of a lord  
and drove coming generations to  
despair and ruin

\*

But who says our time is up  
that the box maker and the digger  
are in conference  
or that the preachers have aired their robes  
and the choir and the drummers  
are in rehearsal?

No; where the worm eats  
a grain grows.  
the consultant deities

have measured the time  
with long winded  
arguments of eternity

And death, when he comes  
to the door with his own  
inimitable calling card  
shall find a homestead  
resurrected with laughter and dance  
and the festival of the meat  
of the young lamb and the red porridge  
of the new corn

\*

We are the celebrants  
whose fields were  
overrun by rogues  
and other bad men who  
interrupted our dance  
with obscene songs and bad gestures

Someone said an ailing fish  
swam up our lagoon  
seeking a place to lay its load  
in consonance with the Original Plan

Master, if you can be the oarsman  
for our boat  
please do it, do it.  
I asked you before  
once upon a shore  
at home, where the  
seafront has narrowed  
to the brief space of childhood

We welcome the travelers  
come home on the new boat  
fresh from the upright tree

Kofi Awoonor, the celebrated Ghanaian poet, was one of those killed in the Nairobi shopping mall Al-Shabab attack on 21 September 2013.

His early work was inspired by the singing, oral poetry and story-telling of the Ewe people of his native land. He taught African literature at the University of Ghana. He was a successful playwright, novelist and poet. Awoonor was imprisoned in Ghana for activities against the military government in the 1970s. Later he was appointed Ambassador to Brazil and Cuba and from 1990-94 he was Ghana's permanent representative to the United Nations.

Professor Awoonor was 78 at the time of his death, but still very active in the world of arts and culture, particularly concerned with the exploration of the effects of colonialism, apartheid and neo-colonialism on the African continent and diaspora. He was widely respected by other African writers, and a close friend, for example, of South Africa's Mongane Wally Serote, who was also present at the Storymoja Hay Festival in Nairobi at the time of Awoonor's death. Serote was to participate in a discussion of black male identity with Dr Neal Hall and Binyavaga Wainaina as part of the festival programme.

# Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika (God Bless Africa)



By Saeed Furaa

These are the first words of the South African national anthem. These words plead with the heavens to protect Africa – and not certain parts of Africa. These words enjoin Africa as a whole to have common faith, vision and goals. These words advocate tolerance more than anything.

Attacks against Somalis and other African immigrants in South Africa without doubt undermine and defy the values that underpin the South African Constitution, the African Charter of Human Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and many instruments that articulate people's rights in the world. One of the distinct features about South African business practice is the idea of a competitive market economy. Many Somalis saw and took advantage of the business environment in mutual understanding with the communities which we live and trade in.

The basic principle in economics - which is also something they teach in every business school, is that where there's a market there is a demand and supply phenomenon. We see people entering into legitimate business enterprises and becoming successful

in that respect; but sadly they also get attacked by thugs and business rivals.

The sustainable business model practices that have been developed by Somalis is a source of income to many and in fact it contributes to local employment and other entrepreneurial spin-offs.

Somali traders provide services to local communities in many informal sectors throughout South Africa which are mostly in the rural areas. In these areas there are no proper roads and infrastructure and many people can't afford to travel to the town or city to buy goods and services.

The contribution of Somali entrepreneurs in providing such services should be better understood. This could also lead to the communities opposing the violence, looting of shops and thuggery directed against the Somalis.

To bring about greater friendship and better relations between the Somalis and the local communities amongst whom they live, work and trade, I suggest the following way forward.

## Way Forward

One possible way in which to achieve socio-economic integration

between these traders (immigrants) and the host society is to create sustainable employment and entrepreneurial spin-offs through entrepreneurship partnerships and the transfer of entrepreneurial skills for the unemployed, especially the youth. This can be done by helping them set up new SMMEs and re-activating failed businesses (particularly in disadvantaged areas).

The conflict between South Africans and African immigrants can be found in the scramble for market opportunities. South Africans argue that foreigners are undermining their businesses and also that they sell products below the market value in various places.

This conflict can be resolved by an arrangement of sorts (a union or an association) in which immigrants and locals can have tea around a table and put their problems on the table. They can try to understand each other better. They can form partnerships and discuss ways forward in terms of business practices; and perhaps even a discussion paper and some formal proposals can come out of such meetings. The many differences can surely be solved and ideas can be turned into reality in as far as this conflict is concerned. Such a union can provide a solution.

In practical terms, how will these proposals be implemented? This can be done by pairing the unemployed youth with entrepreneurial skilled people/businesses starting from our community (Somali Traders), for the benefit of creating/sustaining/scaling entrepreneurship and employment opportunities through partnerships and apprenticeships.

Another possible way forward is through media exposure and engaging more broadly with complaints and misleading and inaccurate beliefs articulated from the points of view of the different communities concerned. The root of the problem lies in lack of understanding and sympathy for each other's difficulties. ■

The Editor welcomes unsolicited submissions to the Readers' Forum and encourages those who would like to discuss or debate contentious issues to use this space. Please keep word count to no more than 800 words and note that some pieces might be edited for length. Send your contribution to: editor@thethinker.co.za.

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