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FOR THOUGHT LEADERS

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE APRM

Can Africa achieve Accountability and Good Governance?

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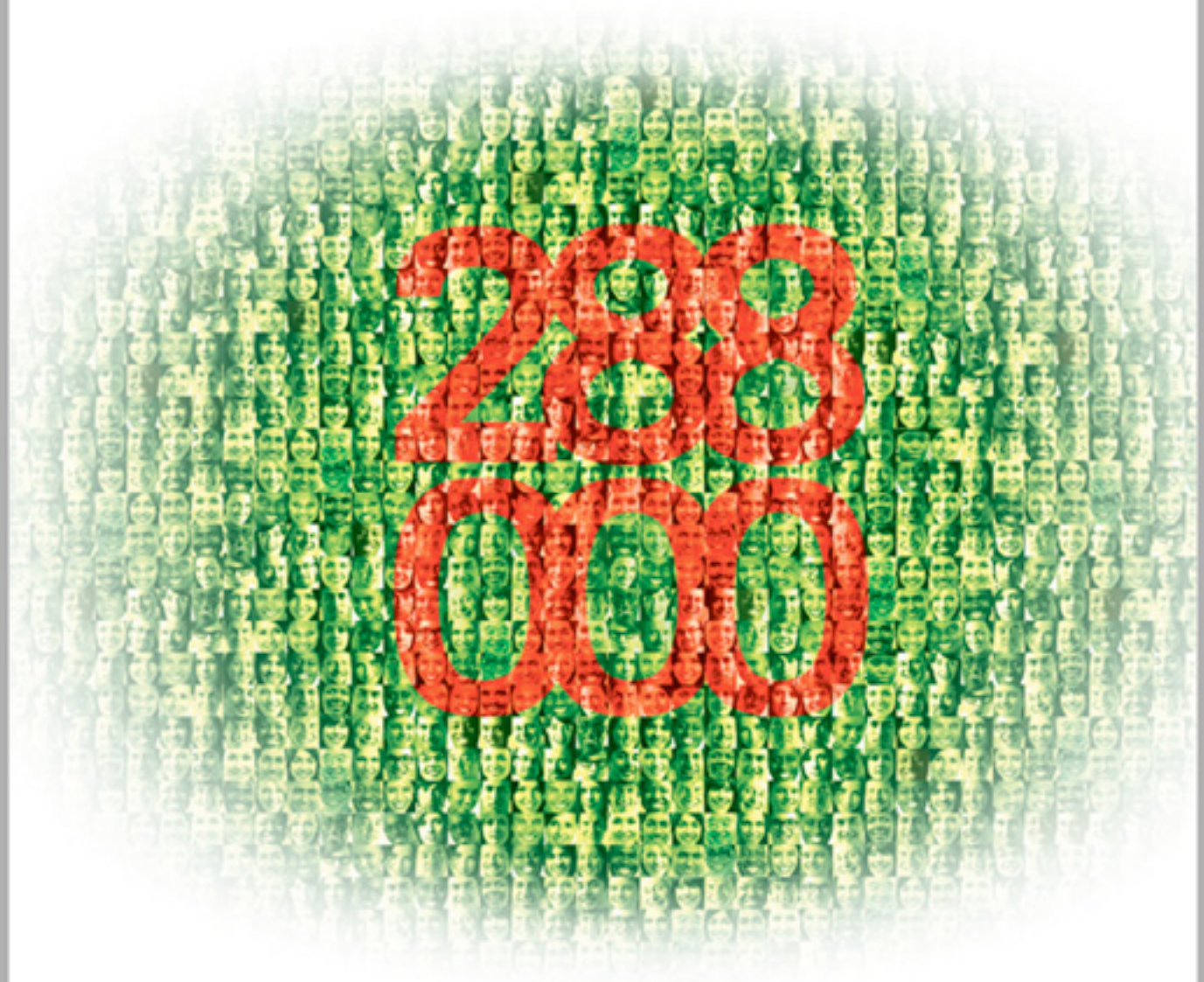
Lindiwe Sisulu on Peer Review and the Legacy of Learning from Each Other Garth le Pere on Democracy, Electoral Governance and Gender in Southern Africa Chris Landsberg on Afro-governance 10 Years Later Sall and Segobye on Governance, Accountability: Issues Confronting Public and Private Sectors in Africa Ayanda Dlodlo on Celebrating Ten Years of African Peer Review Mechanism in South Africa Ademola Araoye on The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in the Context of the African Renaissance

NEW JOBS OVER THE NEXT 7 YEARS



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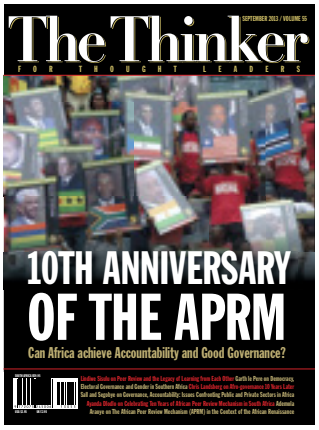


On the Cover:

Former African leaders at an AU Summit.

Image courtesy of DIRCO

ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

The 10th Anniversary of the APRM

The active involvement of working people in urban and rural areas in decision making, policy formulation as well as implementation is critical in ensuring the accountability and good governance of those exercising power. To achieve these objectives, in Africa, requires the growth and development of progressive political parties/formations, trade unions, NGOs and community based organisations.

In this issue of *The Thinker* we mark the 10th abniversray of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and its interaction and inter-connectedness with NEPAD.

Minister Lindiwe Sisulu and Deputy Minister Ayanda Dlodlo, of Public Service and Administration, both re-iterate the deep commitment of the South African government to the process and continued viability of the APRM.

Ademola Araoye, as well as Alioune Sall and Alinah Segobye draw our attention to the weakness of the political leadership as well as the state. Ademola writes: "The state system as currently configured poses a serious constraint to the attainment of the goals of the APRM. It is unable to transcend the narrow confines of the constricted spaces where the people are hamstrung, preventing meaningful participation in national policy formulation and developmental processes." Sall and Segobye call for a "new compact or social contract between the state, private sector and citizenry. A new engagement is critical if the basic tenets of a developmental state and developmental society are to be understood by all the key players. In particular, citizens must liberate themselves from being mere consumers and passive players in the political economy of development to realising their capabilities and value-adding potential to the development process."

Zwelethu Madasa writes on the important role that the Pan-African parliament (PAP) has to play now and in the future in bringing about African unity, integration, accountability and good governance. "The PAP is expected to work to close the gap of legitimacy and credibility that many leaders managing the post-colonial independent state permitted to grow. The PAP should mobilise the people and their grassroots organisations to become involved in the management of national resources in all member states of the AU in order to ensure a people-centred and driven continent."

> "All the authors also point to the fundamental weakness of the APRM, NEPAD, the AU and other institutions relying on donor funding from the more affluent West. This is an issue and challenge that has to be addressed with a sense of urgency."

In addition, as Garth le Pere points out, women have to contend with triple oppression based on race, class and gender and they continue to "carry the yoke of disadvantage with regard to a range of socio-economic and human development indicators where Southern Africa fares particularly badly. Moreover, women bear the brunt of the increasing feminisation of poverty across the region". Miyelani Mkhabela expresses concern about the pernicious role played by institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF as well as western multinational corporations.

All the authors also point to the fundamental weakness of the APRM, NEPAD, the AU and other institutions relying on donor funding from the more affluent West. This is an issue and challenge that has to be addressed with a sense of urgency.

It is incumbent on all those who are committed to African unity, integration, people-centred development, accountability and good governance to heed Chris Landsberg's warning. He writes: "Finally, it is important to end on a cautionary note here. In spite of the continent's serious efforts in the post-Cold War period to put in place the measures that would see the continent moving towards and consolidating an African society of states, there exists in Africa a very serious policy-to-implementation crisis – a gap between stated policy and commitments on the one hand, and the operationalisation of values and instruments on the other. The implementation of policy ideas

and initiatives, turning policy into tangible outcomes, should henceforth enjoy priority."

Egypt: The Crisis Deepens

On June 30, 2013, Egypt was rocked by mass protests, involving millions, against the policies, behaviour and actions of the government of Morsi and the Muslim brotherhood.

However, the powerful Egyptian military, police and other security agencies used those mass demonstrations and protests as a pretext to launch an unacceptable and unjustifiable coup d'état.

Since that illegal usurpation of power millions of supporters of the Morsi government staged peaceful protests in Cairo and other parts of Egypt. Instead of negotiating with the Muslim brotherhood and releasing Morsi and the other political prisoners the army used unprecedented force and violence. By the middle of August nearly one thousand Egyptians had been massacred.

The violent, murderous action has been condemned by the AU, individual African countries, the EU and the USA. But the condemnation of the US administration is not matched by action. It continues to bankroll the Egyptian military to the tune of billions of rands and refuses to condemn the illegal action of the military as a coup d'état.

"The events in Egypt over the past few weeks, including the killing of 25 police officers, have had a profound negative impact upon the continent, the Middle East and the national liberation struggle of the Palestinians."

It is worth noting that the South African government condemned the coup as well as the violent crackdown. In a press release dated 15 August 2013, it said, "The South African Government categorically condemns the violence used by the Egyptian security forces to disperse the pro-democracy demonstrators in Cairo and elsewhere in Egypt yesterday. The tragic loss of Egyptian lives takes Egypt further away from the democratic aspirations as expressed by the millions of Egyptian voters last year. The South African Government calls on the Egyptian authorities to exercise utmost restraint in dealing with peaceful protests."

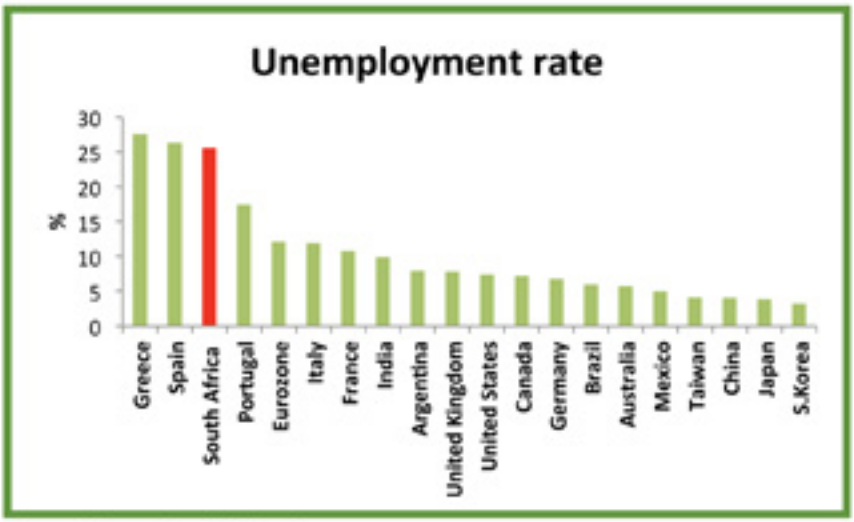
The events in Egypt over the past few weeks, including the killing of 25 police officers, have had a profound negative impact upon the continent, the Middle East and the national liberation struggle of the Palestinians. Progressive forces in Africa, the Middle East and the world should come out in full support for the return of the democratically elected government of Egypt, peaceful negotiations between the warring parties; and for new free, fair and peaceful elections. ■

Egyptian police are on the alert against demonstrators in downtown in Cairo

Structural Unemployment in South Africa

One of the most, if not the most, pressing issue collectively facing South African citizens is the country's unemployment crisis.

An economy that is forced to consider the possibility of tightening monetary policy while the unemployment rate hovers around 25% is one that clearly requires urgent structural reforms. This is a widely held view, but too often the public discussion ends at this point.



Source : Oasis research using Bloomberg.

The tension that exists between South African business and labour, to use the crude categorisations, is one that may be explained by two opposing forces. On one side of the employment contract, labour aims to maximise the wage rate in order to keep up with and beat the cost of living, as far as is possible. On the other side, business aims to adjust the wage rate to accurately reflect the marginal productivity of the employable labour force, in order to maximise profits.

Following the preceding logic, there exist a number of avenues through which South Africans can create a more favourable economic situation. For example, the decades of Chinese dominance in manufacturing industries were partially explained by a high 'social wage'. Employers have historically been able to pay Chinese labourers less than their international counterparts due in part to the successful implementation of the migrant labour system. Well-developed rural areas with strong subsistence farming traditions have historically allowed Chinese families to contain the effects of food price inflation, so that wages are stretched far less than otherwise would be the case. South Africa, unfortunately, has been denied the opportunity to pragmatically follow this particular route. The Apartheid homeland system significantly damaged what subsistence farming traditions already existed in the country. That being said, the social wage can be raised in a variety of other ways. Spatial distortions in South Africa have led to abnormally high transport costs, especially at the lower end of the income spectrum. A well-targeted transport sector reform programme will go a long way to helping the most desperate of our country's job seekers. Another critical issue facing the poorest of the poor is the rate at which energy and utility costs have been increasing. These are issues that sit largely at the door of government and its agencies.

A more neglected aspect of the social wage falls to South Africa's corporate sector. Anti-competitive behaviour and in many cases white-collar criminality have been revealed within local industries on many occasions over the past decade. The impact on the consumer, already under the stress of tightening credit conditions, is unhelpful to say the least. Recent contractor mishaps during the construction of the Medupi electric power plant are a prime example of this, putting the entire economy at risk. In other cases, blatantly anti-social collusion in the heavy construction and bread sectors have significantly eroded the disposable income of the average South African, unnecessarily hampering domestic demand.

While measures to cut the cost of living and raise the social wage will allow labour to tolerate slower nominal wage growth, a boost to average productivity in South Africa will surely also form an

integral part of any long term improvement in our labour market. The skills shortage in many critical professions, ranging from engineering to plumbing and accounting, will need to be addressed before South Africa can raise its effective potential GDP growth rate. Although the link between educational attainment and the probability of employment is still debated amongst developmental economists, there is more compelling evidence suggesting that the wage returns on education (at least for those who have secured employment) are both positive and high.

Higher income to those who manage to advance their education could create larger and less credit-driven domestic markets, sustainably boosting the opportunities for other employment. But the drastic improvement in educational attainment that this requires will have to be driven by a fundamental shift in household and corporate attitudes. Rather than relying exclusively on teachers for education, parents of children could significantly improve future chances by regularly exposing their young ones to reading, writing, and numeracy early on. Fostering a national culture of discipline throughout school years will maximise the chances of gaining university entrance as well, compounding the effects of positive early intervention. On-the-job training and mentorships should also play a far greater role in South Africa's work environment. The long term organisational benefits of this kind of skills transfer will improve sustainability and ultimately growth.

Changes such as these could substantially benefit the current and future generations of South Africans. The intensity of recent labour disputes clarifies the urgency with which structural changes need to be made. All parties should be held accountable for their role in our country's development. ■

All contributing analysts write in their personal capacity

Kayum Ahmed was appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the South African Human Rights Commission in August 2010. Kayum holds five degrees and three post-graduate diplomas including a Master's in International Law (LLM), and a Master's in Arts (MA). Kayum is a recipient of various awards, including the Nelson Mandela Scholarship, Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship, United States Congressional Fellowship, Aspen Institute Africa Leadership Initiative Fellowship, and the *Mail & Guardian*'s Top 200 Young South Africans Award.

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Lindiwe Nonceba Sisulu is the Minister of Public Service and Administration. She is a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC as well as its National Working Committee. Sisulu holds an MA and MPhil degrees in History from the Centre for Southern African Studies, University of York. Prior to her appointment as Minister of Public Service and Administration, she was Deputy Minister of Home Affairs from 1996 to 2001; Minister of Intelligence from 24 January 2001 to 28 April 2004; Minister of Housing from 29 April 2004 to 10 May 2009; and Minister of Defence and Military Veterans of the Republic of South Africa from 11 May 2009 to 12 June 2012.

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Peer review and the legacy of learning from each other

The review process presents an excellent opportunity for African states to generate positive information and embrace transparency in order to counter the excessive perception of political risk in Africa.

By Lindiwe Sisulu

To understand the value of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) process for South Africa it is important to get a sense of the broader African agenda for the APRM. South Africa's foreign policy is premised on playing a central role in Africa's renewal and accelerated economic growth. That is why South Africa takes a keen interest in and actively participates in the APRM process. It is fundamentally about the deepening of democracy and political stability thus creating an enabling environment for economic growth and development.

The APRM was a process painstakingly negotiated by African leaders concerned at Africa's deteriorating economic prospects and its unforgivable marginalisation in the global economic system. Quite clearly the philosophy underpinning the setting up of the peer review mechanism is the need to find a political environment which guarantees human rights and the observance of the rule of law; and to ensure high standards of probity and accountability, particularly on the part of those who hold public office.

On the occasion of its crucial 10th Anniversary we can say with confidence that the APRM has silenced pessimists who wrote it off as yet another dream that would fade away. After ten years of a sustained peer review implementation, we are able to reflect on the significance of this knowledge intensive yet intimately consultative process. At the handover of South Africa's first Country Self-Assessment, former President Thabo Mbeki used the opportunity to reiterate what has become peer review's *raison d'être* that African countries should learn from each other instead of so often looking north for answers to challenges that are essentially African in nature.

Furthermore the Focal Point Chairperson at that time, former Minister of Public Service & Administration Fraser-Moleketi, was categorical in insisting that the key objective of peer review was "to help Africans help themselves". She reflected further, for good measure, that this process (APRM) would help "to show ourselves and the world that we are not part of those whose mindset assumes that we need external assistance in order to grow."

There are many ways the 'learning from each other' edict can be realised. If it is to be reasonably expected that the peer review process will result in common rules, as indeed former President Mbeki seem to suggest, then the fear of breaching such rules should be motivation enough to refrain from particular acts of transgression. The expectation is that the negative default like shaming and naming would discourage member states from diverting from the universal norms of accountability and good governance. One such motivation is the danger of social stigma that comes with an open and unashamed breach of common

rules. The challenge is to put in place monitoring and evaluation systems to report such transgressions.

The peer review process is specifically tooled to install benchmarks and discursively clarify the borderline between acceptable and inappropriate behaviour. This innovative interaction pushes participating member states by means of repeated interaction and "socialisation", eventually to reshape their identities and preferences so that they become supporters of the normative tradition of good governance. More importantly for the peer review exercise, the reviewed states can be expected to avoid being shamed and to this extent forestall looming or actual shaming - which may constitute a particularly powerful compliance tool.

The African peer review process does not seek to elicit compliance through penalties, fines or other forms of sanctions. The defining element in the African peer review's voluntarism lies in the fact that it is a soft compliance instrument that seeks to induce or stabilise compliant behaviour among the participating states. In this scheme of things the material sanctioning or punishment of transgressors is ruled out. In other words, the soft instruments architect seeks to mould behaviour by changing the orientation of peer review candidates instead of steering it through coercion and hierarchical order.

The common assumption is that states through continuous peer dialogue agree to a redefinition of interests and identities. African states are expected to take it as a moral obligation to comply with what is voluntarily negotiated and where state sovereignty is to some extent surrendered as it is in their own interest to do so.

Peer review presupposes a more issue-specific process leading to internalisation of a particular set of cognitive and normative ideas. The learning from each other imperative is dependent on the trustworthiness and reliability of states as future cooperation partners which in itself calls into question the past reputation on the reviewed state. It is in this vein that the former focal point chairperson noted that the achievements of South Africa would be measured against the legacy of apartheid. What this introspective approach means is that a reputation for blatant and repeated violation of agreed norms in the past will lead to rocky future cooperation. This approach does however beg the question as to whether a non-compliant state will forego future cooperation opportunities.

The peer review process is made the easier by the non-adversarial nature of the engagement that encourages participating states to volunteer information without fear of condemnation or other coercive measures. It is expected that the review process will inspire member states to seek to improve even in areas in which they have clearly excelled. With regard to the South African process, for example, the first two reports have been judged to convey some best practices in areas such as: the emergence of an enabling political and economic environment conducive to improving social cohesion and economic growth, transformation and empowerment. These are benchmarks which other African countries can and should emulate or what former Eminent Person for South Africa, Professor Adedeji calls intra-African technical proficiency.

> "One such motivation is the danger of social stigma that comes with an open and unashamed breach of common rules. The challenge is to put in place monitoring and evaluation systems to report such transgressions."

Africa, more than any other continent, has been the recipient of the worst form of publicity, particularly in the western media. The review process presents an excellent opportunity for African states to generate positive information and embrace transparency in order to counter the excessive perception of political risk in Africa. Often the lack of credibility comes from ignorance. Greater visibility for African realities would avoid the absurd scenario where when something happens in the north of Africa it must and often does carry completely unjustified ripple effects in the southern hemisphere. The peer review exercise may also play the role of a dispute settlement mechanism, by encouraging dialogue among states, and thus helping to clarify their positions on contested terrain. This intervention should help to preserve peace and promote the pacific settlement of inter-state disputes on the African continent.

The value of peer pressure for national policymakers to follow best practice resides in the reality that it is likely to create more standardised norms. Peer reviews have enhanced competition for better macroeconomic and trade policies among the Organisation for Economic and Cooperation Development (OECD) members. Similar benchmarking has begun with respect to structural policies, especially those relating to the regulatory framework. The complexity implicit in such vast policy shifts renders them more susceptible to procrastination, and the same problem has been observed in the European Union (EU). This hinders institutional change and makes corporate and political governance more difficult.

The time is ripe for creative ways and means to improve African governance systems in order to create a climate conducive to attracting both domestic and foreign capital to meet the challenges and demands of poverty, underdevelopment and unemployment, and to give a much needed boost to economic growth and development on the continent. Peer review is one effort among many interventions that are needed. This is a process whose net worth in terms of its potential impact on governance processes in Africa is considerable. It is in this sense that the APRM intervention has succeeded in yielding substantial confidence building prospects for Africa. ■

Democracy, electoral governance and gender in Southern Africa

Shallow political participation outside elections and the absence of regime accountability often leads to a sense of collective frustration about what democracy can deliver.

By Garth le Pere

The spectre of controversy around the recent elections in Zimbabwe again raises critical questions about the state of governance and democracy in Southern Africa. The challenges facing the region in respect of democratisation and elections become starker when seen against the backdrop of a very diverse socio-cultural and political landscape with distinct colonial and historical lineages. These have profoundly influenced the political evolution of the mostly dominant- and single-party post-colonial systems. This is particularly significant in those countries grappling with the ambiguities and contradictions of national liberation struggles which inaugurated freedom and independence; and it remains a unique feature of the region.

Progress has been registered in several key performance areas. There is fairly strong support and popular endorsement for democracy and political pluralism if elections are used as a barometer. While still nascent and often lacking in sound organisation, there are emergent and increasingly vocal nationally-based civil societies which are complemented by other functional regional networks representing women, trade unions, NGOs, and youth or focusing on thematic issues such as free and fair elections, anti-corruption, a free media, and upholding human rights. There has also been a gradual assertion of institutional independence by bodies such as parliaments, electoral commissions, and the judiciary. In many countries, they have asserted their constitutional autonomy by challenging the executive abuse of power. However, great divergences in governance and democratisation challenges remain, largely due to the peculiar historical trajectories and political features of the countries concerned. The divergences reflect uneven levels of socio-economic development, not least with regard to the heritage of colonialism which yielded very different paths of transition as well as diverse post-colonial institutional arrangements and political cultures.

In the contemporary era, connections among the region's people were mainly fostered by the region-wide migrant labour system, with South Africa's mining and agriculture sectors forming its epicentre. With the discovery of gold and diamonds in South Africa in the late 19th century, demand for unskilled labour brought workers from the region to these burgeoning sectors. This resulted in a cross-fertilisation of languages, religions, and cultures across national boundaries. Liberation struggles also helped this interaction, especially during the 1970s and 1980s, when independent countries came together under the banner of the Frontline States in an effort to promote nascent forms of integration and solidarity as well as to isolate apartheid South Africa.

Generally, most countries have taken some substantive but mostly procedural steps towards embedding democracy; however, the degree to which democracy has actually taken root varies widely. This reflects the divergent experiences of how democratic transitions have been managed and the extent to which these are being consolidated in the often rough, contested, and highly malleable dynamics between state and society. We also have to recognise the strong military culture in the region where, for example, some liberation movements such as the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), Namibia's South West Africa Peoples' Organisation (SWAPO), Mozambique's Liberation Front (FRELIMO), and the Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) had built large armies while in South Africa, the ruling African National Congress (ANC) inherited quite a formidable apartheid military machine. These, together with other security sectors, have remained at

the centre of the state - thus requiring large expenditures.

The narrative of liberation and the nature of post-colonial contestation for power in Southern Africa have produced 'fourth wave' type regimes where procedural forms of democracy co-exist with deeply embedded authoritarian practices and an often autocratic style of politics. As is the case in much of Africa, there is a growing incidence of hybrid regimes in the region which are neither outright autocracies nor consolidating democracies. Other than what are considered the maturing democracies of Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa, regimes in the region exist in a political grey zone.

The Dynamics of Electoral Governance and Competitive Party Politics

Between 1989 and 2012, there have been over 60 national electoral processes in the region. The more regular conduct of elections has been accompanied by frameworks, principles, and guidelines for the conduct of elections by regional inter-governmental and non-governmental bodies. These include the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (2004); the SADC-Parliamentary Forum Norms and Standards for Elections (2001); and the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa/Electoral Commissions Forum's Principles for Election Management, Monitoring, and Observation (2003), all of which complement or draw their inspiration from AU charters.

In a general environment of tension-bound and highly charged politics, electoral contests tend to be fractious and intense as we have seen in Zimbabwe's last three elections in 2003, 2008, and 2013. As with the rest of Africa, contests tend to favour incumbents and ruling political parties even if the electoral climate has become more free and fair for the most part. The type of electoral system takes on great significance in influencing and determining the behaviour of political parties, the electorate, electoral management bodies, civil society organisations, and candidates for political office.

Electoral systems in the region have been categorised into three types. The first is first-past-the-post (FPTP) which is based on the British electoral tradition and has been adopted by Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Malawi. In the second category are those countries that have chosen proportional representation (PR) systems such as Mozambique, Angola and South Africa. What is interesting about these countries is that they have all emerged from the national liberation struggles to embrace the PR system as a means not only of ensuring political inclusivity but also as part of a process aimed at healing the divisions of the past. The last category is mixed electoral systems such as Lesotho's. Whatever the system, each has its own shortcomings but yet each exercises a profound effect on the extent to which non-ruling political parties enjoy representation, how responsive elected officials might be, and whether women, youth and other marginalised social groups are accommodated in the political process.

> "Generally, most countries have taken some substantive but mostly procedural steps towards embedding democracy; however, the degree to which democracy has actually taken root varies widely."

The narrative of liberation was very much predicated on the capture of state power as was the more peaceful transfers that occurred in other countries. However, the parties of liberation adopted a distinctive culture that drew on hierarchy and Leninist ideas of vanguard leadership and democratic centralism. The ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe is often referred to as the archetype of these practices. Elsewhere in the region where colonial powers abandoned the 'burden of empire' without much ado, embryonic nationalist-type movements found a relatively easy path towards assuming state power but opened these countries to post-colonial domination by charismatic leadership, thus paving the way for the emergence of figures such as Kenneth Kaunda and Hastings Banda under the mantle of single parties.

Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe share common liberation struggle traditions. The exceptional history of struggle against racial autocracy in South Africa, the pacted nature of its transition, and the ANC's avowed commitment to non-racialism and non-sexism have all helped to shape the terrain of post-liberation democratisation. This has provided the basis for a relatively stable and consolidating democracy although worrisome patterns are emerging that include poor governance, corruption, and the mismanagement of resources. South Africa's universally acclaimed constitution not only determines electoral, institutional, and government arrangements and practices but is also an expression of a 'liberation-transition-reconciliation' culture that has shaped the country's democratic foundations.

Countries such as Lesotho, Malawi, and Zambia all attained independence from Britain by peaceful transfers of power but they also share a dominant or single party ethos. For example, Lesotho's post-colonial history since independence in 1966 has been significantly influenced by how its first-past-the-post elections have been conducted. Perennial allegations of fraud together with deeply embedded levels of voter discontent have provided a volatile mix of political turbulence and instability. A mixed member proportional system introduced in 2001 has not done much to ameliorate this state of affairs.

Malawi endured three decades of autocratic single party-rule under Hastings Banda's dominant Malawi Congress Party (MCP) before multi-party politics was introduced in 1993. The mushrooming and institutionalisation of parties (by 2008 there were 40) faces its own hurdles related to leadership problems, personalisation of power, fragmentation and factionalism, and resource constraints. Although nominally a multi-party system since independence in 1964, Zambia has

become an institutionalised one-party state similar to Malawi. However, despite this culture as well as the adoption of a formalised multi-party dispensation in 1991, opportunistic party formations have taken root mainly inspired by ethnic considerations. Ironically, this pattern was a harbinger of changeovers in political power, thereby enabling Michael Sata's Patriotic Front victory.

Most countries have formally-constituted election management bodies (EMBs) to ensure that elections and their conduct are independent, impartial, professional, free and fair. However, in practice this is often compromised by how members of EMBs are nominated and in some instances, there is evidence of political manipulation in the appointment of persons who are seen as partisan; the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission continues to suffer from this stigma. How EMBs are financed is another matter that impairs their efficacy and efficiency; whether by government and/or international donors they will still be vulnerable to the vagaries of the politics of the day. Most rely on the national fiscus but Lesotho, Zambia, Mozambique, and Malawi are mostly reliant on foreign donors. When electoral outcomes become the source of conflict or violence, it more often than not casts a shadow on the autonomy of EMBs so that they are seen to be subject to undue political influence and interference.

The burdens that EMBs face are further exacerbated by their capacity problems relating to controversial issues such as the setting of election dates, managing voters' rolls and registration processes, and promoting voters' education. Typically EMBs find themselves with insufficient time to prepare voters' rolls and inadequate logistics and supply-chain measures in what are often arbitrary announcements of election dates. Even legislative guidelines linking election dates to the dissolution of parliament are mainly observed in the breach. This situation is compounded by problematic and cumbersome voters' registration procedures, which typically includes insufficient registration materials, inadequate time for the process to be completed, lack of identification documents, and poor technical quality of voters' roll and voters' cards. However, putting in place permanent electronic voter's rolls, as has been done in Zambia, does help to obviate a big part of this problem.

In some countries, there are also low levels of registration and voting interest among youth and women. This points to inadequacies in the quality and accessibility of civic and voter education which is mainly the responsibility of EMBs, often assisted by civil society organisations (except in the case of Zimbabwe where such activity is not permitted). There are asymmetries in voter education as well between urban and rural areas; and the role played by donors in voters' education remains a controversial bone of contention, especially in countries where this role is prominent such as Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi, and Zambia.

> "The parties of liberation adopted a distinctive culture that drew on hierarchy and Leninist ideas of vanguard leadership and democratic centralism."

Most EMBs derive their authority and functions from constitutional and legislative mandates. It is significant that ruling regimes have invested considerable effort and resources in establishing electoral machineries that mostly conform to the accepted guidelines, standards, and norms defined by SADC. It is particularly noteworthy that liberation-inspired electoral systems have been quite elaborate as a tool for addressing the exigencies of nation-building and national reconciliation. In Angola, for example, there is a 10 member Independent National Electoral Commission (CNE) set up in 2005 which governs and supervises all election activities and operations. The CNE is also responsible for voter and civic education but civil society groups such as the Electoral Platform are also drawn into this process. A detailed code of conduct is also in place for regulating the behaviour of political parties, candidates, the CNE, the media, electoral officers, security personnel, voters, observers, party agents, religious and traditional institutions, and civil society. Mozambique's CNE, set up in 2007, is very similar in structure and function while in South Africa, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) which was established in 1993, has had a formative and influential role in shaping the country's electoral landscape. Its work has been crucial, given the challenges of making a closed-list proportional system operational and effective and ensuring that the country's complex transition remains faithful to its democratic and constitutional charter.

Electoral violence, conflict and disputes tend to be most intractable and difficult to manage across the region such as in Malawi, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe where deep social and political cleavages exist. This is a consequence of weak political institutions, divisive personality politics, and deeply polarised societies. As a result, disputes and conflict relating to electoral processes have increasingly been subject to mediation, arbitration, and conciliation and concerted attempts have been made to strengthen and improve the roles of political parties, civil society, parliaments, and judiciaries in ensuring accountability, transparency, and fairness in elections.

The Role of Women and Gender Dynamics

In several countries, most notably Malawi, Lesotho, and Zambia, women make up more than half the population but remain seriously under-represented at almost all levels of decision-making and national political life as well as in the formal economy and leadership positions in government and society. In those countries where settler colonialism prevailed, women had to contend with triple oppression based on race, class, and gender. Nevertheless, even independence has not changed this oppressive legacy and women still carry the yoke of disadvantage with regard

to a range of socio-economic and human development indicators where Southern Africa fares particularly badly. Moreover, women bear the brunt of the increasing feminisation of poverty across the region which has been exacerbated by the pernicious effects of decades of austerity measures. They further suffer from discrimination in the systems of land tenure and customary law and have to confront the spectre of violence in their daily lives. As the worst affected region on the continent, women have become the first-line victims of the HIV/Aids pandemic. The female figures of those living with HIV as a proportion of the total is alarming: 61 per cent in Angola; 58 percent in Lesotho; 60 per cent in Mozambique; and 59 per cent in South Africa.

Only Angola, South Africa, and Mozambique have registered significant progress in political representation of woman in national legislatures. As such, 30 per cent is widely considered to represent the critical mass necessary to promote the recruitment of more women as officeholders as well as for developing more legal instruments and institutional frameworks that are beneficial to women. The figures are instructive for these countries: Angola has 38.6 per cent; South Africa 42.7 per cent; and Mozambique 39.2 per cent. At the other extreme are countries that lag behind including Lesotho 22.9 per cent; and Zambia 15.2 per cent. There are several countries which also fare reasonably well as far as women representation in cabinet positions is concerned: Angola has 25.7 per cent; South Africa 41.2 per cent; Lesotho 31.6 per cent; and Mozambique 32.1 per cent. In South Africa the ANC has adopted a 50 per cent gender quota for national elections and in Mozambique a 30 percent minimum female quota has been adopted by FRELIMO.

In terms of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (adopted in 2008), there have been general improvements in constitutional provisions for gender equality and for entrenching good practices. Many countries have reached gender parity in primary and secondary education and in several countries such as South Africa there are more women than men in tertiary institutions. There are signs that women's participation in the economy and gender parity in the private sector are becoming more meaningful and are being taken more seriously on the basis of evidence from a regional gender budgeting network run by the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network. The representation of women in security services is also improving.

> "Women still carry the yoke of disadvantage with regard to a range of socio-economic and human development indicators where Southern Africa fares particularly badly. Moreover, women bear the brunt of the increasing feminisation of poverty across the region."

However, on the negative side, there are still harmful customary practices in place that undermine women's rights such as the vulnerability of widows to highly discriminatory property dispossession. Women still struggle to gain access to credit and continue to be the major players in informal economic activity. They have smaller land holdings than men and there are huge income disparities between men and women across the region; in South Africa the per capita income of women is 45 per cent that of men. Women still have great difficulty in controlling decisions relating to their lives and bodies; choice of termination of pregnancy is fully legal only in South Africa. And despite provisions for sexual and reproductive health and the existence of policy frameworks to support these, contraceptive usage is highly variable: 6 per cent in Angola; 17 per cent in Mozambique; 37 per cent in Lesotho; 30 per cent in Zambia; and 65 per cent in South Africa. There is an escalation of gender violence in spite of concerted campaigns. This has been exacerbated by trafficking in women and girls and a rise in sexual and gender-based violence in schools.

Conclusion

Overall the region has made great strides in embedding the procedural aspects of democracy through regular and mostly free and fair elections which certainly have brought greater numbers of women and youth into the political arena. However, the substance of democracy remains shallow and poorly articulated across national life since many regimes are trapped in the 'politics of survival'. The imperatives of regime stability and security trump the development of legitimate and inclusive polities while the politics of patronage continue to undermine the democratic social contract.

The region is witnessing an increasing hybridisation of transition politics which has several features. Firstly, there is shallow political participation outside elections and the absence of regime accountability often leads to a sense of collective frustration about what democracy can deliver. Secondly, the normative rules of the democratic game are contested, with formal and informal institutions co-existing side by side. The rule of law, for the most part, is applied unevenly, thereby undermining judicial independence and constitutionality. Thirdly, neo-patrimonial practices and high levels of corruption continue to compromise the very neutrality of public power and furthermore undermine public confidence in elections and elected representatives. Fourthly, the capacity of the state is severely constrained in service delivery and is typically overwhelmed by new demands brought about by democratic pressures for greater accountability. Finally, democratic reversals have been induced by political elites themselves, particularly where power becomes personalised or party dominance is embedded in the political system.

If these challenges are not addressed with a sense of urgency, the region will continue to suffer from the fallacy of electoralism: elections on their own do not guarantee democracy; neither do they ensure gender equity. ■

THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM (APRM)

Afro-governance 10 Years later

Geraldine Fraser-Molekti, Thabo Mbeki and Professor Adebayo Adedji

The APRM is a unique governance promotion tool which se,,s to coax leaders in the direction of good and democratic governance through mutual learning, dialogue and negotiations.

By Chris Landsberg

Some ten years ago, African initiatives to establish a new continental regime based on the pillars of peace and security, governance and stability, development, and co-operation were in full swing. A group of African leaders, including Thabo Mbeki, Olusegun Obasanjo, Joachim Chissano, Meles Zanawi, John Kuofor, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Adoulaye Wade, Benjamin Mkapa, Pedro Peres and others were in the forefront of efforts to craft this new continental order. Afro-governance strategies were key for these leaders. It should be remembered during the Cold War decades of proxy wars and east-West tensions, "democratic governance" and "good governance" were not high on the agendas of the superpowers. Indeed, Africa had an ambivalent relationship with democratic governance for more than 50 years.

The decade before the end of the Cold War saw Africans finding themselves in the grip of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPS) and tied aid, induced by the Washington Consensus, followed by World Bank induced notions of "good governance" in the 1990s, which had as its aim the "hollowing out of the state" and making the world safe for capitalist development.

African leaders mentioned above, and at other institutions like the Africa Group at the United Nations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and of course the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) realised the need to take ownership and craft their own agendas, lest such agendas and projects be imposed on them. It was imperative for them to promote their own versions of "good governance". As these leaders developed a new continental architecture, spearheaded by the successor to the OAU, the African Union (AU), they realised the importance of developing "a common governance ethos within the AU". They set out to define their own Agenda, which came to be known as the "African Agenda". Former Mozambican president, and key member of the new African coalition, Joaquim Chissano reminds us that:

"The African continent and many developing countries have for the past two decades been involved in the democratisation process, as democracy is gradually being accepted as the political ideology that can better inform internal and external socio-political and economic relations as a vector for state development"[1].

What is key about Chissano's point is that Africans took responsibility for governance promotion, and did not need encouragement and prodding from outsiders; they realised what their obligations were.

Enter the APRM!

In response to the post-Cold War realities and heightened Western triumphalism, and determined to reclaim their agency and voice in world Affairs, African leaders were instrumental in setting up an African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to promote democratic conduct in Africa[2]. Thabo Mbeki's colleagues singled him out for his *primus inter pares* and innovative role he played in the setting up, not just of the APRM, but the broader continental regime. In 2008, for example, the APRM Panel of Eminent Persons commended "President Thabo Mbeki for his commitment to NEPAD and the APRM processes at both national and continental levels", and recognised his "tireless commitment to

promoting peace and security on the continent and the key role played by South Africa in hosting the NEPAD and APRM Secretariat"[3].

The APRM is a unique governance promotion tool which seeks to coax leaders in the direction of good and democratic governance through mutual learning, dialogue and negotiations. The establishment in 2003 of the APRM was an example of a new leadership dynamism on the continent. With the establishment of this instrument, Africans sought in part to rid themselves from the yokes of colonial rule and white minority domination. South Africa and some of its African partners assumed key roles in negotiating and promoting a new political normative framework for the continent that included a governance and democratisation regime. The promotion of "good governance" in a non-confrontational fashion, or in a quiet diplomatic manner, occupied a central position in the emerging African Agenda. Africa wished to engage the industrialised and other powers on the basis not of neo-colonialism or neo-patrimonialism but genuine partnership based on the principles of mutual accountability and mutual responsibility.

Under the ethos of their African Agenda strategies, the "new" Africans promoted a policy which was based on the view that "there is need to develop a common governance ethos within the AU, which would create a conducive environment for the AU Government, when the latter is established". African Agenda policies promoted adherence to democratic benchmarks and governance indicators set up by Africans and for Africans in order to benefit from the renewed focus on African ownership. It had for example been instrumental in setting up the APRM to promote democratic conduct in Africa[4]. Given its commitment to democratisation as part of its Africa policy strategies, South Africa and its NEPAD allies introduced the APRM. The APRM is an instrument to which African member states sign up voluntarily and commit to comply with the principles, priorities and objectives of the AU Constitutive Act and other decisions of the AU and NEPAD. It is a mechanism for mutual learning and socialisation. It promotes democracy and good governance as "hot political issues", and the APRM openly encourages adherence to these. South Africa is firm in the view that the APRM should make a link between governance, democracy, peace and security and development. For Tshwane-Pretoria, African member states should comply with the APRM's provisions, and all African states should ideally sign up to the APRM.

The APRM became Africa's most innovative governance promotion tool, and it was based in South Africa, and the Republic invested more financial resources in it than any other African state; with the APRM Africa was "showcasing the continent's innovative thinking in governance"[5]. The goal of the APRM was "reflective of the deepening democratic ethos and political pluralism" and was seen to be "accentuating the benefits of political and economic reforms"[6]. The APRM is a "commonly-agreed-to instrument for self-monitoring" and had as its "epicentre the dissemination of best practices and the rectification of underlying deficiencies in governance and socio-economic development processes among AU member states"[7]. The APRM also set out to inculcate democratic governance in Africa by "encouraging and building responsible leadership through a self-assessment process, constructive peer dialogue and the sharing of information and common experience in order to reinforce successful and exemplary practices among African states"[8].

> "There is no refuting the fact that the APRM, adopted in 2003, represents a unique and most imaginative African governance promotion tool, and no other continent has something akin to it."

Countries are encouraged to undertake "self-assessments" as the APRM promotes a "holistic approach to development"[9] that emphasises the following:

- poverty eradication;
- gender balance;
- decentralisation;
- the capacity of countries to participate in the APRM;
- access to and dissemination of information;
- anti-corruption measures;
- broad-based participation; and
- sustainability in financial, social and environmental issues.

Good and democratic governance would thus not be promoted through diktats and gunboat diplomacy and the threatening of punitive measures. Just like South Africa's own negotiated settlement came about through dialogue and negotiations, so the post-apartheid leaders chose to promote democratic leadership and governance through negotiations, dialogue and constructive peer pressure. Accession to the APRM entailed submitting to periodic peer reviews, and to facilitating such peer reviews in partnership with civil society, as well as committing to and implementing a National Programme of Action (NPOA) arising from peer reviews. Very importantly, there needs to be a commitment to operationalising the agreed upon parameters for good governance, such as: Democracy and Political Governance; Economic Governance and Management; and Socio-economic Development.

Challenging times for the APRM

While the decade 1998-2008 was important for African agency and leadership, there is a problem currently of many African leaders not taking their responsibilities seriously by appropriating continental institutions and mechanisms. The APRM, together with NEPAD, are two such programmes that have been allowed to drift and wither at the seams. It is key that African leaders reclaim these African initiatives and re-appropriate them. There is a sense in which the continent has become more fragmented, and ownership of continental initiatives has weakened. Indeed, there has been a sense of a leadership "retreat" by many.

Apart from leadership challenges, we have also witnessed the APRM and other institutions being fraught with many financial, capacity, procedural, operational and political challenges. Here should be added the fact that the APRM as a project and a process is beset with many organisational, technical, leadership and political problems. Indeed, the APRM could be said to be in real jeopardy. The APRM Panel is not fully constituted, thereby leaving a real organisational and political void. The status and stature of the Secretariat has diminished in recent years, and the Midrand office is understaffed, with many of the programmatic and political staff having left in recent years. One of the negative consequences is that there has been no real continuity in the first six years. Within the Secretariat is a real leadership vacuum, but this goes far beyond that. A leadership vacuum also plays itself out continentally, as the AU has not assumed ownership of the APRM, as it did in the case of NEPAD and other continental initiatives. For as long as there is uncertainty about the future and status of NEPAD, the APRM's own future is likely to be in doubt.

One of the challenges that needs to be overcome is the love-hate relationship between governments and civil society organisations (CSOs) in Africa. While governments believe they are the legitimate holders of power, and should determine the APRM agenda, CSOs have been viewing themselves as 'gatekeepers' and 'guardians' of the APRM. This stand-off and stalemate has triggered some kind of oppositionalism in African politics.

It will be remiss not to say something about the international donor community, and the role it has played to date in both the evolution of and challenges faced by the APRM. At the time of its establishment, there was a widespread perception among NGOs and CSOs that the APRM was there to placate donors and international financial institutions (IFIs) like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other Western bodies. Here we should start by reminding ourselves that donors helped to fuel this perception. Instead of regarding the APRM as an important opportunity, and giving it the benefit of the doubt, many donors chose to do the opposite by treating the mechanism as a conditionality tool. Notwithstanding that Zimbabwe has never been a signatory to the APRM, the bulk of donors chose, of course, to subvert the body to Zimbabwean politics, putting pressure on African states to use this governance instrument to whip Mugabe into line, and even threatened to withhold funding, in spite of the commitments they had made. When African states reminded donors that Zimbabwe was not even a member of the APRM, donors would merely insist that they should act against the recalcitrant Mugabe anyway.

Many African states treated the APRM as a beauty parade, there to impress donors and foreign partners to dispense with largesse. Donors in turn have tried to use the APRM as a stick to pressurise recalcitrant leaders into compliance. Donor countries have also lost interest in the APRM, NEPAD and broader AU initiatives, thereby posing a threat to the much vaunted partnership between Africa and the outside world.

> "Instead of borrowing from wholesale external initiatives, the APRM would be applied in ways that responded African particularities and realities, and took on board African dynamics and sensitivities."

Conclusion

As for all the doubters, there is no refuting the fact that the APRM, adopted in 2003, represents a unique and most imaginative African governance promotion tool, and no other continent has something akin to it. Not only did a number of African leaders organise themselves in the form of coalitions and concerts; they also forged close strategic partnerships among one another so that they, and not outsiders, would take the lead in crafting the African Union (AU), and become the chief architects of a new continental developmental and governance paradigm. Instead of willy-nilly adopting external initiatives, these states set out to promote "a holistic approach to development", as they remained committed to "African solutions to African problems". These leaders were not going to stand idly by as others impose agendas on them; they were determined to craft their own renewal agendas and programmes.

Keen to reduce western encroachment and imposition, they wanted to take ownership of, and responsibility for their future, and reduce foreign diktats. While the APRM had much in common with other initiatives, the African ownership idea, crafted and appropriated for Africa was vital. Instead of borrowing from wholesale external initiatives, the APRM would be applied in ways that responded to African particularities and realities, and took on board African dynamics and sensitivities.

Finally, it is important to end on a cautionary note here. In spite of the continent's serious efforts in the post-Cold War period to put in place the measures that would see the continent moving towards and consolidating an African society of states, there exists in Africa a very serious policy-to-implementation crisis – a gap between stated policy and commitments on the one hand, and the operationalisation of values and instruments on the other. The implementation of policy ideas and initiatives, turning policy into tangible outcomes, should henceforth enjoy priority. ■

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GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY

Issues confronting public and private sectors in Africa

A new engagement is critical if the basic tenets of a developmental state and developmental society are to be understood by all the key players. In particular, citizens must liberate themselves from being mere consumers and passive players in the political economy of development.

By Alioune Sall and Alinah Segobye

On reflecting on good governance, it can be noted that the debate and further discourses have been around for some time. Since the 1980s and definitely throughout the 1990s the idea of good governance was used by different players in the political economy and development landscape. In particular, it was used as a tool for reigning in or disciplining the state, particularly in contexts of contested power bases and /or where the state used its power in a manner not pleasing to some stakeholders. Donor agencies used it as conditionality for development aid whilst citizen activist movements used it to leverage external support to lobby their causes such as democracy, gender rights and environmental issues. Interestingly, those states in Africa which tried to assert their independence, particularly in the sphere of economic development policy, soon felt the backlash of donors for non-compliance with the tenets or prescripts of good governance.

So, in many regards, good governance came to be associated with the empowerment of citizenry through democratic inclusiveness, whilst in fact it was often nothing more than the pruning of wings of powerful states and their leaders, and the promotion of "minimalist States". In South Africa, the champion of good governance both within and across the continent was President Mbeki. By 2000, he had elaborated a well-articulated process of democratisation of internal state institutions including inclusive development. This was further translated to a democracy informed foreign policy for the continent and was evident in the architecture of the APRM and NEPAD. Good governance, in his approach, came to mean democratic governance. It can thus be concluded that before the economic meltdown in 2008 this was the broad reading of the practice and maybe theory behind good governance.

However, in the post 2008 world, it can be noted that multiple readings of the idea of good governance have emerged, together with discontent. More and more, it has come to mean western-type liberal democracies; and it is likely that this trend will increase, particularly after the backlash of the Arab spring and the failure of the Islamist parties in Egypt now and in Tunisia in the foreseen future.

Be that as it may, this paper sets out to provide a greater clarity to the debate by examining briefly what is at stake and who are the main players from a domestic point of view, leaving aside the external forces. We then propose two caveats. We finally examine briefly the way ahead.

What are the issues confronting public and private sectors in Africa?

This question has to be put in proper perspective. Firstly, the context is one where different forces are competing for space and power, using different strategies. And secondly, what is at stake is a diversity of resources, material as well as intangible.

> "Good governance is a value-laden notion. It is equated, in the dominant paradigm, with western-type, liberal democracy which is far from being the only political system in the world."

The competing forces

These can be summarised as the state, non-state actors and the private sector.

a) State: *The Prince* – This actor's main strategy and the base of his/her power is the capacity to proffer protection for all others including liberties, material and intangible resources; set the rules, determine rights, entitlements and obligations and enforce them. Setting the rules as well as enforcing must be backed by an effective monopoly of the State on instruments of legal violence (c.f. Max Weber's works). Such a monopoly must enable the State to enforce the rules, if need be by coercion. On both scores, a number of African states are weak and highly dependent for external sources/agencies and are even, in some cases, declared bankrupt.

b) Non-State actors: The Citizen – These actors are diverse yet have aspects of a shared or common destiny. The main strategy for them is forging coalitions around causes or issues. Their capacity to organise and to anchor actions on shared values is a critical determinant of their success[1]. They can rally support of and for each other, harnessing technology which increasingly is diminishing the barriers of geography and language.

c) Private sector: The Market – Asymmetry of information is an important determinant in what is often a zero-sum game. In this arena competitive traits net the highest bidder the most gains and often yield handsome rewards. On the other hand, loss can be catastrophic and serve to eliminate positioning and legitimacy.

What is at stake is the main object of the competition between the three sets of actors, and is their share in, and or control of resources.

Competition for resources

a) Economic resources:

These have come to play a major role in shaping differential power outlooks. In an era of market-led globalisation, the economic resources have diversified, leading the market fundamentalists to talk about our era as one of expanded choice. Finance available for development purposes can be split broadly into four types[2]:

Domestic public: this includes taxation, natural resources revenues; sovereign wealth funds; bond issuance; national savings; capital flights and debt repayments.

Domestic private: this includes household expenditure and savings; resources from the banking sector; the private sector (large, medium and small scale enterprises); illicit capital flight; licit capital flight; and debt repayments.

International public: this includes grants; debt cancellation; debt swaps; concessional loans; export credits; non concessional official loans; sovereign wealth funds (international); climate finance (public); and innovative sources of finance (including global taxes).

International private: this

Pros and cons of different types of finance for development

	Pros	Cons
Domestic public	• Promotes accountability between state and citizen	• Hard to raise in some contexts
Domestic private	• Promotes growth • Develops local private sector	• May not have expertise that internationals can offer. Most countries have a serious lack of private domestic capital.
International public	• Not seeking a return • Comes with development expertise • Promoting globally agreed goods and values • Can be more flexible if contributors allow it to be so	• May come with policy conditions • May come with political baggage
International private	• Comes with international expertise	• Seeking a return • Undermine local capacity

includes remittances, foreign market loans; Foreign Direct Investment; philanthropy; International NGOs; social investment; climate finance (private); "innovative" advanced market commitments; and portfolio investments.

The respective share and role of these different sources of funding vary significantly from one country to another. The majority of African countries, being LDCs, depend heavily on Overseas Development Aid while in those which are resource-rich FDIs tend to play a greater role and crowd out domestic resources.

The quality of economic growth is a function of the outcome of that competition for resources. In the current situation, growth does not benefit the poor; in fact it is inimical to them. It comes with inequalities and exclusion; hence, the call by others in the discourse for inclusive growth as part of the agenda for economic transformation.

Liberalisation of the economy has been, since the 1980s (Structural Adjustment Programmes era), a major bone of contention between state, private sector and non-state actors, (in particular trade unions and civil society organisations).

But the bottom line is that each one is the object of discourses as well as competition between various stakeholders and actors mentioned earlier. And these discourses change[3] as well as the strategies of the actors.

> "This was seen in Senegal's transition to the new democracy in 2012, when a fed-up citizenry used the tools of democratic governance to vote with their feet and cause change in a peaceful manner."

b) Socio-political resources: the issue at stake is the double-faced – some would say schizophrenic – nature of the neo-colonial African state. It is subjected to pressures coming from the top, represented by external agencies, to adopt a neo-liberal model. These pressures are very strong and often take the form of conditions. Failure to meet the criteria of the Westphalian model could lead for instance to a state being declared a *failed state*. Such an indictment comes with challenges which have been discussed in a paper presented in June 2011 in the Monrovia, Liberia, conference titled *Development Aid and Fragile States* (Sall 2011). On the other hand, the State is subjected to pressures from below, from poor and often dispossessed communities which expect protection from the woes of neo-liberalism through subsidies or elements of social protection and safety nets. Failure of the State to meet those expectations often renders it illegitimate, or irrelevant in the eyes of the poor who in the main happen to be a significant part of the population in African countries. Faced with conflicting demands and expectations, the question becomes therefore: who does the State decide to be accountable to? Which legitimacy will be given the premium?

c) Socio-cultural resources: this domain is often the forte of citizenry where cultural heritage and tradition can be leveraged to reinforce the power or authority of the citizenry. However, such leverage is often short-lived, as historical experience has demonstrated. With the advantage of research and science, the State often draws on its intelligentsia to study the norms and culture of the citizenry and uses these to its advantage. Two caveats would be in order:

Porous borders between modernity and culture

These categories are not water-tight or separated by a Great Wall. On the contrary the porosity of the borders between modernity and culture is striking, as can be seen from the two following examples drawn from South Africa.

In the area of governance and legitimacy, the benefits accruing to the clan lineage of former President Nelson Mandela provide an interesting case as it is almost impossible to disentangle the political and cultural realms of the saga. By aligning with this great statesman those who share clan affinity

have ascended to authority whether real or imagined including gaining voice on cultural platforms hitherto not available. The visibility of the "heirs" Makaziwe Mandela and Mandla Mandela in their recent feud makes for interesting urban anthropology as both navigate the rural/urban landscapes, media and roles of being children and at other times leaders in the mantle of Mandela. Ironically, the very tenets of being which characterise the main actor, namely humility and subservience, seem to elude those who claim legitimacy in his name through this cultural route. And, arguably, beyond legacy issues, whether political or cultural, there are some issues of hard currency: the dollars and rands worth of the estate of the former president.

Another interesting case of the benevolent patriarch in the social-cultural resources setting relates to the platinum rich northwest region of South Africa. Here the cultural heritage custodians, supposedly operating on behalf of the communities they lead, usurped the role of negotiators. In reality, most were sufficiently adept to realise the benefits of private property and intellectual property of the individual in representing the business interests of their communities in the process of negotiating mineral resources exploitation. To this end, many emerged as the main beneficiaries of clan or community wealth from natural resources whilst the communities continued to wallow in abject poverty. They rallied the voice of the community when needed but self-represented in different forms when negotiating with private business for the lucrative mining wealth that lay below the communal lands.

The roles of the different actors in achieving good governance

There is also no Great Wall between the actors: it is therefore instructive to reflect what good governance and accountability could mean or be interpreted to represent in the different scenarios posited above. Quite clearly there is a critical role for the State to play in safeguarding the interests of all in the very uneven playing field of business and engagement between the private sector and citizenry. In the same vein, there is a need to recognise that the citizen is not an agency free entity but one which will muster all resources to gain advantage even where the interests of those nearest to them are concerned. The sale of communal or clan land by members of a family capitalising on the ignorance of other members is an example in point. The readiness to buy even in full knowledge of the flawed nature of such sale by the private sector is another.

The rules of engagement by all parties are often premised on a "see no evil, hear no evil, do no evil" principle. This is why recourse to law to restore corrective justice often fails at the expense of citizenry victims. Thankfully, the advent of social media and instant media-based protest has helped through naming and shaming via crowds to make, in particular, big business hesitant to do wrong in the backyard of communities. Things which were beforehand tolerated such as illegal logging or mining and use of child labour now receive immediate condemnation from citizenry as consumers when such reports become public knowledge. In similar vein, leaders who resort to despotic tendencies often reach the limit of their communities' rope and find themselves in dire straits as evidenced by what has come to be popularly known as the Arab spring. More cogently, this was seen in Senegal's transition to the new democracy in 2012, when a fed-up citizenry used the tools of democratic governance to vote with their feet and cause change in a peaceful manner. This route unfortunately continues to elude many other states yearning for change.

> "The question to be asked is therefore not whether or not there is accountability; the question is rather a two-fold one: who is accountable to whom? Further, what purpose or good is covered by the accountability mechanisms?"

In fact, between the various actors, there is a wide array of strategies evolving from straightforward competition to alliances strategies. They play out in different places or arenas. For example, the varied tensions between the private sector and the citizenry are often played out in the marketplace and the strategies evolve from straightforward competition to alliance strategies. Citizens or market forces may in some cases invoke the State to intervene in the manner of a clan patriarch to restore amicable tolerance. Interestingly, this is often the case irrespective of whether the private sector is local or domestic, foreign, emerging or established. In the spaces of such tensions citizen unity is often optimised to confront competitors, as, for example, in food price unrests or public sector transport provisions.

The question then becomes, for a country like South Africa which enjoys multiple forms of governance, laws and heritage resources, how best can a meaningful discourse of accountability and governance be realised? It is in this regard that the Constitution becomes an interesting instrument for the country. Built on a consensus project, this remains the above blemish tool for all to reach a credible take on accountability and governance. Though trying in its processes, it seems to be the one recourse where all have taken solace to reaching a just conclusion or a final stage of resolution. Interestingly, this is a place where culture and heritage have not escaped scrutiny and sometimes upheaval. The decision to recognise female heirs as rightful inheritors of thrones in previously patriarchal systems has rendered redundant norms and oral legal systems that stood the test of time over several millennia. The tolerance of the royal tiff or insult to a presidential or ministerial envoy has demonstrated the latitude of liberties conferred under the guise of tradition whilst understanding the tightrope traditional leaders walk in working with modern government's many layers.

Where do we go from here?

Here we need to:

- refine the conceptual framework;
- unpack the notion of developmental state; and
- forge a new compact.

Refine the conceptual framework

Good governance and accountability are often used as associated concepts or in tandem in the dominant discourse. They are seen both as objectives and outcomes of development and are thought to be mutually reinforcing. Yet they are not synonymous and one does not necessarily lead to the other.

Good governance is a value-laden notion. It is equated, in the dominant paradigm, with western-type, liberal democracy which is far from being the only political system in the world. As a matter of fact, liberal democracy is competing with models ranging from "template democracies" which are also called "choice-less democracies" (Thandeka Mkandawire 2006) to authoritarian regimes and outright dictatorships in the claims to adherence to the concept.

Accountability, on the other side, although it can be value-laden, refers to mechanisms and procedures which are pre-set. It is more mechanistic in outlook. It is value-free to some extent because, irrespective of the nature of the governance system, there must be an element of accountability in the sense that someone has to declare the job done, whatever the job is; and whoever is entrusted with the task to declare the job done. The question to be asked is therefore not whether or not there is accountability; the question is rather a two-fold one: who is accountable to whom? Further, what purpose or good is covered by the accountability mechanisms? The first question refers to the hierarchical/functional relations between actors whereas the second question refers to the areas and scope of accountability mechanisms/systems.

Unpack the notion of developmental state

The notion of a developmental state in Africa also needs further scrutiny as most of those states classified as developmental manifested diverse forms of development and development potential. Some, like Botswana, remain marked by high levels of inequality and poverty within an otherwise affluent state entity. The diversity of expressions of 'states in developmental mode' in Africa suggests that a focused lens which scrutinises the situation or context of each country has merits. In particular, the role of the leadership in directing or leading development in each state needs further interrogation. It is evident that in some states the ruling party, with the collusion or collaboration of a few elites, is a dominant player (Botswana); whilst in others a broadened middle class and private sector inform the development process (Mauritius).

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Many have noted that even where the will existed there was no real translation of good governance intents to real liberation and empowerment save for a few beneficiaries. As an example, those who championed citizen empowerment were able to unlock wealth from the state and its foreign investors to bring in a few elite local (or indigenous) beneficiaries. This was in sectors such as mining, construction and communications. Similarly, land ownership was cosmetically changed to enable land ownership by an additional few elite indigenes. In other instances, the selling off of state assets such as state owned companies and entities enabled a privileged few to become owners of new corporate entities. Unfortunately, the majority of citizens, particularly those locked in the informal sectors and rural areas did not benefit in any real way from such changes.

It is thus argued that to realise a developmental state a basic building block needs to be a developmental society. This seems to be the gap that accounts for so much of the disparity, discrepancy and discontinuities which inform the nature of the developmental state in Africa. In our view, creating a developmental society will, at the very least, foster an active engagement of citizenry in the development planning and implementation processes. In this regard, citizen participation would not be limited to the zeal espoused at election time, but would extend to keeping a closer watch over, and participating in, all spheres of the development process particularly the economic aspects. This is why new social movements which focus on fiscal expenditure and the monitoring and evaluation of state expenditure are a welcome addition to the civil society movement landscape. Fiscal intelligence has for long been left to state planning institutions and as such accountability for resources was often taken for granted as being outside the ambit of citizen know-how. This was particularly the case in states where wealth was abundant from mineral resources. Therefore a close tab on fiscal spending was not a priority. However, the post 2008 world that has seen a diminishing resource base and sudden drying up of aid has resulted in civil society actors taking an interest in fiscal matters of development.

A further point which is advanced is that citizenry are not totally devoid of capital resources. In fact, people have at their disposal resources such as their cultural capital. This is expressed in many forms including an intellectual resource which can be used in innovation emerging from indigenous knowledge systems. What is often missing is a clear and well-articulated vision of how people conceptualise this capital resource stemming from their cultural milieu. In the main, it has been espoused via liberation era slogans such as *Harambee* (Kenya),

Uhuru (Tanzania) and *Ubuntu* (South Africa). These rallying calls brought together those who shared certain features of a common identity such as language, struggle lived experiences and so forth.

However, in the post-independence state not much time or resources were devoted to interrogating this shared identity or what sustains it. To this end, many still grapple with the question of identity. It is imperative that in the developmental society the issue of identity is explored and explicitly interrogated as often its negative manifestations (e.g. xenophobic attacks) run counter to the spirit of a rights-based developmental state and a burgeoning and liberalised developmental state economy. It is important that the articulation of the national (state) identity is reconciled with the subnational and ethnic identities (corporate and citizen) which also inform the developmental society. In particular the need to accommodate diversity (racial, cultural and religious, among others) is essential if development is to advance in a meaningful way.

It is noted that the premise for a developmental society is already there. The state has, in many parts of the continent, accepted its diminished role in dominating the development process. In many countries large scale development projects are either private sector driven or run through public private sector facilities. In fact many countries have embraced PPPs as lightening government's burden in managing projects which often ended in disastrous ways. So in effect there already is space created for non-state actors including the private sector.

What seems to be lacking is the ethos of a developmental society. In our view, this starts with the body politic of the fabrication of society. It starts at the individual, family and community levels. Citizen readiness to transform must start at the building blocks of individual and family investment in personal/group development and a shared vision of where the individual/family is going (aspirational). In this regard leadership and business gurus such as Richard Branson (Virgin), Anita Roddick (The Body Shop) continue to inspire as self-made leaders who started from humble bases. Such consciousness impacts also on the principles infused to the broader community and society. For example, through the Body Shop brand Roddick has influenced present and future generations to be more aware of the environment and the resources used in the multi-billion rand beauty industry. This has influenced in a significant way the idea of "fair trade' which has benefited women in rural African settings whose livelihood depends on collecting natural resources such as morula, shea and cocoa. Such shifts in beliefs, practice and ways of doing business are now more prevalent and reflect how individuals can be a force of change in development.

> "In our view, creating a developmental society will, at the very least, foster an active engagement of citizenry in the development planning and implementation processes."

Ke nako: the time has come for a new compact

It can be argued further that the time is also right for a new compact or social contract between the state, private sector and citizenry. A new engagement is critical if the basic tenets of a developmental state and developmental society are to be understood by all the key players. In particular, citizens must liberate themselves from being mere consumers and passive players in the political economy of development to realising their capabilities and value-adding potential to the development process. In the South African context, this will require the actual engagement of *Batho Pele* and a better grasp on *Ubuntu*. It could start with the interrogation of the idea of BEE and its related policy propositions. An acceptance of the limitations of BEE to realise a broad-based empowerment of the poor and previously disadvantaged should lead to the innovation of other ways of looking at the development landscape and hopefully the innovation of other ways of engagement in the development process. In this regard, the role of, for example, the emerging African (Black) philanthropists such as Patrice Motsepe will be differently conceptualised and driven to empower those in need. Similarly, their own vulnerabilities as owners of wealth resources but by no means producers of resources will be interrogated so that future policies will focus on a sustainable and producing/productive middle class.

> "It is imperative that in the developmental society the issue of identity is explored and explicitly interrogated."

Conclusion

In conclusion, the ideas cast above suggest that there is still further discourse needed to unpack some of the nuanced and blurred readings of governance and accountability in the African context. Nonetheless, we recognise the existence of a healthy tension in the key players in expressing different iterations of the idea of good governance and accountability whilst drawing from a wide array of knowledge resources which clearly indicate a discerning of the rules and tactics of engagement in such discourse. It can be said that further research, in particular of society and culture in Africa, especially in the face of rapid urbanisation, will continue to inform the changing landscape of governance and accountability. ■

References:

1 One should note the importance of sports clubs in that regard and their direct or indirect involvement in the political arena. Of note is their role in Egypt and Turkey and the Springbok victory South Africa in 1995

2 Excerpts from a working paper by Jonathan Glennie on International Public Finance, 2013

3 See 'International organisations as policy actors: an ideational approach', by Daniel Beland and Mitchell A Orenstein, 2013. *Global Social Policy* 13 (2) 125-143

Celebrating ten years of the African Peer Review Mechanism in South Africa

Since our accession in 2003, tremendous progress has been made in the continent with regards to pursuing the objectives of the APRM. Work in progress includes deepening democracy, enhancing civil society participation in governance, fostering better economic policies and promoting African integration.

By Ayanda Dlodlo

Since the momentous 1994 breakthrough, South Africa has been committed to ensuring its integration with the rest of the continent. We are part of the continental effort of strengthening democracy and enhancing civil society participation in matters of Governance. This explains our accession to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in March 2003 in Abuja, Nigeria.

The former President of the Republic of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, is one of the founding fathers and pioneers of the African Peer Review Mechanism. He captured the spirit and purport of the APRM succinctly when he said "good governance, the institutionalisation of democracy, political mobilisation for development, and creating conditions for political stability are the warp and woof needed to ensure that our people reap the development dividend" that would accrue from such a process. According to President Mbeki the African Peer Review Mechanism is an African initiative which remains an essential tool for countries to gauge progress on the governance front, from an African perspective. "

For South Africa this strategic re-orientation and commitment also resonates with the principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter "The People Shall Govern". This notion in the Freedom Charter of 1955 envisaged the creation of a people-centred government that cares about the needs of the people and values their participation in governance.

South Africa commenced its APRM process in 2006 as part of the first group of countries to be assessed on the aforementioned thematic areas. In preparation South Africa established a multi-sectoral body to oversee this process called the National Governing Council which comprised both Government and Civil Society representatives. This was an important element to ensure a participatory process that enjoyed credibility and legitimacy from all sectors of society. This body comprised Labour Federations, Faith-based organisations, Business, Women, Youth, Disabled Persons, Arts-culture, heritage organisations, Non-Governmental organisations and Civics organisations.

There are several other innovations that also characterised South Africa's APR process which include the formation of Provincial Governing Councils whose purpose was to cascade the consultation to the provincial level and ensure that it reached the majority of our people. South Africa also enhanced the methodological approach of the process by simplifying and translating the questionnaires into the eleven official languages. The role played by Community Development Workers in enhancing popular participation in the APR process cannot be over emphasised.

We submitted our Final Country Self Assessment Report (CSAR) and draft National Programme of Action (NPOA) in June 2006. Both documents were products of thorough research and rigorous consultation with all citizens and sectors of society. The Report writing process was also led by a group of eminent local Research Institutions to ensure the integrity and veracity of the data, statistics as well as the production of a credible and balanced report. In July we hosted the Country Review mission whose purpose was to verify our CSAR and explore issues identified in both CSAR and draft NPOA.

"In preparation South Africa established a multi-sectoral body to oversee this process called the National Governing Council which comprised both Government and Civil Society representatives."

The Review Process was finalised in September 2007 and as its by–product, a National Action Plan aimed at addressing some of the challenges identified in the report, was developed. Subsequently, South Africa has submitted the First (2009) and the Second (2011) Progress reports on the Implementation of the Programme of Action to the Head of States and Government Forum of Participating countries.

Since our accession in 2003, tremendous progress has been made in the continent with regards to pursuing the objectives of the APRM. Work in progress includes deepening democracy, enhancing civil society participation in governance, fostering better economic policies and promoting African integration. There are many countries in our continent who are eager and committed participants in this process. They participate not for their own sake but as a result of a firm commitment to uplifting the plight of the African majority. They do so with a firm belief that Africa can no longer be a basket case and African can no longer be the marginalised among the peoples of the world. The lively discussions and frank debates on the country reports which takes place at the Heads of State Summit remain a truly unique experience and are conducted in the spirit of peer review.

As a country, we too are proud to be part of this great initiative. It gives us pride not only because we dared to pioneer a new vision but because we remain true to the commitments of the leaders of the Organisation of African Unity which coincidentally marks the 50th anniversary since its formation this year. It is these leaders of our beautiful continent that dared us as the peoples of the continent, to work together to improve our lot.

As we celebrate the 10 years of the APRM, undoubtedly there is much to be done in spite of the tremendous strides we have made. There remains a need to continue to strengthen the Peer Review Process and to develop common understanding, benchmarks and ways of assessing information. This is critical in having a fair and objective process and is essential to the development of Africa.

Nkosi Sikelel' i Africa, God Bless Africa!!! ■

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in the Context of the African Renaissance

The structure of the African state system, in upending the natural solidarity of African peoples, had been a perennial source of the perpetuation of the historic wretchedness of peoples of African descent.

By Ademola Araoye

African Unity is above all, a political kingdom which can only be gained by political means. The social and economic development of Africa will come only within the political kingdom, not the other way round Kwame Nkrumah, 24 May, 1963.

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) was established in 2003 as an instrument to which member states of the African Union (AU) voluntarily acceded. The leadership agreed to submit themselves to a self-monitoring mechanism on their adherence to a set of values, principles and ethics in governance. It was born in the context of the revolutionary acknowledgement of historical failures and deficits and the stark identification of the challenges, both internal and extra-African, that have militated against a true and holistic emancipation of African peoples, societies, states and the continent; indeed the global black universe. These existential debilitations have emanated from, firstly, the entrenchment of extra-African interests as central to the vicious dynamic, in Fanonian terms, of the permanence of the wretchedness

of the African Earth; and secondly, the witting and unwitting connivance, as well as outright abdications, of African leadership in these ancient deleterious debilitations. The APRM thus represents an important dimension of purposeful transformational African responses to the challenges and deficits that have plagued African societies and states. In the context of this renaissant resurgence, the mandate of the APRM is thus to encourage approaches that, in relation to the status quo, are transcendental and revolutionary in their operative realignments in regard to political, economic and corporate governance values, protocols, codes and standards among African countries in advancing socio-economic developmental objectives within the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

In its first decade, it is imperative to audit the APRM process with a view to properly locating it within the ferment of the emerged spirit for holistic emancipation of African peoples in the third millennium. This spirit is expressed in the enunciations of the African Renaissance. It is concluded that the APRM, as presently operated, falls far short of the contemporary progressive and radical impulses of African peoples. To strengthen its relevance, the mechanism requires a further realignment to protect against the creeping danger of status quo appropriation of the vision by the same forces that have through the centuries brought ruin to Africa and its peoples.

Africa entered the third millennium with the radical reconstruction of its critical spaces brought about by the end of the Cold War and, more immediately, the dismantling of Apartheid in the decade leading to the end of the last century and millennium. These seismic shifts compelled the re-envisioning of African spaces and ushered in an opportunity to begin the redefinition of the locus of African peoples in the larger universe. The African renaissance re-emerged as a compass in navigating the interaction of black humanity within the now transformed spaces and in relating to the historically hostile global universe that had exploited Africans in the service of the strategic interests of dominant foreign powers. Invigorated by the transformation of the hitherto constricted spaces into new emancipatory universes, the end of apartheid, also entailing the near final decolonisation of the continent, South Africa, under the leadership of the African National Congress, would inject a new dynamism and provide leadership for progressive forces in the post-cold war era in black Africa. It is the convergence of these impulses, championed by Thabo Mbeki, which imbues African renaissance with the attributes of an imperative call to action.

The immediate post-Cold War era was a critical conjuncture in a continent that had abdicated the compelling visions of the halcyon days of Albert Luthuli, Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Modiba Keita, Amilcar Cabral and Sekou Toure amongst a handful of other visionaries. Consequently, the unfortunate compromise of 1963 led by the neo-imperialist driven conservative Monrovia bloc derailed the vision for a strong politically united federated African state as a bastion against neo-imperialist designs for post-independent Africa.

> “The charter of the OAU that emerged in 1963 fossilised the balkanisation of African peoples and entrenched structures that advanced the interests of neo-colonial forces.”

The charter of the OAU that emerged in 1963 fossilised the balkanisation of African peoples and entrenched structures that advanced the interests of neo-colonial forces. With the success of the liberation struggle, in 2013 Africa has 55 states, albeit many of them no more than glorified micro political (non)entities. Yet the reality as observed by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere is that Africa is the poorest and weakest continent in the world. The major reason for the continued existence of these micro (non)entities was (and remains) that too many African leaders had a vested interest in keeping Africa divided[1]. Nyerere reveals that after the failure to establish a union government at the Accra Summit in 1965, he heard one head of state express relief at the fact that he was returning to his country still as head of state[2]. Unfortunately, even in 2013, the real impediment to the unification of Africa is the threat to small impostors occupying small state offices in obscure backwater capitals. Many African leaders are dinosaurs of some kind, some more and some less malevolent.

The balkanisation of Africa into little fiefdoms of stooges and proxies of neo-colonial forces implied that the same dominant External Order became the legitimising force that validated who and which African leader of its numerous feeble states best advanced its neo-imperialist goals. Indeed, in many instances the ubiquitous External Order decided who ruled their little African proxy-states. By the reliance of the many unviable (non)entities that are recognised as states on negative sovereignty dispensed by powerful extra-African elite states, the dominant parameters for the validation of African leadership were thus neither Africanist nor oriented toward the welfare of the African people. The structure of the African state system, in upending the natural solidarity of African peoples, had been a perennial source of the perpetuation of the historic wretchedness of peoples of African descent. Mbeki identifies Africa’s snail pace towards political and economic integration, in terms of implementing the agreed bottom-up, rather than an adventurist top-down strategy, with regards to an accelerated advance to African unity as one of the serious impediments[3] to holistic African emancipation.

The African Renaissance, a black-centred counterpoise to the dominant structure of ideas and the norms and institutions that govern relations in the global system, seeks a radical repudiation of the structure of relationship with these powerful forces. Its Africanist worldview contrasts sharply with established negative understandings and interpretations of

the African cosmology by the African who has been redesigned by the travails of history to repudiate self and his own. The African Renaissance therefore seeks to retrench the principal euro-centric and other external ideational structures that constitute the foundations of the dominant order that has always defined the peripheral locus and irrelevance of the black world in the universe. The African Renaissance is also a process of and a constructivist paradigm for action. Its philosophical roots can be traced to the heterogeneous traditions of the structure of African belief systems and values and its multiple expressions. As a codified system of ideas and values, it synthesises the positive elements of these traditions with pan-Africanist ideals that have remained elusive into a coherent system of ideas that can guide common approaches to the multifarious challenges before Africans. In the formulation of epistemological institutions dedicated to the reversal of extra-African structures of knowledge, the renaissance seeks first and foremost to deconstruct the divisive definitions of the identities of African peoples and thereby redefine the common interests of all Bantu[4] peoples. The African Renaissance revolves around three pivotal elements of transcendentalism, transformation and emancipation. These, together, distil the historical and experiential impulses of African peoples at the end of the twentieth century. They express a changed cognitive complexity in the interpretation of historical forces that have moulded developments in Black Africa and responses adopted as a result.

The end of the twentieth century itself coincided with the dissipation of historical conjunctures that had been central to the social construction of the world of black Africa. These historical conjunctures were constituted by the confluence of four major developments. These developments include the end of the cold war that made bankrupt traditional calculus of super power strategic concerns. This, for a time, created a lull in the manipulation of African states and crises as pawns in grand global strategies across the ideological lines of the cold war. The second is the de-legitimation of the concept of spheres of influence maintained by neo-colonial forces and a third being the final defeat of apartheid in South Africa. Finally, the paradoxes of a globalisation process set in motion by the end of the Cold War called into question the relevance of colonially inspired political institutions that have remained dysfunctional to the transformation, emancipation and developmental aspiration of all Bantu peoples. In its repudiation of the dominant extra-African structures of knowledge and values as the pivots of the organisation of society and the locus of the African within the global spectrum, the African Renaissance challenges the structural foundations on which the superstructure of the international realm is built.

This international realm is founded on colonially inspired alien structures of knowledge that transformed the historical geography of Africa in a few years. The penetration of these alien forces into Africa truncated the trajectory of developments in societies. It put in its stead incongruous ideas and institutions that confused identities of the peoples and instituted an arbitrary divisive redefinition of the allegiances of the continent. These, in turn, spawned the pervasive illegitimacies and multidimensional crises in post-colonial institutions that have remained the challenge of black Africa in the second half of the last century. These extra-African structures of knowledge, which have dominated the African space since, created new contentions among black Africans as a result of the alienating impact of the structures of ideas, values and institutions which were the bases of the social construction of the black world. Africa's relations with the universe, the dominant values and worldviews, the rules and norms that governed intra-African relations and the place of black Africa in the universal scheme of affairs were thus externally derived.

> "In 2013 Africa has 55 states, albeit many of them no more than glorified micro political (non) entities."

The African Renaissance confronts this construction of the African world as a philosophy and a paradigm of action. This confrontation has translated to the expansion of existing, and exploration of new, ideational frontiers in order to put African peoples in the driver's seat for people-oriented development, through the setting of the emancipatory agenda as well as the structure and mechanisms to advance these emancipatory visions. NEPAD distils these visions and emerged in their pursuit.

The framework for NEPAD, designed to secure an Africa in which poverty had been eradicated and which was on the path to sustainable development, was adopted by African heads of state in 2001. It was conceived as a two tiered partnership. At the first and critical level is the partnership between African leaders and African peoples. At the second level is the newly accented interaction between Africa and donor communities, falsely described as "the rich nations of the world". The new partnerships aimed to eradicate poverty in Africa, promote sustainable development, integrate Africa in the world economy, and accelerate the empowerment of women. It was estimated that the programmes would cost in the region of $64 billion each year, to be raised through aid and fairer trade[5]. A major assumption that underpinned this expectation was anticipated behavioural changes on the part of the dominant exploitative External Other. An ahistorical transformation of attitudes was expected from the major beneficiaries of the superordinate and subordinate structure and pattern of subsisting systemic relationship. It was expected that the major beneficiaries of the structure of global relationship from which their wealth was derived would voluntarily relinquish carefully orchestrated advantages to help liberate the space and balance the structure of economic relations in favour of Africa. According to this forlorn doctrine, if African leaders undertook to improve their political and economic governance paradigms,

by liberalising the socio-political space, the rich countries would increase the aid component and would take measures to make the skewed economic relations, including the international trade regime, fairer and thereby generate more income for Africa. The establishment of the APRM was to demonstrate the commitment to change the paradigm of governance of African leaders in the hope that this would elicit the quid pro quo for the anticipated behavioural and attitudinal changes of its often dominant and hegemonic international partners.

Structurally the peer review mechanism is constituted in the following way:

- the Committee of Heads of State and Government (APR Forum) is the highest decision making authority;
- the Panel of Eminent Persons (APR Panel) oversees the review process to ensure integrity, considers reports and makes recommendations to the APR Forum;
- the APRM Secretariat provides secretarial, and administrative support; and

the Country Review Mission Team (CRM Team) reviews progress and produce an APRM Report on each country.

The APRM is an element in a mosaic of interlinked structures. These structures, which operate within the framework of the African state system, include NEPAD, the AU and the Pan African Parliament. A realistic evaluation of the APRM and its future role must therefore begin with comment on the larger total canvass of the African state system. The state system as currently configured poses a serious constraint to the attainment of the goals of the APRM. It is unable to transcend the narrow confines of the constricted spaces where the people are hamstrung, preventing meaningful participation in national policy formulation and developmental processes. The governance and developmental process operates alongside the cult of the national philosopher whose views are sacrosanct and who decides for the people. Constitutional reform processes in the African quasi-states are orchestrated charades to entrench the interests of a minority, who are also in the service of elite powers. The elite powers promote them.

The leaders that are thus produced by the sham instrumental democracies moderated by extra-African bodies are not best primed to articulate the vision of an African Renaissance. The highest decision-making organ of the APRM is thus constituted by the same Heads of State whose ultimate allegiance even to their own states is questionable. And their commitment to the unity of Africa is even more doubtful. In fact, those known in their micro states as dignified brigands and nepotistic rulers hailed and trumpeted by their western masters have acquired prominent roles in their phony commitment to the vision of an emancipated Africa. And

> “The real impediment to the unification of Africa is the threat to small impostors occupying small state offices in obscure backwater capitals. With few exceptions, the African leader is a dinosaur of some kind, some more and some less malevolent.”

they are in an ever expanding league in the era of the APRM. The African states that serve as the springboard to the highest echelon of decision making in Africa are hostages to the ambitions of one man. The states are thus non-transcendental and non-transformational in their impregnable resolve to keep Africa balkanised, to keep the petty dinosaurs at play, alienating the people and standing in the way of a negotiated resurgence of the solidarity of the peoples and African communities. Above all, they perpetuate the deleterious mindset that underpins the continuing haemorrhage of the resources of African peoples to complement the dwindling fortunes of western treasuries, who, of course, mouth empty canticles about the fight against corruption in Africa. In these circumstances, the expected utility in the envisaged behavioural transformations of elite states in relation to the economic development in Africa that underpins the promised balancing of the playing field is zero. It is for these reasons that some have dismissed the APRM on the grounds that it is wholly a creation of the G8 or that it is an attempt by Africa to meet demands of the G8 and therefore by extension not an initiative that is driven by African concerns[6]. Others have concluded that the great hope that NEPAD held for Africa and Africans at its launch in 2001, did not, and has not, materialised as expected in the AU's first decade of existence[7]. The non-transcendental and non-transformatory character of the African quasi-state, a factor responsible for these failures, is replicated in the major institutions of the AU, including the Pan African Parliament (PAP).

In the words of Bethel Amadi, the President of the PAP, the establishment of the Pan African Parliament is informed by a vision to provide a common platform for African peoples and their grass-roots organisations to be more involved in the discussion and decision-making on the problems and challenges facing the continent. Its 265 members represent legislative institutions of the various states, rather than the direct representatives of African peoples. Because of this, the PAP transmits to the continental arena all the shenanigans associated with elections to state structures and institutions in the various states. They represent the state and not its communities. This means that the Union parliament is an articulator of state policies and perspectives and alienates the communities and peoples from the continental ferment. The continental legislature is deprived the benefit of the vibrant energies of African peoples because again of the non-transcendental and non-transformatory character of the African quasi-state. The PAP decisions are always consonant with the decisions of the Foreign Ministers of their states. As Bethel concludes, the PAP has consultative and advisory roles

only and there are concerns about its capacity to carry out its functions effectively[8]. This means it is unable to provide leadership for Africa in critical areas of continental foreign and security policy. This weakness partly accounts for the routing of the AU in the mismanagement of the crises in Cote d'Ivoire and Libya, where foreign interests triumphed over continental visions.

Due to the non-transcendental and non-transformational character of the African state, all the old deficits continue to haunt and hurt the continent in 2013 - almost a decade and a half into the new millennium. Given the governance and developmental deficits, one of the most critical gaps in governance is the challenging attempts to plug the illicit flow of resources, financial and otherwise, from the continent. A new joint report by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and Global Financial Integrity (GFI), launched on Wednesday, 29 May, 2013 at the 48th AfDB Annual Meetings in Marrakech, Morocco, revealed that the African continent has been *a long-term net creditor to the rest of the world*. The report finds that Africa suffered between US$597 billion and US$1.4 trillion in net outflows between 1980 and 2009 after adjusting net recorded transfers for illicit financial outflows. It debunked "the traditional thinking (that) has always been that the West is pouring money into Africa through foreign aid and other private sector flows, without receiving much in return"[9]. Such is the magnitude of financial haemorrhage from Africa that a whole new structure has been put in place to check the menace. A High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa was inaugurated by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) on 18th February 2012 at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa. The Panel is chaired by Thabo Mbeki, former president of South Africa. The Africa Governance Institute observes that:

"The establishment of the High Level Panel (HLP) follows a resolution of the 4th Joint Annual Meetings of the ECA/ AU Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in Africa in March 2011, which decided to address the debilitating problem of illicit financial outflows from Africa estimated at about $50 billion annually, in mandating the establishment of the Panel.

"Illicit financial outflows constitute a major source of resource leakage from the continent draining foreign exchange reserves, reducing tax collection, dwindling investment inflows, and worsening poverty in Africa. …This source of resource outflows is far bigger and higher in terms of scale and magnitude than the normal corruption channels, which are focused upon globally"[10].

> "It was expected that the major beneficiaries of the structure of global relationship from which their wealth was derived would voluntarily relinquish carefully orchestrated advantages to help liberate the space and balance the structure of economic relations in favour of Africa."

Against this background, it may be permuted that only serious inward looking African panaceas that are premised on progressive African renaissance planks of transcendentalism and transformation stand a chance of achieving the objectives of holistic emancipation of African spaces, peoples, communities. A first step in this direction is a voluntary and negotiated restructuring of the African state system. The realignment of the African Union so that all its structures and institutions are influenced and driven by grass roots communities is imperative. This includes the significant diminution of the role of Heads of State in its affairs. Continental legislators should be directly elected by their communities. The member states of the AU should meet their financial obligations to the organisation as a demonstration of their commitment to the integrity of the organisation. The charter of the AU should be amended to limit foreign financial interventions in the AU to a very negligible proportion. Holistic African emancipation would mean the liquidation of the numerous unviable quasi-states that dot the African firmament and exist as cancerous political (non)entities susceptible to manipulation and control by powerful external forces. On the economic front the galvanising capacity of an African Union pooling together the resources of African people is represented by the powerful symbolism of the potential INGA dam in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The INGA falls site has been described as having the greatest hydro potential of any river basin in the world. Yet until today this potential has lain unrealised for over a century - like Africa - because like Africa, it has awaited illusive international funding.■

> "The leaders that are thus produced by the sham instrumental democracies moderated by extra-African bodies are not best primed to articulate the vision of an African Renaissance."

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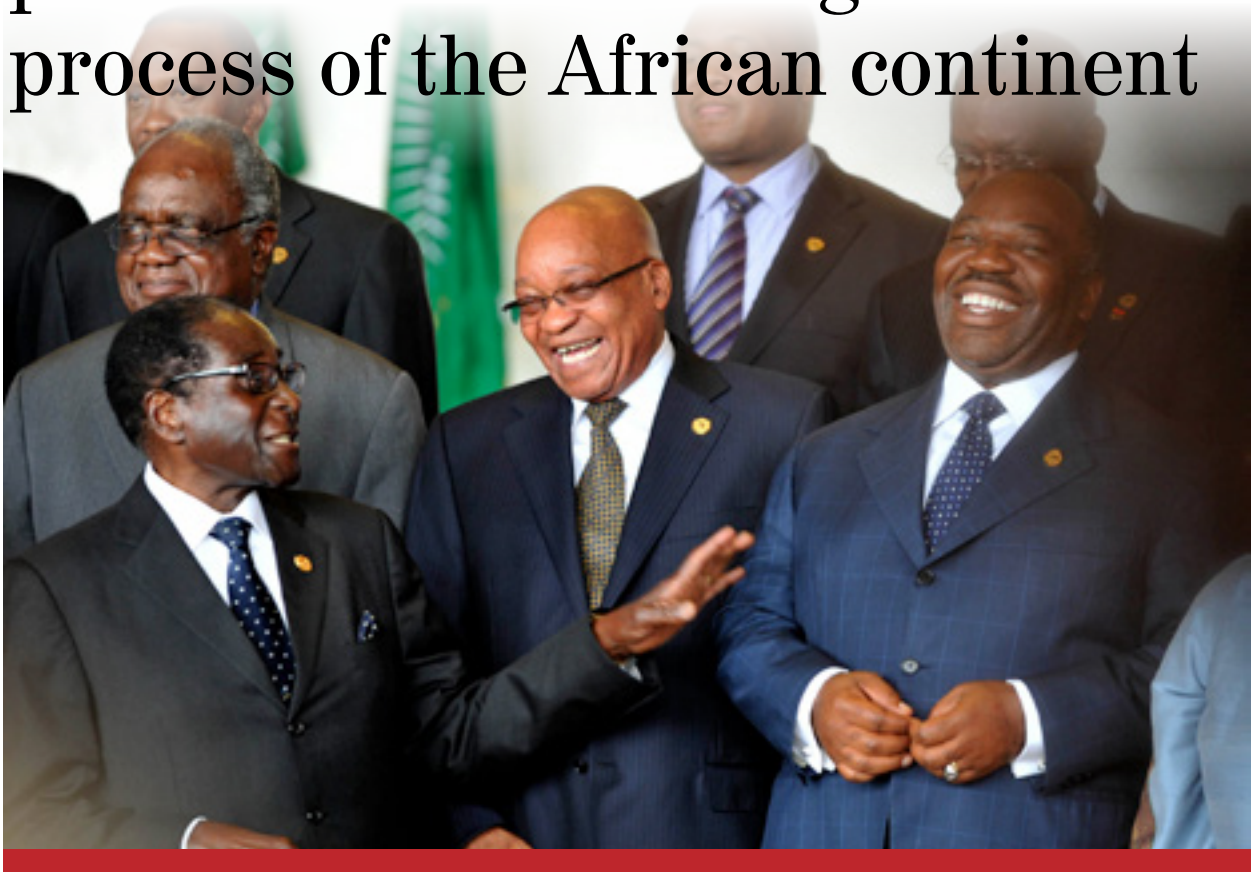
The role of the Pan African parliament in the integration process of the African continent



President Zuma at the AU Summit

The PAP should mobilise the people and their grassroots organisations to become involved in the management of national resources in all member states of the AU in order to ensure a people-centred and people-driven continent.

By Zwelethu Madasa

In the political traditions of the progressive international movement against imperialism and colonialism, there is an innate belief born out of the people's struggles all over the world that the people are their own liberators. The role of parliaments, in this case the Pan African Parliament, should be understood in the context of a people's liberation struggle against political and economic oppression emanating either domestically or globally. The people in the modern democratic political dispensation have elected representatives, the members of parliament, to be their voices in the management of national, regional and continental resources of states.

One of the eminent leaders of the African National Congress, the oldest liberation movement in Africa, Chief Albert Luthuli, subscribed to this revolutionary idea of the masses being their own liberators. A story was told by the late Oscar Mphetha, ANC leader in the Western Cape, of a meeting of white liberals that was held at Rosebank, Cape Town, in the early '60s where Chief Luthuli was invited to address the meeting. During question

time after Chief Luthuli's address apparently a white Liberal from the floor told the Chief that Black people will never rule South Africa. Chief Luthuli is reported to have replied, that if the Black people decided someday that enough was enough and fought for their own liberation, that day they would be liberated.

The conception of the Pan African Parliament (PAP) was influenced by progressive African forces epitomised by leaders such a Chief Albert Luthuli, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Samora Machel and Modibo Keita as a continental vehicle to advocate the liberation of the people by the people themselves. The Pan African Parliament was established as an organ of the African Economic Community (AEC) in accordance with the Abuja Treaty of 1991, whose aim was the political integration of the African Continent premised on regional economic integration. The Abuja Treaty was succeeded by the Constitutive Act of the African Union as a consequence of the transformation of the Organisation of the African Unity (OAU) to the African Union (AU) in the year 2000. This Act created the PAP as one of the organs of the AU. The primary aim of the OAU was liberation of the whole continent from colonial and apartheid oppression and domination. The rational for the transformation of the OAU to the AU was to ensure that the integration of the continent was underpinned by a strong institutional framework of governance. The PAP was envisaged as the main institution that would promote popular participation in the construction of the revitalised continent under the auspices of the AU.

Historically, the continent suffers from a problem of untransformed post-colonial independent predatory states. Africa is plagued by states that feed on their national resources for narrow personal gain. When we talk about the state here, we are referring mainly to the individuals who are responsible for managing the state. These individuals have neglected the masses that elected them and have allowed, perhaps unwittingly, a gap to grow between the governed and themselves, the rulers.

This is the culture that African states inherited from the former colonial governors who had no relationship with those they ruled as they were accountable only to their colonial masters, often far away geographically. The PAP is expected to work to close the gap of legitimacy and credibility that many leaders managing the post-colonial independent state permitted to grow. The PAP should mobilise the people and their grassroots organisations to become involved in the management of national resources in all member states of the AU in order to ensure a people-centred and driven continent.

The PAP could mobilise for a people-centred integration process of the continent through developing strong synergies with sister processes established with similar objectives, for example, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). The two latter organisations could through synergies make reports to the PAP about the progress the AU members states are making to improve governance so that the members of parliament in the PAP could take steps to enforce the results of reviews in their countries. NEPAD could make regular reports to the PAP as a matter of agreed procedure and the members of the PAP could similarly work to ensure that member states affected implement decisions taken during NEPAD meetings of Heads of States.

“NEPAD could make regular reports to the PAP as a matter of agreed procedure and the members of the PAP could similarly work to ensure that member states affected implement decisions taken during NEPAD meetings of Heads of States.”

Regrettably, the concept or African solutions to African problems developed by African intellectuals through the establishment of these solid institutions has been usurped by the Western powers, as if the solutions can be external to Africa. The Western powers have taken advantage of the apparent yielding of political ideological space and activism by the progressive international forces of the Left, thereby allowing the Conservative forces to drive the good governance and human rights agenda as an industry, and also to serve Western geo-political interests.

The externalisation of solutions to Africa's challenges is undermining the ability of the continent to take ownership of those solutions that originated from Africa and progressive international forces. The African intellectuals, international progressive forces, the African Youth and Women's organisations need to reclaim these African solutions represented by African Institutions such as the PAP, NEPAD and APRM in order to ensure a people-centred integration of the continent.

The insidious disease of dependence created by donor money will continue to weaken the continent unless the people of Africa and their leaders take the principle of self-reliance seriously. It is the duty of members of parliament as elected representatives of the people to agitate for increased contributions to the programmes of the continent aimed to promote economic emancipation of the peoples of Africa. Change comes from generational sacrifices by today's agents of change for the sake of tomorrow's success. It is the duty of members of parliament to make states responsive to the people's needs through robust and constructive oversight work over the executive arm of government. The PAP has a pivotal role to promote good governance and human rights throughout the continent, not because these original African values are preached by Western powers, but because of their intrinsic value.

However, for the PAP to play its role effectively it needs to attract a certain calibre of members of parliament and civil servants who understand and embrace the African values of service to

the people and being agents of change. The Abuja Treaty of 1991 that founded the PAP also makes mention of the important contribution that the people's grassroots organisations have to play. Therefore the members of parliament in the PAP are expected to devise strategies to create a continent-wide mass movement that is organised on the basis of shared values. In addition the PAP is expected according to its current protocol to promote the harmonisation of laws across the continent and regional economic integration in order to facilitate increased intra-trade in Africa. There are various standing committees of the PAP dealing with different sectors of the economy in Africa that mirror the committees of parliament at national level. These committees of the PAP have now been linked to their counterpart departments of the African Union Commission to improve synergies, good governance and accountability within the African union.

There is a huge role and potential for the PAP to work with corporate Africa in different sectors of the economy to facilitate the free movement of people, labour and goods in order to promote inclusive economic growth and small and medium enterprises. For example, in the pharmaceutical area a lot of work has been done by the PAP, funded by the Bill Gates Foundation, to promote harmonisation of the regulatory regime in the production and registration of medicines across the continent in order to promote sustainable investment in the production of medicines and to help address the health challenges. The role of the PAP now in this context is to develop a model law for the registration and production of medicines, hold public hearings, debate it and make a proposal to the Assembly of Heads of States for its adoption and implementation across the continent.

The PAP is also preparing work in collaboration with the World Bank in the area of energy to develop model laws ranging from regulations pertaining to the transportation of fuels and petroleum products to ensure conformity with international safety standards. The PAP could also research and develop model laws in the area of the standardisation and improvement of contracts between AU member States and multi-national corporations in different fields to ensure that these contracts comply with global standards on environmental and social responsibility and ensure revenue flows to member states. The AU is doing some work in the area of improving revenue collection by states. The PAP also to develop model laws for revenue collection that would be used as normative standards by each member state of the Union through national parliaments to enhance revenue collection. By developing over a sustainable period a common normative basis that would underpin an economically strong African Union the PAP could play a pivotal role on the integration process of the continent.

> "However, for the PAP to play its role effectively it needs to attract a certain calibre of members of parliament and civil servants who understand and embrace the African values of service to the people and being agents of change."

However, for the PAP to succeed in this role, adequate funding is absolutely necessary. Whilst the support of the donor communities is important because their domestic companies are benefiting from the resources of the continent, the African-based corporate world needs to put their money up front, contributing to the funding of the PAP. AU organs aim to promote the self-reliance of the continent. It is in this light that the private sector in Africa needs to become robustly involved to support the PAP and work with it to facilitate a climate conducive to sustainable economic investment in Africa and intra-Africa trade.

The PAP is enjoined by its protocol and the Constitutive Act of the AU to promote the principles of human rights, peace and security, democracy, good governance, transparency and accountability in Member States of the African Union. The PAP is also called upon to contribute to a more prosperous future for the peoples of Africa by promoting collective self-reliance and economic recovery.

These principles that the PAP is enjoined by the Assembly of Heads of States to promote and encourage are the bedrock for a prosperous Africa for its entire people. However, the PAP needs the support of progressive forces in Africa, its diaspora and globally. Academics, intellectuals as well as the ordinary people must work together and harness their energies and expertise in order to play this pivotal role. The principles that the PAP is expected to promote require ideological elucidation as well as programmes of action for successful implementation.

Progressive forces in African civil society including the media need to urgently utilise the space that the PAP has provided through its open committees in various themes and open plenary sessions to engage in the development of programmes that will help mobilise all Africans to action to build a better Africa for all. The time for armchair criticism on matters that are not going well in Africa is a luxury that can only be afforded by the Afro-pessimists in their studies and boardrooms. The peoples of Africa all know what their problems are and what the solutions should be; but they need a greater number of honest representatives to champion their worthy causes.

If the PAP continues to work to become the platform for the peoples of Africa and their grassroots organisations to have a voice in the decisions of the AU about the integration of the continent, it will have lived up to the expectations of the African leaders when they provided for establishment of the PAP in the Abuja Treaty in 1991. However, as the saying goes, he who puts his hand on the plough does not look back. We all have an obligation as Africans to help the PAP fulfil its mandate to represent the voices of the people in matters of governance in the continent. ■

Mbeki redefines African Renaissance

The twenty-first century quest for the re-birth of Africa has to realistically accept that some basic construction of a new African self-hood and activism is required.

By John Lamola

Former President Thabo Mbeki's article on the 50th anniversary of the OAU in *The Thinker* Volume 51 represents a historic contribution to the agenda of the African revolution. In a ground-breaking way, it refines and gives a new content to the concept of renaissance as introduced by Mbeki himself as a paradigm for a new activism for the development of Africa.

Mbeki bases his evaluative reflection on the record of the OAU on his reading of Emperor Haile Selassie's opening address at the inaugural conference of the organisation in 1963. This leads him to a melancholic conclusion that, fifty years on, the dream of African unity still remains but a dream. Consistent with his assumption that African unity is an essential expression and condition of African renaissance, logically, he had to either despair of the rebirth of Africa, or find a new meaning and focus for the African renaissance project. He dramatically finds this new meaning as he comes to terms with Selassie's assertion that, "in a real sense, our continent is unmade. It still awaits its creation and creators".

Renaissance, literally, means a rebirth, a re-awakening, a re-discovery of what existed before and has, over time, become obscured. Mbeki's re-reading of Selassie's speech exposes the fact that fifty years on, there is no Africa to reawaken, Africa is still unmade, awaiting its creators. The concept of renaissance as deployed towards the Africa of today is therefore inappropriate.

An Africa that still see itself through the cultural lenses of the civilisation of the colonisers, and is governed by an elite pervasively bought into the global capitalist culture of self-enrichment that benefits external power centres; an Africa that oozes with gold, platinum and diamonds yet needs the people of China to build its African Union headquarters, is definitely still awaiting its creation.

In the same vein, speakers at the recent Cape Town Africa World Economic Forum reminded the global investor community: Africa is not homogeneous; investors must not tar the whole continent with the same brush. There is no singular unified entity that should be called Africa, but a potpourri of diverse regional idiosyncratic blocs of countries that deviate in varying degrees from the esteemed norms of Western economic management. Africa still awaits its creators.

Telling too, is the fact it is not uncommon to find debates and colloquia in southern African universities on the topic "Who is an African?" Africa is still unmade; the Africa to reawaken is still searching for its identity.

A concomitant reflection on how Africa was fundamentally unmade by the trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonial plunder and the continuing effects of this history on the quality of leadership

"Central to "remaking" would be a deliberate and conscious effort at developing a new and uniquely African way of looking at ourselves, and at understanding and interacting with the world outside of Africa."

Africa has since had, leads Mbeki to a pivotal observation, against the background of Selassie's remark, that, "accordingly, our striving to achieve the renaissance of Africa must focus on the remaking of Africa!"

A robust and rigorous analysis of the state and condition of Africa as a geo-economic entity, as well as the cultural status and self-understanding of the people of Africa will corroborate this "remaking" paradigm. The concept of remaking alludes to a fundamental reconstruction. It does not entail the ad-hoc rushes to solve symptomatic problems that so much beset contemporary Africa. Central to "remaking" would be a deliberate and conscious effort at developing a new and uniquely African way of looking at ourselves, and at understanding and interacting with the world outside of Africa.

The root problem of Africa, in our humble observation, is its fixation with an exogenous mentality that cannot help but do and express everything with an eye to pleasing the external world forces, be they European, American or Asian. This has to be turned into an endogenous mentality, that will seek to do things for Africa, and for Africa's sake only.

Given the urgency of the African plight, the implication of the remaking of Africa project has, therefore, to include the replacement of the historically dismal slogan of "Africa must unite" with "Africa first!" The latter has a more direct normative challenge for a change in mentality, which will automatically realise the intentions of the former. "Africa first" speaks of self-liberation and mobilisation against all those demons that keep Africa divided and weak, such as tribalism, and the proclivity to be used by external interests against the welfare of Africa and the African agenda.

"Africa first" will mean that we value those things African, including African people, above everything else. This seemingly jingoistic afro-centrism is strategic. It is, in particular, a bitter remedy required in South Africa as an antidote against our self-hate which so amply expresses itself in a xenophobia that exclusively singles out black Africans.

Due to our education system that still treats Africa as an enigma fit for a museum, South Africans, both black and white, are woefully still caught up into an "Africa last" syndrome. This is starkly reflected in our street-naming grand parody where it is impossible to find a Nkrumah, Nyerere or Kaunda street in the capital city, where instead, preference is for the memorialisation of local Tshwane activists. Where is Agostinho Neto Street? Did Cuito Cuanavale never happen?

President Mbeki's appreciation of Emperor Selassie's wisdom is apt. The twenty-first century quest for the re-birth of Africa has to realistically accept that some basic construction of a new African self-hood and activism is required. Arise, creators of Africa! ■

COURTING CONTROVERSY

Zimbabwe's Empowerment Quest

If concerned only with the outcome while neglecting the process, empowerment is unlikely to achieve sustainable and equitable gains.

By Admire Thonje

The socio-economic plight of indigenous people in both developed and developing countries is a cause for concern. The picture is consistent; they form the disadvantaged in their countries. It is therefore worrisome that unless deliberate interventions are made, the indigenous groups like the black masses in Africa who have a long history of being exploited may continue to suffer from marginalisation. This is true for some of Zimbabwe's people who were excluded from wealth accumulation under colonial and white settler rule and then side-lined after independence. In contemporary Zimbabwe, it is mostly these poor, ordinary people who have suffered from economic misfortune.

For more than a decade now, Zimbabwe has drawn attention from certain sections of the international community - predominantly in a negative light. The land resettlement exercise, contentious political processes and outcomes, and various economic woes strewn in between are among the most prominent of issues over the past two decades. Criticism and support for the government of Zimbabwe has come from many circles. After appropriating land which was mostly owned by a white racial minority in the first years of independence, the government of Zimbabwe (starting with a Zanu-PF led government until 2008 and then a coalition between three belligerents – the MDC in its two forms and Zanu-PF) has taken to empowering its citizens. For some observers and analysts, the empowerment act is noble and ought to have been attempted earlier in Zimbabwe's development project. Indeed, the current initiative appears to be born out of similar observations and questions raised by Chimombe on foreign capital some twenty-six years ago. He wrote:

"not much progress has been made to assess the real net benefit which the country derives from foreign capital, whether in terms of employment, appropriate technology, manpower training, government revenue, reinvestment of profits, backward and forward linkages etc."[1]

The questions raised point towards disillusionment with the developmental role of foreign investment at a time when government was 'playing by the rules'. The disillusionment prevailed among indigenous business people with a study by Maphosa citing an entrepreneur as having said, "The reason we fought the war was that we wanted to control the economy of our country. Someone somewhere up there has apparently forgotten this. If the Government is going to continue with this carefree attitude we will continue to be subjugated by Whites for a long time to come."[2]

This disillusionment had persisted over the years and subsequently manifested itself in the empowerment policy. For some commentators, the drive for empowerment is as awkward as the political marriage which presided over Zimbabwe's state of affairs between 2008 and 2013. Critics note that empowerment is an excuse for the government's failure to create jobs and thus an attempt to pass the buck to the private sector by targeting foreign-owned companies. At more than 80% formal unemployment, such an assertion is difficult to ignore[3]. In addition, they note that empowerment which is tied to indigenisation is a desperate attempt to draw support from the electorate despite the risk of frightening away foreign capital and investment. The interest and criticism should not be of much surprise because empowerment is essentially about transforming power relations between and within groups. Consequently, there are winners and losers in the transformative process. On the whole, while critics see disaster in the effort, sympathisers see hope and success.

"The interest and criticism should not be of much surprise because empowerment is essentially about transforming power relations between and within groups."

Apart from being an endeavour to correct a historical wrong, the reason given by the state for engaging in empowerment is that foreign-owned companies have exploited the country's resources without paying attention to the development of communities residing in or around the resource-rich areas[4]. Furthermore, there is recognition that empowerment efforts are (in Zimbabwe's case should be) consistent with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) objectives such as broad-based participation in development as well as recognition and fulfilment of economic rights – a position emphasised by the responsible minister.

Historical background to the prevailing situation

Economic empowerment is premised (as was the land exercise) on an unjust and unbalanced distribution of resources steeped in history, which made wealth accumulation for some sectors of society a mammoth task. Upon independence, the government of Zimbabwe focused on developing skills partly to compensate for the skills flight of some members of the white community, and partly to uplift a multitude of black people who were coming from under-resourced areas. The efforts of the government witnessed gains in social development as a new breed of teachers, nurses and other professionals emerged and joined in a national effort towards socio-economic development.

However, owing to a lack of foresight and ill-advised policies such as the adoption of the economic structural adjustment program (ESAP) in 1991, many people lost their jobs and were found vulnerable as they were largely ill-equipped to find alternative employment (where it existed) or start ventures of their own. A few people set up businesses while the rest either eked out a living in urban areas, migrated back to their rural homes or sought work abroad.

During this period, organisations such as the Indigenous Business Development Centre and later on the Affirmative Action Group came to prominence demanding that empowerment of indigenous businesses be expediently dealt with. However, the government's commitment was taciturn and therefore

the first foray into empowerment bore narrow results. By the time of the economic disintegration which started at the turn of the new millennium, many of Zimbabwe's citizens were living in poverty. Importantly, many people (especially in rural areas) lived in poverty while multinational companies 'looted' the wealth – almost literally – from under their feet for the enrichment of their owners in foreign lands – or so it seemed. Spurred on by the recognition of endemic racialised poverty, an anti-imperialist ideology and renewed pan-African/nationalist ethos, the government (then led by Zanu-PF) turned to indigenisation as a policy to improve people's lives. The situation was no longer tuned for encouraging people to be employees; instead, it was now time to become owners of 'God given resources' and become employers.

Indigenisation and economic empowerment

Generally, indigenisation and economic empowerment are policies which have been influenced by efforts towards uplifting poor masses around the globe. In Zimbabwe, the model which has been studiously observed is South Africa's black economic empowerment (BEE). Suffice to note, BEE in South Africa has been controversial in some circles because of its apparent creation of 'a new group of black elite'. The drawbacks of the South African model did not deter their Zimbabwean counterparts. In addition to learning from BEE, delegates from Zimbabwe showed an interest in the model applied by the Royal Bafokeng Trust culminating in a tour of Rustenburg in 2011. While learning was underway, the legal framework was being constructed. The Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act [Chapter 14:33] was officially passed into law in 2008 but put into action in 2010. The Act gives legal backing to the model which authorities have devised. The model is built upon five schemata:

procurement involvement of indigenous businesses and people;

- employee Share Ownership Schemes (ESOS);
- community Share Ownership Schemes (CSOS);
- sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF)[5];
- a company or other entity incorporated by the Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation (ZMDC).

According to the Act, indigenisation means "a deliberate involvement of indigenous Zimbabweans in the economic activities of the country, to which hitherto they had no access, so as to ensure the equitable ownership of the nation's resources". Indigenous people are "any person who, before the 18th April, 1980, was disadvantaged by unfair discrimination on the grounds of his or her race, and any descendant of such person, and includes any company, association, syndicate or partnership of which indigenous Zimbabweans form the majority of the members or hold the controlling interest". The Act seeks to "provide for support measures for the further indigenisation of the economy; to provide for support measures for the economic empowerment of indigenous Zimbabweans; to provide for the establishment of the National Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Board and its functions and management; to provide for the establishment of the National Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Fund; to provide for the National Indigenisation and Empowerment Charter; and to provide for matters connected with or incidental to the foregoing". Lastly, empowerment is construed as "the creation of an environment which enhances the performance of the economic activities of indigenous Zimbabweans into which they would have been introduced or involved through indigenisation". With such a noble goal in mind, how then is it that Zimbabwe has again stirred a hornet's nest among its international peers as well as within its borders? It is to some of the errors that the article now turns.

> "Apart from being an endeavour to correct a historical wrong, the reason given by the state for engaging in empowerment is that foreign-owned companies have exploited the country's resources without paying attention to the development of communities residing in or around the resource-rich areas."

Criticism of indigenisation in Zimbabwe

Some of the criticisms have been brought up by the reserve bank governor and prominent economists. The controversy surrounding the empowerment drive lies in the notion that while the idea and principle are noble, the execution is bad. For a start, 51% ownership of a venture to which one has made no input is considered excessive by investors who have assumed much risk in making their capital bear returns. Furthermore, criticism has emerged on the apparently selective application of the law with regards to Chinese-owned firms which are treated favourably in contrast to the treatment meted out on other foreign-owned firms. In short, it is a concoction poisonous to foreign capital.

Second, there have been dubious dealings by responsible authorities in some cases, like the Zimplats deal. Zimplats successfully engaged the ministry responsible for indigenisation upon meeting conditions and offering a satisfactory package for transfer of 51% of its ownership. However, as the conditions for transfer of ownership became public knowledge, the ministry appeared to have grasped the short end of the deal, much to the chagrin of the head of state. The criticism arising from the debacle has been to the effect that the persons who negotiated on behalf of the minister were incompetent and cannot be

entrusted with negotiations in future deals. Criticism regarding transparency has emanated from the involvement of a local consulting company (Brainworks Capital Management) in negotiating indigenisation deals. Some sections of the media and corporate world have questioned how the company was awarded the tender, especially considering the close personal ties between company directors and the responsible minister.

As earlier stated, one of the current empowerment model's most fervent critics has been the governor of the reserve bank. The reserve bank governor has tabled his alternative version of empowerment. His model is procurement based[6] with his criticism of the current model lying in the understanding that:

1. The current model is a weak model. It is too rigid, assuming a blanket approach without considering the structural differences in sectors such as the banking sector. To emphasise this point, it is worth noting that bank collapses since the year 2000[7] have occurred among locally owned banks alone. Applying the indigenisation on the basis of current stipulations on a sector which has already proved problematic for local firms is highly risky, putting depositor's funds as well as the economy in danger. A sector sensitive model is thus advocated.
2. There is ambiguity on how to seek legal recourse in the event of complex disputes. Some ministers have already shown discontent at the far-reaching tentacles of the Act with contestations over its scope and legality having emerged. By virtue of the minister's actions with regards to enterprises in many sectors, some people have become wary of the apparent superseding nature of the Act.
3. The model is bent on enriching elites. The self-enrichment criticism is probably the most resounding among those who have concerns about the manner in which the empowerment drive is executed. While evidence is scant that there has been wealth accumulation through indigenisation, the Brainworks saga which revealed the secretive nature of deals has fuelled suspicions. The argument is further given credence when concerns raised by some sectors of communities in resource-rich areas are considered. People in areas such as Chiadzwa have been quick to note that their area is being exploited without much development. Instead, proceeds from mining activities are alleged to be channelled towards development of other areas. As such, where foreign companies failed, the government appears to be failing as well. One form of elitist exploitation is merely replacing another.

> "The situation was no longer tuned for encouraging people to be employees; instead, it was now time to become owners of 'God given resources' and become employers."

To the above criticisms, some analysts add that:

4. There has been ignorance of lessons from South Africa (particularly on sustainability) regarding certain aspects such as private acquisitions. Tangri and Southall[8] point out that some companies bequeathed some of their shares to black entrepreneurs who turned out to operate more like traders – shorting their positions – thereby compromising the empowerment effort. Consequently, a company could be found to be compliant with BEE at one point only to become non-compliant upon sale of the black-owned shares.
5. The empowerment programme is open-ended in nature. As a result, it is difficult to evaluate. After exactly how long can people be deemed to be fully empowered? Again the South African experience will prove instructive in Zimbabwe's case. Having enjoyed independence for the past 19 years it is clear that summative evaluations cannot be made at present. Hence, it is difficult to draw conclusions with absolute certainty that empowerment has been successful or failed.
6. The brains entrusted with managing the indigenisation exercise are not adept at the task. Managerial quality in trust boards resembles the management that has been entrusted with state enterprises such as NRZ, GMB and Air Zimbabwe. As a result, the outcome is likely to be disastrous.

> "The controversy surrounding the empowerment drive lies in the notion that while the idea and principle are noble, the execution is bad."

The empowerment exercise has not been without benefits. According to state media, CSOSs have led to the rehabilitation of schools and small dams in some communities. Yet this benefit draws out further criticism. It is not clear whether the CSOSs are a parallel to local governments, a replacement or a complementary structure. This is because the CSOSs have now assumed the developmental work normally done by local authorities, such as infrastructure development.

Outstanding issues on empowerment

For people in the world of development practice and its academic arena, empowerment is not a new term. To some, it is synonymous with the Chinese proverb 'give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime'. It has either been concerned with giving a man a fish, the lake or the means to fish but not the entire package. In its many forms, empowerment has been largely a top-down effort; crafted by some superior, all-knowing body of technocrats for the 'ignorant' or sometimes ill-equipped masses with the intention of 'empowering' them. For

example, in women's empowerment, it is often academics and elites who articulate the social constructs which reflect power dynamics and roles between men and women while poorer women mostly accept the solutions that are devised. For some who became uncomfortable with the patriarchal connotations, empowerment has become synonymous with the hackneyed phrase 'helping people help themselves'. The various forms have thus far achieved varying results. Consequently, empowerment in Zimbabwe and anywhere else should be conceptualised as a broader power shift mechanism and human rights issue.

Empowerment of previously marginalised (and in some cases currently marginalised) groups does not occur out of simple transfer of resources or provision of supportive frameworks alone. For example, empowerment of women is not achieved by merely instituting quota systems or instituting legislative frameworks but partly depends on transformation of the very system that has suppressed women's emancipation – society. Similarly, with regards to economic empowerment, a benevolent disposition and a legislative instrument are inadequate. There are clearly power relations which need to be understood and altered. A narrow focus in an attempt to empower groups may derive limited outcomes or even reduce the effort into a farce. It is imperative that empowerment be seen and understood in the context of the socio-economic and political factors which influence it. When conceived as a human rights issue, empowerment encapsulates a broader section of those seeking to be empowered while curtailing the role and powers of those facilitating it. As a result, the obligations of those in higher office are clearly articulated and their extent defined. Instead of being understood as a short-term measure aimed at redress, it becomes a sustained effort which spans time horizons. For example, at present, the politicking around empowerment appears to ignore the fact that efforts must be inter-generational in nature. Whereas the fixation is on correcting the plight of those indigenous people in Zimbabwe at present, a human rights oriented approach would also consider future generations. Neither can empowerment be perceived as a solitary process nor an act confined to one line-ministry or area or expertise. Instead, it is a national endeavour which is broad and diverse in nature, drawing on contributions from other ministries, communities and political formations. It is from this perspective that empowerment initiatives in Zimbabwe have been lacking so far.

> "Scant community involvement[9] and inadequate representation translate to an exclusive process that is not grassroots oriented and therefore top-down."

The current efforts in Zimbabwe and indeed in South Africa, focus on immediate outcomes and not the relevant processes which yield sustainable and inclusive outcomes. For example, in Zimbabwe, the current pre-occupation is on transfer of resources from one group to another. While this is a visible act of empowerment, it is inadequate as a sustainable effort. The processes which an empowerment effort could effect include recognising the bearers and claim holders in their many forms (i.e. primary and secondary), involving all stakeholders primarily the primary stakeholders and applying a bottom-up approach. Scant community involvement[9] and inadequate representation translate to an exclusive process that is not grassroots oriented and therefore top-down.

> "Rights-based approaches may go some way towards ensuring that governance and transparency prevail and controversy is curtailed."

At present, empowerment has been confined to social, economic and cultural rights alone and not civil and political rights. To refer again to the Maoist proverb on fishing, confining rights issues in empowerment to only one class of rights is as good as teaching one how to fish in an area where there are no fish. While the learner grasps some skills necessary for survival, the skills are of little use without availability of other resources and additional skills sets. Economic empowerment depends for its success on civil and political empowerment to complement it.

By political empowerment is meant recognition and support of multiple political leanings and interests. The communities and individuals that are set to be empowered economically need to participate in continuously shifting power dynamics as well. For example, freedom of movement, participation and expression are vital in empowering individuals. Yet already, there have been reports of incidences which have curtailed participation freedom of some sections in communities and even of officers in the state commissioned Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). Furthermore, the selection of traditional leaders who have a clear partisan position serves to highlight the constrained freedoms that alternative voices face with regards to articulating their wishes and desires in the empowerment drive. If representatives in CSOSs are selected on partisan lines, it is likely that the rights of conforming parties will be recognised to the detriment of contesting parties.

Empowerment efforts in Zimbabwe have thus far been premised on the provision of a supporting legislative framework, the creation of an enabling economic environment, making resources available and creating awareness. These factors are insufficient, as there is also a need for support from the empowered especially in poor regions through skills development. There has to be a deliberate effort to build capacities through enhancing skills especially rural areas. This is

because while prominent transactions/ deals have thus far involved 'foreign-owned' companies transferring shares to community schemes, employee schemes and undisclosed parties, in time, small local enterprises will participate more through procurement and supply of inputs and output. With the majority of Zimbabwe's population residing in rural areas, there will be a need to address skills gaps to ensure that citizens from these parts have their rights to participate in empowerment recognised and fulfilled. Without the requisite skills, not many business people will succeed in becoming part of the value chain.

So far, the focus has been on considering one set of parties to whom companies to be indigenised and the state have obligations – marginalised communities. However, there is an additional party whose rights risk being neglected – current shareholders. Granted, some of the shareholders include companies and funds which do not possess or lay claim to human rights, but there are individuals who are also part of shareholding the companies. Can their rights to property and to freedom of ownership of property be considered less important to those of other groups? Where shares are disposed of, will they be dispensed at fair value to the shareholders? This is an interesting element to the empowerment challenge, and the courts will certainly be approached for its resolution. The land reform or land redistribution exercise revealed the extent to which authorities in Zimbabwe were 'committed' to recognising property rights where they contested for attention with restitution-oriented processes. Whether the treatment of property rights will be different in the indigenisation effort or not is still a matter for speculation and conjecture at present.

Lastly, because empowerment is linked to rights and rights issues identify duties and obligations, the role of primary and secondary duty-bearers must be succinctly defined. Those charged with protecting, fulfilling and recognising the rights of the empowered include the state, local community leadership and companies through their management. For empowerment to succeed, they have to work in the best interests of all parties concerned. This requires transparency, communication and fairness. Applying rights to the empowerment agenda can thus aid in abating some of the pitfalls that have plagued empowerment in some parts of the globe and currently threaten to do likewise in Zimbabwe. These pitfalls include inequitable resource allocation and corruption. Moreover, recognising parties with duties and obligations ensures that those who are 'empowered' do not feel a sense of entitlement without responsibility. In the case of CSOSs and ESOSs, the 'empowered' have obligations to their communities at large and to future generations as well. Rights-based approaches may go some way towards ensuring that governance and transparency prevail and controversy is curtailed. Rights-based empowerment efforts may also incorporate people from regions which do not have vast resource-wealth by recognising their claims to economic and social rights that others may now enjoy.

"With the majority of Zimbabwe's population residing in rural areas, there will be a need to address skills gaps to ensure that citizens from these parts have their rights to participate in empowerment recognised and fulfilled. Without the requisite skills, not many business people will succeed in becoming part of the value chain."

Conclusion

The position taken in this article is that empowerment does not result from one privileged group assisting others less privileged. Instead it derives success from the underprivileged engaging their challenges and empowering themselves in an enabling environment facilitated by duty bearers. In so doing, effective governance is realised. To empower themselves, certain conditions and resources have to be available to communities. These include a human rights framework to empowerment. If concerned only with the outcome while neglecting the process, empowerment is unlikely to achieve sustainable and equitable gains.

If left to market forces, there is no doubt that people will be marginalised from economic participation and ownership. What is debatable – as is the case in Zimbabwe – is how to ensure that the empowerment process is appropriate to ensure a positive or desired outcome. Empowerment short of recognising rights issues is nothing but a pyrrhic victory. While rights-based approaches are not a panacea for the world's ills and development challenges, when used to complement other approaches, they are likely to pose better chances of success, equity and equality. ■

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4. Mining towns such as Redcliff and Kamativi have been left degraded and desolate after companies have withdrawn operations leaving locals with environmental and economic challenges of colossal proportion.
5. Currently recognised as the National Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Fund –NIEEF
6. Ironically, South African black business council has recently sought litigation claiming the unconstitutionality of the procurement bill related to black economic empowerment.
7. Some of the banks to have faced closure in recent times include Trustfin Bank, CFX Bank, Century Bank, Intermarket Building Society, Royal Bank, Barbican Bank, Genesis Investment Bank, Interfin Banking Corporation, ReNaissance Merchant Bank.
8. Tangri, R. and Southall, R. 2008. The Politics of Black Economic Empowerment in South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 34 (3). 699-716.
9. Groups such as the youth, women and the disabled are mostly scantily represented as older males dominate in the empowerment drive.

(ANTI) SOCIAL MEDIA

A Human Rights Perspective

Staying connected has therefore become easier. Whether these connections lead to deep and meaningful discussion limited to 140 characters, or whether Facebook friends can be inspired to become human rights activists, remains to be seen.

By Kayum Ahmed

Does clicking the 'like' button on a human rights organisation's Facebook page amount to activism? Social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have been used to launch important human rights campaigns, which according to some commentators, contributed significantly to the Arab Spring. However, social media platforms have also been used to perpetuate hate speech and racism, and it has been suggested that online media is unable to instil a sense of discipline and strategy in activists. Is social media therefore essentially anti-social?

The Big Black Braai

Sitting across the circular conference table from Mr Zama Khumalo, I noticed how angry he became when he spoke about white people: "When I see a white man, I see someone who has robbed me of the privilege I was supposed to have." Zama was twenty-four when I first met him on 14 February 2013. He was an unemployed journalist struggling to make a living, having quit his job with a local newspaper about a year before our encounter.

Zama was a participant in a mediation session arranged by the South African Human Rights Commission following comments he posted on his Facebook page celebrating the deaths of forty-two white children who died in a tragic accident when a school bus plunged into the Westdene Dam in March 1985. Zama wanted to arrange what he referred to as a 'Big Black Braai' (barbeque) to celebrate the deaths of these forty-two children. He stated, "On 27 March 2013, I will send out an invite to invite you to come to the Westdene Dam for a BIG Black Braai, (100% Blacks), fireworks, DJ – Black-People, celebrating their death… we will always celebrate the death of whiteness."

While my colleague from the Human Rights Commission facilitated the mediation session, I watched Zama and the young white attorneys representing one of the complainants who had lodged a complaint against him. After Zama apologised and suggested that he cannot live in the past any longer, the attorney noted that he was a similar age to Zama and that he agreed that as South Africans, it was important to leave the past behind.

I watched these two young South African men: one was black, angry and unemployed, while the other was white and employed as an attorney. I wondered whether Zama viewed the young white attorney as, "someone who ha(d) robbed (him) of the privilege (he) was supposed to have."

Zama explained that his decision to post the 'Big Black Braai' on his Facebook account followed his reading of a book by Albert Luthuli called, "Let My People Go," published in 1962. The book relates a story of how white South Africans decided to celebrate their 200 year domination of black people by arranging a celebration in Pretoria. This 'celebration' is contrasted with black people suffering 200 years of oppression under colonial and apartheid rule.

Zama explained further that after reading Luthuli's book, he needed to meet a friend at the Westdene Dam. When the friend failed to pitch up, he bought a cigarette and walked around the dam. He came across a memorial dedicated to the forty two children who died and thought about the book he had just read in which Luthuli described white people celebrating the oppression of black people. Without knowing that those who died in the tragic accident were children or that they had no link to the apartheid regime, Zama assumed

that the memorial had some sort of political significance.

Given that Chief Albert Luthuli was a Nobel Peace Prize winner and the past President of the African National Congress, and that the innocent children who died in the Westdene Dam tragedy had no link at all to the apartheid regime, I began to wonder how Zama could have misread both Luthuli's work as well as the memorial dedicated to the children who died. So I visited the Westdene Dam shortly after the mediation session and noted that the memorial simply states, Westdene Dam, March 27, 1985, In Memoriam and then goes on to list the forty two names of those who died.

It appears that Zama's anger towards white people clouded his perception of everything he read. His anger became a lens through which he interpreted Luthuli's work as well as the memorial. He did not even manage to take down all forty two names, just the first twenty four during his visit to the dam.

When Zama was asked why he decided to use Facebook as a medium for expressing his views, he said, "Facebook asked me 'what's on your mind?' and so I said what was on my mind." While Zama's story is rooted in a complex mix of race, history and socio-economic inequality, the medium he used for expressing his views, namely Facebook, generated immense media attention both locally and internationally. He received death threats and had to leave his home for a week fearing for his safety.

Zama's use of social media to express his anger and frustration through hate speech is one of many cases dealt with by the South African Human Rights Commission involving media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. Two cases that also grabbed media headlines involved a white model who posted various racist tweets and a white student at a local university in Cape Town who made derogatory statements against black people. These cases were also mediated by the Commission resulting in both parties publicly apologising for their comments.

Revolution 2.0

While cases such as Zama Khumalo's demonstrates the negative impact of social media, Wael Ghonim, who started a Facebook page to draw attention to the murder of Khaled Said by Egyptian security police, believes that social media was an effective tool during the Arab Spring. Inspired by the death of Khaled Said and frustrated with the Egyptian government's blatant cover up of his murder, Ghonim started a Facebook page entitled, "We Are All Khaled Said." Within two minutes of creating the Facebook page, three hundred members had joined the page. By the end of the campaign, more than 100,000 had joined the Facebook page.

Various campaigns were coordinated through Ghonim's Facebook page starting off with a simple campaign where participants changed their profile picture to a banner of Khaled Said against the backdrop of an Egyptian flag. Subsequently, various peaceful demonstrations across Egypt were organised. In his book entitled *Revolution 2.0 The Power of the People is Greater than the People in Power: A Memoir* (2012 Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), he lists the number of people who liked and commented on every Facebook post.

While Ghonim clearly believes that the number of likes and comments represent some form of activism and expression of support for his campaign, celebrated author, Malcolm Gladwell, suggests that social media platforms have been given far too much credit for starting revolutions ('Small Change: Why the Revolution will not be Tweeted' *The New Yorker*, 4 October 2010). Gladwell believes that we have forgotten what activism is and that a degree of personal connection to a campaign is critical in ensuring its long-term sustainability and success. He does however recognise the limited value of social media campaigns that do not require too much of the user such as signing up for a bone marrow donor registry. "But weak ties," according to Gladwell, "seldom lead to high-risk activism."

Staying Connected

It has become fairly common to observe people in restaurants and other social settings texting or tweeting instead of actually engaging with each other. Social media therefore has an anti-social element to it. Instead of creating greater connectivity, the use of social media may also result in a greater disconnect between people. Similarly, human rights campaigns that rely too heavily on social media platforms may invariably gain significant interest and attention, but fail to translate the likes on its Facebook page into concrete activism.

The Human Rights Commission's Twitter account @sahrcommission, has nearly 5,000 followers for instance. But these followers are not necessarily supporters of the Commission's work. Many of our followers publicly criticise the work of the Commission and use Twitter to express their unhappiness about a particular position using 140 characters or less.

The increase in the number of complaints received by the Human Rights Commission relating to incidences of hate speech and racism using social media platforms, also points to the harm that can be caused through the improper use of social media. The anonymity that social media provides its users also creates further difficulty in investigating matters.

Despite the criticism levelled against social media, it remains an effective tool for sharing information with those who are able to access these platforms. The growing number of smartphones being purchased across the socio-economic spectrum means that more people have access to social media. It has therefore become easier for the Human Rights Commission to share information about a campaign with a Facebook friend in a rural Eastern Cape village, than it was before we launched our Facebook page. There is also greater access to our services through social media platforms allowing users to lodge complaints and request information through these mechanisms.

Staying connected has therefore become easier. Whether these connections lead to deep and meaningful discussion limited to 140 characters, or whether Facebook friends can be inspired to become human rights activists, remains to be seen. ■

A Class Analysis of Regional Integration

The recent global financial crisis may or may not be the beginning of a fundamental reversal of fortunes for neo-liberalism and its contents; it is at best an opportunity to review our understanding of global capitalism and its rivals.

By Mxolisi Notshulwana

An unintended paradox of contemporary regional integration approaches is that the stronger their case for regarding African integration as a capitalist hegemonic project, the weaker is the evidence of any opposition to it. The demonstration that a transnational bourgeoisie is working to constitutionalise disciplinary neo-liberalism, if convincing, only serves to prove the inadequacy of any countervailing opposition to the project. While this description of the social reality of capitalism in Africa may be a good starting point for political analysis, this pessimism perhaps underplays a basic Marxist principle that classes are co-substantial.

While terms like proletariat or working classes have an anachronistic ring to them, and indeed seem to have slipped from the lexicon of left-leaning analysis, their dialectical pairings such as transnational bourgeoisie or ruling class forces have not. Many contemporary analyses of African regional integration focus almost entirely on the success enjoyed by the ruling class in establishing its ideological and economic hegemony across the continent.

The recent global financial crisis may or may not be the beginning of a fundamental reversal of fortunes for neo-liberalism and its contents; it is at best an opportunity to review our understanding of global capitalism and its rivals. The economy and the process of regional integration have to be made more democratically accountable. Regional governments should refrain from attempting to overwhelmingly shore up market rules over the lives of African citizens at a time when the global economy has become increasingly destabilised. In short, what we need is to lessen the neoliberal practice of incessantly socialising the risks of doing business and development in Africa while profits remain privatised.

This aversion to politicising the economy can be set against the apparently apolitical form of governance that has prevailed in the past few decades of neoliberal orthodoxy. Indeed, market-driven versions of regional integration in Africa have enabled governments to present themselves as impotent managerial bodies that handle the external economic pressure they face. The result of this seemingly impotent managerial order has been an acute obfuscation of power relations in the reconstruction of contemporary capitalism.

Mainstream approaches to regional integration in Africa offer little in assisting to overcome this obfuscation. Instead most work on regional integration has arguably contributed to the elaboration of discourses that have added to it. This can partly be explained in terms of how the defining debate of the study of regional integration – that between functionalists, neo-functionalists, intergovernmentalists, and those supporting the new regionalism approach – has constrained its disciplinary horizons. Now, we need to bring other dimensions in the political economy and policy mix to accelerate regional integration and lift Africa's infrastructure development.

The Africa Competitiveness Report 2013, recently launched by the World Bank at the WEF in Cape Town, identifies three sectors as critical in changing the class character of regional integration in Africa. Empirical research evidence in the World Bank Report shows that energy, transportation and the information, communication and technology (ICT) sectors serve as important levers to bridge the divide between rural and urban, developed and less developed areas, whilst linking the region to facilitate and enhance infrastructure investment and economic growth. The Report argues that the greatest impact in regional infrastructure investments is derived from telecommunications followed by roads and electricity. For instance, the Report estimates that sustained infrastructure investments of about 1 per cent in transport and telecommunications can yield increases in the GDP per capita rate by 0.6 per cent[1].

This comprehensive policy mix of infrastructure development needs to be complemented by a strong and active state with an open method of civil society coordination that promotes flexibility and a class-based model of regional integration. In this way, the process of regional integration in Africa becomes an arena of organic and multiple conversations about how to redesign the social and economic relations of capitalism. This regional integration approach posits a relational and dynamic process in respect to how power is mediated. An even greater challenge in the regional integration approach in Africa is how the continent is willing to redefine or modify state sovereignty in the process of regional integration.

> "The economy and the process of regional integration have to be made more democratically accountable."

The class analysis of the process of regional integration posits one way of looking at the process and at how regional infrastructure can catalyse linkages across national boundaries. At the very least, domestic political economy and class interests offer a better mechanism – a transmission belt – by which regional impulses are translated into policy. The cautious intergovernmental approaches to regional integration in the continent may be a prudent model and this approach may have to be slightly modified if deeper regional integration is to be achieved.

> "The result of this seemingly impotent managerial order has been an acute obfuscation of power relations in the reconstruction of contemporary capitalism."

The sovereignty debt crisis in Europe shows the challenge that Africa will face if the balance between national interests and regional unity is not properly arranged. One European observer put the challenge of the class character of European integration this way: "the crisis was neither the fault of the bunch of profligate countries, nor was it caused solely by a group of reckless banks investing the net surpluses of their home markets in the bubbles of the European periphery. Those activities contributed, for sure, but the catalyst for the crisis was mainly political: each country's national political leaders had been unable, since the outset of the euro, to respond to the social costs of globalisation once they could no longer resort to the instruments, often delusive and deceitful, of national monetary policy. National politics shoved under the rug the structural changes connected to the new open economic environment, and in order to do that, each country would resort to different tricky stratagems that proved unsustainable once the crisis started"[2].

A class analysis of regional integration draws on the importance of coordinative discourse to embed and politically legitimate the economic and social dimensions of regional integration. Indeed, market integration even at the level of fiscal coordination is not enough outside the political and economic integration that brings clearer directions of the role of the state and the relationship of capital, markets, public powers and the citizens. The discursive interactions between the state, markets, capital and citizens should be co-constitutive and co-determinant in the process of regional integration. In this way, the neoliberal sanctity or the privileging of the markets is replaced with a more nuanced class analysis linking markets to state action, raising and focusing on citizen development and well-being in the process of regional integration. ■

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SAB pledges R1 million to protect rhinos in partnership with government

South African Breweries

The South African Breweries (SAB) has pledged R1 million to building a sustainable partnership with the Environmental Affairs Department to promote rhino conservation.

The funding will supplement the investment that SAB, SA's leading brewer, has made over the past few years. To date, SAB has contributed more than R30 million to various rhino and wildlife initiatives, including the capture and tagging of rhinos.

SAB Executive Chairman Norman Adami says: "We have been horrified by the senseless slaughter of wildlife, which is part of South Africa's precious heritage. We see investing in initiatives to help save wildlife such as rhinos as an important element of our corporate social responsibility.

Mr Adami said the additional R1 million would be directed towards initiatives for rhino conservation which would be agreed jointly with the Environmental Affairs Department.

SAB was the first corporate company to sponsor the RhoDIS database in 2011. The RhoDIS database is based on the CODIS (Combined DNA Index System) used by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to match a suspect's DNA to a crime scene. It actively supports the South African Police Service, conservation authorities such as SANPARKS and private rhino owners in building a shared asset register of rhinos in the country.

SAB regularly sponsors events where animals, including rhino, are tagged and DNA samples are taken. Since the start of these events in 2004, a total of 155 animals have been tagged, with the majority being rhino.

Last year, SAB also teamed up with former international cricketer, Mark Boucher, to launch the SAB Boucher Conservation Non-Profit Company aimed at raising critical funds needed to assist with saving our threatened rhino population. The non-profit company aims to raise enough money to eventually register all of South Africa's 18 000 rhinos on RhoDIS.

The RhoDIS system has been used in several successful prosecutions. This included the jailing of a Vietnamese man for ten years after he was arrested at OR Tambo International airport while trying to smuggle rhino horns out of South Africa. The DNA profiles obtained from the horns matched the profiles of rhinos poached only days earlier.

"We wanted to be sure that our efforts support the most credible rhino conservation programmes and that we do not waste or duplicate scarce resources. SAB believes that an essential part of the solution is an effective rhino management system, based on a comprehensive database of DNA samples."

Mr Adami said there are already so many valuable efforts across the country, with some risking their lives every day to help protect the rhino. "We wanted to be sure that our efforts support the most credible rhino conservation programmes and that we do not waste or duplicate scarce resources. SAB believes that an essential part of the solution is an effective rhino management system, based on a comprehensive database of DNA samples." ■

SAB The South African Breweries

Celebrating those who rise to the challenges of implementing early childhood education

We pay tribute to the many, many thousands of women who, against all odds and despite having very little support, care for and educate our youngest children each day.

By Michaela Ashley-Cooper and Lauren Van Niekerk

It is five in the morning and the smell of porridge fills the rooms of the small house in the slowly waking township of Xola Naledi, in Grabouw, Western Cape. Benita Garnet is getting herself and her three children – aged 6, 10 and 15 – ready for school, and makes sure her husband, who is ill, gets his medication. It's not very long before she hears a knock on her front door and when she opens it a little boy stands at the entrance. His grandmother kisses him goodbye and sends him inside. Benita hands him his bowl of porridge and waits for the sound of other small footsteps outside on her veranda. Invariably more toddlers arrive before sunrise, their mothers entrusting them in Benita's care while most of them make their way to work.

When all the children have arrived, they will enjoy music, play with blocks and try their hand at colouring in, and before long it will be lunchtime. Then it is sleep time, followed by outdoor play. This is a typical day at Benita's Early Childhood Development (ECD) centre.

While it started in 2007 with one small child, today Benita's centre has between 12 and 15 children. "I was tired of working for others," says Benita of her motivation for starting her centre. "Today I am proud to be working for myself. I have a passion for what I do and running this care group is my dream."

Always keen to learn more about child development, Benita regularly attends training, broadening her knowledge, and she is reaping the benefits. "Before, I saw my role with the children as being there to keep them away from harm's way. I thought it was childish to play with them, but as soon as I interacted with them I was surprised to see them learning," says Benita. "Now I encourage the children to learn through play. Educating and helping them is what preoccupies me because I want them to make something of their lives." Benita says that the training has given her the skills required to provide the children with a quality early learning environment and a chance at a better quality of life than her parents were able to give her. "I want to give them everything that I can. That's why they must learn; so that one day they can also run their own businesses and not be dependent on someone else."

This story is just one example of the strong South African women who have overcome significant obstacles in order to care for the children in their communities. In doing so, these women bring about social change in a fundamental way and are the foundation for our country's early education.

There are currently more than 60,000 women working in ECD centres throughout South Africa; this means that over 60,000 jobs have been independently created at no cost to government. This is a significant accomplishment and something that should be celebrated. However, the early childhood development sector in South Africa faces a multitude of challenges; underpaid teachers, unemployed parents, hungry children, and unsafe early learning environments are a few of the obstacles caregivers and children experience every day.

According to figures reported in the Child Gauge 2012, in 2010 it was estimated that children constitute 37% of South Africa's population (18.5 million children 18 years and under, and 6.5 million children 6 years and

under), with 60% of our children living in abject poverty (household income below R575 per month). This figure has declined steadily since 2003, partially due to the reach of the Child Support Grant, which currently supports more than 11 million children. The official mortality rate of our youngest and most vulnerable citizens is a distressing 56 deaths per 1000 live births. Approximately 450,000 children under the age of 15 years are HIV-positive and 3 million children reside in homes that reported child hunger.

Whilst South Africa has high levels of school enrolment and attendance in Grades 1 – 12, with an attendance rate of 97% in 2010, the quality of education in our country is poor and there are still approximately 350,000 children across South Africa who are not attending school. By March 2012, 734,654 children were enrolled in Grade R classes; and 836,000 children were in 19,500 registered ECD centres nationwide with 488,000 of these (58%) receiving the ECD subsidy from the provincial Departments of Social Development. However, there are still approximately 5.5 million children not exposed to any form of early learning programme (84% of those children 6 years and under).

To add to this continually evolving and expanding sector, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) recently announced that it plans to increase preschool education from the current one year of Grade R to two years. This goal, in line with the proposals put forth in the National Development Plan (NDP), is commendable, but achieving it will be challenging.

So what does the NDP propose for South Africa's youngest children? Concrete proposals include the introduction of a nutrition programme for pregnant women and young children; and extended ECD services for all children under six. More specifically, the plan aims to ensure "universal access to quality early childhood development for children aged 0–3…" and make "2 years of quality preschool enrolment for 4 and 5 year olds compulsory before Grade 1" (NPC, 2012).

However, the plan does not state what exactly government means by this, and what can be done in order to achieve this by 2030.

From our experience, the main challenge in ECD today is to increase access to and improve the quality of ECD programmes. Whilst the NDP supports this, there are numerous challenges when working towards making this a reality. An initial issue is that the NDP's actual aims are unclear, as the terminology used differs across the document; terms and phrases such as "early childhood development provision", "preschool education" and "early childhood development exposure", "universal access to Early Childhood Development" are used interchangeably. In reality these are very different, and thus the plan is confusing in what it aims to achieve.

The proposal for compulsory two years of preschool enrolment brings with it significant challenges in implementation; the most immediate of which is the cost involved in extending Grade R to two years. To extend Grade R to include an additional year for children aged 4 and 5 at least, an extra 33,400 ECD classes will need to be established by 2030. The building and equipment alone, at a conservative estimate of R 400,000 per class, would cost government R 13.4 billion at today's Rand value. Added to this, the recruitment and training of an additional 33,400 ECD teachers will be required. If these teachers were to earn a modest salary of R 5,000 per month, the cost to government would be a further R 2 billion in teacher's salaries per year, again at today's Rand value.

For young children, research has shown that a comprehensive range of ECD interventions, beginning in pregnancy and carried out throughout a child's life, produce the best results. This includes prenatal support to mothers, support for caregivers and families, care and cognitive stimulation for children, and preparation for children transitioning into formal schooling. Interestingly, the NDP asserts that, "the state is responsible for ensuring that all vulnerable families receive a comprehensive package of early childhood development services." A comprehensive package would need to include a number of ECD interventions.

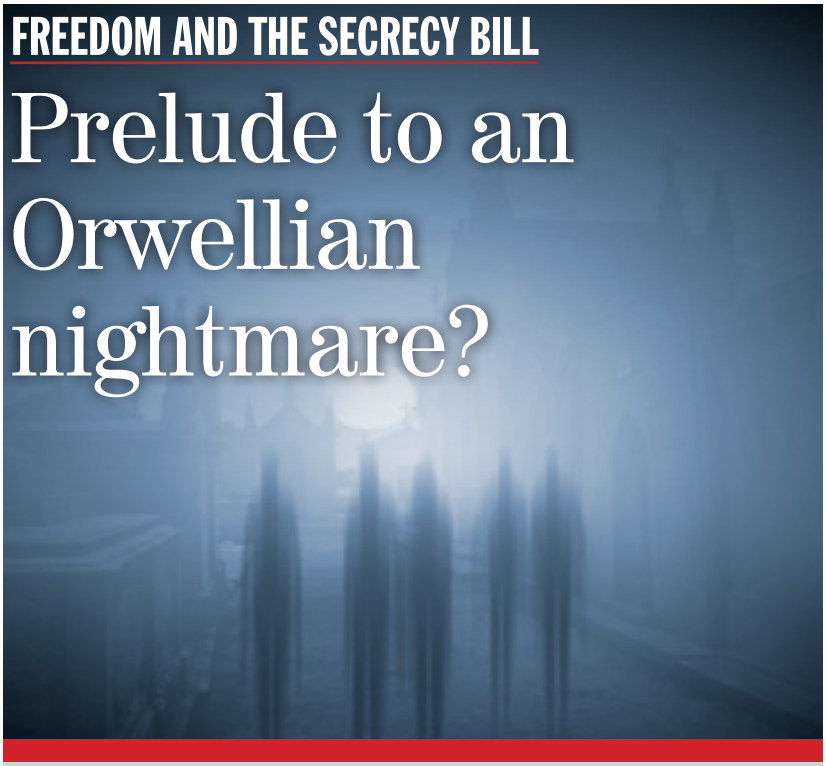
These interventions should include: quality ECD teacher training; governing body and supervisor leadership and management training; infrastructure upgrades; educational equipment provision and training; as well as out-of-centre ECD outreach programmes, such as family home-visiting programmes, and the facilitation of community play groups. Such interventions were discussed in more detail in *The Thinker* Volume 53, July 2013.

More specifically, to produce quality ECD teachers, far more ECD practitioner training at NQF Levels 4 and 5, providing teachers with the essential skills to work with young children effectively, is required. And these Level 4 and 5 qualifications should be recognised by the DBE and the South African Council of Educators (SACE) as teaching qualifications which can be upgraded by Higher Education Institutions into primary school teacher qualifications for those who wish to follow this career path.

Whilst the NDP is very attractive on paper, and the Department of Basic Education's aims are commendable and, if achieved, will bring great benefits to our youngest children and their families, we must bear in mind Chairperson of the National Planning Commission, Minister Trevor Manuel's words (at the launch of the Child Gauge 2012) when he said, "Collectively, as a society we are in neglect... If politics fail, we have to ask where the rest of society is, in dealing with these kinds of challenges... Now that we know the facts, what are we (as a society) going to do about it? … We have to take collective responsibly for taking these issues forward."

As we celebrate women's day this month, we pay tribute to the many, many thousands of women who, against all odds and despite having very little support, care for and educate our youngest children each day. They are true nation builders and we salute them. ■

Due to space constraints, this article was not published in Volume 54, August 2013.



FREEDOM AND THE SECRECY BILL

Prelude to an Orwellian nightmare?

Are we on the verge of sacrificing our personal freedom for the false promise of greater security or are we simply a divided nation that prefers to recoil from the responsibility of our new-found freedom?

By Rennie Naidoo

Will the passing of the Secrecy Bill usher us into a more Orwellian-like society? In Orwell's haunting political allegory, *Animal Farm*, the animals form a 'united democratic front' to take over property from the exploitative human owner thus earning their freedom. Unfortunately this freedom, if it existed at all, lasted only momentarily.

The initial slogan that spread through the farm during that revolutionary period was: 'All animals are equal!' Hope was short-lived though and pretty soon the ruthless and clever creatures of the farm (the pigs) eventually had all the animals socially engineered with the same disciplined compliance, like mechanical entities, dutifully performing under their dictatorship. The pigs meanwhile began to live the lives of the aristocrats while the grinding majority was forced to earn a meagre living. After a short period, the slogan was artfully revised by the pigs' propaganda machine to read: 'All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others.'

If we reflect on this story, even if somewhat loosely, we may awaken from our deep slumber and realise that our struggle for freedom was a grassroots victory fought by the mass movement of our people across the racial divide. So the credit for victory does not belong to one party or one race group.

We may see some remarkable parallels between Napoleon and Snowball in the power struggle between President Zuma and ousted President Mbeki. I refer specifically to the incidents that resulted in the banishment of leaders. In the case of President Mbeki, banishment may be too strong a term for some, but this was nonetheless in essence what happened. And let us not forget that deceit was rampant. If we reflect on this story, we will see equally remarkable parallels between Boxer, the noble horse, as the embodiment of the average South African citizen, dutifully working hard to make this a better country for our children.

We may also see a disturbing alliance being formed between the exploitative farmers and the cunning farm creatures (so hauntingly described at the end of the book). I refer of course to the current relationship between big global defence and finance corporations, influential intelligence agencies, powerful nation states and not forgetting the elite ruling classes. Yes, US President Eisenhower also warned us of the dangers of a military-industrial complex being shaped, protected, privileged, and backed by the state. So while some lawyers claim victory that the latest amendments to the Bill now exclude commercial information, the remaining vague clauses such as: 'the exposure of economic, scientific or technological secrets vital to the Republic', should leave us feeling uneasy, as this could mean anything and everything.

Yet, despite these stark similarities between *Animal Farm* and the politics of the day, it is Orwell's other famous novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which is perhaps more prophetic about current day politics in South Africa. Orwell spent a significant amount of time describing to us in microscopic detail the work of the 'Ministry of Truth' and its records office; and how the Party employed people whose single most important duty was to maintain the 'truth' of the present by deleting the facts of the past. This is similar in many ways to the strategy the apartheid government and their 'sponsored experts' used to distort the truth.

I can recall one example that Nigel Speavey discusses elegantly in his book, *How Art Made the World*. In it, he describes the collusion by the apartheid state and their lackey experts to spread the notion that the Bushmen

paintings done 20,000 years ago were actually the work of foreigners of 'Nilotic-Mediterranean origin'. This was obviously a form of 'reasoning' motivated by racism and used to uphold the notorious apartheid system of government.

Yes, it is also similar to the manner in which the young Helen Zille's contribution to South African history, exposing the controversy surrounding the death of the forever cerebral Steve Biko – is absent from most of our minds today. It is a pity that we will never know what intellectual giants such as Biko, Hani and Luthuli would have to say about the ideals of reason, the pursuit of truth and the power structures in our government today.

I think that when we analyse the Secrecy Bill we need to reflect on it with the same analytical precision that these three great intellectuals would almost certainly have adopted. I suspect that as much as we may wax lyrical about the threats to free speech, they would draw our attention to the dangers of the concentration and balance of power.

In the first phase of our democracy it seemed only fair for many of us to trust the leading political party. Admittedly they had to contend with a Herculean task. All things considered, given their poor performance in the areas of defence, border management, intelligence, policing and the judiciary, should we submit blind obedience to the same old catchphrase 'National Security'? An astute observer will recognise that public officials all around the globe, whether in a democracy or a more oppressive state, frequently believe that they have the right to rule without public involvement, and prefer to suppress and stifle the flow of information to the citizens they represent.

Heather Brooke discusses in *The Silent State* how in 2009 even the self-appointed prototypical moral elites of the political world – British Parliamentarians in all their pomp and splendour – wanted to maintain the status quo of power imbalances between the state and citizens, despite their sophisticated and surely euphemistically labelled Freedom of Information Act. Many of these eminent politicians were reluctant to open up secretive information to their citizenry, and more significantly, were reticent to reveal how they had spent public money. Eventually this ended in a major political scandal, followed by a number of resignations.

But why do we need this particular Bill so urgently in South Africa, given the more pressing projects in the current portfolio of state priorities? Do we have any serious competition or military threat globally or in the region perhaps, somewhere here in Africa maybe, that we should be immediately concerned about? You would not have to be a brilliant prognosticator to wager that this is highly unlikely.

We have seen several examples where our security agencies as well as those of countries such as the USA and the UK have acted above the law and arrogantly displayed that they are accountable to no one but themselves. Instead of protecting our citizens they have demonstrated that they do not see the need to be accountable to the public when they wield their considerable power. Is this the calibre of people we want in charge of keeping us secure?

If we have a government elected by the people, for the people, then why should we be kept in the dark? If we enter into wars, then is it not the South African citizen who is footing the bill? Is it not in the name of South African citizens that wars should be fought in the first place?

Anyway, what good can arise from our intelligence agencies having a monopoly on knowledge? Have we not seen recently what amounts at least partly to intelligence failures in the Central African Republic? Have leaders in our security services earned our trust?

Could it be that the biggest threat from allowing open access to information facing the ruling party is the informed citizen? Could it be that the real intention behind the Bill is to control and regulate information, because the free flow of information to citizens is a threat to the state's evolving autocratic systems? Perhaps, our state bureaucrats and our national security agencies are really interested in securing their own positions of power? One has to ask why this would be their intention given our largely apathetic response towards the Arms Deal controversy which demonstrated by and large we are a fairly impotent citizenry.

Or could this Bill's origin be due to something less sinister and perhaps even as mundane as advice received from yet another group of expensive international consultants – an outcome of a comparative quantitative benchmarking assessment with one of the stars in global policy setting – the United States or the UK perhaps. Perhaps this all started with an accidental encounter with one of own research institutions keen to justify their existence by promoting paranoia, and let us not forget the use of jargon that will intimidate even the best Oxford graduate, let alone a bored bureaucrat looking for something meaningful to do instead of playing solitaire. Perhaps it was another policy memo that infected one of our decision-makers like a highly contagious virus, in an innocent conversation, during one of those lavish international diplomatic parties.

We can even speculate that it is the digital age that is frightening to some of our politicians and security forces who would like to control our communication. After all, the Arab Spring has shown us how powerless citizens can come together to challenge political leaders and state institutions.

We should hope that these kinds of laws will not be applied eventually to the citizen's use of mobile networks and the Internet. These citizen communication networks are starting to provide us with knowledge, irrespective of class, power, and wealth – and we should be most protective about it. As pointed out by Heather Brooke in her later works, these technologies are also providing us with the hope of being a truly informed public – creating a platform to share our thoughts, organise around issues, and to challenge those in charge who abuse power. If used appropriately it may be able to help us build a vibrant democracy. Yes, there exists a criminal minority – citizens, state officials and even journalists – who will abuse their freedoms.

I am sure many reasonable citizens would support that criminals – once what amounts to crimes have been narrowly and reasonably defined

– should be prosecuted. However, we can only hope that there are no loopholes with this Bill (I refer to those parts still shrouded in cloudy vagueness) in its present form or future Bills that allows the state to 'protect us' by preventing us from using these citizen communication networks to form our opinions.

Are we not entitled to the following guarantees at least: that future decisions made as a result of this Bill will not erode the liberties we have (from a dompass we may now need an e-tag to venture in what were once public travel routes to our workplace); that crimes against citizens will not be committed in the name of national security (protecting our so-called economic security by really protecting the interest of global mining corporations even though some of them abandoned us after the initial, ceremonial demise of apartheid); that we will not be helpless in challenging the state for suspected wasteful expenditure when they claim that the information we need is subject to secrecy (for example, the Arms Deal and Nkandla).

We should hope that citizen communication networks will be used to foster democracy and enlightenment in a similar manner to the way that the invention of the printing press encouraged access to information and brought about debate in Europe. We should also hope that this medium does not become just another form of consumer escapism, or become subjected to a type of totalitarianism that will restrict and manipulate the truth. But are we using these technologies to redefine the future of our democracy in any momentous way? Initial research by some of my colleagues on Internet and mobile phone use patterns suggest that these technologies are strengthening and advancing narrow group interests as opposed to increasing individual autonomy. If these patterns persist, they may weaken our shared experiences of citizenship and dash our hopes of being a truly informed public and a thriving democracy.

One of the founders of the US constitution, Thomas Jefferson, argued that the state should trust its citizens to form their own opinions. To do this we will need access to the facts and be able to communicate our opinions freely. This is the only hope for the enlightenment of many of our people, and the end of a divisive society where the majority group are steeped in superstition and the blind worship of their leaders, and where some minority groups are still struggling to transcend their reassuring but false, elitist notions of superior racial, religious or intellectual distinctiveness. We need to at least sometimes leave the illusory comfort of our particular social groups and act in solidarity to defend the broader interests of our infant democracy. We can no longer afford to be passive participants in the institutional building of our country.

If you reflect on the prophecy of Orwell's novels, can the future landscape of South Africa be any more gloomy than it was in the past or is presently? Irrespective of our race, class or intellectual ability, we will have to acknowledge that we have been a divided nation that have in the main always sheepishly drunk from the fountains of those who were in power, people whose minds have always been ridden with the authority of narrow group interests, with stagnant beliefs that have hindered us from thinking independently, or truly cooperating with each other. Irrespective of the historical period, many of us have clung too closely to our social groups and chose to naively believe in our party's slogan at one time or the other that was always the same old lyric: "WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH" (quote from Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*).

Are we on the verge of sacrificing our personal freedom for the false promise of greater security or are we simply a divided nation that prefers to recoil from the responsibility of our new-found freedom? Is it a stretch to also apply the insights of the great Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky and assert that we are historically a nation of divided groups that prefer bread and miracles to freedom? This reflection may be a blow to our crystallised individual and collective ego but by many accounts seems profoundly and ominously true. Surely, it is not enough to be well fed and entertained! It is also not enough to be a spectator and applaud from a distance those few legal experts and NGOs that had the guts to contest the initial versions of the Bill. Still more needs to be done and many more of us need to stand up and be counted so that the final Bill limits the power of the state in a few key areas. Ultimately we need to ensure that the state uses its power according to transparent and unambiguous rules that serve the interests of the larger population. If we do not, then we are largely to blame.

We know that power can corrupt even once benevolent leaders who started out their mission to serve with good intentions. We know that the current safeguards in place to deter, detect and punish transgressions by the state, if any, are extremely weak. We also know about the frailties of human nature in taking shortcuts to fame and fortune. We know all too well about the human tendency to favour family and friends and afford them privileges in the absence of a system of checks and balances.

As political scholar Francis Fukuyama points out, we will be naïve to expect a ruling party with such a strong concentration of power in its hands to simply comply with the law of the land and to be held accountable in parliament and by other oversight bodies to meet the broader interests of the citizen. He reminds us that good institutions will not appear magically. If we are to build a thriving democracy we have to realise that it takes more than just voting in elections. We can limit the power of the state by a system of checks and balances through the will of the people and this expression in the form of an even more active and vigorous civil society.

This is the only way to set our new masters free from the trappings of absolute power. We have to be more active participants in the political life of our emerging democracy so that we keep them in check from the perils of power. Otherwise we may end up like the betrayed animals in Animal Farm, a betrayed people who remained trapped in empty slogans: AMANDLA! AWETHU! POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

Or is it in truth POWER TO THE (Elite) PEOPLE (of the Ruling Class)? ■

The APRM and Foreign Direct Investment

Africa is seen by western investors as a treasure to be plundered and we need to have the strategic foresight to anticipate and prevent the various different systems of exploitation.

By Miyelani Mkhabela

Africa has done little with regard to strategies on current Foreign Direct Investment in the continent; neither has it focussed on forecasting the patterns required to build a lasting legacy which could provide the foundation for successful African leadership and citizens at large.

Focusing at the second pillar of African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), *economic governance and management*, good economic governance including transparency in financial management is an essential pre-requisite for promoting economic growth and reducing poverty. "While foreign capital is considered essential in financing private sector development in Africa, the continent has not benefited significantly from the surge in private capital flows to developing countries since the early 1990s. Africa remains on the sidelines of financial globalisation." (Emmanuel Nnadozie, Kavazeua Katjomuise and Ralf Krüger).

As African leaders, we must begin to ask ourselves pertinent questions. For example, what can we do to achieve more balance in our relations with multinationals whose intention is to selfishly conduct business at the expense of our people? How can we properly manage development aid which is offered in a form that attempts to increase oversight and influence at strategic decision making panels? And how can we be more aware of the long-term negative impact of importing foreign ideas and products, so as to be extremely selective in accepting advice and aid which looks deceptively good in the short term?

Africa, first through the Organisation of African Unity and now through the African Union, sought and seeks to achieve continental unity, peace, justice and democracy. Unity of its leadership has the potential to create

a powerful block to demand economic emancipation through equal benefits to all FDIs in different parts of our regions. If we do not define and implement certain economic principles right now, Africa will remain dependent on development aid and we shall have failed the broader patriotic vision, focusing primarily on our current personal challenges.

The origins of the APRM lie in discussions about the Millennium Development Goals at the international level, and parallel discussions within Africa on what eventually became known as The New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). The primary purpose of NEPAD was to craft a new framework for relations between Africa and the rich countries of the world. And therefore we need to assess if the primary purpose is being achieved. Does the framework continue to earn us continental pride, so that we may be running our own continent shortly without depending on help from the wealthier countries?

"As at January 2010, 29 of the African Union's member countries had signed up to the APRM, while 25 had yet to accede. Thus more than half of African countries were participating in some form in the APRM process. However, deeper inspection showed that of the 29 countries that had acceded only 15 had actually started the journey in any meaningful way; the remaining 14 had signed up but done little more to move matters forward" (Adotey Bing-Pappoe).

We also need to be vigilant against any intended penetration of our different states. Disunity among us can encourage secret agreements with colonial-minded economies.

"The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are the two most powerful institutions in global trade and finance. Since 1980 the United States government which dominates both bodies has used them to economically subjugate the developing world" (Asad Ismi). The dominance of these institutions must not be exploited as engines to open African gates to deepen poverty and entrench a vision of Africa as a continent having only health challenges. The USA has used these institutions to remotely lead Africa, deploying multinationals to serve their imperialist interests and suppress the sons and daughters of the soil. Africa is seen by western investors as a treasure to be plundered and we need to have the strategic foresight to anticipate and prevent the various different systems of exploitation.

The World Bank and the IMF have pressurised Third World countries to open their economies to Western penetration and increase exports of primary goods to wealthy nations. These steps amongst others have multiplied profits for Western multinational corporations while subjecting Third World countries to horrendous levels of poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, illiteracy and economic decline. The region worst affected has been Africa, and MDGs are benefiting mainly western countries, with perpetual imports coming to our regions with polite statements of assisting Africa. "For two decades the World Bank and the IMF have forced developing countries to create conditions that benefit Western corporations and governments" (Asad Ismi).

> "In the journey to decolonise our continent we must first decolonise our minds and initiate strategic perspectives."

"The unfavourable investment climate in many African countries results from poor governance, institutional failures, macroeconomic policy imperfections and inadequate infrastructure, as well as rampant corruption, bureaucratic red tape, weak legal systems and a lack of transparency in government departments. These and other factors have made it difficult for the continent to attract foreign capital and mobilise adequate and sustained levels of domestic private investment to attain the levels of growth necessary for massive job creation and poverty reduction" (Emmanuel Nnadozie).

The APRM needs to appoint an advisory panel of African professionals that will specifically interact with all African states during the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In our priorities of alleviating poverty and job creation, we automatically provided opportunities for multinationals to move into that economic space; and the other main priority of health improvement has allowed for the importation of health care products and for a deepening of the penetration by foreign corporations into Africa states.

It must be the primary focus of the APRM to ensure that the MDGs do not extend the power of the current economic tyrants over Africa: the richest continent, as it could be seen, with so many mineral and other resources, but still called the Dark Continent. In the journey to decolonise our continent we must first decolonise our minds and initiate strategic perspectives, so that we may be regarded in the future as past citizens that utilised the wealth of Africa as a primary tool to emancipate generations to come.

African states must adopt a Foreign Direct Investment policy led by the NEPAD and APRM forums to protect the wealth of the continent from all who exploited it in the past and are still waiting greedily to systematically exploit our grandchildren for generations to come. African professionals will therefore re-look at all FDIs and give advice on investment decisions to protect the interests of the continent and manage in the main the mineral resources for better continental leadership.

A review of all foreign investment is due as Africa can sustain itself with capital generated from natural resources and dividends from other multinationals. A radical but thoughtful dimension on this FDI review and future strategic investment patterns will honour Africa, enabling her not to struggle in eradicating poverty, creating decent jobs (ILO principle) and providing better health services to the continent.

As our former President Thabo Mbeki says, "Africa must unite!" A united Africa will overcome many challenges inherited from the systems of Western economic tyrants. ■

The role of the OAU Liberation Committee in the South African liberation struggle

By Elias C.J. Tarimo and Neville Z. Reuben
Courtesy South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET)

The Road to Democracy in South Africa, volume 5: African Solidarity was launched at UNISA on 27th April 2013. The launch was attended by many dignitaries including former President Thabo Mbeki, Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe and Professor Makhanya, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of UNISA.

In this issue we publish extracts from a lengthy chapter, "The role of the OAU Liberation Committee in the South African liberation struggle by Elias C.J Tarimo and Neville Z. Reuben.

The edited version omits a great deal of detailed information. We thank SADET for granting us permission to publish the extracts from this chapter.

On 25 May 1963, independent African heads of state and government met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for the historic meeting which launched the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). Besides coordinating the political, economic, social and cultural affairs of African member states for the common good of the African people, the OAU was charged with the task of spearheading the liberation struggle in the territories which were still under colonial domination and white minority rule. In his address to the summit meeting, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia recalled that for about 150 years colonialism had fettered and bound the continent; it had reduced its once proud and free people to humiliation and its terrain was cross-hatched and checker-boarded by artificial and arbitrary boundaries. According to him, the exit of this Armageddon was brought about by the determination of those who refused to accept the judgement passed upon them by the colonisers. They had held unswervingly in the darkest hours to a vision of an Africa emancipated from political, economic and spiritual domination. The emperor stressed, 'through their example … these people taught us how precious are freedom and human dignity and of how little value is life without them'.[1] Although Africa's victory had been proclaimed, it was not yet total, because areas of resistance still remained. For this reason, independent Africa declared its first great task as the final liberation of those Africans still dominated by foreign exploitation and control. The Committee of Nine (later the Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa), consisting of Algeria, Congo (Leopoldville), Ethiopia, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanganyika, Uganda and United Arab Republic, was set up to carry out this task.[2]

The last speaker at the conference, President Nyerere, pointed out that the people of Tanganyika, as indeed their brothers in the Congo, could not be comfortable or complacent about their freedom as long as their neighbours to the south were under colonial domination. He said that the task ahead was to discover how to bring about 'our freedom in unity, and our unity in freedom'.[3] The aims and objectives of the OAU were set down as follows:

- To promote unity and solidarity of the African states.
- To coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa.
- To defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the African states.
- To eradicate all forms of colonialism in Africa.
- To promote international cooperation with due regard for the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[4]

The OAU Charter contained the following basic principles:

- The sovereign equality of all member states.
- Non-interference in internal affairs of member states.
- Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable right to independent existence.
- Peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration.
- Unreserved condemnation of all

forms of political assassination as well as of subversive activities on the part of neighbouring states or any other states.
- Absolute dedication to the total emancipation of the African countries which were still dependent.
- Affirmation of a policy of non-alignment with regard to polarisation into international blocs.[5]

The signatory heads of state agreed to coordinate and harmonise their general policies in the diplomatic, political, economic and social cultural domains and in the areas of defence and security. President Nyerere and some of the founder members of the OAU were hailed as key players in that first generation of successful African nationalist leaders who took the 'unfinished business' of the liberation of southern Africa seriously. Nyerere, for example, placed Tanganyika (later Tanzania), squarely in the middle of more than 30 years of war for southern African liberation. Unlike Winston Churchill, Nyerere 'presided over the dissolution of the imperialist Empire'. As hinted by Haile Selassie, freedom and human dignity are so precious that life is of little value without them. To Nyerere, the freedom of his country could not be guaranteed when surrounded by neighbours under bondage. Dar es Salaam was chosen as the headquarters of the Coordinating Committee for Liberation because of Tanganyika's proximity to the unliberated territories of central and southern Africa.[6] A special liberation fund was also established to which every OAU member state had to contribute a certain per cent of its income. However, liberation of southern Africa was not an end in itself. Political freedom for every African country was seen as the prelude to continental unity which in turn was regarded as the only political structure upon which to erect a viable and sustainable economic base for the African peoples.

Background to OAU solidarity with the liberation struggle

…Nyerere knew that a successful struggle against apartheid and hence colonialism in southern Africa, could only be waged under the banner of African unity. He was one of the founding heads of state of the OAU in 1963. At its founding summit conference in Addis Ababa, he committed Tanganyika to the total liberation of Africa and emphasised the point: 'We in Tanganyika are prepared to die a little for the final removal of the humiliation of colonialism from the face of Africa'.[7] Nyerere's remarks were partly in response to the call made earlier by Ben-Bella of Algeria who posited the following standpoint: 'so let us all agree to die a little, or even completely, so that the peoples still under colonial domination may be freed and African unity may not be a vain word'.[8] Ben-Bella's stand was certainly informed by the experience of his own country where an armed struggle was waged in order to secure political freedom from France. …

"Political freedom for every African country was seen as the prelude to continental unity which in turn was regarded as the only political structure upon which to erect a viable and sustainable economic base for the African peoples."

When launching the OAU in 1963, the founding members made firm resolutions against white minority rule in southern Africa. They resolved to break all diplomatic and trade relations with South Africa. They also resolved:
- To intensify the fight for the independence of Namibia occupied illegally by South Africa.
- To give their full support the UN Special Committee against Apartheid.
- To fight for blanket economic sanctions against South Africa.
- To grant scholarships, educational facilities and possibilities of employment in African government services to refugees from South Africa.[9]

In implementing the above resolutions the majority of the independent African states imposed diplomatic and trade embargo on South Africa. Only two regimes namely Kamuzu Banda's Malawi and Felix Houphonet Boigny's Ivory Coast, maintained trade and diplomatic ties with apartheid South Africa. The High Commission Territories (Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho), having achieved their independence, failed to enforce complete sanctions on apartheid South Africa owing to their economic dependence on South Africa and military vulnerability stemming from their historical links and geographical proximity to South Africa. These states were forced by circumstances to support the liberation movements covertly while professing neutrality. This ambiguity was understood and appreciated by both the OAU member states and the liberation movements.

The OAU carried out a vigorous international campaign for enforcement of sanctions against South Africa. This included termination of trade and economic relations with the racist regime. The OAU member states were at the forefront of the enforcement the sanctions. They closed their ports and airports to South African ships and aeroplanes respectively and prohibited South African planes to fly in their air space.[10] The OAU member states condemned the Western oil companies, banks and other transnational corporations which persisted in trading with South Africa.[11] Through the UN Africa Group, the OAU pushed the UN to pass an arms embargo on South Africa leading to the Security Council Resolution 418, prohibiting supply of arms and related materials to the apartheid regime. The Africa Group was particularly proactive in the 1970s in campaigning for the liberation of southern Africa.[12] Together with other anti-apartheid bodies, the OAU carried out vigorous campaign to isolate South Africa in cultural, educational and sporting activities. South Africa was for example banned from participating in the Olympic

Games, and other international sporting events.[13]

However, these campaigns to isolate South Africa were not honoured by all the nations. The Western powers, particularly US, Britain, France and West Germany, maintained diplomatic, economic and military collaboration with South Africa and their transnational companies continued to invest in South Africa.[14] In the 1970s and 1980s these same Western allies, notably the US, France and Germany assisted South Africa to build its military capability and embarked on a project to equip the racist apartheid regime with nuclear weapons. Furthermore, in the 1980s the Reagan administration was involved in establishing the South Atlantic Treaty Organisation for the purpose of including South Africa in the NATO alliance.[15] The pretext was to establish military power in southern Africa to contain the spread of communism. The OAU, particularly the frontline states, spearheaded by Nyerere and Kaunda, condemned the manoeuvres of the Western powers in the strongest terms but their condemnation fell on deaf ears.

Some OAU member states also violated these sanctions and continued their trade and sports links with South Africa. The Kenyan cricket team, for instance, continued to play with all-white South African teams in the 1970s and 1980s. Noting the failure by the Western powers and some African countries to comply with limited sanctions against the apartheid regime, the OAU campaigned for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions. In May 1981, the UN in collaboration with the OAU convened an international conference in Paris to deliberate on sanctions against South Africa. The conference resolved to impose comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa but this resolution, when put to the UN Security Council, was vetoed by the US, France and Britain. As a result, some nations imposed sanctions while others did not. The OAU recognised the ANC and PAC as the authentic liberation movements of South Africa and campaigned for their recognition and support internationally. Such campaigns eventually led the UN to accord representatives of the ANC and PAC observer status in the General Assembly. Other international bodies like the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth of Nations, and progressive movements worldwide recognised and supported the liberation movements and their noble cause.

The OAU Liberation Committee

The OAU Liberation Committee (LC) was established by OAU member states in May 1963 with the sole purpose of coordinating the liberation process of Africa. Concurrently a special fund was established to enable the LC to provide the necessary support. The members of the LC[16] were to attend all the meetings and to draw up resolutions which were binding on the OAU member states and the liberation movements. Other countries which were not members were also allowed to attend as observers.[17] The Liberation Committee was headed by an executive secretary who was its chief executive officer. Since the LC had its headquarters in Dar es Salaam, it was agreed by the OAU member states that the executive secretary should be a Tanzanian. The executive secretary was assisted by two deputy executive secretaries. They were appointed alternately from different countries. There were other office bearers like the public relations officer, heads of standing committees etc. The LC also had a chairperson who led the bi-annual meetings. This was normally the Foreign Minister of the host country of the meeting. After the meeting, the chairman remained with the portfolio until the next meeting.[18]

> “The OAU carried out a vigorous international campaign for enforcement of sanctions against South Africa. This included termination of trade and economic relations with the racist regime.”

The Liberation Committee's executive organs

i) The bi-annual meeting was the highest decision making organ of the Liberation Committee. All matters from the Secretariat and the standing committees were deliberated in this meeting and resolutions made. Bi-annual meetings were held twice each year in the beginning and in the middle of the year. They were held in rotation in different countries.[19] The bi-annual meetings were presided over by the Foreign Ministers of the host country for each meeting. The OAU secretary general attended all the meetings, as did the permanent members. Observers were also permitted to attend.

ii) The Secretariat comprised the executive secretary, the deputies, public relations officer and other office bearers on the basis of their positions. This was the executive organ where all matters of the LC were deliberated and resolutions made to be submitted to the bi annual general meetings.[20] There were three standing committees as follows:

- Standing Committee on Information, Administration and General Policy. This committee dealt with all affairs related to policy, information and administration, including organising meetings, drafting resolutions and communiqués, drawing up press releases, etc.
- Standing Committee on Finance. This committee dealt with the financial matters. It was the custodian of the financial accounts and matters of income and expenditure that involved the LC, including requests of financial assistance by the liberation movements.
- Standing Committee on Defence. This committee coordinated all the military affairs of the liberation movements, including the disbursement of funds requested by the liberation movements for military operations, securing military equipment and organising military training. It also received and consolidated the military budgets

of the liberation organisations for submission to the Secretariat.[21]

iii) The Council of Ministers was another important executive body. In the hierarchy the Liberation Committee was answerable to the OAU Council of Ministers on all matters that required its attention and/or the attention of the OAU Summit. However, the Liberation Committee was highly autonomous and most of the decisions it made were final.[22]

Functions of the Liberation Committee

The functions of the Liberation Committee included inter alia:

- Mobilisation of resources for the liberation struggle.
- Mobilisation of international solidarity for liberation.
- Assisting the liberation movements financially and materially to execute the liberation struggle.
- Assessing the performance of the liberation movements and giving the necessary advice and assistance.
- Conflict management and resolution within and among liberation movements.

The analysis of the contribution of the LC in the support of the South African liberation struggle now follows on the basis of the outline above.

Mobilisation of resources for the liberation struggle

The most crucial task undertaken by the Liberation Committee from its formation until its dissolution was the mobilisation of resources. These resources were in the form of contributions by the OAU member states to the special fund for liberation; or donations from individuals, friendly countries, international and local organisations. The contributions from member states proved to be the most dependable source of funding. However, such funds were grossly inadequate and unreliable because certain member states failed to honour their commitment to the special fund. Some of those who did pay, rendered less than the stipulated amount and only did so intermittently, after persistent reminders.[23] Interestingly, there was no penalty for members who failed to contribute to the fund. Thus, contributions depended more on the willingness and interest of the individual member states. Malawi, for instance made no contribution at all to the fund, while some countries, such as Lesotho, Comoros and Cape Verde, which were beneficiaries of the special fund before their independence, failed to contribute to help other countries. Most of the former French colonies like Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Chad and Ivory Coast declined to contribute for fear of being isolated by their imperial master, France. Countries like Ghana and Tunisia declined to contribute when in 1960 they accused the LC of misusing funds, blaming Tanzania. They claimed that Tanzania was influencing the decisions and operations of the Liberation Committee and that she was using the committee's funds for the country's own purposes.[24]

> "Noting the failure by the Western powers and some African countries to comply with limited sanctions against the apartheid regime, the OAU campaigned for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions."

The wave of coup d'etats and unconstitutional changes of governments which afflicted many African countries from 1960s onwards also meant that new African governments stalled on their obligations to the LC and the special fund. Liberia for instance did not contribute to the special fund after the military coup that brought Samuel Doe to power in 1979. The same applied to Equatorial Guinea under Francois Macias Nguema.[25] Some countries expressed exceptional commitment in their contributions to the fund. These included Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, Algeria, Angola and Nigeria.[26] Because of the inadequate and unreliable contributions by the OAU member states, the LC was always constrained by lack of funds to execute the formidable task of liberation. The situation became really critical in the 1960s when contributions received from the member states was less than half than it should have been.[27] This made the LC's task really challenging. It had to make important decisions on how to allocate the meagre resources to the liberation movements and had to set assessment criteria rather than meeting the budgets submitted. The criteria included the effectiveness of the liberation organisations in executing the struggle as well as the efforts made to achieve unity and minimise conflict among the various movements in any one territory etc.[28]

Mobilisation of international solidarity for liberation

The second source of funds for the LC, as already mentioned, were donations from friendly countries, individuals and organisations. The flow of these resources depended on the way and extent to which the LC and the OAU managed to popularise the liberation agenda. The countries that participated most actively in assisting the liberation struggle in various ways included the African countries, socialist countries like USSR, the countries of Eastern Europe, Cuba, China and the Democratic Republic of Korea. Assistance also came from countries belonging to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). From the West, the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland) and the Netherlands were among the most active. Individuals like President Nyerere and various anti-apartheid organisations and progressive movements also donated to the liberation fund. For instance, donations from various countries and movements from June 1965 to May 1966 amounted to US$12,067.[29] Donations from governments, individuals and institutions that passed through the Liberation Committee's special fund in 1977 amounted to US$27,884,131 made up as follows (all in US$): Liberia ($608,009); Libya ($82,000); Indonesia ($4,600); government of Iran ($5,000);

Yugoslavia ($20,000); President Nyerere ($8,537); Jane L. Glanco ($1,000); overseas donors ($1,865); individuals and institutions in Tanzania (S$672); Niger ($10,000); Venezuela ($100,000); G. Inniss ($1,020); Finland ($36,023); J.L. Brown ($100); local donations from Tanzania ($185).[30] Remittances from the governments of Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Kuwait to the LC amounted to US$4,020,658.[31]

These financial donations notwithstanding, available funds were often inadequate to supplement the shortfall in the special fund. However, donations from the international community were not only in the form of money. Material assistance such as medicines, foodstuff, clothes, military equipment and other humanitarian aid was also provided.[32] Some of these material goods were directed to specific liberation organisation because of their bilateral relations. For example, the major portion of the USSR support in terms of both financial and material contributions was channelled to the ANC. …

The first task of the LC in support of the liberation movements was to identify the authentic movements. Luckily enough, many of the southern African movements, including the ANC and PAC, had their bases in Tanzania. The two South African movements were acknowledged worldwide as the true representatives of the oppressed people of South Africa due to their track record in earlier struggles. However, in the meantime, two other movements emerged in 1966 claiming recognition and support from the LC as South African liberation movements. They were the All African Convention and the Unity Movement. The LC referred their request to the OAU's Council of Ministers (see above) which did not approve them. Thus, the ANC and PAC remained the only two liberation organisations recognised by the LC throughout the South African liberation struggle. The LC's second task was to support the liberation movements financially and provide other material assistance. The LC also located their representatives in offices, and saw to it that they had residential and training camps and operational bases. The financial assistance from the LC was of two types. Funds were provided for material goods (including procurement of military equipment, transport, training and other logistical support). The second type of allocation (normally less) was for administration and publicity.

Due to the LC's financial constraints, it could not provide the level of financial assistance requested, and the funds disbursed were normally far less than the budgets submitted. This was because in the 1960s there were many active liberation movements and the funds received from OAU member states and other donations were meagre. This meant that the LC had to set criteria for the allocation of financial assistance, including the relative effectiveness of the movements in executing their liberation activities; the absence of leadership disputes and internal strife; and efforts to forge unity among the organisations in territories where there were more than one movement, as was the case of South Africa.

> "The situation became really critical in the 1960s when contributions received from the member states was less than half than it should have been."

The 1976–1980 period was characterised by both diplomatic and military strategies to dismantle the Smith regime and force South Africa out of Namibia.[33] In 1978, for instance, several resolutions were passed by the UN Security Council to address the Namibian question, including Resolution 435. This demanded the withdrawal of South Africa from Namibia and stated that the UN would assume the responsibility of supervising the transition to majority rule in Namibia.[34] The intensification of armed struggles in Zimbabwe by the ZANU and ZAPU PF forced the Smith regime to the negotiation table for majority rule in 1979. In February 1980, free and fair elections were held in Zimbabwe and ZANU came to power, leading to the independence of Zimbabwe in April 1980. The Namibian question remained unresolved as the Regan administration came up with the new condition of linking this with the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.[35] Angola had requested Cuban forces to assist her to confront the South African forces that were deployed to Angola through Namibia to carry out destabilisation campaigns.

1981–1994 phase

This was the final and decisive phase for the liquidation of apartheid. Zimbabwe having gained her independence, the OAU concentrated its attention squarely on the apartheid regime, both for its illegal occupation of Namibia and its brutal apartheid policies. Although the LC was short of funds it nevertheless offered a greater share to the ANC and PAC than previously, although the allocations were far below what the two organisations requested. In 1984, the priority in the allocation of funds went to SWAPO (US$250,000) then ANC and PAC (US$150,000 each).

Apart from financial support, the LC extended material and logistic support to the South African liberation movements. In 1984, material assistance to the ANC amounted to US$200,000, while the PAC received support to the tune of US$150,000. Such assistance included securing of offices and camps for the movements as well as residential houses/quarters for their leaders. For example, the ANC had its headquarters in Morogoro from early 1960s before it shifted to Lusaka, Zambia. But it had several residences in Dar es Salaam and Morogoro for its leaders.[36] The PAC had its offices and residential houses in Dar es Salaam. In order to keep them safe from sabotage attacks by the apartheid regime, these offices and homes were heavily guarded by the police and security organs under the coordination of the LC and the government of Tanzania.[37]

The LC collaborated with the government of Tanzania to secure camps for settlement and military

training for ANC and PAC cadres as it did for all other recognised liberation movements. Most camps were in Tanzania. The earliest camp was Kongwa in central Tanzania established in 1962 to host members of all liberation movements.[38] But as the liberation struggle gained momentum and the number of freedom fighters increased, it became necessary to open more camps. Nachingwea, Itumbi and Mgagao were duly set up.[39] The latter two hosted ANC and PAC cadres as well as those from Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia. Nachingea was reserved for the FRELIMO fighters because of its proximity to Mozambique. The ANC also secured a training camp at Kinguluwira and a residential site at Msanvu, while PAC trained its cadres at Masuguru but later moved to Msungura. Both camps were in the Coast Region. In the 1970s, Masuguru became a settlement camp for PAC cadres who migrated in larger numbers into the country in that period. Other camps were established for PAC cadres at Kitonga and Pongwe in the 1980s.

In 1976, more South African refugees flocked to Tanzania following the Soweto uprising in South Africa, so the ANC requested additional settlement and training camps from the government of Tanzania.[40] Through the coordination of the LC, the ANC was granted a 100 acre stretch of land at Mazimbu in Morogoro which was later on extended to 250 acres. On this site, the ANC built its first educational institution in 1978 to teach the youngsters who had fled South Africa in the aftermath of the Soweto killings. In 1979, the institution was renamed the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College (SOMAFCO) in honour of an MK cadre who was hanged by the apartheid regime in 1979. The young Mahlangu had escaped the Soweto massacre in 1976, fled to Tanzania and was one of the first group of students that enrolled at SOMAFCO. He was infiltrated back into South Africa to take part in MK operations, but was arrested by the security forces. …

Conflict resolution within and among liberation movements

The ANC and PAC, as with all liberation movements, experienced internal strife and inter-party differences; these made it difficult for them to unite for a common and more effective struggle against the apartheid regime. The LC and the frontline states made every effort to unite them and encourage them to work together throughout the 30-year liberation struggle in South Africa – without success.[41] By the end of the 1970s, as Sifiso Ndlovu shows, it had become obvious that the two organisations would never unite to wage a common struggle.[42] The signs of some improvement in the relations between the two movements in the anti-apartheid struggle came at the last moment in 1991, after the regime had dismantled the apartheid policy, unbanned the ANC and PAC and opened the door for negotiations between the government and the political parties about the political future of South Africa.[43] The failure of the two movements to forge unity was rooted in their historical background and ideological convictions. The PAC claimed to be more militant with a clearer socialist ideology than the ANC, which was seen as liberal, moderate and diplomatic in its approach to the liberation struggle. On the other hand, the ANC considered the PAC a rebellious child which should be left alone to fend for itself.

> “The two South African movements were acknowledged worldwide as the true representatives of the oppressed people of South Africa due to their track record in earlier struggles.”

The LC and the frontline states considered unity between the liberation movements the most decisive weapon to dismantle colonialism and minority rule in southern Africa, and the success of PAIGC and FRELIMO in this regard added more weight to this opinion.[44] They had demonstrated unity of purpose in the liberation of their colonial territories with spectacular success. By 1970, they controlled significant portions of their territories which eventually brought the Portuguese colonialists into their knees in 1974 and 1975 respectively. The reluctance of the ANC and PAC to forge any kind of unity disturbed the LC and might well have contributed to the LC's decision to limit their financial allocation despite their experience (particularly the ANC) in waging a liberation struggle relative to the other movements elsewhere in the region.

Quite apart from the lack of common bonds between them, the ANC and PAC were also prone to internal strife in their ranks and leadership disputes. By 1973, the differences in the leadership of the ANC had become so sharp as to threaten the break-up of the party over the alleged influential role of the SACP within the ANC. This was also the root cause of a splinter faction known as the Group of Eight which was led by the Makiwane brothers and Robert Resha.[45] However, the most serious leadership crisis arose in the PAC. Its president, Potlako Leballo (1962–1979) was accused of reactionary and counter-revolutionary activities and lack of commitment to the liberation cause. These accusations dated back to the 1960s. In 1968, the PAC Central Committee deposed him from the presidency. However, the LC intervened, reconciled the disputes and reinstated him in his position.[46] This move was met with serious resentment in PAC ranks; they accused Tanzania of supporting the deposed president and of influencing the LC to recognise Leballo as leader despite his lack of significant support in the PAC.[47] The PAC decided to abandon the LC and as a result the LC promptly suspended its assistance to the movement.[48] Later, relations between the PAC and LC were normalised again and LC assistance was resumed. In 1979 the PAC Executive Committee again deposed Leballo from the presidency and expelled him from the party claiming that his poor leadership had thrown the party into serious crisis, culminating in the murder of David Sibeko.[49] However, internal leadership disputes and tension continued, making the PAC

unstable throughout its struggle for the liberation of South Africa. …

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the role and contribution of the OAU Liberation Committee to the liberation struggle of South Africa. Besides discussing the background to the rise of the OAU, the liberation struggle in South Africa; and the role and functions of the Liberation Committee, the chapter has outlined the contribution of the LC to the South African liberation struggle in the specific areas of mobilisation of resources; international solidarity; and provision of financial and material assistance to liberation movements. The LC and the South African liberation movements were compelled to adopt armed struggle as a means of achieving political change in South Africa because peaceful negotiations had failed. The oppressed people were encouraged to employ the armed struggle as the means to force negotiations from a position of strength (on their feet and not on their knees). This was inevitable because, as Mwalimu J.K. Nyerere said, 'when people are denied the right to live as human beings, then they will prefer to die as human beings'. Armed struggle eventually opened the door for negotiations in South Africa. It is therefore not surprising that the liberation struggle in South Africa reached its climax on the negotiation table at Kempton Park under the auspices of the Conference for Democracy in South Africa (CODESA). ■

References

1. Tanzanian Army Archives (hereafter Army Archives), Dar es Salaam: Proceedings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States, Volume 1, Section 2, p 2, Addis Ababa, May 1963, Address delivered by Haile Selassie, at the Conference of Heads of African States and Governments, Addis Ababa, 25 May 1963. These archival documents are about the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).
2. Army Archives: Statement by Ajuma Oginga-Odinga, representing the African national liberation movements in non-independent territories, 30 May 1963.
3. Army Archives: Speech by Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, president of the Republic of Tanganyika, 24 May 1963.
4. A. Okoth, *A History of Africa, Volume 2, African Nationalism and the Decolonization Process* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 2006), 319.
5. P. Nugent, *Africa since Independence* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 103.
6. Army Archives: Proceedings of founding summit, Addis Ababa, May 1983, Statement by Ajuma Oginga-Odinga.
7. Army Archives: Proceedings of founding summit, Addis Ababa, May 1963, Statement by J.K. Nyerere. See also J.K. Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity* (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1966), 215–216.
8. Army Archives: Proceedings of founding summit, Addis Ababa, May 1963, Statement by Ahmed Ben-Bella.
9. Asante and Chanaiwa, 'Pan Africanism', 752.
10. In its meeting in Rabat, Morocco in June 1975, the LC resolved to impose an oil embargo on the apartheid regime and deny port facilities to all South African vessels. See Daily News, 6 June 1975. Also see Army Archives: AR/LC/3649, Minutes of 30th Session of the LC, Tripoli, Libya, February 1978; and ibid., Annexure 1, Lagos Declaration for Action against Apartheid, 30–52.
11. Ibid., 47–52.
12. The African representatives in the UN decided to adopt a common position in UN resolutions and they became known as the Africa Group.
13. The World Conference against Apartheid met in Lagos in 1978 and resolved among other things to prohibit the sale of arms to South Africa and the transfer of military and nuclear technology. See Army Archives: AR/LC/3649, Lagos Declaration for Action against Apartheid, 44–48. In implementing the resolution, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 418 prohibiting the provision of arms to the apartheid regime. However the Western countries continued to violate this resolution. See resolutions on South Africa in Minutes of 37th Session of LC, Arusha, June 1981, Annexure 2, 41.
14. See Army Archives: AR/LC/3649, Lagos Declaration, 49–50.
15. Minutes of 37th Session of LC, Annexure 2, 42. In *Daily News*, 18 July 1986 it was reported that the OAU Liberation Committee condemned the West and Israel for their continued economic and nuclear collaboration with the apartheid regime, calling it an 'unholy alliance' between the Pretoria regime and the Western powers, notably US, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Britain and Israel.
16. In 1963, the members of the LC were Algeria, Congo (Zaire), Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda, Egypt, Guinea and Tanzania. In 1966 Somalia and Zambia were added to make 11 members. Zambia became independent in 1964 and her membership was deemed essential due to her proximity to the colonial territories of southern Africa and the commitment of its leaders to liberation. In the 1970s membership was extended to 17 when Ghana, Mauritania, Morocco, Lybia and Cameroon were added to the list. See Army Archives: AR/LC/3636, Minutes of the 7th Session of the LC, Dar es Salaam, August 1965, 1, 10; AR/LC/3647, Minutes of 8th Session of LC, Dar es Salaam, January 1966, 1, 6; and AR/LC/3628, Minutes of the 21st Session of the LC, Accra, Ghana, January 1973, 1. The Tanzanian Army Archives located in Dar es Salaam also house those of the OAU Liberation Committee (LC).
17. Every OAU member state, with the exception of the permanent members, was given observer status. A country was at liberty to send or not to send an observer. For instance, in the meeting held in July 1966, Sudan and Mali sent their ambassadors to Tanzania as observers. In the January 1973 meeting, 12 countries (Gabon, Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Upper Volta, Burundi and Lesotho) sent observers. See Army Archives: AR/LC/3636, Minutes of 7th Session of LC, Dar es Salaam, August 1965; AR/LC/3647, Minutes of 8th session of LC, Dar es Salaam, January 1966; and AR/LC/3628, Minutes of 21st Session of LC, Accra, Ghana, January 1973.
18. Army Archives: AR/LC/3636, Minutes of 7th Session of LC, 1965, p. 10.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., 11.
21. Ibid., 12–14.
22. Ibid., 4, 9–10.
23. Army Archives: ARC/LC/3636, Minutes of the 7th Session of the LC, 5; AR/LC/3629, Minutes of the 9th Session of the LC, Dar es Salaam, July 1966, 5–9, 38. Also see Army Archives: AR/LC/3647, Minutes of the 8th Session of LC, January 1966, 10.
24. Army Archives: AR/LC/3647, 8. The Central African Republic paid its contribution through the French Embassy, but was then instructed to pay direct to the LC. See Army Archives: AR/LC/3636, 5. The Central African Republic did not contribute again after this instruction. Burkina Faso did not pay after 1967; Chad after 1965; Gambia after 1967. Ivory Coast's contribution was irregular. See the minutes of the LC sessions from 1963–1968. See also Army Archives: AR/LC/2716, Minutes of 54th Session, Arusha, June 1990, 120–124. See also SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 2, 1970–1980* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2006), chapter 12.
25. Army Archives: AR/LC/2716, Minutes of 54th Session, 120–124.
26. Ibid. Tanzania was frequently praised in the LC meetings for its prompt contribution to the special fund and unwavering assistance to the LC. See for example AR/LC/3647, 8th Session of LC, 6.
27. For instance the assessment of contributions due in 1965 was £742,000 while the amount contributed was £366,501. See Army Archives: AR/LC/3647, 8th Session, Appendix A, 24.
28. See *The Standard*, 15 July 1968; and 14 October 1968.
29. Donations from June to May 1966 were as follows: Kuwait $10,000; Dahomey $1,682.7; Iraq $1,992; Tanzania $128; Niger $729; Indonesia $3,500; Michigan Negroes $35; Total $12,067. See Army Archives: AR/LC/3629, Minutes of the 9th Session of LC, June/July 1966, financial statements, 43.
30. See Army Archives: AR/LC/3649, Minutes of 30th Session of LC, February 1978.
31. Ibid. Remittances of donations to the OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa in 1978 were as follows: Abu Dhabi (US$2,000,000); Qatar (US$1,000,000); and Kuwait (US$1,020,658).
32. For instance, the German Democratic Republic donated 10 tons of medicine, foodstuff and clothes worth Tsh15 million to the LC. See *Daily News*, 23 April 1976. Such donations were frequently made throughout the liberation struggle.
33. Note Nyerere's diplomatic crusade to the US to solicit the support of the Carter administration for the liberation of southern Africa. See J.K. Nyerere, *Crusade for Liberation* (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1978), 1–94.
34. In 1978, four resolutions were passed by the UN Security Council on Namibia. They included Resolutions 385, 432, 435 and 439, the most significant being Resolution 435. See Minutes of 37th Session of LC, 1981, Annexure 2, 32–38.
35. Interview Warioba. The respondent participated in the negotiations for the independence of Zimbabwe in 1979 and the stalled negotiations for Namibian independence in 1980. Also see Minutes of 37th Session of LC, 1981.
36. Interview Mbita.
37. Ibid. See also Army Archives: PMC/P.30/1/Vol. 2/23, 25 May 1990.
38. Interview Mbita. See also SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1, 1960–1970*, Second edition (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2010), chapter 11.
39. Interview conducted by SADC research team with former Tanzanian Chief of Defence Forces, General M. Sarakikya, Arusha, 10 April 2007.
40. Interview Mbita.
41. In 1965 the executive secretary, Sebastian Challe, was quoted as advising the PAC and ANC to unite in order to wage a more effective struggle. He cautioned that 'going it alone' meant waste of time and energy. See The Standard, 17 February 1965. Such appeals persisted throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Tanzania and Zambia were tasked with assist this endeavour, but without success.
42. See SADET, *Road to Democracy, Volume 2*, chapter 12.
43. In its 55th Session in 1991, the LC welcomed the improved relations between the ANC and PAC and called upon them once again to establish a united front. See *Daily News*, 23 February 1991.
44. Julius Nyerere, president of Tanzania, the host country of the LC was a staunch believer of unity. He might have influenced the LC executive secretary (also a Tanzanian) to take a similar stand on unity.
45. See S.M. Ndlovu, 'The ANC in Exile in the 1970s', Unpublished paper.
46. Unnamed file in the LC archives. See also SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 4, 1980–1990* (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010), chapters 14 and 22.
47. Unnamed file in the LC archives.
48. *The Standard*, 13 July 1968.
49. Unnamed file in LC archives.

THROUGH A CREATIVE LENS

These three poems all speak to, and about Africa. Zama Madinana strives to rid the continent of violence and nurture a seed of peace. David Kapp catches a glimpse of 'that rare African unity' which is talked of more often than seen. And Mondi Nkasawe appeals for a new type of leadership – for 'the energies needed for war are not the same as those needed for building'.

for afrika
zamokuhle madinana

open the gates of your soul to see
as i engrave verbal graffiti
on the naked walls
of your mind
oozing eternal rumblings
to save you from an ocean of ignorance
to save from being ambushed
by a ghost of insanity
i zoom in the pages of knowledge
for you to absorb enlightenment
& walk on the highways
of emancipation
i rid resentment
anger
& cruelty
from the landscapes of your heart
coz a seed of peace
is struggling to germinate
from a soil
that is covered in bones
of children who died
carrying guns
defending heartless tyrants
bloodthirsty kony's
taylor's
and many more

Zama Madinana currently lives in Johannesburg where he has built his audience as a performance poet. At UJ he started a poetry society with his fellow poets. He has read his work on the radio and been published on the internet, many newspapers and *The Thinker*. For Zama poetry is his way of expressing emotion and giving voice to political issues that affect the African continent. This poem is from his poetry collection, *Rescue*.

A Memorandum for Freedom Day
Monde Nkasawe

When freedom came
For us it was the last to come
To join this illustrious list of hallowed days
To complete the mission for the reclamation of Africa
From William Francis Hare, to Kwame Nkrumah
From Malcolm John MacDonald to Jomo Kenyatta
From Ian Smith to Robert Mugabe
From Vítor Crespo to Samora Machel
From Leonel Cardoso to Agostinho Neto
From Sir Richard Gordon Turnbull, to Julius Nyerere
From FW de Klerk to Nelson Mandela
Africa free!

The Unknown Soldier speaks
Lying in state in the belly of our land
He tells the story of an epic battle
Lasting three centuries of unceasing struggle
Of accounts most harrowing
Of countless acts of heroism
Of a gallantry of proportions untold
Of excruciating pain endured beyond belief

All to resolve an argument
That ours is a home for all
Or not

When freedom came
For us it came purposefully
Conferred not so much by design
But by history and circumstance
That it being the last to come
It had to carry a message
From a generation of freedom fighters
Nay an honored scroll of lessons
Of things to avoid
Of things to do
That as carefully
We be aware of this desperate contradiction:
That those who lead a revolutionary struggle for change
Are themselves not the best to lead such change
That revolutionaries must not linger at State House
As they do not best Governors make

As painfully
The contradiction holds
That the energies needed for war
Are not the same as those needed for building
That corruption, this disease of incumbency
Will make a liar of good men and women
Will eat and devour alive their glorious reputations
And bring down as easily
This edifice of revolution

As sadly
The contradiction holds
That a struggle is conducted
Not out of anger at today's oppression
But as a preparation for a just tomorrow
That you must prepare for such a tomorrow
But you must not factor yourself in it

As cruelly
The contradiction holds
That should you fail in any of this
The vision for a democratic society
Which you've held all your life
Will merely be a dream
To be jettisoned at the first hurdle in government
Enticing the early germination of the seeds of failure
Embedded in your success

As brutally
The contradiction holds
That while we can shoot our way into power
We cannot shoot and intimidate our people out of poverty
That while our people will love us
For the things we've done for them in the past
They will insist that either we serve them as diligently
Or suffer the ignominy of freedom fighters
Who once were heroes
But now have fallen

As clearly
Let it be understood perfectly
That victory is not inheritance
But an oath you swear to hold in trust
The future of your children

As passionately
Let the commitment be made and abided to
That let none cry again
That the aberration of Marikana
Let it never be repeated
That the abhorrent death of Tatane by our own hand
Let justice be done, now, this instant!
Let none cry again!!!

Monde Nkasawe is a civil servant working for the Eastern Cape Government, in the Office of the Premier. Occasionally he breaks away from the mind numbing routine of bureaucracy to write prose and poetry. This poem was inspired by Freedom Day this year, but it is also highly relevant for this issue.

DR RAMPHELE

Ganging up for Civil Society? Is Agang a viable political party?

By Tembile Ndabeni

Dr Mamphela Ramphele's political involvement dates back to the "dark" days of Apartheid when she was a close associate of the leader of the Black Consciousness Movement, Bantu Steve Biko. This therefore means that she does have limited struggle credentials. Though the latter is not a precondition for forming a political formation, it is an advantage for getting support. Moreover, it is the character and calibre of human beings which counts a lot when forming a political party; and very few people would question Dr Ramphele's capabilities.

The question is, will her move from civil society mobilisation to forming a political party be a benefit or loss to the voiceless people she represented?

Civil Society bodies should represent diverse interests and challenge everything that affects society. Being part of Civil Society, you can say anything and challenge everything, guided by your consciousness and limited by the constitution. It means you are not affected by the phrase "do not harm the goose that lays the golden egg". The constituency of Civil Society should resist been the victims and mere survivors of unjust, corrupt and failing systems of government.

Dr Ramphele was a figure in Civil Society. Her academic qualifications and work experience lends weight and credibility to her work.

Now that she will be working for the people from another planet, would she be able to be effective the way she was when she was still in Civil Society? Will she still represent the people across ideological (literally) and party lines as she used to do when she was on that planet?

To be honest, there is a thick, not a thin line, between (real) Civil Society and a political party. As stated above, Civil Society is a force that represents societal interests and not a certain political party. This is why when there is an issue affecting society it is rare to find it keeping quiet. Even if it is the people it represents who cross the line, it condemns their wrongdoing. For the political party what is of paramount importance is scoring political points for it to get as much support, more membership and votes as possible, even at the expense of the truth. Therefore, it is easier for a political party to turn a blind eye rather than lose support especially from prospective members and voters. A political party becomes vocal when its interests are at stake. Perhaps the phrase "Do not harm the goose that lays the golden egg" applies here, in political parties. Wrongdoers may not be called to order because that might spoil some chances for the party concerned. Now, a challenge for Dr Ramphele is that she condemned wrongdoing across the board when she was primarily a figure in Civil Society. Will she do the same now that she is a figure in the political party or will the abovementioned phrase apply?

It is not for me to answer, but time will tell.

An individual (adult) has got a right to take a decision about her life, but public figures are subjected to scrutiny. This is because their lives become more public than private.

A question remains: What is Agang?

Is dit a gang vir die mense van Suid Afrika om deur te gaan or a gang against the ruling party?

That is for Agang to answer. ■

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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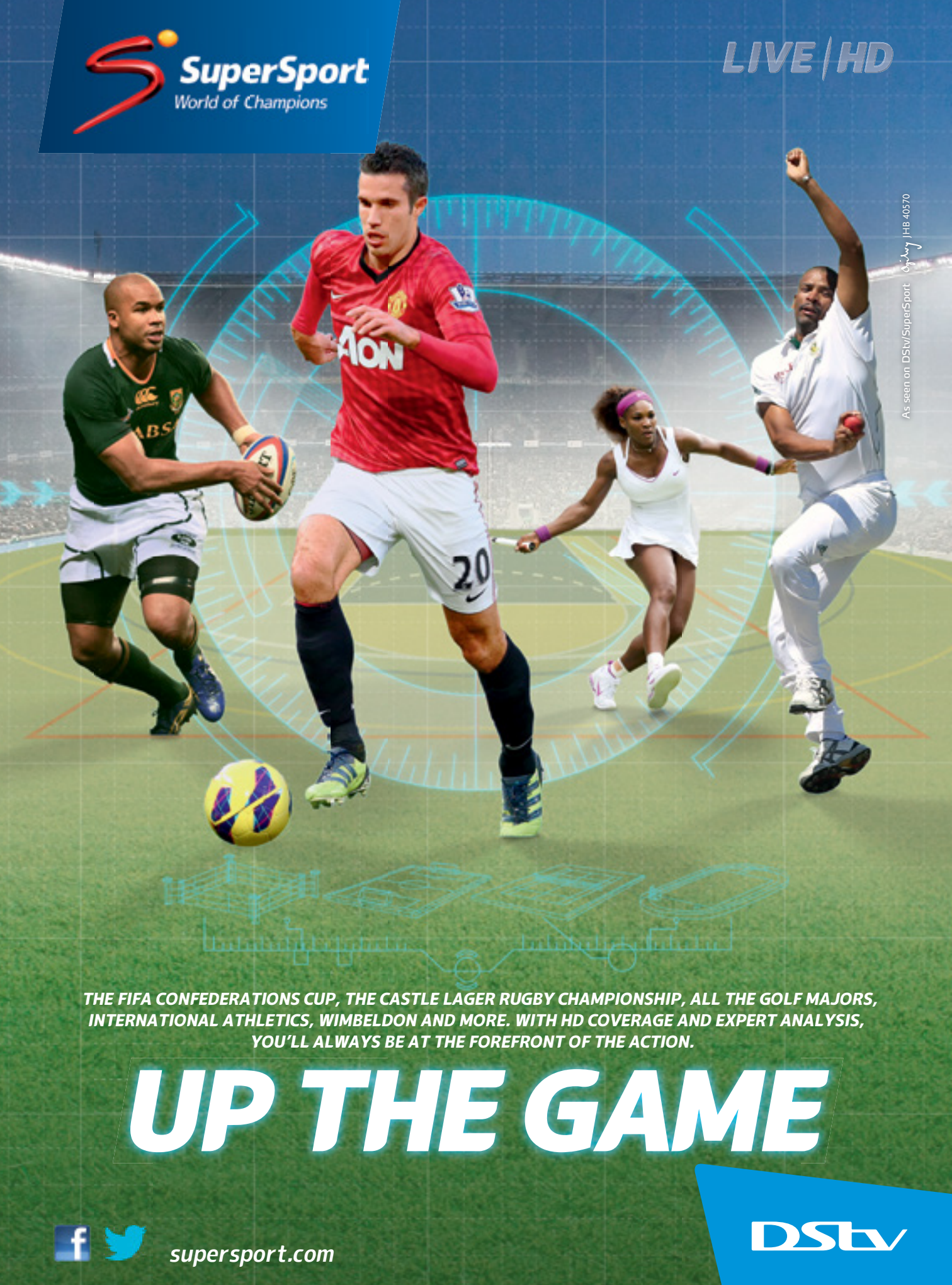
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