



Adebayo Adedeji

# Preparing Africa for the twenty-first Century:

## Agenda for the 1990's



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa

# **Preparing Africa for the twenty-first century:**

Agenda for the 1990's

# **Contents**

	Prefatory Note	i
I.	Development Policy Agenda	1
II.	Security and Stability for Development and Cooperation	19
III.	Restructuring African States and Societies	41
IV.	The Political Agenda	57
V.	Integrating Post-Apartheid South Africa into the African Economy: A Preliminary Exploration	73
VI.	Forging a New Compact with the International Community	85
VII.	Postscript	105

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>AAF-SAP</b>	<b>African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation</b>
<b>ADB</b>	<b>African Development Bank</b>
<b>ANC</b>	<b>African National Conference</b>
<b>APPER</b>	<b>Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, 1986-1990</b>
<b>CEPGL</b>	<b>The Economic Community of Great Lakes Countries</b>
<b>DAC</b>	<b>Development Assistance Committee</b>
<b>DAE</b>	<b>Democracy, Political and Economic Empowerment and Accountability</b>
<b>ECA</b>	<b>Economic Commission for Africa</b>
<b>ECCAS</b>	<b>Economic Community of Central African States</b>
<b>ECOSOC</b>	<b>Economic and Social Council</b>
<b>ECOWAS</b>	<b>Economic Community of West African States</b>
<b>EEC</b>	<b>European Economic Commission</b>
<b>ESAF</b>	<b>Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (of IMF)</b>
<b>FAL</b>	<b>Final Act of Lagos</b>
<b>GATT</b>	<b>General Agreement on Tariff and Trade</b>
<b>GDP</b>	<b>Gross Domestic Product</b>
<b>IDA</b>	<b>International Development Association</b>
<b>IMF</b>	<b>International Monetary Fund</b>
<b>LPA</b>	<b>Lagos Plan of Action</b>
<b>OAU</b>	<b>Organization of African Unity</b>
<b>ODA</b>	<b>Official Development Assistance</b>
<b>OECD</b>	<b>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</b>
<b>OERS</b>	<b>Organization of the Senegal River States</b>
<b>PTA</b>	<b>Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States</b>
<b>SADCC</b>	<b>South African Development Cooperation Conference</b>
<b>SAF</b>	<b>Structural Adjustment Facility (of IMF)</b>
<b>SAP</b>	<b>Structural Adjustment Programmes</b>
<b>SSDCA</b>	<b>Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa</b>
<b>UDEAC</b>	<b>Central African Customs and Economic Union</b>
<b>UMA</b>	<b>Union of Maghreb Countries</b>
<b>UN-PAAERD</b>	<b>United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development</b>

## ***Prefatory note***

The encomiums which have been poured on me since the news of my resignation from the service of the United Nations as one of its Under-Secretaries-General and as the Chief Executive Officer of its Economic Commission for Africa are symptomatic of the generosity of African Heads of State and Government, the non-African member States of the United Nations, the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity, the President of the African Development Bank and many of my senior colleagues in the United Nations and at ECA. Indeed, quite a few individuals - African and non-African - who have no direct dealing either with the UN in general, or the ECA in particular have been quite generous in their promises.

All these are typical of the way that I have been treated throughout my sixteen years tenure in spite of the fact that I have been consistently critical of African governments on the management of the African economies and their persistent failure to put into practice at national level policies which they have collectively adopted at the regional level. Neither have I spared the international community, particularly the donor countries and the multilateral institutions under their control. For the better truth and sober reality is that the international community has not kept faith with Africa. The effort it has taken, except when there are emergency situations which threaten the population with hunger and starvation, has been invariably too little and too late. This is in spite of the fact that it has always sat in harsh judgement over the African people and their governments as to how best they should run their affairs and which development policies and strategies are best for them and are likely to attract donor's support.

But Africa has itself to blame; not for lack of trying to work out a series of continental blue-prints but for its naivety in trusting too much the outside cynical world and for giving the impression that outside assistance is the life saving belt which it must grasp at all costs. Why we have failed to draw necessary lessons from Asia which three to four decades ago was in more or less the same predicament as we now find ourselves but which looked inward rather than outward for solution has always made me wonder. After all Asia was under colonial tutelage for many centuries while for most of Africa, the colonial era was less than a century. Why was the dependency syndrome become so ingrained in Africa in a way that it has not been in most of Asia?

This is a question whose answer our historians and political scientists are now grappling with. But unfortunately time is not on our side. The rest of the world is moving at considerable speed forward while Africa is moving steadily backward. One hopes that the traumatic experience of the 1980s, which ECA first characterised as the lost decade, will make all of us - the people of Africa, their organisations, their leaders and their governments - determine that never again will we allow a repeat performance in the 1990s and beyond.

Although there are a few discernible trends that make one think that this is likely to be the case, no irreversible process has emerged - at least not yet. It is in order to provide all necessary stimulants to the emergence of such a process that I have devoted my last six public statements as the Executive Secretary of ECA and which have been delivered before highly respected and august assemblies to focussing on the agenda for the 1990s which we must pursue and implement vigorously, purposefully and relentlessly in order to prepare Africa well and proper for the twenty-first century. The agendas go beyond mere economism; they are holistic in approach. To enable the entire African and non-African audience that may

be interested in examining closely these proposals in an integrated manner, the ECA has decided to publish this volume.

I have been asked repeatedly by many well-meaning people why I have decided to leave the service of the UN and ECA at this point in time particularly given the challenge posed by the new African Economic Community whose treaty was signed on June 3, 1991 in Abuja, Nigeria and given also the daunting task of ensuring that the 1990s are not lost. My answer is that there is never a "right" time but as I have repeated again and again to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose, under the heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance; a time to cast away and a time to keep, a time to stay and a time to go. For me, the time to leave the services of the United Nations and of ECA has come. I have been touched by the sentiments and emotions that have been expressed and shown since my resignation was announced. Memories are made of these.

I must seize this opportunity once more to express my most sincere appreciations to all our heads of state and government and to their governments and people, whom I have served these past decade and a half, for their unflinching support. I have been accepted as one of their own. I have been honoured as one of their people. This support and honour reached its climax when at their twenty-seventh Summit meeting in Abuja from 3 - 6 June 1991, they adopted unanimously, upon the recommendation of their Council of Ministers a resolution of appreciation and commendation. This is unique and I feel truly honoured.

But I must single out His Excellency General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for special mention. It was his distinguished predecessor, General Yakubu Gowon, who at the request of the then Secretary-

General of the United Nations, Dr. Kurt Whaldeheim, gave me the opportunity to serve Africa and the international community in June 1975. Since then successive Nigerian heads of state and government - the late General Murtala Mohammed, General Olusegun Obasanjo, Alhaji Shehu Shagari and General Mohammadu Buhari have generously given me their support and that of their respective governments. President Babangida has, even long before he became my country's head of state and more so since 1985, been exceedingly supportive. I cannot remember in all these years any request of mine in the interest of Africa and of the United Nations that he has not willingly and generously supported.

Let me conclude this prefatory note in the same way that I concluded my statement to the Abuja Summit of the OAU by adapting from an emotional statement of the RT Honourable Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe P.C., the Owelle of Onitsha and one of the founding fathers of my country, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, during the historic General Strike of 1945 in a pamphlet which he published in 1945. I leave ECA for the unknown, I do so full of spiritual satisfaction that I have served mother Africa to the best of my abilities. I do so more determined than ever before to devote the rest of my life in the continued service of Africa in particular and of humanity in general. Finally, I do so in the firm belief that this continent and its people have better days ahead and that one day, in the not-too-distant future, the African collosus will emerge and take its rightful place in the community of nations and peoples and show to the rest of mankind that we, the Africans, are also the children of God.



# Chapter I

## THE DEVELOPMENT POLICY AGENDA

*Statement at the formal opening of the twenty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Africa and seventeenth meeting of the Conference of Ministers held at the Commission's headquarters, Addis Ababa, 9 May 1991*

### 1. The disappointments of the 1980s

The decade of the 1980s - Africa's lost decade - is remarkable for its many paradoxes. It was the decade during which Africa evolved its own continental strategies and programmes of development, and yet most of its governments followed and implemented only those strategies and policy frameworks carved out for Africa from outside in order to have access to the "almighty" foreign exchange resources. Throughout the decade, Africa consistently and assiduously tried to put its economic problem in the forefront of the global agenda and yet, at the end of the decade, became more marginalized and more peripheral than it has ever been. It was a decade when more resources went to waging conflicts, civil wars and internal stifes than to education and health. Finally, it was a decade during which one and all in the international community agreed that Africa needed massive transfers of resources from abroad to enable it cope with its crisis and lay the foundation for an economic turnaround and yet, throughout the period, Africa became increasingly a net transferor of resources and the persistent victim of the reverse flows of resources.

In order to ensure that the 1990s is not riddled by such paradoxes, and that we do not run the risk of losing yet another decade, it is necessary for us to come back once again to the

question of Africa's development policy agenda during the 1990s. It will be recalled that during ECA's thirtieth anniversary, which was held in Niamey, the Republic of Niger, and which coincided with the twenty-third session of the Commission, I focussed my speech on *African Recovery in an Uncertain and Unstable International Economy*. In 1989, at its twenty-fourth session here in Addis Ababa, I chose *Preparing Africa for the 1990s* as the theme of my address. And last year, at the twenty-fifth session in Tripoli, the Great Libyan Arab Jamahariya, I spoke on *Africa in the 1990s: Marching Forward with the Transformation of the African Economy*. Indeed, the fact that the theme of ECA annual sessions both last year and this year is *Africa in the 1990s: Meeting the Challenges* shows a consensus among all of us that this is the decade of our destiny. As I said in Tripoli last year:

*"It is the decade that challenges Africa, its leaders, governments and people more than any of the preceding ones. For it is the decade during which we must answer a few basic and fundamental questions: What will be the plight of our people during the decade? Will it be one of growing immiserization or one of the reversal of the decay that set in during the last decade, of movement from a state of hopelessness and despair to one of growing optimism and endogenous socio-economic renewal? Will we succeed during this decade in abandoning the programmes and policies that marginalized our people, and turned a growing proportion of our population into vulnerable groups? Will we, instead, pursue vigorously a human-centred development strategy and programmes that put the people first, with the governments yielding space to their people, creating the enabling environment to promote initiative and enterprise and which puts the people at the driving wheel?"*

*"What will be the position of Africa in the world economy during the next ten years? Will Africa begin*

*to recapture the lost ground in the international economy relative to other regions and lay the foundation for becoming a true partner rather than a perpetual dependant in the world economy? What will be our response to the phenomenon of growing regionalism that will be the hall-mark of the 1990s with the North American Free Trade Area, Europe 1992, the Pacific Rim, and what have you? Will we, in response, revitalize and reinvigorate our regional economic groupings such as the PTA for Eastern and Southern Africa, ECOWAS for West Africa, ECCAS for Central Africa and UMA for the Maghreb countries? How advanced will we have gone in the implementation of the Final Act of Lagos which calls for the establishment of the African Economic Community by the year 2000?"<sup>1)</sup>*

We are now almost through with first half of the second year of the decade. Sadly, all the socio-economic and political ills that were so overwhelming in the 1980s and which contributed to our losing that decade are still very much with us - the disintegration of productive and infrastructural facilities; repeated cycles of droughts and environmental degradation and the vulnerability to natural disasters; the persistent threat of hunger now currently looming over 15-25 million people in Africa; and, the persistence and the spread of civil wars and internal strife in many African countries - in the 1980s the countries most seriously affected were Angola, Chad, Ethiopia, Mozambique and the Sudan. Since this decade began, rather than the number reducing, more countries have been added to the list - Liberia, Rwanda and Somalia.

We must not forget that the commodity problem still remains unresolved and the excruciating debt burden still weighs more and more heavily on our economies and decisive-

<sup>1)</sup> Adebayo Adedeji, "Africa in the 1990s: Marching Forward with the Transformation of the African Economy". Statement at the Formal Opening of the Twenty-fifth Session of the Commission and Sixteenth Meeting of the Conference of Ministers held at Tripoli, the Great People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, 15 May 1990, pp. 3-4.

ly constrains our ability to embark on a process of sustainable development, even in spite of recent initiatives taken by some creditor countries to cancel some ODA debts - acts of generosity for which we are most grateful but which have resulted in the cancellation of only 5 per cent of Africa's stock of debt. Besides, whatever might have been the presumed advantages of such cancelled debt more often than not quickly evaporated in the face of a more than proportionate reduction in earnings from export commodities as a result of the collapse in the commodity market and the dramatic fall in prices. Thus, what the debtor nations gain in the wind of debt cancellation, they lose and lose much more in the whirlwind of persistent and sharp falls in the prices of export commodities.

Accordingly, the picture which is portrayed in ECA's *Economic Report on Africa* for 1990 and 1991 is that the African economies are still not out of the doldrums and, if anything, that they are yet to acquire the capacity for independent and durable growth. In such circumstances we must perforce return again to the issue of our development policy agenda in the 1990s to ensure that we do not repeat the mistakes of the 1980s.

## **2. Emerging positive developments**

On the positive side, there are emerging some bright stars out of the firmament. And given our strong bias in favour of a human-centred development paradigm - the very pillar around which the *African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation* (AAF-SAP) is built - these developments have tremendous potentials to impact positively on our development prospects in the 1990s if they are properly harnessed and unleashed.

The first and most significant of these positive developments is the pro-democracy and popular participation wind

of change that is currently blowing throughout our continent. In some places it has developed into a gale force. There is no doubt that sooner or later the whole continent will be covered by it and, when this happens, we will be heralding the birth of a new Africa - where democracy, public accountability, the political and economic empowerment of the people and equity and justice prevail. As I have said again and again,

*"Africa needs fundamental change and transformation, not just adjustment. The change and transformation required are not just narrow, economic and mechanical ones. They are the broader and fundamental changes that will bring about, over time, the new Africa of our vision where there is development and economic justice, not just growth; where there is democracy and accountability, not despotism, authoritarianism and kleptocracy; where the governed and their governments are moving hand-in-hand in the promotion of the common good; and, where it is the will of the people rather than the wishes of one person or a group of persons, however powerful, that prevails."*<sup>2)</sup>

It was at the end of the ECA-sponsored Arusha International Conference on Popular Participation in February 1990 where the *African Charter on Popular Participation in Development and Transformation* was adopted that we strongly advocated that the time has come for the African people to put themselves first, to get rid of their lethargy, to wean themselves of their dependency syndrome and take control of the driver's seat of the vehicle for engineering the social, political and economic transformation of their societies, countries and continent. The response to that call for change has been most encouraging and augurs well for the future. We see this as a

---

<sup>2)</sup> Adebayo Adedeji, Closing Statement at the International Conference on Popular Participation, Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, 16 February 1990, p. 2.

portentous sign of the beginning of the second liberation of Africa.

The second positive development is the growing and determined effort to address the problem of internal civil strife and war in Africa. In Angola and in Mozambique, in Rwanda and in Liberia, and in Ethiopia, the Sudan and Somalia, men and women of goodwill on both sides of the conflicts that have afflicted their countries are seeking peaceful solutions. These efforts must be encouraged and supported, for democracy, development and transformation cannot take place and flourish in societies and countries that are strife-ridden or are constantly in a state of war.

The third positive sign is the ongoing dialogue in the Republic of South Africa to dismantle apartheid and install a truly democratic system of government. Although progress has been slow and is continually marred by the internecine struggles among the majority black population, aided and abetted by extreme elements among the white population if not actually fuelled by them, it is our hope that the process which has begun last year is irreversible and that, sooner or later, a genuinely democratic and majority-ruled Republic of South Africa will emerge to resume its place in ECA and take its seat in OAU. I used the words "resume its place in ECA" advisedly for it is now forgotten that South Africa was one of the nine founding member States of ECA in 1958. Because of its apartheid policy, its membership was suspended in 1963 by ECOSOC on the recommendation of the Commission. The integration of the Republic of South Africa into the African regional economy will have tremendous positive impact and challenge not only in Southern Africa but also throughout the continent.

The fourth positive development since the beginning of the new decade is that the negotiations of the treaty establishing the African Economic Community have been successfully con-

cluded and our Heads of State and Government, at their forthcoming summit meeting of the OAU in Abuja, Nigeria from 3 to 5 June 1991, will sign the treaty. While the signing of the treaty is, of course, not an end by itself and while the road to the complete realization of all the phases in the establishment of the community will be long and arduous, the progress so far made is historic and gives hope for optimism.

### **3. Africa's policy agenda for the 1990s: A nine-point programme for action**

What in the light of these recent events - some positive, others negative - should be our development policy agenda for the 1990s? This is a question which is easier posed than answered but from which we cannot afford to shy away. There are nine crucially important issues that African countries, individually and collectively must of necessity address successfully during the decade. They are:

#### **(a) Reaffirmation, operationalization and implementation of existing continental blue-prints**

As the whole world knows, Africa devoted the 1980s working out regional strategies and policy frameworks for meeting the challenges that confront it. These include the Monrovia Strategy (1979); the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and the Final Act of Lagos (FAL) (1980); Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER) (1985); the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD) (1986); the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP) (1989); and, the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (1990). Moreover, the African strategies and policy frameworks are reinforced by such international instruments as the Declaration on Interna-

tional Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Growth in Developing Countries, the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and the Paris Declaration and Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries.

Therefore, Africa does not lack strategies and policy frameworks and does not need to devote its energy and resources to preparing new ones in the 1990s. What it needs to do now, what it must do earnestly and doggedly, is to stick to them, to be faithful to them and to translate them into operational programmes at the national, sub-regional and regional levels and proceed post haste with their implementation. We must reject the bait, no matter how tempting, to work out yet another regional strategy or programme. In this connection, I am glad that the Memorandum by the ECA Conference of Ministers to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of UN-PAAERD, 1986-1990 explicitly rejects such an option. As it frankly states,

*"... given the global political and economic climate, it cannot be expected that a repetition of UN-PAAERD, no matter how modified, would yield results different from those of the previous Programme. If anything, it might exacerbate the marginalization of Africa by removing its main concerns from current global concerns and treating them as special problems. It will, thus, be a political mistake to relegate Africa to a "back burner" position by invoking yet another programme with an appellatory character, which, as everybody knows would lead to nothing".<sup>3)</sup>*

<sup>3)</sup> Memorandum by the ECA Conference of Ministers to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of UN-PAAERD, 1986-1990, (E/ECA/CM.17/L) Annex II, p. 15.



Such a rejection would lead us to the very first issue which should be on our development policy agenda for the 1990s. This is a reaffirmation of the continuing relevance and validity of our continental blue-prints backed by a determination to operationalize them and pursue their basic strategies, objectives and priorities in our search for socio-economic recovery and transformation. Though they, particularly the most basic among them, such as LPA and FAL, AAF-SAP and the Charter for Popular Participation, may from time to time require some fine tuning, we are all agreed that they provide the key to the solution of our long-term development problem. The corollary of all this is the acceptance of the cardinal principle that the attainment of self-sustained development, which is human-centred and which aims at the integration of the African economies, requires the adoption of long-term and medium-term plans as well as articulate technical and logical stages in the long-term plan. Such a plan must be based on a firm and legitimate political will, a rational and methodological process, and appropriate and development-oriented economic policy instruments at the national, subregional and regional levels.

## **(b) Getting policy instruments right**

The second issue which must feature prominently on our development policy agenda is the imperative necessity of getting our policy instruments right. I argued this at some length last year. All policy instruments, including adjustment measures must be subordinated to the pursuit of the goal of long-term development and transformation. In this connection, our two-year long study of three selected policy instruments whose preliminary drafts were placed before you last year has now been completed and will soon be published. The three policy instruments are multiple exchange rate systems, differen-

tial interest rates policy and selected credit control and price support policies for food self-sufficiency in Africa. The final version of this study has benefitted considerably from extensive consultations with experts and various institutions at the regional and international levels. As I stated in the foreword to the study, these three policy instruments,

*"... have a direct influence on all spheres of economic activity including, in particular, the level and structure of production, export performance, magnitude and pattern of imports, consumption levels and patterns, external debt, balance of payments and resource flows. Hence the application of these policy instruments does determine, to a large extent, the path and content of both adjustment and transformation."*<sup>4)</sup>

**(c) Developing internal capacity to respond to external shocks**

The third issue on our agenda is the development of the internal capacity and capability to be able to respond to change and to external shocks. In the ever-changing world environment in which we live, negative and positive changes abound, both internally and externally, and only those countries whose internal structures and external relations are adaptable to changing situations and novel ideas can hope to take full advantage of new opportunities, be it in national, subregional or international trade or finance. For instance, the menace of drought to Africa's agriculture has remained a recurrent theme since early 1980s. The collapse in commodity prices has meant serious losses in government revenues, investment and consumption. Severe foreign exchange constraints have

---

<sup>4)</sup> Selected Policy Instruments, Addis Ababa, June 1991, p.v.

adversely affected both the productive capacity of African countries and their ability to generate additional incomes. The combined effects of declining export earnings, reduced external capital inflows and increasing debt-service obligations have severely limited the ability of many African countries to promote economic recovery, not to speak of the pursuit of a long-term development strategy. The world of ever-shifting technological frontiers and fast technological obsolescence is such that reliance on primary production has been rendered into an unviable development strategy, and countries that rely almost entirely on the possession of abundant raw materials and its associated pattern of production and trade are going to find themselves more and more in a disadvantageous position, left behind in the development race. Added to this are the untoward effects and impact of the recent Persian Gulf crisis on Africa.

As a people, ours is to be able to insulate ourselves from the negative aspects of the global economy and to increase our capacity to respond appropriately and effectively to such negative exogenous shocks. It is more than ever clear that the speed of economic recovery and transformation in the African countries will depend on how successful African Governments are in removing the rigidities of the African economies, and how well they master the strategy of managing their domestic economies as well as their economic relations - monetary, trade and financial - with the rest of the world.

**(d) Achieving congruence between priorities and resource allocation**

The fourth topic on our agenda is how to achieve total and complete congruence between our stated goals and priorities and the allocation and utilization of our own resources. Indeed, the greatest challenge that we face in

the years ahead is how to ensure the most efficient use of available resources - a factor which is at the heart of the effective management of our economies. It is common knowledge that, in many African countries, resources - be they financial, physical or human - are far from being productively utilized; that considerable leakages exist and are being perpetuated; and, resource allocations do not always match or reflect stated goals and priorities.

**(e) Putting in place a holistic human resources development policy and strategy**

Fifthly, we must deal squarely in the 1990s with the question of human resources development in a holistic manner. For at the centre of the African socio-economic drama lies the human factor which is the ultimate dialectics whereby people are necessarily and immutably the mentors of the processes of change and transformation and the beneficiaries of the results of such processes. Our failure to pursue long-term development goals has probably had the most devastating negative impact on the human factor - whether in the fields of education and health or in the fields of employment, the empowerment of the people and income distribution. With the illiterate population growing more rapidly in Africa than its overall population growth rate (while it is decreasing in other regions), with persistent inadequate scientific and technical know-how and with severe underutilization of human resources, how can we hope to cope with the challenges that lie ahead? Africa must therefore deal squarely with the all-too-important question of human resources development in a holistic manner - that is, the creation of human resources, their rational and optimal utilization and the development of an enabling environment that will bring about a high degree of involvement and commitment by the entire population. What we need is a new approach that will put at the forefront of our development

effort the human factor; an approach that will redress the lack of viable political entities and encourage a democratic culture to take root on the continent.

**(f) Making regional and subregional integration as an integral part of domestic national policy**

Sixthly, economic cooperation and integration between and among African countries must become an integral part of domestic national policy. Any assessment of the prospects there are for Africa must, per force, take cognizance of regional economic integration. For in no area of endeavour - whether it is in the internalization of the development process or international trade negotiations, debt policy, or adjustment with transformation - can much progress be made without cooperation among African countries. In a continent which emerged from colonial dependence in such a fragmented state, nothing will guarantee full mobilization of the continent's immense potential more than a concerted effort at economic integration and cooperation. What we have done so far is to set up the needed intergovernmental organizations and instruments of cooperation and integration, but we are still to make them function effectively to serve the ends they are intended to serve.

If, as is increasingly evident, the world of the future will be a world of trading blocs and economic groupings - what with the planned consolidation of Europe into a Common Market in 1992, the US-Canada Free Trade Area, the Australian-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, and an OECD for Asia - the real losers in the 1990s and beyond are those areas, especially Africa, where the process of economic integration is yet to be fully consolidated. At a time when the other continents are strengthening economic and commercial ties among themselves, Africa cannot afford to remain disunited.

This is why the establishment of the African Economic Community is both timely and indeed welcome. Time is not on Africa's side. The rest of the world is, quite understandably, not waiting for us. Having formed itself into solid economic blocs, the rest of the world is likely to find it easier to cooperate even better with and among itself than with Africa. Africa is the only continent that, for now, has no second window to fall back upon and is completely devoid of the leverage and the necessary wherewithal for operating as an equal economic partner within the international community. Therefore it is necessary for Africa to find ways and means of accelerating the process of full integration than is currently envisaged if they are to strengthen ties among themselves, and enhance their ability to participate more fruitfully and as worthwhile partners in the international economy.

(g) Rediscovering Africa's culture, tradition and value

The seventh issue for our agenda is the imperative necessity for the African people to redefine their identity, their values and their aspirations. Even after more than three decades of independence, the traditional African cultural norms, beliefs and attitudes have hardly been given the due chance to situate and shape the development of the continent. Preoccupation has been so much with "imitative modernism" through which Northern values, institutions and technology are transplanted rather than with those positive aspects of traditional values and cultures that could be positively harnessed for development.

As I said in 1975, in the Tom Mboya Memorial Lecture, *"for over the last hundred years, the traditional cultures of Africa - the arts and customs and beliefs of the scores of diverse*

*ethnic groups in Africa - have seldom appeared worthy of honour and respect".*<sup>5)</sup> The African traditions of solidarity, cooperative spirit, self-help development and humanism, and of perceptions of human beings as the fulcrum of development as well as of sanctions on leadership to ensure accountability have fallen into disuse and forgotten. How to sort this out, and, having done so, how to positively capitalize on those functional aspects of our cultures, values and customs and harness them for development purposes is one of the major challenges facing development economics today inasmuch as Africa is concerned.

If the African people continue to undermine and distort their identity, if the African people continue to throw away their own values and mimic alien ones, if the African people refuse to define a future of their own or, having defined it, refuse to stick assiduously to it, and if the African people refuse to base their aspirations on their own potential, it will be very difficult for the region to start on the path of real progress. If we do not rediscover the apparently lost courage to develop on our own lot and by our own bootstraps, how do we expect anyone else to expend energies and resources in assisting us to develop? As a people, we must abandon our contagious lethargy, our monumental opportunism, our unjustified fatalism, and, above all, our dependency syndrome.

#### **(h) Removing infrastructural constraints to long-term development**

An essential precondition for Africa's turnaround and for laying the foundation for socio-economic transformation lies in squarely addressing the many long-term constraints on the economic development of the region.

---

<sup>5)</sup> Adebayo Adedeji, "Pluralism as a Factor in Africa's Development and Modernization". Tom Mboya Memorial Lecture, 18 December 1975, p. 4.

Problems such as inadequate transport infrastructure, low levels of human resource development, lack of effective environmental management and maintenance in the face of creeping deforestation and desertification and the poor levels of agricultural research and lack of technological break-throughs for such African staple crops as maize, millet, sorghum, cassava and yam, need to be urgently tackled. For what is at stake in Africa is whether it will enter the twenty-first century and the beginning of the next millennium with its present fragile structures, increasingly marginalized and unable to confront the real task of development and development engineering. Or, whether it is going to march strongly towards the twenty-first century and the next millennium with a new resolve to build the economic structures that will turn its tremendous potential of natural and human resources, together with the advantages and opportunities that these resources confer upon it into concrete results and achievements. Hence the strategic importance of this agenda item.

**(i) Making individual and collective effort to ensure that the doomsday scenario is proved wrong**

Africa must make individual and collective effort to ensure that the doomsday scenario never comes to pass, and that it is never realized. The generally portrayed picture is that Africa will remain at the periphery of the world's socio-economic order. Already detached from the mainstream of the world economic system as a result of an "involuntary de-linking", Africa is most likely to continue to suffer from greatly reduced commodity prices in the 1990s; it will, at best, be allowed only to acquire polluting industries. Environmental degradation would accelerate, making many parts of the region totally uninhabitable; and, its large and rapidly increasing population would almost ensure that squalor, disease, malnutrition



and increased ignorance would be the lot of the average African! Undoubtedly, this type of prognosis for Africa in our "brave new world" goes beyond mere "Afro-pessimism" when one recalls the very brutal and frightening prediction by the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD some time ago that "*Africa in the year 2000 will not be in the ditch it is now. It will be in the bottom of a deep black hole.*" But the important thing for us is that it must not be allowed to come true not merely by words but by deeds and our concerted actions.

#### **4. The struggle for the second liberation of Africa must be won during this decade**

I have no doubt that this nine-point programme together with the four positive developments that I referred to at the beginning of this statement can, if pursued vigorously, make a major difference to Africa, propel it on the path of socio-economic recovery and enable it to lay the foundation for socio-economic transformation. We can even boldly predict that they will, together, make the second liberation of Africa a reality sooner rather than later.

Throughout the period of my service, we have worked together to put ECA in the forefront of the battle for Africa's socio-economic emancipation and transformation. We have been consistent in our earnest search for the second liberation of Africa - the socio-economic liberation of the continent, the liberation of its teeming millions from the scorchers of hunger, famine, disease, illiteracy and underdevelopment. The task has proved more herculean, and more daunting than we had thought, but we have remained steadfast and undaunted. I wish we were in a position to sing *finita jam sunt proelia - the strife is over, the battle done*; but we are not. Perhaps one day we may but not yet now. But as the poet, William Blake once said, Great things are done when men and mountains meet. This is not done by jostling in the street.

Therefore, as I bid ECA and the United Nations adieu, I can only truthfully say *veni, vidi, servi*. I leave, fully conscious of the fact that the struggle must perforce continue, that the war for the economic redemption of Africa must continue to be waged until we are able to give hope to the hopeless, help to the helpless and turn this marginalized and excessively ridiculed continent into one of prosperity and abundance. I hand over to you an ECA that, working hand in hand with the OAU, is capable of playing an increasingly major role in the achievement of our long-term development objectives. And I charge you, one and all, to ensure, with all the resources at your command, that Africa overcomes - that it overcomes famine and hunger; that it overcomes illiteracy and backwardness and that it overcomes economic injustice and inequity.

Let me assure you that though I leave ECA and the United Nations, my commitment to continue with the struggle remains as firm as ever. Therefore, for as long as I live, I shall remain a combatant in the struggle for the second liberation of Africa - the socio-economic emancipation of our continent - for therein lies the path of honour and dignity and of hope and a future for our peoples, for our children and grandchildren.

# Chapter II

## Security and stability for development and cooperation

*Statement to the Kampala Forum on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (SSDCA), Kampala, Uganda, 19 May 1991*

### 1. Introduction

The Economic Commission for Africa is very much pleased to have been able to co-sponsor this meeting with the Africa Leadership Forum and the Organization of African Unity. Almost a decade ago, in Lagos, Nigeria, African Heads of State and Government initiated a bold endeavour which was designed to bring about the accelerated development of the continent and the progressive integration of its economies. They adopted the first continental blue-prints in the form of the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and the Final Act of Lagos (FAL). If, in spite of the historic nature of the LPA as the first-ever continental programme for long-term development and socio-economic transformation, we have found it necessary to be here today to explore afresh ways and means of intensifying efforts in those same directions, it can only be because the socio-political context which led to the formulation of the LPA and FAL have radically changed. Events, both in the rest of the world and in Africa since independence, particularly since the 1980s, by making the lofty intentions and ideals of the LPA and FAL, and Africa's own perception of its development into the twenty-first century yet to become a reality, have made an initiative such as the present one increasingly mandatory if Africa is not to face a systemic collapse in the immediate future.

To appreciate the need for a new, albeit comprehensive regional initiative, we need to ask and answer such hard questions as: Where and why did we go wrong and how do we overcome? Or, put differently, why is Africa in such a mess and where do we go from here?

## 2. The interlocking nature of the African crisis

The independence of the Sudan in 1956, of Ghana in 1957, of Guinea in 1958, followed by that of the majority of the West and Central African countries in 1960 heralded the dawn of a new era when the so-called dark continent enjoyed the promise of the continent of the future - bright and prosperous. That promise has regrettably eluded us during the past three decades. Since independence the lot of the African countries has been, almost without exception, that of an unending chain of crises. One country after another has been shaken by political convulsions and violence. As I pointed out in the Convocation Lecture which I delivered on *Africa and the Africans and Their Historic Challenge* on the occasion of the eighth Convocation ceremony of the University of Calabar, Nigeria on 3 December 1987, political instability, cleavage and conflict have become prevalent in Africa, and perhaps the most dominant all-pervasive factor in the contemporary social history of the continent. The same conclusion was reached almost a year later in the *Khartoum Declaration on the Human Dimension of Africa's Economic Recovery and Development* where it was observed that:

*"...the political context for promoting healthy human development (in Africa) has been marred for more than two decades by instability, war, intolerance, restrictions on the freedom and human rights of individuals and groups as well as overconcentration of power with attendant restrictions on popular participation in decision-making."* <sup>6)</sup>

---

<sup>6)</sup> The Khartoum Declaration, Khartoum, Sudan, 5-8 March, 1988, p. 19.

The establishment of viable and integrative political order has eluded many African countries. In fact, a few have come close to being destroyed by civil wars or bad government, or both, while in some it can be argued that the very basis of effective government hardly obtains. At the same time, the economic condition of Africa, especially that of sub-Saharan Africa, has become almost universally grim, if not tragic, as many countries are threatened by a systemic economic breakdown and the economic centre no longer holds. Sadly enough, the interlocking nature of the African crisis and the development problematic which was all too obvious was generally ignored. Perhaps the first explicit recognition came almost belatedly in the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation where it was stated:

*"...the crisis currently engulfing Africa, is not only an economic crisis but also a human, legal, political and social crisis. It is a crisis of unprecedented and unacceptable proportions manifested not only in abysmal declines in economic indicators and trends, but more tragically and glaringly in the suffering, hardship and impoverishment of the vast majority of African people. At the same time, the political context of socio-economic development has been characterized, in many instances, by an over-centralization of power and impediments to the effective participation of the overwhelming majority of the people in social, political and economic development. As a result, the motivation of the majority of the African people and their organizations to contribute their best to the development process, and to the betterment of their own well-being as well as their say in national development has been severely constrained and curtailed and their collective and individual creativity has been undervalued and underutilized."* <sup>7)</sup>

---

African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, 12-16 February 1990, (E/ECA/CM.16/11), p. 17.

The systemic economic breakdown in Africa, it must be understood, is principally the result of the political and social conditions of the continent - poor governance, lack of public accountability and of popular participation by the majority of the population, an increasingly narrow base of decision-making, the crisis of confidence between the governed and their governments. As Claude Ake reminded us in a paper presented at the ECA International Conference of "Africa: The Challenge of Economic Recovery and Accelerated Development" held in Abuja, Nigeria, in June 1987, *"we are never going to understand the current crisis in Africa much less contain it as long as we continue to think of it as an economic crisis. What is before us is primarily a political crisis; its economic consequences are serious enough as we know only too well, but they are nonetheless incidental. Not only is the crisis entirely political in character, it is also political in origin."*<sup>8)</sup> The economic breakdown in turn, of course, aggravates political instability in the region in a most vicious interaction between bad politics and poorly run and declining economies, and the social and psychological consequences are, to put it mildly, disastrous. There can be little doubt that, they i.e. the persistent political turbulence in Africa and the pervasive and persistent economic crisis - have led to political despair and to the marginalization of the continent and the consolidation of the image of the region as a perpetual underdog of the world.

Thus part of the reasons we have remained enmeshed in the mess in which we now find ourselves is because we have chosen to ignore at our peril the mutually reinforcing negative consequences of political and economic crises in Africa, and because we stubbornly refused to allow our policies and programmes to be influenced by the full realization that political and economic reforms are necessarily interlocking and intertwining. The focus on narrow, economic objectives and short-term management of the African economy in the 1980s,

<sup>8)</sup> Claude Ake, "How Politics Underdeveloped Africa". Paper presented at the ECA International Conference on "Africa: The Challenge of Economic Recovery and Accelerated Development", held in Abuja, Nigeria, June 1987, p. 1.

instead of the longer- term human-centred development objectives, is another reason why our economies and the level of their integration are still at the stage at which they are today.

There can be no greater fallacy than that which sees a dichotomy between security and stability, on the one hand, and cooperation and development, on the other, or pretends that either can be kept away from the other in a watertight compartment. Development and cooperation being a multi-variate process in which all elements - economic and non-economic - interact organically with each other cannot be divorced from its social, cultural and political settings. Again, as I had pointed out in my Calabar Convocation Lecture, *"the operation of the law of cumulative causation in Africa has been such that political instability and the weakness of ineffectiveness of many a government have resulted in the aggravation of the continent's economic vulnerability, stagnation and decadence which, in turn, has exacerbated the dependence of its economies on exogenous factors, aggravated its economic backwardness and is resulting in severe societal strains and stresses which in some cases are close to total breakdown."*<sup>9)</sup>

Insecurity in Africa is both at societal and individual / personal levels. Beginning with the first military *coup d'état* in sub-Saharan Africa in the Sudan on 17 November 1958, coups have become rather endemic on the continent of Africa. Africa has seen no fewer than a hundred coups and counter-coups in the last two decades, most of which have heralded the dawn of an unstable hegemony of governments whose number one priority and consummate focus is regime perpetuation and security rather than the security of the nation. The transformation of the entire political economy into that of despotism, with authoritarianism and kleptocracy in place of democracy, public accountability and political empowerment has not only undermined liberty and freedom of the individual, it has led

<sup>9)</sup> Adebayo Adedeji, "Africa and the Africans and Their Historic Challenge". Convocation Lecture of the Eighth Convocation Ceremony of the University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria, 3 December 1987, p. 9.

to his or her marginalization in the development process. It has led to the people being actually forgotten in the scheme of things.

We have seen in the last two decades in Africa a blatant disregard for the protection and promotion of the human rights of the individual such as it has never before been experienced anywhere on the continent, as well as the growing marginalization of individual citizens in governance of national affairs. We have seen the ironic tragedy of many African Governments that would expect the same citizenry that is suppressed, tramped upon, violated, coerced and brutalized, and even jailed for mere expressions of dissent, to be the very mentors and fulcrum of the processes of change and transformation. An increasingly large number of Africans have been turned into refugees or displaced persons by the political turmoil on the continent or held hostage to externally dictated programmes of adjustment. Primarily as a result of lack of security and stability in Africa, we now have the rather dubious distinction of being the continent with the largest population of refugees in the world.

### **3. The role of external factors in the lack of security and stability in Africa**

No serious discussion of the problems of security and stability of Africa will be complete without an assessment of the influence of the external factors. The history of African countries has been replete with important instances of perverse external involvement of Africa as a pawn in ideological battles and super-power rivalry, and involuntary and unequal linkages to the international economic and financial system, with all the insecurity and instability that they entailed for the region.

Whether or not and to what degree the African countries are still being subjected to neo-colonialist manipulation will



continue to be debated. What is clearly undeniable is that some of Africa's contemporary problems of insecurity and instability are directly traceable to colonialism.

The balkanization of Africa - a prime example of our colonial legacy - has been a perennial source of instability. By splitting and locating one ethnic group across the borders of two or more countries, balkanization supplied the *raison d'être* of some of the unending border disputes and wars which have plagued and are still plaguing the African countries today. As it is, some of these disputes or wars have endured or intensified, as the case may be, undermining the very basis for intra-African economic cooperation and integration.

Our economic structure of mono-cultural production and our reliance on the export of one or two primary commodities exports is another of our unenviable colonial inheritance and predispositional sources of instability. The colonial economic legacy of extreme openness and excessive dependence renders Africa particularly vulnerable to external shocks. It is part of the reason the increasingly unfavourable international economic climate - resulting from the volatility and collapse of commodity prices, exchange rate fluctuations, high interest rates and increased protectionism, together with the worsening terms of trade - has constituted such a serious constraint on Africa's development and transformation and such a source of insecurity to Africa's primary producers.

Imported ideological and political differences have also been a source of intra-African disputes and conflicts in neighbouring African countries. For instance, ideological cleavages between avowed Marxists and non-Marxists, and between proponents and opponents of communism, have ostensibly been responsible in part for some of the internal conflicts in Africa and for external involvement in the *proxy* or *surrogate* internal civil wars fought in recent times or in the not-too-distant past in some parts of central, eastern and southern parts

of the continent. In this regard, one of the positive developments from the new political configurations in the world, characterized by increasing ideological homogeneity and a thaw in the cold war and in super-power rivalry, will be, over the long run, the attenuation of ideology as a source of conflict within and among African countries.

Other manifestations of the external factors in the security problems and the instability of the African region have included direct interference in the internal affairs of some African countries, military interventions, mercenary invasion and other acts of destabilization. Too often, leaders who have lost the confidence of their people are sustained in office in Africa by outside forces, including military forces, while the same forces have been known to be the real ousters of leaders who, though locally popular, fail to toe the line or offend the interests and sensibilities of metropolitan powers.

South Africa's export of violence and its deliberate destruction of the economy and lives in neighbouring States in order to defend the apartheid system and ensure its continuation has been a dominant source of insecurity and instability in the entire Eastern and Southern African subregion. The countries that have been most seriously affected by the debilitating impact of acts of destabilization, aggression and subversion by the Government of South Africa are the nine countries of the Southern African Co-ordinating Conference (SADCC) which incurred not only human costs but also prohibitive costs in terms of war damage, extra defence spending, higher transport and energy costs, relief and survival support to the large and growing number of refugees and displaced persons, and losses of output and exports resulting from boycotts and embargoes. The effects of South Africa's regional strategy for ensuring the continuation of apartheid did in fact pervade all aspects of life in neighbouring countries - lives and economic infrastructure destroyed or damaged, and seeds of future disruption sown in the ravaging of health and education

facilities. The government of South Africa brazenly supported and actively participated in open warfare in countries such as Mozambique and Angola, and waged economic war against others. How much more could life have been made insecure and unstable for the affected countries, particularly when account is taken of the very long time that would be needed to recoup accrued losses and regain the capacity already destroyed.

There are important non-political sources of instability and insecurity, however. The extent that the orthodox SAPs have given rise to general disaffection, protests and riots on the continent is, for example, illustrative of the impact of foreign-imposed economic policies on national stability. In addition, the increasing role of foreign experts and advisers, directly and indirectly, in national economic decision-making in Africa is a potent source of policy discontinuity on account of which the management of the economy has greatly suffered. It is not hard to imagine where the African economy would be today with respect to socio-economic transformation, equitable income distribution and general economic welfare had we not been derailed from relentlessly and vigorously pursuing the Monrovia Strategy, the LPA and FAL through the publication of the *Agenda for Action* <sup>10)</sup> by the World Bank even before the ink had dried on the paper on which the LPA was written. It is also not difficult to imagine what would have happened to our social and economic milieu since 1985 if the goals of policy reforms for recovery, as enshrined in APPER, had not been hijacked by the orthodox SAPs that were principally concerned with the symptoms rather than with the root causes of our underdevelopment.

The perverse influences of external factors are not however the only significant sources of insecurity and instability in the African countries. The African elites are themselves part of the

---

<sup>10)</sup> World Bank, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action*, Washington D.C., 1981.

problem of Africa. They bear a large responsibility for some of the problems of insecurity and instability that confront their countries. As an example, many political elites often seek to perpetuate themselves in power, and any challenge by the people to their rule, no matter how principled, is perceived as treason. Mansour Khalid recently wrote<sup>11)</sup> a devastating account of the failure of the Sudanese elite - their selfishness, egotism, self-centredness, a tendency to distance themselves from the societies that have given them birth and their anxiety to be assimilated into the elites of Europe. What he said about the Sudanese elite applies *mutatis mutandis* to the elites of all other African countries - self-seeking, opportunistic, sycophantic and lacking in much commitment to Africa. But for the African elites the continent would not have remained the despised appendage of the receding upron strings of the very metropolitan powers that once ruled over it, free to be manipulated at will. Lack of public accountability by the African elite has been a major source of dissatisfaction and disaffection among the citizenry and, in turn, one of the provocations to violent demonstrations. By recklessly exploiting ethnic, religious and other social differences for personal gains and political ends, many African elites have exacerbated the divide and rule game and created growing tensions in many countries. In relation to the rest of the society, it is always a zero-sum game in which the gain for the individual elite becomes the loss to the nation.

#### 4. The way forward

But if such is the severity of the mess in which Africa has found itself with respect to insecurity and instability, what is the way forward? It should by now be obvious that very little progress, if any, can be made with economic development and with the economic integration and cooperation on the continent of Africa without security and stability. Both are um-

---

<sup>11)</sup> Mansour Khalid, *The Government they Derve: The Role of the Elite in Sudan's Political Evolution*, Kegan Paul International Ltd., 1990.

bilically linked, and there cannot be one without the other.

Without security, defined broadly to mean economic, political and social security at national, subregional and regional levels, there can be no stability in the African region; and, without stability, there can be little prospects for economic integration and cooperation, or for socio-economic transformation of the African economies. Economic, political and social security are part of the enabling environment that will bring about a high degree of involvement and commitment in development on the part of the entire population.

Education, skills, technology, capital, level of remuneration, etc., are no doubt important in motivating an individual to want to give his best to achieve the highest level of productivity possible. But there must, in addition, be an enabling environment in terms of political freedom - freedom of speech, of thoughts, and of association, freedom from economic and personal insecurity and freedom from arbitrary arrest must be supreme in such a society. Individuals must be able to express new ideas, to articulate new thinking without being molested. It is in such a political environment that a high level of productivity can be generated. It is in such a society that the values of self-reliance can be developed. It is in such a society that a consensus of values, based on the common characteristics of toughness, determination, resilient inner strength, steadfastness in duty, respect for the law, etc., will evolve and grow. In other words, there must be the democratization of the development process in such a society and adequate and effective political accountability.

But development, democracy and cooperation cannot flourish in societies that are constantly in a state of war and are crisis ridden and subject to political and social intolerance, ethnic and religious unrest, and secessionist activities. Nor are inter-State conflicts and border disputes conducive to effective cooperation.

Important as it may be, it will not be sufficient for us to simply agree that political pluralism and protection of basic human rights are essential ingredients for fostering national, subregional and regional security and stability, or that security and stability are in turn some of the essential and most crucial ingredients and foundation for cooperation and development. We need to do much more. We need to formalize the ideals of a self-reinforcing linkage between political, economic, social, cultural and psychological development and the evolution of the politics and policies based on consensus and consent, conviction and commitment, and compassion and accountability into a grand process. We need in addition to formulate the essential properties of the design of the very process that will keep in constant focus the essence of the interlinkages we have been able to identify.

Africa's history has been replete with struggles against man's inhumanity to man, against injustice - struggles against slavery, against colonialism and against racial discrimination and apartheid are shining examples. But the time is long overdue to add a new dimension to the struggle. We must now turn our struggle into the struggle for personal freedom, justice and democracy for our people. We must turn it into the struggle for human rights and dignity for our people. And, above all, it must be the struggle for the political and economic empowerment of our people. It is only by so doing that we will usher in the second liberation of Africa and unleash the energies of our people. We must put in place a national security system which enables each of our countries to achieve its national objectives while at the same time it provides a very high degree of guarantee of personal freedom, human rights and personal security, through political, economic, psycho-social and military actions, to all its citizens without any type of discrimination on account of race, sex, religion, or cultural or ethnic origin and differentiation.

Africa needs to evolve its own system of security, a new order of stability, and a new democratic order that will redefine and reshape the region's political, cultural, economic and social agenda, and, by so doing, lay the groundwork for development and cooperation on the continent for generations to come, and in respect of the region's relations with the rest of the world. The comprehensive new order must not only embody a common set of values and notions of justice, equity and freedom, it must, by providing a set of principles and a common code of conduct to which all African countries will subscribe, encompass a defined process and a given framework in which the issues of security, stability, development and cooperation are explicitly linked. But, above all, Africa needs to put itself in a position where it will be able to set its agenda by itself rather than have it set by other countries or power centres.

The nature, content and scope and complexity of the historic challenge that faces Africa and the Africans is such that our resolve will be measured not by our rhetoric but by how urgently, vigorously and persistently the challenge is addressed on the part of all and sundry, and whether or not we do so with all the might and resources at our disposal. Although any security, stability, development and cooperation process for Africa to be viable and durable, must proceed in the end as an intergovernmental process, it is important that it is seen and viewed right from the beginning as a collective process in which there is room for everyone that cares to participate in their individual capacities, both in bringing pressure to bear on governments - African and non-African - to participate in the process, and in giving impetus to the process through general advocacy and the promotion of public enlightenment and education.

The new vision for Africa must be one wherein the new concepts of the State are defined in terms of the rights and obligations of the State to its citizens, where institutions and

the rule of law take precedence over personality cults, where leaders and not rulers are what will be in hot demand, where the State has more to offer than its hollow shell of sovereignty, where the governed and their governments are moving hand-in-hand in the promotion of the common good, where it is the will of the people rather than the wishes of one person or a group of persons, however powerful, that prevails, and, where the gravest threat and indeed the only threat to the State and state security would be perceived as the poverty and indignity and deprivation of its citizenry. So perceived, the issue of one African country having to give up part of its existing sovereignty in order to gain greater sovereignty in freedom and unity with other African countries becomes more comprehensible, and reductions in military expenditures become part of the peace dividends to be reaped from promotion of social and political stability. But, above all, the solidarity and spirit of Pan-Africanism, which made the struggle for the independence of one country the struggle of all countries of Africa, would have been recaptured, and we can then all see in the need for economic development, co-operation and integration of Africa a common cause for action.

Whatever we do, we must ensure that the Kampala Forum marks a new beginning for Africa, the birth of a new Africa in which a new era of democratization of the development process, the political and economic empowerment of the people, public accountability and economic and social justice will become internalized at each national level. We must also send forth the unequivocal and unambiguous signal that Africa is ready for change and from being a citadel of political instability and social conflict and unrest into one of stability, democracy, social cohesion, national unity and regional integration, ready to initiate and organize the process that will enable it, using its own concepts, policies and instruments for socio-economic engineering, attain self-reliant and self-sustaining development, and ready to will for itself a new future



that will release, galvanize and recharge the energies of its teeming masses.

What is the specific agenda that will make all this possible? This is the question that we must now attempt to answer in the concluding part of this address.

## **5. Policy agenda for security and stability in the 1990s**

The question of what the policy agenda should be for security and stability on the continent in the 1990s is extremely complex and admittedly easier posed than answered. But, in groping for an answer or for a series of answers, our onerous task of drawing up a policy agenda, I believe, is considerably eased and assisted by some of the positive and spectacular political developments on the continent in 1990 and 1991, especially with respect to people-driven democratic changes.

As already indicated in the preceding chapter, the wind of change that is blowing across the continent in the quest for basic rights, individual freedom and democratic participation in social, political and economic development. Since the process was launched in February 1990 in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania with the adoption of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation by an ECA-sponsored International Conference, the demand for democracy, political and economic empowerment and accountability (DEA) has been growing fast in Africa. In line with the call in the African Charter for the broadening of the social base of power and decision-making, and for the creation of a new partnership between the people and the governments in the common interests of society and accelerated socio-economic development, the African Governments have themselves started yielding space to the people in response to this growing popular demand. Let us hope that the process will

continue and indeed accelerate and gather momentum into the gale force that it promises to be.

If the process is to be aided, fostered and guided, then Africa's agenda in the 1990s for security and stability in order to prepare itself for the twenty-first century must encompass the following:

(i) **Stability**

(a) *Promoting human rights to accelerate popular participation*

Promotion and protection of human rights and basic freedoms are essential to fostering genuine popular participation. As a first step, governments should incorporate provisions relating to fundamental human rights and basic freedoms in their national constitutions or comparable legal codes. Subsequently, national institutions should be established to monitor compliance of governments to the human rights provisions.

(b) *Adherence to the supremacy of the rule of law*

This requires that in all circumstances and on all occasions, *without any exception*, governments will have vigorously follow the provisions of laws or codes legislated by an assembly of freely elected representatives. No one, no matter how powerful and highly placed, can be exempt from accounting for his/her conduct when a law is breached. The independence and impartiality of the judiciary must be guaranteed. Security of tenure for members of judiciary is a *conditio sine qua non*. A Bill of Rights must also be promulgated by an assembly of freely elected representatives of the people which will

guarantee *inter alia* the right to education, to food and shelter, to economic empowerment including the right to own property and the freedom for arbitrary arrest and detention without trial. Provisions for *habeas corpus* and *habeas mandamus* should be included in such a Bill of Rights.

(c) *Promoting economic equity and social justice*

Promotion of economic equity and social justice are essential elements for fostering stability. The specific ways for achieving the goals of economic equity and social justice may vary from country to country. But basically, there should be created institutions, such as Equal Opportunities Commissions, that will monitor and report annually on access to education, health, housing and other welfare facilities. In particular, specific programmes for poverty alleviation and eradication should be designed and implemented by African countries.

(d) *Promoting public accountability*

Public accountability is vital to sustained confidence in governance of public affairs, itself an essential requirement for political stability. African countries should strive to establish or strengthen, as appropriate, institutions that promote public accountability. These may take the form of an ombudsman or a code of conduct bureau as well as audit boards. These bodies should be given protection from arbitrary executive or legislative interventions through guaranteed tenure of office, salaries and pensions for those who administer them.

**(e) *Limitation of the tenure of political leaders***

Frequently, political leaders in Africa have tended to remain in office for a prolonged period of time or for life. This has not only resulted in the stifling of innovations in management of national affairs but also it has made it possible for leaders to act without commitments to the basic values of public accountability thus breeding corruption and gross abuse of power. African countries should, therefore, enshrine provisions in their national constitutions that explicitly prohibit political leaders from remaining in office for more than a fixed term. In addition, rotation of top political offices - the presidency or prime ministership or Head of State as the case may be - should be considered in situations where regional or ethnic balance is crucial.

**(ii) *Security***

**(a) *Linkage between internal and external security and between stability and security***

The issue of security must be anchored on some basic principles foremost among which is the linkage between internal and external security. The chances of effective inter-country security in Africa depend on a pervasive state of internal security in each country. A state of intra-country insecurity breeds suspicions among neighbouring countries and leads to inter-country conflicts. The organic link between national security and the security of Africa must be perceived by one and all. Therefore to achieve national and continental security must be the principal policy objective of all African countries. This means that each country must be guided by the principle of good neighbourliness and

peaceful resolution of conflicts. It also means that all efforts must be concentrated on the prevention of conflicts.

The security of the people, their economic and political empowerment and the security of their property is an absolute necessity for stability. Conversely, national and collective regional self-reliance is vital for intra- and inter-country security and ultimately for continental security.

At the continental level, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights should undertake annual assessment of human rights record of African countries and publish its findings.

**(b) *Regaining sovereignty over conflict resolution and management***

The growing tendency towards referring disputes within or among African countries to extra-African powers for resolution has to be curtailed. Institutions for adjudication and arbitration in intra- and inter-state conflicts should be established or strengthened, as appropriate, at the national and regional levels respectively. The organs of the OAU established for arbitration and mediation should be revived to provide the regional umbrella under which subregional institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA), the Southern African Co-ordinating Conference (SADCC), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Economic Community of Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), will serve as the decentralized centres for conflict resolution and

management in their respective subregions. With respect to intra-state conflicts, Africa's traditional media for conflict resolution should always be explored and exploited fully in its various forms and early enough, especially the cultural norms of respect for the mediation roles of elders in traditional African societies.

(c) *Establishing peace keeping mechanisms*

A major lacuna in existing subregional and continent-wide political institutions is the lack of viable peace-keeping arrangements, a situation that has led to exacerbation of several intra-state and inter-state African conflicts. To redress the situation where many conflicts in Africa have degenerated to brutal savagery, it will be important to devise creative and cost-effective arrangements for peace keeping in Africa in order to give mediation and conciliation a good chance. Peace keeping arrangements can be designed both within subregional and continent-wide frameworks. To this end, there should be a defined body of rules for peace keeping to be codified under the auspices of the OAU which itself should have a key role in peace keeping processes on the continent, with adequate flexibility and initiative for subregional arrangements.

(d) *Confidence-building measures*

Confidence building measures that will reduce mutual suspicion among African countries will need to be promoted. One such measure should be a collective non-aggression pact among all African countries. This will not only prevent the possible use of the territory of one African country for launching attacks on another African territory by a

foreign power, it will eliminate also the quick resort to the use of force at the slightest provocation or indication of disagreement among African countries.

(e) *Seeking active partnership with the rest of the world*

In an increasingly interdependent world, Africa should seek the support and cooperation of other regions and countries to promote its goals of security, stability, development and cooperation. But the partnership has to be based on equality and mutual respect. In this context, it is essential for the rest of the world to respect Africa's agenda and Africa's priorities, perceptions, goals and strategies and not try to supplant them or foist its own designs on Africa. This implies that unbridled interference in the political and economic management of African countries from outside of the region would have to be terminated. It means that indigenous democratic processes and cultures must genuinely be given a chance to develop and triumph, and that African initiatives will be supported fully without the temptation to impose political conditionalities from without.

## 6. Conclusion

If the second liberation of Africa is to take place, a new order based on the declaration of binding principles for the governance of each state and for the conduct of intra-African relations must be put in place. It is only by so doing that the region can rid itself of the problems of insecurity and instability and of the threat of a systemic collapse. Such binding principles duly observed and implemented will provide not only an enabling environment for the pursuit of the development policy agenda discussed in the preceding chapter but

also the necessary respite for laying the foundation for the much-needed fundamental restructuring of African states and societies - the subject of the next chapter. Without intra-and inter-state security and stability which promotes and reinforces personal and interpersonal, as well as group and inter-group security, the unleashing of the energy of the people for socio-economic transformation will remain a pipe dream and the second liberation of Africa will be unattainable.



# **Chapter III**

## **Restructuring African States and Societies**

*Statement at the fifty-fourth Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, Abuja, 28 May 1991*

### **1. Introduction**

It is a great honour and privilege for me to address this fifty-fourth Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers. This session is uniquely historic, because the Council, among other things, will be putting finishing touches to the all-too-important treaty establishing the long-awaited African Economic Community scheduled to be considered and signed by our Heads of State and Government, on 3 June 1991 immediately after the opening of their summit meeting to be held here in Abuja from 3 to 5 June 1991. The adoption of the treaty will be another major and concrete step in giving practical effect to aspirations which we all share and which, in various previous meetings and conferences, we have all endeavoured, since the early years of African independence, to bring to fruition.

At the personal level, it is indeed a happy coincidence that both the Council and the Summit will be focusing attention on the all-engaging subject of regional economic co-operation and integration, which has been close to my heart for more than three decades, on this my last occasion of participating at OAU meetings as ECA's chief executive officer. In my days as a University don, I ceaselessly advocated the need for co-operation and integration and in my public service, both at

national and international levels, I have striven to give regionalism an expression. Indeed, for better or for worse, I have personally played a decisive role in the creation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, 1975) the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA, 1981) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS, 1983). You will therefore understand, if on the eve of the signing of the treaty establishing the African Economic Community and on this occasion of my last opportunity of addressing your Council, I have chosen as the subject of my statement "Restructuring African States and Societies" under the theme *Preparing Africa for the Twenty-First Century: Agenda for the 1990s*.

There is always the temptation that, engulfed and engrossed as we are in crisis management, particularly in view of the stubborn persistence of our socio-economic crisis, we may lose sight, as we did in the 1980s, of preparing ourselves and our continent for the world which will emerge at the beginning of the next millennium and next century. The factors that will dominate the first few years of that century are already beginning to emerge and form. Among these are the restructuring of nations and states, the predominance of regionalism and the replacement of nationalism with regionalism and the emergence of proto-regionalism.

For while states and societies are going through an intense process of restructuring in many parts of the world, while larger structures are being established to transcend narrow national borders, the reverse seems to be the case in Africa where there is discernible regression to parochialism, ethnicism and tribalism. Even the nation-state which in other parts of the world is regarded as being too restrictive is disintegrating to clans and tribes in Africa. Yet Africa has the unenviable distinction of harbouring a large number of minus-

cule states - nations which, with the best will in the world, have no chances of becoming viable, vibrant, dynamic and prosperous. Are we going to carry this structure into the twenty-first century? If we do, then the gulf which currently exists between the rest of the world and Africa will by that time have become a gorge.

## 2. Africa's legacy

The most unenviable of Africa's colonial legacy is the large number of small minuscule nation states. Of the 51 countries of developing Africa, 24 have a population of less than five million each and 10 of these have a population of less than one million each and 13 countries have an area of less than 50 thousand square kilometres each. And as if this is not enough, 14 countries are landlocked. There is also the uneven spatial distribution of population, especially in the geographically large countries. Is it surprising therefore that both the African product and factor markets are severely fragmented and that there is a major constraint on the exploitation of the ample possibilities of resources complementarities and economies of scale on the continent.

Consequently, the African economies have undergone very little transformation during the last thirty years or so for the simple reason that economic and social transformation can only be achieved where the potentials for economies of scale do exist. The optimal use of natural resources, the viability of industrial structures, the establishment of appropriate institutional framework and infrastructure are severely limited by the size and structure of the nation-states inherited at independence.

As Friedrich List has clearly stated, *"a large population and an extensive territory endowed with manifold national resources are*

*essential requirements of the normal nationality .... A nation restricted in the number of its population and in territory...can only possess a crippled literature and crippled institutions for promoting art and science. A small state can never bring to complete perfection within its territory the various branches of production."*<sup>12)</sup>

There is however a further complication. The partitioning and fragmentation of Africa into a small number of politically distinct entities without regard to the need for economic viability was done without regard also to history and culture. The arbitrary division of nationalities and ethnic groups into separate nation-states has been the primary cause of persistent instability and internal conflicts. So also has the putting together of diverse ethnic groups to form one nation-state. It has also made virtually impossible the task of nation-building in many an African country.

It needs to be emphasised, however, that the fundamental premises of nation-states is that they are in tune with the historical evolution of extending the scale of human society and that they are legitimate when they unite in a compact whole their populations regardless of their ethnic or religious difference but are illegitimate when they tend to divide or polarise their population. After all, nobody can deny the actual multinationality or multilinguality or multiethnicity of the oldest and most unquestioned nation-states such as Great Britain, France and Spain. What is of paramount importance is that allegiance to the nation-state must transcend ethnic ties and allegiance.

Unfortunately it is the reverse in most if not in all of Africa. More often than not, ethnic ties have superseded national allegiance. Ethnicism has bred a sociological dualism in many an African country where individuals have different patterns of behaviour, attitude and social values as between their

---

<sup>12)</sup> Friedrich List, *The National System of Political Economy*, London, 1885, pp. 175-176.

primordial local and ethnic society on the one hand and the national or civil public interest on the other. Ethnicism has sustained and has itself been maintained by the economy of affection which is based on networks of support, communications and interactions among structurally defined groups who are connected by blood, kinship, community or such other affinities as religion. The economy of affection thus breeds double standards - morally, socially and politically - and threatens the solidarity and unity of the state and the viability of the national economy.

In retrospect and in order to form effective nation-states transcending ethnic loyalties and fulfilling the three conditions stipulated by List - large population, extensive territory, manifold national resources - as well as unifying rather than polarising the populations, we should have undertaken a fundamental restructuring of the nation-states that we inherited at independence so that today Africa will have not more than a dozen to twenty states instead of the present 51. But because of the immensity of the problems involved and the danger such a move would have posed, our founding fathers decided, in their wisdom, that we should live with our colonial inheritance. Unfortunately the departing metropolitan countries gave further impetus to centrifugal tendencies on the eve of their departure. In fact some would say that they fuelled those tendencies. For example, in the former French territories, there were two organic unions which made the two federations: French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa. Each of these could have become a nation-state, albeit a federal polity, had the French not chosen to hand over power to individual entities that made up each federation.

The only way therefore to overcome the restrictions and constraints that fragmentation has imposed on our development is to pursue a second-best solution. This is the vigorous and relentless promotion of regional cooperation and integration in the hope that this may lead eventually to political

integration and the rationalization of the nation-states structure.

### **3. Regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration: the second best option.**

In other words, in lieu of the fundamental overhaul of the nation-state structure that emerged after independence, our second best option was regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration. And that was what our leaders and governments opted for. It is what our regional continental organizations have been promoting. First, the Economic Commission for Africa since it was established in 1958, and, later to be joined by the OAU when it came into existence in 1963, have been pushing the establishment of sub-regional cooperation entities. Indeed, the departing metropolitan powers, fully aware that the inheritance they were passing on to their African successors are far from being viable also took some initiative in this direction either just before they handed over power or as part of their immediate post-independence assistance. We must also admit that the clamour for such cooperation was on the agenda of the nationalist leaders struggling for independence. For example, the Sixth Pan-African Congress held in Manchester in 1945 recommended *inter alia* and, with great foresight, the establishment of a West African Union as a means of combating the exploitation of the economic resources of the West African territories and for ensuring the participation of the indigenous people in the industrial development of West Africa. Also the Bandung Declaration of 1955 included the promotion of economic co-operation among the African countries.

It is true of course that some of the pre-independence efforts sponsored by the colonial governments were not aimed at genuine cooperation for the welfare and progress of the majority of the population. They were largely for the interest and benefit of the white settler population. Hence the pre-in-

dependence economic cooperation efforts were stronger in Eastern and Southern Africa than they were in Western and Central Africa where the whites never intended to settle permanently. Thus the failure of the pre-independence economic groupings in Africa to cater for the interest of the Africans and to promote the development of their economies made African politicians disenchanted with the groupings in particular and suspicious about cooperation in general.

To compensate for the disintegration of the former francophone African federations, the French authorities established a number of economic cooperation arrangements. The Conseil de l'Entente, l'Union Douanière Equatoriale, l'Union Douanière et Economique de l'Afrique Centrale (UDEAC) and the Organisation des Etats Riverains du Fleuve Sénégal, (OERS) were examples of such institutions. In fact in the course of the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s many more multi-national groupings were established. But all of these were based on former colonial allegiances - the francophone and anglophone syndrome. Even among the francophone countries there was disaggregation. The former Belgian territories banded together in the Economic Community of the Great Lakes countries (CEPGL) as if to uphold their separate identity.

Our first successful attempt to break down the colonial barriers by establishing economic cooperation entities that cut across such barriers was in 1975 when the Treaty of Lagos establishing the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was signed in May 1975 after three years of intensive negotiations. The unique features of ECOWAS, which covers fifteen countries stretching from Mauritania to Nigeria and bounded to the north by the Sahara and to the south by the Atlantic Ocean, are that (i) these countries are very different in their sizes, their populations and the levels of their development; (ii) the grouping brought together former French, British and Portuguese colonies; and, (iii) it provided

a common forum and unifying platform for ethnic groups which had during the partition of Africa in 1884 in Berlin been arbitrarily divided and separated. The ECOWAS example was followed in December 1981 by the establishment of the PTA and in 1983 by ECCAS.

Yet in spite of these and other achievements in establishing various subregional groupings in Africa, the region is yet to achieve a major breakthrough in economic cooperation and integration. Why has success been so limited? What have been the major constraints? What lessons can be learned from the experience of the first three decades now that we are establishing the long-awaited African Economic Community? Why is it that this our second-best option has not propelled our countries on the path of socio-economic transformation? Why have the various economic groupings not become the instruments of change and transformation?

#### **4. Economic cooperation and integration and socio-economic transformation**

As we have argued in AAF-SAP, Africa's ultimate development objective is the alleviation of mass poverty and the raising of the living standard of the African people. This will only be attainable if pursued in tandem with the objective of establishing self-sustained development. This encompasses three inter-locking sub-goals; namely, (i) maintenance of sustained economic growth; (ii) transformation of the African economic and social structures; and, (iii) maintenance of a sustaining resource base.

It needs, however, to be emphasized that in the context of the long-run, sustained economic growth, though necessary, will neither be sufficient nor, indeed, possible without a fundamental transformation aimed at removing the debilitating distortions in our present economic and social structures. Unfortunately, socio-economic transformation has tended to be



equated with a process of economic and social modernisation that tries merely to replicate the patterns of production, consumption and institutions that prevail in the developed countries. What is required, on the contrary, is a *new African transformation ethic* that incorporates, rather than alienates, the present and future African realities - political, social, cultural, environmental and economic. The *new African transformation ethic* must also be based on a human-centred development paradigm which puts the people at the centre of the development effort, on the driving seat as it were and is predicated, above all, on the rational proposition that development has to be engineered and sustained by the people themselves through their full and active participation. In other words, the *new African transformation ethic* rests on the firm belief that development should not be undertaken on behalf of a people; rather, that it should be the organic outcome of a society's value system, its perceptions, its concerns and its endeavours.

It stands to reason, therefore, that the realisation of the *new African transformation ethic* will, in the light of what we have already said about the balkanization of the continent into arbitrary nation-states and the difficulties so far encountered in the task of nation-building, utilise regional and subregional integration as the principal impulse in restructuring the fragmented continent into a more coherent and stronger economic and political entity.

The integration of the African economies and the attainment of full regional collective self-reliance involves six mutually interdependent dimensions; namely:

- i) the integration of the physical, institutional and social infrastructures;
- ii) the integration of production structures;
- iii) the integration of the African markets;

- iv) the resolution of inter-country conflicts and the prevention of acts of political destabilisation by outsiders;
- v) ensuring stability and security - particularly personal security - both at nation-state and inter-country levels; and,
- vi) the creation of an enabling environment for initiative and enterprise and for across-the-border factor movements.

It will thus have become crystal clear that Africa's performance in the field of economic integration cannot be assessed only through our ability to remove customs barriers between African countries: we all know that intra-African trade barely accounts for five per cent of Africa's overall trade. Success in the integration process will be demonstrated by our ability to construct inter-State roads and railways, to boost inter-State trade, to interconnect electric grids, to exploit, jointly, natural resources wherever they exist, to set up multinational joint ventures in key economic areas (transport, energy and industry) benefitting from economies of scale, to operate cost-effective regional and subregional institutions in the fields of science and technology, agricultural research and higher education and to create currency convertibility with a view to creating ultimately a single currency as a means of payment throughout the continent. Briefly, the economic restructuring of our states will result from our ability to exercise a common sovereignty in the management of our economy.

## **5. Economic cooperation and integration agenda for the 1990s**

When the Final Act of Lagos was adopted as part of the Lagos Plan of Action in April 1980, many people thought that we are visionaries, that the establishment of an African Economic Community which is our ultimate objective was an ambitious and perhaps unrealistic goal. Today we are happy

to witness that this formidable undertaking is taking its final shape. We have, indeed, succeeded in establishing three more subregional economic communities in addition to ECOWAS which was the only economic community to cover an entire subregion by the time the Final Act of Lagos was signed. The Union of Maghreb Countries (UMA) has been reactivated. And we are now about to establish the African Economic Community, the ultimate goal foreseen in the solemn commitment made eleven years ago. The Community will have the challenging task of orchestrating the process of the continental integration. In spite of all the limitations and difficulties, Africa has every reason to be proud of the results achieved so far. It is the only continent that has succeeded in embarking on a rational approach to its integration process and which has set up the necessary institutional framework to back up that approach.

However, we must not delude ourselves that we have reached our final goal. We are only at the beginning of a long and arduous journey - a journey which according to the treaty will take us over three decades to complete. Our challenge is not only to reach the end of the journey successfully but to do so much earlier than is envisaged.

For us to accomplish this herculean task, we must agree on an agenda for economic cooperation and integration in Africa during the 1990s. There must be a consensus of what needs to be done, how to do it, who is to do it, when and where. It is an agenda that must show beyond any doubt that Africa has decided to use economic cooperation and integration as an instrument for social, political and economic change and transformation. The seven issues identified in the following pages are far from being exhaustive. They are only illustrative of the immense task ahead.

First, subregional economic communities (ECOWAS, PTA, ECCAS and UMA) should be strengthened along the lines of

the *new African transformation ethic*: emphasis on production and infrastructure, participation of all socio-economic groups in the economic integration process, application of community laws at the national level, etc. etc. Indeed, we must adopt at the level of each subregional economic community and at the level of the African Economic Community common policies in the fields of agriculture, industry, energy, transport and trade which would regulate the functioning of our national economies. We need to give priority to community laws and apply them strictly. The effective way to ensure the impact of our community programmes on our national economies is to adopt the appropriate institutional measures for translating into national laws all the protocols, conventions and other decisions adopted by our communities. In this respect, the creation of a ministry in charge of economic integration becomes an urgent item for inclusion in our national agendas.

Second, the economic integration process at the subregional or regional level must manifest a positive dynamic interaction between politics and economics; the political process should assist the economic integration process and not be a handicap to it. The consolidation of our restructuring process through subregional economic communities may depend, to a large extent, on the support and boost that the process receives from social, economic, and political groups that consider the communities to be convenient for their interests and ideas. There is also the need to create a constituency of active supporters, entrepreneurs and businessmen of the African Economic Community and subregional economic communities in each African country. Clearly identified groups, ranging from political parties to professional and business associations and grass-roots non-governmental organisations can make specific contributions to the process of restructuring African states and societies through economic cooperation and integration.

Third, we should make sure that people who are going to lead those economic groupings are well selected on the basis of their proven performance, not on the basis of their nationality, ethnic or interest group. Every attempt should, therefore, be made to recruit first-rate members of staff who have the appropriate skills, expertise, broad African experience and are independently minded but tolerant towards bureaucracies associated with regional economic integration. Moreover, in general, the secretariats of all existing economic communities suffer from a lack of real decision-making powers and their finances and resources are totally inadequate for independent practical cooperation and integration activities. Their development is blocked by the marked dominance of nation-state interests, allowing genuinely supranational subregional development policies only within a narrow framework. Therefore, we must devote to the funding of the economic integration process all the attention it deserves and devise a financing mechanism to establish an autonomous source of financing for our economic communities.

Fourth, Courts of Justice should be established at the level of each community to sanction member States, organisations and individuals who infringe the community law.

Fifth, for the African Economic Community to succeed, subregional economic communities should accept to work closely and cooperatively with it. There is a need to establish between the African Economic Community and the subregional communities such working relationships as will best guarantee the performance of assigned tasks.

Sixth, we should give top priority to good neighbourliness and avoid aggravating internal conflicts created by internal frictions. Africa is making progress in the democratisation of its society and institutions. The encouragement of this process will contribute to eliminating internal conflicts and creating

stability for our institutions, continuity in our development effort and the best environment for our development.

Seventh, in dealing with the outside world and other regional blocs, we should put our interest first. But we must also be open to making our interest closer to those of the outside world, so as to identify areas of common interest with a view to developing joint partnership.

## **6. Concluding remarks**

In conclusion, let me add that this agenda will remain unfulfilled unless two additional conditions are satisfied. First and foremost there must be strong and determined political will. It must, in this connection, be underscored that political will is not required only of politicians and governmental officials. It needs to be demonstrated by all the strata of the society and by all actors in all sectors of our society - political parties and organisations, chambers of commerce and industry, grass-roots and peoples' organisations, trade unions, women's and youth organisations and the academic and intellectual community. Fostering a spirit of mutual understanding among our peoples of different ethnic groups will certainly contribute to transforming mentalities and attitudes in our societies. Indeed, we urgently need to reactivate the spirit which motivated our fathers during the time of their struggle for independence: transboundary large political movements which created a spirit of brotherhood among people from different ethnic groups and nations.

We should always remember how economic and political integration in EEC has restructured the European society. After World War II, there was much hatred and suspicion among the European nations. The process of the unification of Europe has transformed the hostile nations into co-operative member-states. National boundaries are falling down, the Europeans are enjoying the right to free movement throughout

Europe, the right of residence and of establishment within the EEC. This has eliminated the concept of nation-state, of nationalism and inter-State conflicts. A new European nation and a new European citizen are coming to being.

If we are able to inspire the diverse groups and nationalities with the spirit of African economic integration, we would have to employ the most powerful means to restructure the mentality of our society for eliminating tribal or ethnic conflicts, putting an end to the economy of affection and therefore paving the way for democracy, popular participation and development. The free movement of people across national boundaries and their right to establish enterprises in any country within the communities must be guaranteed. If we do not undertake to change the mentality of our peoples, we will be facing difficulties in increasing inter-state trade and in promoting African multinational enterprises in priority sectors.

The second condition that must be satisfied is the establishment or recovery of self-confidence in the capacity of Africa and Africans to achieve their stated goals. For in spite of our bravados, there is increasing manifestation of growing lack of self-confidence among our policy makers and indeed among our peoples. The significant diminution in and narrowing of the scope for independent policy-making and national economic management, the ease with which Africa is derailed from the pursuit of its own indigenous development strategy, the persistence of the economic crisis for so long and the overwhelming dependence of a growing number of countries on donors and multilateral development and monetary authorities for debt reliefs and balance of payments support etc have eroded considerably, Africa's self-confidence. As I said some fifteen years ago in Georgetown, Guyana, in the Turkeyen Third World Lectures of 1976 which I had the honour to deliver that year, "*Western economists have made take-off into self-sustaining growth dependent on a certain level*

*of savings and investment. This is a mistake. Take-off is primarily dependent on the establishment or recovery of self-confidence... And this self-confidence is, to a large extent, a function of mobilising talents and capabilities and creating the right type of environment and motivation for unleashing inventive and innovative abilities"*<sup>13)</sup>.

I did say at the beginning of this statement that this is the last time I will have the privilege of addressing your august Council as the chief executive of ECA. I left Nigeria for Addis Ababa a few days after the signing of the Lagos Treaty establishing the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975. I am glad that I will be returning finally to Nigeria a few days after the signing of the Abuja Treaty for the establishment of the African Economic Community. May the dreams that it portends come true. And may it lead to the eventual restructuring of Africa's nation-states and societies into larger and more vibrant and dynamic ones - fewer in number, strong and viable rather than being numerous and minuscule and consequently weak and non-viable.

---

<sup>13)</sup> Adebayo Adedeji, "Africa, The Third World and the Search for a New International Economic Order". Turkeyen Third World Lecture 1976. Delivered at Georgetown, Guayana, November 1976, p. 60



# Chapter IV

## The Political Agenda

*Statement at the twenty-seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, Abuja, Nigeria, 4 June 1991*

### 1. Introduction

I have always deemed it a great honour to have, once every year, the opportunity to appear before your august assembly, and lay bare my heart and mind to you by sharing with you my viewpoints on matters of great importance to our continent, to our countries and to our people. Indeed, more often than not such matters concern the place of Africa in the world in which we live and in the international community of nations of which we are a part, even if we are at the periphery of the periphery of that community, marginalized and daily marginalizing ourselves and our region by our persistent failure to face up to our historic challenge, through action, not words; through deeds - heroic deeds - not rhetoric; and, through dogged determination and persistent manifestation of our will to survive, to thrive and to prosper, not by looking for manna from heaven, not by compromising our sovereignty and, worst of all, not by virtually closing our eyes to the erosion of our independence, our dignity and our self-respect.

On this occasion of your historic summit meeting in Abuja, the capital territory of the Federal Republic of Nigeria - our symbol of national unity and cohesion - where you signed only yesterday, 3rd June 1991, the Abuja Treaty for the establishment of the African Economic Community, I am glad not

only to be here to have witnessed this momentous act but also to have this opportunity to share with you my ideas and my perspective, particularly as this will be my last opportunity of interacting in this manner with your assembly as your humble servant and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa.

## **2. The African Economic Community**

When you adopted the Final Act of Lagos as part of the Lagos Plan of Action in April 1980, the rest of the world thought that Africa was, as usual, dreaming and that the establishment of an African Economic Community was not only too ambitious but was also an unrealizable goal within the time frame we had set for ourselves. Consequently, while the Lagos Plan of Action was greeted with an avalanche of attacks and our will to pursue vigorously its objectives was consistently and persistently undermined, the Final Act of Lagos was contemptuously dismissed. Therefore, we have every cause for celebration for the deed of yesterday - the signing of the treaty.

Indeed, since the Lagos Economic Summit of April 28-29, 1980, we have succeeded in establishing three more sub-regional economic communities in addition to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which was the only economic cooperation entity covering an entire subregion by the time the Final Act of Lagos was signed. We have since established the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA, 1981) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS, 1983). The Union of Maghreb Countries (UMA) which had been in existence since 1963 has been reactivated. Thus, with the signing of the Abuja Treaty, we have come to the end of the first part of our journey.

We must now embark, post haste, on the second and final part of our journey - a journey which according to the treaty

will take us over three decades to complete. The challenge which we have before us is not only to reach the end of the journey successfully but to do so much earlier than is envisaged. But as of now, we have cause to be proud of our record. For in spite of all the limitations and difficulties, we have succeeded in establishing a rational approach to the integration process and have now set up the necessary institutional framework to back up that approach.

In my address to your Council of Ministers on 28 May 1991, I urged on the necessity for all the governments and people of Africa to evolve a consensus on an agenda of what needs to be done, how to do it, who is to do it, when and where if we are to face up to the herculean task of regional cooperation and integration. As I said then, such an agenda must show beyond any doubt that Africa has decided to use economic cooperation and integration as an instrument for social, political and economic change and transformation along the new African transformation ethic.

Earlier on, at the formal opening of the twenty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Africa which was held from 9 to 13 May 1991, I discussed the development policy agenda for the 1990s. This consists of nine principal items as follows: (i) reaffirmation, operationalization and implementation of existing continental blue-prints instead of spending energy preparing new ones; (ii) getting policy instruments right particularly exchange rate policy, interest rate policy and price support policy; (iii) developing internal capacity to respond to external shocks; (iv) achieving congruence between priorities and resource allocation; (v) putting in place a holistic human resource development policy and strategy; (vi) making regional and subregional integration an integral part of domestic national policy; (vii) rediscovering Africa's culture, tradition and value; (viii) removing infrastructural constraints to long-term development; and, (ix) taking individual

and collective effort to ensure that doomsday prognostications for Africa do not come to pass.

These two agendas have been put forward in the firm belief that if they are vigorously pursued they will propel Africa on the path of socio-economic recovery, enable it to lay the foundation for socio-economic transformation and turn economic cooperation and integration into a veritable instrument for operationalizing the new African transformation ethic. But these two agendas, crucially important as they are, cannot by themselves assure the achievement of the second liberation of Africa unless an environment for stability and security prevails in all countries of Africa and throughout the continent and unless they are complemented and fully supported by an appropriate political agenda. It is the nature, content and scope of such an agenda that is the focus of my attention in this my last statement before your august assembly.

### **3. The political component of the crisis**

Indeed, such a political agenda is the bedrock on which the socio-economic transformation and the restructuring of African states and societies must perforce be based. For, as is well known, development does not take place in a vacuum. It is a complex process which is closely linked and has mutually reinforcing inter-relationships with a host of factors - political, economic, social, cultural, psychological and institutional. Indeed, we will never fully comprehend and grasp the current African crisis as long as we continue to assume that it is primarily an economic crisis. It has become crystal clear that what we confront is primarily a political crisis, albeit with serious socio-economic consequences. In other words, not only is our crisis essentially political in character, it is also political in origin. Therefore, any narrow economic solution is bound to be mechanistic, non-durable and non-sustainable. For economics without politics is an exercise in futility and aridity. Therefore, a political agenda is an imperative neces-

sity if Africa is to face the challenge of the 1990s in preparing itself for the twenty-first century.

Such a political agenda should cover the following areas: (i) peace and conflict; (ii) security and stability; (iii) governance, democracy and accountability; (iv) transformation of state and its bureaucracy; (v) empowerment and equity; (vi) reorienting the African elite from the mimicry of foreign values and lifestyles to become frontliners in the promotion of African values and lifestyles; (vii) facilitating the internalization of the new African transformation ethic; and, (viii) encouraging the evolution of proto-regionalism in substitution for ethnicism and proto-nationalism.

#### **4. The political agenda**

Let us examine these *seriatim*:

##### **(i) Peace keeping and conflict resolution**

More than ever before, Africa needs peace. This continent has had and is having too many intra and inter-country conflicts. There is therefore an urgent need to resolve all existing conflicts in Africa and thereafter prevent conflicts and disputes from escalating into armed conflicts. Indeed, as is recommended by the recently held *Kampala Forum on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa* (SSDCA) in the *Kampala Document*<sup>14)</sup>, there is an urgent need to prevent conflicts and disputes from escalating into armed hostilities through the strengthening of conflict resolution mechanisms, through the initiation of a continental and sub-regional peace-keeping machinery and through the setting up of an African Peace Council whose primary task will be to ensure that peace and harmony reign supreme in the

---

<sup>14)</sup> The Kampala Document, jointly published by the African Leadership Forum, the Organization of African Unity and the Economic Commission for Africa, Kampala, Uganda, 19-22 May 1991

continent and that a state of intra-country and inter-country tranquillity is created and maintained.

If we succeed in achieving this objective, Africa will generate its own peace dividends through the considerable lowering of military expenditures and the resources so saved would be used for development purposes, for education and health, and for poverty alleviation. It is now increasingly clear that the much-talked-of peace dividend for the Third World out of disarmament in Europe and North America which we have been hoping for will not materialize, at least not in the short- and medium-term. The hope that the North will turn "swords into ploughshares" through disarmament and use the resources so freed for socio-economic development and combating hunger and poverty in the South is turning to be a pipe dream. But in view of the relatively heavy expenditure which we ourselves incur on defence, we should ourselves turn our swords into ploughshares and use our own internally-generated peace dividend for development purposes. In any case, even if peace dividend is eventually generated in the North, the chances are that it will go to Eastern Europe rather than be transferred to Africa.

**(ii) Security and stability**

The second area of focus on our political agenda are security and stability. These were also issues before the recently-held Kampala Forum on the SSDCA process. Here two basic propositions emerged from Kampala. First, the security of a nation must be construed in terms of the security of the individual citizen to live in peace, with access to basic necessities of life, while fully participating in the affairs of his/her society in freedom and enjoying all fundamental human rights. Lack of democracy in which people freely participate in govern-

ment, denial of personal liberties and abuse of religion are some of the deep-rooted causes of insecurity.

The second proposition is that promoting political and social stability in individual African countries calls for adherence to the rule of law, popular participation in governance, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, non-creation of political organizations on religious, ethnic, regional or racial basis, transparency in public policy making and avoidance of religious fundamentalism. All these we have dealt with at some length in Chapter II.

### **(iii) Governance, democracy and accountability**

This leads to the third area of concern on our agenda. The debate on democracy and democratization is currently sweeping through Africa. Much has been said in recent writings about the lack of accountability and bad governance. Lack of real political and financial accountability is a major bane of Africa as it breeds irresponsibility among public functionaries and leads to resistance and cynicism among the ruled. Indeed, as I have argued again and again, power without accountability will, as sure as the night follows the day, lead to barbarism.

### **(iv) Transformation of state and its bureaucracy**

The fourth issue on our agenda is the urgent need to examine most carefully how best to transform the state and its bureaucracy to meet the challenges of the 1990s and prepare individual countries and their people for the twenty-first century. We do certainly run the risk, that after the phase of too much state intervention, we may be moving in many cases to the extreme opposite of concentrating on the withdrawal of the state, believing the effectiveness and allocative efficiency of free market for-

ces. This will be unfortunate, as the solution to our problem is not a simplistic either-or approach. The problem is much more complicated. While there is no doubt that the command bureaucratic approach has to be eliminated, we must realize that market economies do not function by themselves. They need a state which provides an efficient and predictable legal and administrative framework as well as infrastructure in order to flourish. Just leaving things to the market mechanism and forces will be a grave error.

**(v) Empowerment and equity**

Economic and political empowerment is a *conditio sine qua non* for security and stability. The empowerment of the people to participate fully in decision-making and resource allocation at all levels of our society requires that our governments must yield space to the people in a new social partnership in pursuit of the new African transformation ethic. Effective popular participation in development is equally central for generating the new social partnership. It is quite clear that governments alone cannot develop Africa. They require the full support and collaboration of the people in their social groups, organizations and associations. This means that maximum scope must be given for the participation of workers and their trade unions, women and their organizations, business groups, grassroots associations, non-governmental or voluntary development organizations, youth associations and professional bodies. Such empowerment must be strengthened by an equitable distribution of the output of the society in such a way as to build a humane and just society.



## (vi) Re-orientation of African elite

This leads to our sixth political agenda item: the role of the elite. Unfortunately, the African elite has become a major factor in our political problem. This is because of their ambition for power at all costs, their selfishness and their low level of national commitment. All these reflect their basic lack of patriotism which has in turn generated endemic political instability. The African elite seem to be self-seeking and self-centred. They need to show greater commitments to their people, society and nation instead, as at present, of the habit of regarding themselves as an extension of foreign elites whose values and life-styles they imbibe and mimic. It is the African elite who fan the embers of ethnicism and religious fundamentalism and who prosper from the economy of affection by using it to achieve and sustain wealth for their members.

Whereas in the other societies which we regard as our model, it is their elite that have led their socio-economic engineering and their political revolution, the reverse has been the case in Africa. The African elite are the victims of the foreign mirror syndromes. Using the mirror crafted for them by the North, they see their society as foreigners see them - distorted and caricatured. They see foreigners as those foreigners will like to be seen and they see themselves as foreigners see them. They are the embodiment of *THE ME ERA* under the guise of which they have abandoned themselves to a special kind of selfishness and to a unique disregard for the claims of sociability and order. These people, like Ovid's *Narcissus*, love themselves only. They are invariably the first to flee their countries whenever there is trouble or commotion. They are the first to exploit their countries and their people and funnel overseas their ill-gotten gains for their immoral

conspicuous consumption abroad. There is, therefore, an urgent need for reorientating the elite of Africa from the mimicry of foreign values and life-styles and from the ridiculous and unpatriotic behaviour of showing more confidence in foreign countries than they show in their own. The African elite should stop fiddling while Africa burns.

**(vii) The internalization of the new African transformation ethic**

Our seventh issue on the political agenda for the 1990s and beyond is how to internalize the new African transformation ethic which I described at some length in my address to the Council of Ministers last week. We must stop equating our socio-economic transformation with a process of economic and social modernization that merely replicates the patterns of production, consumption and institutions that prevail in the developed countries. The new African transformation ethic that we must foster is one that incorporates rather than alienates the present and future African realities and it must be based on a human-centred development paradigm which puts the people at the centre of the development effort, puts them on the driving seat. The new African transformation ethic, if I may repeat, rests squarely on the firm belief that development should not be undertaken on behalf of a people; rather it should be the organic outcome of a society's value system, its perceptions, its concerns and its endeavours.

**(viii) Restructuring our nation states**

I now come to the last and perhaps the most difficult issue on our political agenda. This is the need to begin to embark upon a peaceful restructuring of our inherited nation-state structures into politically and economically

viable entities. We must not turn our inherited colonial borders into a divine order, unchangeable and immutable. The present overwhelmingly minuscule structures make us extremely ill-prepared to face the challenges of the 21st century. Since the whole of my statement last week was devoted to this theme, I shall not further expatiate on it.

## **5. The complementarity between the political and the economic agendas**

Just as political and economic independence were originally linked, so must Africa's political agenda be systematically and firmly linked with its socio-economic agenda in this Second Liberation of the continent. Enough has been said to show that there are critical political preconditions for the sustained development and economic restructuring of the region. The vigorous pursuit of human-centred development and the creation of the enabling environment for economic restructuring and structural transformation are central to this integration of the political and economic agendas for the 1990s.

Africa's development must shift from its economistic preoccupations with 'things' - GDP, income, investment, capital, foreign aid, etc. - and incorporate the people as both the fulcrum and the end of the development process. Politically, this requires the democratic participation of the people at all levels in the formulation, design and implementation of development programmes. It also demands the equitable sharing of the benefits of transformation among all social groups and individuals. These are in addition to the devotion of increased economic resources for the development of human resources through education, training as well as the development of science and technology.

Similarly, the creation of an enabling environment for accelerated recovery-with-transformation in the 1990s requires

the creative integration of Africa's economic and political agendas. This is primarily because this enabling environment involves critical economic and political pre-conditions for sustainable development. In the economic agenda, Africa must vigorously pursue the domestic mobilization and efficient utilization of resources, generate the appropriate investment climate, provide relevant incentives for agricultural production by devoting 30 per cent of annual budgets to the sector and the resuscitation of its industrial structures. It must also rehabilitate physical and social infrastructure through the allocation of 20-25 per cent of total expenditure to the social services. The political agenda for the creation of an enabling environment for Africa's transformation also requires such basic political conditions like full democratization for effective popular participation, the achievement of socio-economic security, durable peace and political stability.

Above all, the harmonization of Africa's political and economic agendas during this Second Liberation requires the generation of determined political will and self-confidence. Member States must mobilize their national populations effectively in order to ensure the political commitment required for the implementation of policies and programmes for national and regional development. The political leadership must also increasingly demonstrate the self-confidence required for correctly conceptualizing Africa's political and economic agendas, and for relentlessly pursuing them, regardless of any external threats and blackmail. The past error of setting aside regional blueprints and implementing foreign policies and programmes must be avoided in the 1990s if Africa is not to drift further into disaster. The historic challenges confronting Africa and its peoples in this Second Liberation calls for determined courage, purposeful political will and sustained self-confidence. Africa must not fail because it cannot afford not to succeed.

## 6. Ideals and illusions

*Ex-Africa semper aliquid novi* - there is always something new out of Africa. So goes a Latin saying credited to Pliny in AD 23-79. For nearly five centuries since Europe established contact with Africa, that saying has been construed by Europeans to mean that the new things coming out of the continent are those which have resulted in humiliation and degradation for us. These "new things" have been in succession slavery, military defeat, balkanization, colonization, economic exploitation and our unequal integration into the world economy. It has also meant disdaining our cultures and traditions as being barbaric and uncivilized and absorbing hook, line and sinker those of our masters, and sustaining those foreign cultures and traditions even three decades after independence.

As already indicated, the independence of the Sudan in 1956, of Ghana in 1957, and of Guinea in 1958 followed by that of majority of West and Central African countries in 1960 heralded the dawn of a new era when the so-called dark continent enjoyed the promise of the content of the future. Unfortunately that promise has eluded us during the past three decades. I am convinced that, in spite of our vicissitudes during these years and in spite of our miserable track record during the past decade, that promise is still within our reach provided we can pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps and give new meaning to our political independence, and consequently, new hope, opportunity and challenge to our people.

Does this sound idealistic, visionary or even utopian? Am I being idealistic in my advocacy of a new political order? Many friends sometime give me the impression that I am. Perhaps they are right!

But to have an ideal is to believe in something worth having. It is a mistake to regard the opposite of an idealist as a realist.

One can be a realist without losing one's idealism, one's vision. For idealism is concerned with principles and morals, places ethics above politics and seeks the exercise of power within the confines of morality. An idealist is no less a realist. The only difference between him/her and the latter is that he/she is far from being satisfied with the existing order of things and seeks ways and means of moving closer to his ideals. While, undoubtedly, the only reality is power, it is also true that what people believe i.e. their ideals - are also factors in determining social change. Therefore, my ideal of a self-reinforcing linkage between political, economic, social, cultural and psychological development and the evolution of politics and policies based on consensus and consent, conviction and commitment, and compassion and accountability, is not only a state of affairs which I judge to be worthy of attainment in Africa but one which I believe is also realizable.

Inevitably, idealism brings in its trail illusions because achieving set goals is bedevilled with all sorts of difficulties. However, such difficulties and setbacks, no matter how disappointing, should not be allowed to lead to discouragement, to throwing in the towel and to becoming pessimistic or, worse still, leading to despair. Rather, they should lead to greater efforts, to greater determination. For, given our historic challenge as a people and as a race we have no other honourable alternative. To put ourselves in a position of true equality with all other races of the world we must be resolute in the pursuit of these ideals. And our resolve will not be measured by our rhetorics but by our resourcefulness; not by satisfying our individual or ethnic greed but by working together for our collective well-being and upliftment. We do not need pity or paternalism from others. We need their respect and this we can only earn by providing to an increasingly sceptical and cynical world proof that we have the grit, the will and the determination to turn Africa from being a dark continent into a beacon of light; from an economically backward and vulnerable continent into a self-reliant, self-sustaining and

prosperous one; and, from being the citadel of political instability and social conflict and unrest into one of stability, democracy, social cohesion, national unity and regional integration.

I fervently believe that we Africans can engineer and set in motion the social, political, economic and scientific revolutions so that during the next millennium Africa will emerge standing shoulder to shoulder with the other continents of the world with Africans fully accepted as equals to any other race and people in arts, science, politics and all other human endeavours.

This is a historic challenge that all of us face. It is a sacred duty that we owe to Mother Africa. The consequences of failure are simply too grave to contemplate. Let us, therefore, pull our resources together to turn Africa from a continent with dark and dim prospects into one with a bright and prosperous future, to usher in the second liberation of our continent - the political and socio-economic transformation of Africa.

# Chapter V

## Integrating post-apartheid South Africa into the African economy: A preliminary exploration

*An article prepared for Africa Forum, A Journal of Leadership and Development, May 1991*

### 1. Introduction

Prognostics and long-term projections have always been hazardous. In the real world there are often, if not always, a multitude of imponderables; an array of strategic uncertainties; and, many unforeseeable events. For example, very few people could, a few years ago, have imagined a non-cold-war and non-bipolar world that we currently have. Fewer people still can imagine what will emerge as the new Middle-East order. This, is also the case about what will really emerge after apartheid is conquered and majority rule established in South Africa.

The complexity of drawing up believable scenarios about post-apartheid South Africa does not reside in the only fact that as a country South Africa is a web of complexities at the social, political and economic levels. From within itself these complexities make it difficult to see how the internal racial, tribal, economic forces will evolve to create a new apartheid-free South African nation. It is almost paradoxical to realise and recognise that apartheid was a force that neutralised many other forces within the South African socio-fabric such that it had a semblance of stability or cogency as a social entity.



However, hazardous as prognostics are, we cannot avoid them for our curiosity as human beings and our innate need to have some measure of our destiny in our purview make it necessary that, once in a while, we take a crystal ball and gaze at our future. It is in this spirit that some thoughts about post-apartheid South Africa are sketched hereafter. In sketching most of these thoughts the overriding concern is to provoke further thought on the issues involved rather than to predict the future. Perhaps, if we all think correctly about the issues, the events of post-apartheid South Africa might well work along the tide of our most cherished wishes. Alternatively, if we fail to be clear about the issues, the South Africa of the future might very well fail to steer clear of some of the most fearsome nightmare scenarios.

In order to focus the issues, post-apartheid South Africa is analysed from within itself and from without. From within, the social, political and economic scenarios are looked at. From without, some issues regarding the relations of a post-apartheid South Africa with its immediate neighbours, with Africa and with the rest of the world are examined.

## **2. Inside post-apartheid South Africa: A view from without**

Many people have, naturally, asked themselves the question of what South Africa will look like after apartheid. Perhaps the safest answer that has been given is that "*apartheid-free South Africa will be neither Nirvana nor Armageddon*"<sup>15</sup>). With realism, one can qualify this analysis by adding that, in all probability, the early post-apartheid South Africa will incline towards Armageddon rather than Nirvana. This is because, at the level of society and the economy there is so much trauma and complexity that inevitably there will be friction and difficulties in social and economic transition from apartheid to

---

<sup>15</sup>) Paul Moorcraft, *African Nemesis, War and Revolution in Southern Africa (1945-2010)*, Brassey's, United Kingdom, p. 467.

post-apartheid stability in South Africa. But one should hasten to add that even if the transition as seen hereafter will be difficult, South Africa will eventually settle and become a great nation.

At the level of society, post-apartheid South Africa will not easily or quickly rid itself of the black-white divide in the day-to-day business of doing things. Neither the mind of the white nor the bitter memories of the black are going to change overnight. The economic power of the white as compared to the destitution of the black South African are unlikely to lead to an increasingly stable post-apartheid. Thus apartheid-free South Africa is likely to face a bitter dilemma. While apartheid will be gone according to the letter of the law, it will be an inescapable reality to all - black and white - at least for the transition period. The experience with racism in the United States of America in the post-slavery period has a lot to teach us in this respect.

But post-apartheid period's greatest enemy at societal level may very well turn out not to be the black-white divide that will prevail. It may turn out that tribal considerations might alight the most dangerous fires of conflict in a post-apartheid South Africa. Is it just a fear that the current internal crisis among the South African black people in the form of the ANC-Inkhata conflicts will spill over into the post-apartheid period? Further, if the recent history of post-independent African States has anything to teach us, it is the bitter lesson that the divide and rule principle of colonialism always leaves deep scars that greatly undermine the social stability of societies that had been colonised and deliberately divided along tribal or religious lines. Up to now there are many conflicts in African countries that owe their origin to the colonial division of nations along ethnocentric lines. There is no doubt whatsoever that apartheid, in its dying hours, has used and will accentuate the use of ethnocentricity in South Africa so as to sow the seeds of discord for post-apartheid.

Closely associated with the potential eruption of tribal tensions in post-apartheid period is the deliberately planted potential danger of what some analysts have called "*zonal dynamics of black politics*"<sup>16)</sup> in South Africa. The Bantustans are undoubtedly a landmine in the political stability of South Africa as a post-apartheid State. It is clear or at least it should be clear to all that the pockets of military units which exist in each of the Bantustans will constitute an ever looming source of potential conflict to a central power in post-apartheid South Africa. On the basis of experiences in post-independent countries, non-homogeneous militarised units in a single country have tended to result into the formation of internal guerilla groups to fight against the ruling group. It is not difficult to envision the possibility of such occurrence in South Africa.

At the economic front, post-apartheid South Africa presents a mosaic of problems and issues. However, the most central economic concern is whether the white South African will, after apartheid, continue to do "business as usual" and whether a majority government will allow business to be run. Taking the Zimbabwean example, an exodus of whites out of South Africa after apartheid and majority rule could have a detrimental impact on the South African economy for quite sometime. Also, the nature and degree of capital inflow in investments might change considerably after majority rule such that the South African economy might face difficulties of investment sustenance.

However what is interesting to ponder about the economic scenario of post-apartheid South Africa is not merely the state of the economy but perhaps, more importantly, the nature of the policy concerns that will emerge and how such policy issues will be handled. Inevitably, the post-apartheid economic policy agenda will have to include:

<sup>16)</sup> see C. Tshepoane Keto "Tsa Batho: Zonal Dynamics of Black Politics in South Africa", in *South Africa in Southern Africa* by Edmond J. Keller and Louis A. Picard (eds), Lynne Rienner Inc., Boulder and London, 1989.

- a) the reduction of the poverty of the blacks;
- b) the reduction of the inequalities among the different racial groups;
- c) the implementation of a new land policy;
- d) education and training for the majority of the population
- e) increasing the availability and accessibility of other social services and facilities particularly housing to the majority
- f) development of urban areas which harbour repressed migration; and,
- g) re-modelling the entire public administration away from enforcing apartheid to implementing anti-apartheid policies and programmes

Looking at such an agenda, one cannot fail to ask the question of whether post-apartheid South Africa will find the resources and the will to implement such a gigantic agenda. Yet it is also obvious that if the above agenda is not tackled, post-apartheid South Africa might find itself torn apart in total turmoil from within its many social, political and economic contradictions. One has just to hope and wish that whatever the economic agenda that will face post-apartheid South Africa, the policy makers will have the will and that the economy will retain enough of its resilience and strength to go through the transition to economic stability.

But can social and economic Amalgamation be avoided? Can we have an apartheid free democratic South Africa that will also be free of internal tribal or racial strife, free of economic sabotage and free of economic inequities and poverty? It is possible to construct a scenario of bliss for South Africa but at least two heroic assumptions have to be made. First and

foremost, we must reach into the minds of people and assume that post-apartheid South African will actually forget and forgive apartheid. The conscience of the South African people will have to be that of *forging together* irrespective of colour, religion, or sex. A second assumption that must be made is that there will be political maturity at the very start of post-apartheid. This is absolutely essential to ensure a smooth transition from white repression to black accommodation.

If the above two assumptions do get fulfilled, then we can have a scenario of post-apartheid South Africa that is socially cohesive, politically stable and economically strong. Under this scenario, South Africa would become a dominant force politically and economically not only in the Southern African subregion but in Africa as a whole.

### **3. Post-apartheid South Africa and its neighbours: the realities and the prospects**

It should be underscored at the outset that within the Southern African context, every single event that is now taking place in the subregion has significant repercussions on the shape and patterns these relations will finally take subsequent to the elimination of apartheid in South Africa and the attainment of majority rule. Thus, it is important to first scrutinise some of the basic realities and how they are evolving in time and space.

#### **First reality:**

The Southern States are tied together by economic linkages in which, however, South Africa is the regional economic hegemon with almost the best of everything and capable of dominating the subregion in many ways including militarily.

### Second reality:

It is yet to become clear as to how and under what terms the Southern African countries will cooperate if and when South Africa joins the group as an apartheid-free country. This reality is often ignored by focussing on SADCC as an automatic and natural cooperation arrangement in which South Africa will just fit. This is not so evident because SADCC was formed to make its members less dependent on South Africa. It will require a number of changes in perception and strategy to transform SADCC into a mechanism of cooperation with South Africa.

### Third reality:

The present pattern of economic interaction is highly uneven. South Africa is the principal pole of accumulation; the other states are mainly service economies ministering to South Africa's needs in terms of labour reserves, markets, water and certain raw materials. In a nutshell, there is an entrenched dependency syndrome between South Africa and its immediate neighbours.

### Fourth reality:

The emerging movements towards democracy in some countries of the subregion might create new patterns of ideological and other alliances and might, in one way or another, affect the nature of cooperation in the subregion especially with a fledgling post-apartheid South Africa.

These realities have already formed the major part of thinking about a cooperative approach to regional reconstruction in a future post-apartheid Southern Africa. Thus the ANC has, on its part indicated the need to renounce any hegemonic aspirations in the subregion. Deputy President of the ANC,

Nelson Mandela, is on record as describing as intolerable and unacceptable for a democratic non-racial South Africa to have a situation in which some countries in the subregion prospered while others in neighbouring countries starved<sup>17)</sup>. Overall, what is emerging as an underlying principle in Southern African cooperation is that greater regional economic interaction along new lines which would not be exploitative would require prioritising the interests of the most deprived neighbours in certain areas according to principles of affirmative action.

Another general principle for post-apartheid cooperation in the subregion that comes out clearly from the emerging realities is that a new subregional order that includes a powerful free South Africa will have to be a product of well studied negotiations that can bring about a pattern of integration that circumvents or, to some extent, neutralises the overwhelming economic strength of South Africa. Any attempt to impose or to assume as natural, the cooperation of the countries of the subregion would lead to a number of "cracks" and would most likely not achieve the desired results.

Besides having a close look at some of the key areas which should form the bedrocks of cooperation in Southern Africa after apartheid, it is also interesting to ask whether there can be a possibility of political union in the subregion like the recent union of Eastern and Western Germany. This is particularly evident in the case of Lesotho and to an extent in the cases of Swaziland and Botswana. Another interesting question is what would such a political union mean to the other members of the subregion such as Zimbabwe and Zambia, and what would it mean for economic integration in the area as a whole.

---

<sup>17)</sup> Noticias (Mozambique), of 17/7/1990, Reporting of a speech made at a public rally in Mozambique.

#### **4. Post-apartheid South Africa and Africa: What is the agenda?**

A significant change that is likely to result from the liberation of South Africa by the anti-apartheid forces is likely to be at the continental level. South Africa as a political entity will finally wake up from isolation and be counted among the members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) an event that will also equally affect the OAU. As an economic giant in the whole continent, South Africa is likely to benefit from the readily open African markets and perhaps to some of the region's raw materials.

It is presently very difficult to speculate on the nature and strength of political clout that post-apartheid South Africa will have. This will depend on many unknown variables including the political leadership that will emerge, the power structure, the ideological stance etc. Other forces in other large countries like Nigeria and Egypt as well as on the strengths of economic blocks that will have concretised will also affect South Africa's clout in Africa and the World.

But while the picture of political clout of post-apartheid South Africa in the overall workings of the continent is still blurred, the picture of the economic clout is almost already drawn. Even as of now, we can already outline the major directions of interactions between the presently independent African countries and post-apartheid South Africa. This agenda includes at least six distinct items; namely, trade, minerals policy, transport, food security, migrant labour.

Trade is one of the direct agenda items on which both Africa and South Africa can mutually benefit. It is estimated that some 32 per cent of South Africa's manufactured goods go to Africa. After apartheid this share should be able to more than double. For the continent, intra-African trade would be boosted by increased trade flows with South Africa. Also, the



continent could greatly benefit from exchanges in the more appropriate technology from South Africa. The only caution that has to be sounded is that indiscriminate trade with South Africa could stunt industrial take off in some countries especially in Southern Africa.

Mineral wealth in South African countries is a potential area for cooperation at the continental level. An increased processing of these minerals as well as increased intra-regional trade in them would contribute significantly to the industrialization of African countries.

Transport will be vital to further all aspects of cooperation and integration. Most economic activities will need strong North-South and East-West transport links. Air links between post-apartheid Johannesburg and the major capitals of Africa should greatly improve the movement of goods and people in the region as a whole. The liberation of South Africa may also bestow upon Africa a strong shipping network that would enable connecting many of Africa's ports.

Food security, at least, in the Southern African subregion should greatly improve with the possibility of trading in food and food products with South Africa. For the region as a whole, the food security agenda should be able to benefit from post-apartheid South Africa.

Migrant labour is likely to be one of the thorny issues between post-apartheid South Africa and other countries. The likely scenario is that South Africa will continue to attract migrant labour and skilled manpower from African countries plagued with unemployment. But this is likely to be also a source of tension with the black labour force. Such tension will not augur well for South Africa's solidarity with other African countries.

## **5. The end of a nightmare: A world without apartheid**

The step to post-apartheid South Africa will always be historical for mankind in that we will have conquered the last explicit elements of the evil racial prejudices among the human races. If the whole world has seen and abhorred apartheid then we can safely extrapolate the fact that the world will love post-apartheid South Africa. As such it is likely that flow of resources will increase and that the World support for everlasting change and development will be given. Indeed, if the "Armageddon Scenario" as described earlier is to be avoided, then the entire world will have to contribute to the smooth transition from hatred-inspired apartheid to human-centred post-apartheid.

# **Chapter VI**

## **Forging a New Compact with the International Community**

*Statement at the 1991 Second Regular Session of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations General Assembly, Geneva, 9 July, 1991*

### **1. Introduction**

I am pleased for the opportunity to speak, once again, to the Economic and Social Council at its annual second regular session. It has always been a cherished experience for me to share with your august assembly, once every year, the analysis, projections and perspectives of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa concerning Africa's socio-economic development.

During the 16 years that I have been Executive Secretary of the ECA, the Council has always lent its support to the various major initiatives concerning Africa that we have brought before it for consideration. The Council was instrumental in the proclamation of the First and Second UN Transport and Communications Decades for Africa, the First and Second Industrial Development Decades for Africa and the galvanization of international opinion and support for Africa's emergency situation in 1984 and 1985 culminating in the Special Session of the General Assembly of May/June 1986 on Africa's Critical Economic Crisis, to mention but a few. The discussions and negotiations on these issues were, to be sure, often difficult, but the Council has shown consistent understanding on African issues and problems.

As this is the last time I will appear before ECOSOC as the Executive Secretary of ECA, I deem it necessary to express my deep appreciation to you for this unflagging support which you have given to Africa, to my Commission and to me personally. It is my hope that you will build on this tradition in the years ahead, given the enormous challenges that the continent faces in the next decade and beyond.

As I prepare to leave the ECA, I have been giving considerable attention to how best to prepare Africa for the twenty-first century during the remaining eight and a half years left of the twentieth century. Accordingly, during the past two months, I have, in five different statements and/or writings, focussed on what specific agenda should be pursued in the 1990s in development policy, in restructuring Africa's nation states and societies, in achieving a greater degree of stability and security without which there can be no sustainable development and cooperation and in providing an overall enabling political environment.

These statements have been made respectively before the ECA Conference of Ministers (May 9, 1991), the Kampala Forum on SSDCA (May 19, 1991), the OAU Council of Ministers (May 28, 1991) and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU at their Abuja Summit meeting (June 4, 1991). I have also during this period (May, 1991) written a think piece, by way of a preliminary exploration, on the prospects of post-apartheid South Africa and the probable consequences for southern African countries and the entire continent of integrating post-apartheid South Africa into the African economy.

In all these, I have focussed exclusively on what Africa must do for itself to prepare itself for the next century. In this my last statement in the series, I am focussing on what the international community can and indeed must do to enable Africa to implement fully its various agendas. Since these agendas

are designed to lay the foundation for the second liberation of Africa - i.e. the bringing about of a fundamental political, social and economic transformation of Africa - the question which we are in effect posing is what role should the international community play in this endeavour?

That it has a role to play - whether negative or positive or indifferent - there can be no doubt. After all, Africa is part and parcel of the global economic system - marginalized and peripheral, no doubt, but nevertheless still a part of it all the same. While given its present circumstances, the rest of the world can forget Africa and suffer very little consequences therefrom, Africa, on its part, cannot afford to do without the international community - so pervasive is its dependency on it. This narrow dependency and shock-prone economic basis, to a large extent colonially inherited and neocolonially entrenched, does not constitute a foundation for sustainable development nor for viable nation-state. Hence Africa's need for the genuine support of the international community.

But fundamentally more important is the long-term perspective. Africa which occupies almost one-quarter of the earth's land mass and will in the course of the next generation harbour one-fifth of the world population cannot be wished away. Its problems and concerns cannot continue to be put on the back burner. Sooner or later, these problems must be attended to as continued neglect will have negative impact beyond Africa and impinge on the welfare of mankind generally. This will be more so in the years ahead as our global village shrinks further and further in the face of further revolutions in telecommunications and information technologies and as interdependence intensifies. In any case, a world that turns its back to a continent with such a great potentiality in terms of natural and human resources will remain in perpetuity a poorer world, operating well below its production possibilities. It will be a poor world that fails, when it needs not to, to maximize the welfare of mankind. Therefore, there

is a mutuality of interests in the international community playing a positive and full role in enabling Africa to lay a firm foundation for its political, social and economic transformation so as to realize its second liberation.

But before identifying in specific manner the role that the international community should play, let us first summarize the main elements of the African agenda for the 1990s.

## **2. Elements of the African agenda for the 1990s**

The years 1990 and 1991 may yet go down in history as the beginning of the initiation of change and transformation in Africa. The process of fundamental changes has been launched in the political, economic and structural spheres of the entire continent. February 1990 heralded the beginning of change in apartheid-ridden South Africa with the release of Nelson Mandela after twenty-seven years in jail. It was also the month that the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation was adopted in Arusha, Tanzania, after a huge international conference - the first of its kind - at which non-governmental and voluntary development organizations, organized labour, women's organizations, youth and students and their organizations rubbed shoulders with representatives of African governments, the donor community and African intergovernmental and international organizations.

After an intense process of interactions, the conference adopted a charter which affirmed *"that nations cannot be built without the popular support and full participation of the people, nor can the economic crisis be resolved and the human and economic conditions improved without the full and effective contribution, creativity and popular enthusiasm of the vast majority of the people; that popular participation is the fundamental right of the people; that African governments have to yield space to the people without which popular participation will be difficult to achieve;"* and, that, in this

connection, the international community should "examine its own record on popular participation, and hereafter support indigenous efforts which promote the emergence of a democratic environment."<sup>18)</sup>

In May 1991, the Arusha Conference was followed by the Kampala Forum on *Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa* (SSDCA). The Charter had established the umbilical cord between popular participation and security, stability, development and cooperation in Africa by also affirming that (i) one of the conditions for ensuring popular participation is the bringing to an end all wars and armed conflicts; (ii) the elimination of internal strife and inter-country conflicts; and, (iii) the cessation of acts of destabilization by apartheid South Africa on southern African frontline countries which have resulted in a debilitating diversion of resources that would otherwise have been used to meet the critical basic needs of the people in these countries. The Kampala Forum was therefore a logical follow-up which was required to spell out the requirements of SSDCA and to launch the process that will eventually lead to the adoption of binding principles and policies in these areas by all African governments.

The *Kampala Document* which was adopted by the Forum put forward *inter alia* the following basic principles:

- (i) that the erosion of security and stability in Africa is one of the major causes of the continent's continuing crises and one of the principal impediments to the creation of a sound economy;
- (ii) that the link between security, stability and development demands a common African agenda based on a unity of purpose and a collective political consensus;

---

<sup>18)</sup> African Charter for Popular Participation in Development, op.cit. pp. 17, 21, 22.

- (iii) that a new Africa based on a new order can only be realized through a declaration of binding principles which will guide the conduct of governance in individual African states as well as the imperatives of intra-African and inter-African relations; and,
- (iv) that the implementation of the process must perforce involve the major economic and military powers whose actions and /or inactions impact on the African situation and whose cooperation and blessing are essential prerequisites for the success of the process and its implementation.

The third potentially momentous development was the signing on 3 June 1991 at Abuja, Nigeria, the treaty establishing the African Economic Community by the African Heads of State and Government. That ceremony was the culmination of eleven years of negotiations begun after the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos in 1980. It was in the latter document that it was agreed that such a treaty should be signed during the last decade of the millennium after successful negotiations. Thus the signing of the treaty marks a turning point in the development of regional cooperation and integration in Africa. The potentials that the African Economic Community offer for structural change and transformation are enormous.

This year 1991 is also the year of the final review and appraisal of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD). To assist in undertaking that review, the United Nations General Assembly set up an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole which is expected to meet early in September and submit its report to the Assembly later in the year. Apart from the report which the Secretary-General of the United Nations is submitting to the Ad Hoc Committee, the ECA Conference of Ministers responsible for economic development in their



respective countries have also decided to present a memorandum containing their collective assessment of the implementation of the programme to the Committee.

It was in the light of these four developments, of these discernible trends and emerging tendencies that I have articulated the agenda for the 1990s in a holistic manner. In my statement to the formal opening of the 26th session of the ECA, I articulated Africa's development policy agenda for the 1990s under nine principal items, as follows: (i) reaffirmation, operationalization and implementation of existing continental blue-prints instead of spending energy preparing new ones; (ii) getting policy instruments right, particularly in respect of exchange rate policy, interest rate policy and price support policy; (iii) developing internal capacity to respond to external shocks; (iv) achieving congruence between priorities and resource allocation; (v) putting in place a holistic human resource-development policy and strategy; (vi) making regional and subregional integration integral parts of domestic national policy; (vii) rediscovering Africa's culture, traditions and values; (viii) removing infrastructural constraints to long-term development; and, (ix) making individual and collective effort to ensure that the doomsday prognostications that abound for Africa do not come to pass.

The policy agenda for security and stability includes (a) on the **stability** side (i) promoting human rights to accelerate popular participation; (ii) adherence to the supremacy of the rule of law; (iii) promoting economic equity and social justice; (iv) promoting public accountability, and (v) limitation of the tenure of office of leaders; and, (b) on the **security** side (i) linkage between internal and external security and between stability and security; (ii) regaining sovereignty over conflict resolution and management; (iii) establishing peace-keeping mechanisms; (iv) confidence-building measures; and, (v) seeking active partnership with the rest of the world.

Restructuring African states and societies into bigger nation-states is where our long-term interests lie. Instead of the present large number of minuscule states, Africa needs strong, sizeable and reasonably populous nation-states that will constitute meaningful poles of development. Of the 51 countries of developing Africa, 24 have a population of less than five million each and 10 of these have a population of less than one million each. 13 countries have an area of less than 50,000 square kilometres each and 14 are landlocked. Africa needs to dump its colonial inheritance in its state structures by undertaking a fundamental process of restructuring and integration. But this is a long-term objective. In the meantime, sub-regional and regional integration has to be pursued vigorously. To the extent that we succeed it will pave the way for subsequent political integration.

The political agenda which is needed to buttress the other agendas was articulated in my statement to the African Heads of State and Government at their June 1991 Abuja Summit in the following areas: (i) peace-keeping and conflict resolution; (ii) security and stability; (iii) governance, democracy and accountability; (iv) transformation of state and its bureaucracy; (v) empowerment and equity; (vi) reorientating the African elite from the mimicry of foreign values and lifestyles to becoming frontliners in the promotion of African values and styles; (vii) facilitating the internalization of the new African transformation ethic; and, (viii) encouraging the evolution of proto-regionalism in substitution for ethnicism and proto-nationalism.

The prospects of realizing these agendas in the 1990s have already witnessed a giant leap forward with the signing of the treaty establishing African Economic Community at the Abuja Summit of the OAU. The treaty signals the determination of African countries to use the instrumentality of economic cooperation for fostering their socio-economic transformation and development, and for capturing the benefits of the

economies of scale that a large African-wide economic space would provide for markets and production.

However, even with the best of efforts and intentions, Africa does not and cannot expect to be able to implement and realize its political and economic agendas without the cooperation of other countries and regions of the world. Its hopes of establishing, at the national, subregional and regional levels, truly dynamic, prosperous, self-reliant and inter-dependent economies capable of functioning as true and reliable partners in the international economic system cannot materialise without strong, increasing and sustained support from the international community, and without removing or at least ameliorating the impact of the variety of exogenous factors which, over the years, have aggravated the region's central problems of lack of structural transformation and low productivity. The exogenous factors include: (i) the collapse in commodity prices; (ii) the adverse terms of trade; (iii) stagnation and decline in official development assistance (ODA); (iv) high interest rates; (v) heavy burden of external debt and debt servicing obligations; (vi) the shift to a regime of sharp fluctuation of exchange rates; and, (vii) increased protectionism. These are the factors grouped together by the ECA Conference of Ministers under the title "rapidly deteriorating and hostile international economic environment" in their 1984 *Special Memorandum* to ECOSOC.<sup>19)</sup> In such circumstances, what complementary role can the international community play in preparing Africa for the twenty-first century? To answer this question realistically, we must first undertake a review of the past and current role of the international community in Africa.

---

<sup>19)</sup> Special Memorandum by ECA Conference of Ministers on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis, (E/ECA/CM.10/37/Rev. 2, May 1984, p. 5.

### 3. A review of the role of the international community in Africa

The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation calls on the international community to "*examine its own record*"<sup>20)</sup> in Africa. While it has always been an unproductive effort to blame all of Africa's difficulties on exogenous factors, it is equally counterproductive and unrealistic to behave or argue as if these exogenous factors - be they political, social and economic - do not have tremendous and, more often than not, overwhelming impact on the African political economy. Indeed, it was an appreciation of their importance that made African countries request the convening of the Special Session on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa in May/June 1986. And it was an acceptance of this point of view by the international community that made the General Assembly accede to the request in the first place and subsequently to adopt the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD). While this programme did not bind the international community to any specific measures or levels of assistance, it recognises:

- (i) that African effort has to be supplemented by complementary action of the international community through intensified cooperation and substantially increased support;
- (ii) that lasting solutions to the serious exogenous constraints, over which Africa has no control, will have to be found since its persistence impedes African efforts;
- (iii) the magnitude of Africa's debt and the severe and restrictive burden which this continues to place on many African countries;

---

<sup>20)</sup> Op.cit. p. 22.

- (iv) the need to eliminate protectionism particularly non-tariff barriers, to adopt measures which encourage African exports and diversification programmes and improved market access, especially for tropical products, within the framework of GATT;
- (v) the need to deal with commodity issues taking into account the special interests of Africa;
- (vi) the need for extensive international support for the priorities and policies that Africa has identified as necessary; and,
- (vii) the importance of increasing official development assistance to Africa, its improved quality and effectiveness.

Finally, the international community while noting that Africa will need additional external resources amounting to \$9.1 billion a year between 1986 and 1990 over and above the then current level of assistance committed itself to making every effort to provide sufficient resources to support and supplement African development effort. It also committed itself to ensure that the flows of external resources are predictable and assured.

The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly will in September 1991 be undertaking a careful and reasoned evaluation of the response of the international community in the light of these undertakings. Indeed, the ECA Conference of Ministers prepared a memorandum during the twenty-sixth session of the Commission for submission to the Ad Hoc Committee. So has the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations. I am quite sure that others will soon be submitted to the Ad Hoc Committee.

The inescapable conclusion which any objective evaluation leads to is that while the international community has taken

some positive measures during the period of UN-PAAERD, these have in their totality fallen far short of needs and expectations. The additional resource requirements estimated at \$9.1 billion annually over and above net resource flows failed to materialize. Worse still, the total net resource flows to Africa declined significantly from a level of \$25.9 billion in 1986 to \$22.6 billion in 1989. The year-by-year figures at 1986 prices and exchange rates were \$27.3 billion in 1985; \$25.9 billion in 1986; \$22.7 billion in 1987; \$22.4 billion in 1988; and, \$22.6 billion in 1989. Official Development Assistance (ODA) remained in real terms more or less constant during the 1986-1990 period at an average of about \$16.5 billion per annum. Export credits and private flows declined sharply - the former turning negative from a level of \$2.0 billion in 1985 to minus \$1.8 billion in 1988. Although it turned positive again in 1989 (\$0.8 billion), it was still below the 1985 level. Private flows also declined sharply from \$6.7 billion in 1986 to \$3.5 billion in 1989. The share of Africa as a whole in bilateral ODA from Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors remained constant during 1986-1989 while the share of Sub-Saharan Africa increased slightly from 28.5 per cent in 1986 to 29.8 per cent in 1989. ODA from non-DAC donors declined during the period.

On the other hand, multilateral institutions (World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank) increased their support to Africa during the UN-PAAERD period. The World Bank's principal funding programmes in Africa are the International Development Association (IDA) and the Special Programme of Assistance (SPA) while the IMF's are Structural Adjustment Facility (SAF) and Enhanced Facility (ESAF). The World Bank's net disbursement to sub-Saharan Africa totalled \$8.3 billion during 1986-1990 - an average of \$1.66 billion annually. However, outflows from Africa to the Bank during the same period amounted to \$3.4 billion, thus bringing the net transfer to Africa down to only \$4.9 billion during the entire period. With regard to the

IMF, total net credit which had averaged about \$1.7 billion between 1981 and 1983 dropped to \$0.7 billion and \$0.2 billion in 1984 and 1985 respectively and have turned negative since 1986 with an annual average of minus \$600 million between 1986 and 1989.

It must also be pointed out that the support of both the World Bank and the IMF has other serious limitations. As the ECA Ministers pointed out in their Memorandum *"access to these resources is conditional upon the implementation of SAPs, a fact which leaves little choice for African countries but to accede to such conditionality. Secondly, conditionality requirements have also limited access to the funds. For example, only about a third of total resources available under SAF and ESAF have been disbursed to date."*<sup>21)</sup>

On its part, the ADB was able to expand its lending during 1986-1990 to \$12.1 billion from \$4.3 billion during 1981-1985. The Bank endeavoured throughout the period to place top priority in its lending programme to agriculture and sectors in support of agriculture - the topmost priority areas in UN-PAAERD. Thus 26.2 per cent of its loans and grants were allocated to agriculture and 21.9 per cent to sectors in support of agriculture. ADB has also financed projects in the areas of economic integration, environmental protection, women in development and population activities.

Other areas for international community's support have suffered from the same degree of inadequacy. The African debt situation has become more serious over the years in spite of the various initiatives which have been taken by the international community. Africa's stock of debt has risen from \$204 billion in 1986 to \$272 billion in 1990; debt as a percentage of GDP has increased from 54 in 1986 to 109 in 1990 while the ratio of actual debt service payments to export earnings was

<sup>21)</sup> Memorandum by the ECA Conference of Ministers to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of UN-PAAERD, 1986-1990, (E/ECA/CM.17/L) Annex II, p. 7.

in excess of 30 per cent in 1990. Indeed, the figure for scheduled debt servicing in the same year was 46 per cent.

Similarly, there has been no significant improvement in the unfavourable external environment. Even though Africa successfully increased its export volumes by 7.5 per cent between 1986 and 1990, its export earnings fell by 12.5 per cent during the same period. Both the terms of trade and the purchasing power of exports have declined markedly during the period. Africa received very limited support for diversification both within and outside the commodity sector. Neither has the functioning of commodity markets improved and rather than lasting solutions to the commodity problems being found, they have been seriously aggravated. Measures to provide adequate compensatory financing called for in UN-PAAERD have not materialized. Neither have market access conditions for African exports significantly changed between 1986 and 1990.

While it is true that UN-PAAERD was not a development contract legally binding on the international community to fulfill fully its obligations and commitments, the low level of performance in all the areas of agreement has generated a sense of betrayal. It is to be hoped, however, that this will not lead to negative attitude in terms of future cooperation between the continent and the international community. It is imperative that a new compact must be forged but in doing so both sides must learn from the experience of the past five years and take full cognizance of the geo-political realities of the world of today. There should be no room for pessimism nor for accusation and counter-accusation. Rather both sides should opt for realism in forging the new compact.

#### **4. Forging a new compact**

What then should be the nature and content of such a compact? First and foremost, and drawing upon the experience of UN-PAAERD, this new compact must be binding



on both Africa and the international community. Secondly, it must state specific obligations and specific goals and measures to be undertaken by both sides. Thirdly, it must be based on the principle of mutuality of interest and of mutual benefits. Fourth, the compact must be operational and quantifiable with specific targets and timeframe and be monitorable. Finally, an appropriate monitoring mechanism must be an integral part of the compact.

Let us expatiate on each of these seriatim. There is no doubt that the greatest deficiency of UN-PAAERD was that it was neither legally nor morally binding. Although it has been referred to as a compact, it is anything but that. In fairness to people who have so referred to UN-PAAERD, there are ample references in the document to convey that impression. Paragraph 13 which is entitled *"Commitment to a common point of reference"* asserts that *"Africa is committed to provide the necessary framework to launch long-term programmes for self-sustaining socio-economic development and growth. The international community is committed to assist Africa to achieve this objective"*. Paragraph 16 states categorically that *the international community "commits itself to making every effort to provide sufficient resources to support and supplement the African development effort"*.<sup>22)</sup>

However, judging from the actual development that took place or did not take place, it is clear that these so-called commitments were not accepted in the capitals of the major donor countries as constituting a binding obligation. In fact, the attitude was that UN-PAAERD was another document coming out of all-night negotiations from the General Assembly - negotiations usually conducted by professional negotiators with minimal, if any, reference to their principal actors in their respective capitals. Therefore, any new compact must be the subject of deliberation and approval in the capitals of both the donor and African countries after it has been

---

United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD), pp. 14-15.

successfully negotiated and adopted in principle by the General Assembly. When the two parties concerned have, upon such due deliberation agreed, the compact can then be promulgated by the General Assembly.

I realize that this is a rather unusual way for decision-making in the United Nations but the time of playing politics and diplomacy with the lives of millions of Africans should be deemed to be over. Otherwise, there will be an explosion which will be more costly to manage.

The compact must also state unequivocally specific goals, targets, obligations and measures by both sides and wherever possible in quantitative terms. This must be done by both sides. It is not enough, for example, for Africans to undertake in general terms to improve human conditions and the standard of living of the people, to democratize the developmental process and encourage popular participation and to promote subregional and regional cooperation. They must set specific targets and goals in measurable terms within specific time-frames. To promise the pursuit of socio-economic transformation is inadequate for a binding compact. The indicators for measuring the success of such a process must be identified and specified.

Similarly, the donors must be more forthcoming. They must articulate their targets in specific terms and again within given time-frames. They must set a minimum floor of net external inflows over a given period. They must indicate their target for reducing the stock of Africa's external debt and in view of the severity of the constraints which the debt burdens pose for Africa's development, set a minimum in terms of debt reduction and debt servicing reliefs that are compatible with enabling Africa to achieve its targets and goals. Doing too little too late is frustrating to both sides - the African crisis continues to intensify and the donors seeing no substantial result for their effort become discouraged. In the field of commodities and

diversification what exactly the donors intend to do to help Africa and over which period need to be specified. Shying away from specifying targets is to fight shy of the problem. After all the donor countries set targets for themselves.

To make it worth the while of both parties, particularly of the donors, there must be some element of mutuality of interest. As Arve Ofstad, Arne Tostensen and Tom Vraalsen stated in their paper<sup>23)</sup> to the North-South Roundtable held in June 1991 in Ottawa,

*"While it is not difficult to see the benefits to Africa's developing countries of securing resources and creating conditions for long-term development, it may sometimes be more difficult to identify what real interest the richer and more developed world would have in the development of the poorer nations. Cynically, the North may not, at least if perceived in a short-term perspective, care very much for the fate of Africa. But no doubt the long-term evolution of Africa as part of the globe will impact on the North, beneficially or adversely. Whereas it may be difficult to further appeal successfully to the North on moral grounds, it should be possible to present the case of African recovery and development also in the light of the North's self-interest."*

However, even with the disappearance of the cold war and the emergence of the new mono-polar world political order, there are vital interests that should impel the countries of the North to want to ensure that Africa does not become a permanent economic underdog, a permanent *mezzogiorno* for which there is little or no hope.

Surely, the reduction of conflicts and instability, the protection of the environment and the reduction of migration from

---

<sup>23)</sup> Arve Ofstad, Arne Tostensen and Tom Vraalsen, "Towards a Development Compact". Paper presented at the North-South Roundtable held in Ottawa in June 1991.

Africa to Europe are of immediate vital interest to the North. From a long-term perspective, increased trade from Africa and securing access to strategic minerals should also be of considerable interest. Thus it is possible to establish mutual, even if unequal in the short run, benefits as a basis of the compact.

Fourthly, the compact must be operational. Time-frames must be set; who is to do what and when must be determined. While all these cannot realistically be worked out in full detail in advance, there must be an implementation programme. This then leads to the fifth condition. The implementation must not only be monitorable, it must be regularly monitored. An appropriate mechanism at governmental level on which both sides participate on an equal basis must be instituted. And there should be some form of sanctions for non-performance. Above all, each side must be allowed to formulate its part of the bargain first before the negotiating process begins. Imposition as in the past will be counter productive.

## **5. The challenge of Africa to the international community**

Africa challenges the international community almost as much as it challenges the Africans themselves. No doubt, African governments and people must perforce assume the primary responsibility for their own development. Indeed, what the world has witnessed in the last one decade is the increasing resolve and determination on the part of the people of Africa to lift and pull themselves up by their own bootstraps from the valley of recession and economic stagnation. However, given the tremendous sacrifice and the social and political costs that will be required for the rehabilitation and revitalisation of the African economy, and the enormity of the tasks and efforts that will be involved in engineering the continent's socio-economic breakthrough, Africa's efforts alone, tremendous as they have been in the past, will certainly not be sufficient. Therefore, Africa poses great challenges to

the North and particularly the countries of Western Europe and North America.

With the wind of change already sweeping through Africa in the quest for basic rights, individual freedom and democratic participation by the majority of the population in social, political and economic development, the political agenda in Africa has already gathered a momentum of its own. By adopting the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, the African governments have committed themselves to a new development ethic, in which people are to be put first in all development efforts and of which the democratization of the political and development process is a centre-piece. With this development one is bound to ask if the donor countries will respond generously by giving substantial and adequate material and technical support so that these internally generated initiatives for democratization can take root. Unless there is immediate improvement in the standard of living of the people and the socio-economic transformation process shows signs of becoming sustained, the move to greater democracy and popular participation may not only be halted but may also be reversed. The corollary of this is that it will be a mistake for the donor countries to impose political conditionalities because it can generate the feeling that the democratic process is not indigenous but externally imposed. This will be unfortunate as it will thwart and prevent indigenous democratic forces from triumphing.

The African situation also challenges the international community to take all appropriate measures that will lead to a better management of the international economy. The retreat from human solidarity must be halted and reversed. The strong and the rich must accept it as their duty to care and play fair with the poorer members of humanity. As Shridath Ramphal, the former Commonwealth Secretary-General puts it in a remarkable ECA Silver Jubilee Lecture, in 1986, *"recognition of mutual interests is not leading to fulfilment of mutual needs but*

*to reliance on self-assertiveness and even compulsion. In some important respects, we are acting out at the global level the feudal mentality."*<sup>24)</sup> Africa today faces the danger that its economy because of its weakness, its fragility and its vulnerability continues to face the danger of being trampled upon particularly because of the way the international economy is currently managed.

There is therefore, an urgent need to embark on a more equitable and rational global macro-economic policy. Better parity management of exchange rates in order to bring about a more stable exchange rate system in place of the existing free floating volatile rates which have intensified currency speculation and brought new restrictions to domestic policy through adverse impact on patterns of trade and production and have also exerted immense repercussions on inflation is required. Domestic policies and economic management in general will have to be better coordinated in the world's leading economies in order to avoid world inflation. In the area of commodities and international trading arrangements, there is need for greater trade liberalization and less protectionism, coupled with commodity agreements aimed at removing the uncertainties over future prices for primary commodities of interest to the developing countries of the South, especially Africa. In this connection, there will have to be a speedy resumption and conclusion of the Uruguay Round and an integrated reform of the world's monetary, financial and trade-regulating international institutions to ensure that they are more responsive to the needs and problems of all regions of the world. What is required of the countries of the OECD is the democratization of the international economic system and for them to live up to the challenge of their enormous and rather unique economic powers in assuming proper responsibility for the healthy functioning of the world economic system.

---

<sup>24)</sup> Shridath S. Ramphal, "The Trampling of the Grass", The Inaugural Silver Jubilee Lecture ECA, Addis Ababa, 1986, p. 30.

# ***Postscript***

No one who has the interest of Africa and its people at heart will deny that the decade of the 1990s is the continent's decade of and with destiny. It is a decade during which Africa must regain the losses of the 1980s and prepare itself for the twenty-first century. It is a decade the Africans and the international community must abandon a narrow perception of the crisis and adopt instead a holistic approach. It is a decade during which we must give up mechanistic and economic responses in favour of the holistic and human-centred development paradigm to confront its multi-faceted problems. Africa's problems are not merely economic. Nor are they merely political or social. They arise from a combination and interactions between and among all the three with the inevitable consequences of the law of cumulative causation.

The 1990s is also a decade during which Africa must forge a new compact with the international community based on two principles: acceptance of Africa's endogenous agendas and commitment to turn the existing hostile external environment into a more favourable one. It is no exaggeration to say that policy orientations of major powers towards Africa have tended to oscillate between exploitation, benign neglect and occasional solidarity and humanitarian support, with each of these policy attitudes determined more by expediencies rather than by consideration of Africa's own defined agenda. Very often, the tendency has been to ignore Africa's views and sensitivities on issues concerning Africa or fundamentally affecting the African continent, and to ridicule and supplant Africa's initiatives, priorities, perceptions, goals and strategies.

Thus, at a time when momentous changes are taking place in the world, bringing in their trails new relationships among

countries and new ways of thinking, Africa has a right to expect, and indeed to demand, that the rest of the world, particularly the major powers, relate to it in new and more creative ways. The new relationship between Africa and the rest of the World must therefore be based on genuine partnership, within which Africa is allowed to set its own agendas, and to which the international community would direct and focus its support. The new relationships of partnership, however, must, by definition, go beyond the need to scrupulously respect Africa's agenda. It must be based on equality while at the same time encompassing respect for Africa's perspectives on matters pertaining to Africa.

But the primary responsibility rests upon Africa and its leaders to pursue their own agendas vigorously and relentlessly with external help if it is forthcoming or singlehandedly if it is not or if unreasonable conditionalities are attached to it. The clock is ticking fast, the hour is fast approaching for Africa either to acquit itself or be condemned by an increasingly sceptical and cynical world into the status of a permanent underdog.

If Africa can put its act together, if it can wean itself of its colonial past, its unenviable heritage and its neocolonial status, the sky is virtually the limit given its potentials. No doubt leadership - in terms of quality, integrity and commitment - is a crucial factor in the pursuit of the development ethic that alone can bring about the second liberation of the continent. The heroes of the first liberation - political independence - were well-known and household names in their own times. The second liberation needs its own heroes - men and women imbued with vision and with fire in their belly who are totally and irrevocably committed to redeem Africa in the socio-economic fields and correct the political errors of the past three decades; men and women who will uncompromisingly pursue the goals of transforming the African polity, society and economy.