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The Evolution of the Monrovia Strategy and the Lagos Plan of
Action:

A Regional Approach to Economic Decolonization

by

Adebayo Adedeji

United Nations Under-Secretary-General
and
Executive Secretary
Economic Commission for Africa

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I. INTRODUCTION

In March 1979, at the formal opening of a seminar on Alternative Patterns of Development and Life Styles for the African Region which was jointly organised by the Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Environment Programme, I said inter-alia that:

"...For too long, the impression has been created that Africa development strategies and life styles are an imitation - indeed, a poor imitation - of the strategies and life styles developed elsewhere for other societies with different historical, cultural, economic and political background

"..The situation in which almost all African economies are, today, makes it imperative for us to seek alternative patterns of development and life styles before it is too late. Almost two decades after political independence, the African region is more dependent on the outside world economically than ever before in respect not only of skilled manpower, entrepreneurial resources, raw materials, capital goods and services, consumer goods and even food. But even more basic is the fact that we are much more dependent on the outside world for ideas as to what the operational meaning of socio-economic development is and how it should be brought about (emphasis added).

"Indeed, we in Africa have over the years become the mimic people. Although we pretend to be real, to be original, to be learning and to be preparing ourselves and our countries for self-reliant development processes and for an authentically African life style, all we really have succeeded in doing is to mimic other societies and their life styles. In doing so, we use borrowed phrases and jargons and terminologies which are foreign to our people and thus succeed in beclouding the issues before us and in confusing our people"¹.

It will be clear from this fairly strong statement - which is typical of the kind of statements that I have been making over the years since assuming the headship of ECA - why the Commission has since 1975 been seeking not merely an alternative strategy of development for Africa but also, and more importantly, a development strategy that is

¹ Economic Commission for Africa, Seminar on Alternative Patterns of Development and Life Styles for the African Region, Addis Ababa, 6 - 9 March 1979, Opening statement by the Executive Secretary.

genuinely African-oriented, that is genuinely native rather than a strategy intended to lead to a caricature of the life-style or ways of living of one or the other of the existing socio-political systems or societies. Indeed, the need for such a search has become an imperative necessity as the revolution of rising expectations of the 1960s has been replaced by the revulsion of unfulfilled economic dreams, which is gradually but steadily leading us to a massive societal revolt and rebellion that promises to have unprecedented political destabilising effects throughout the length and breadth of Africa unless there is a reversal in economic trends and an upsurge in economic performance.

For rhetorics apart, the African economy today, perhaps more than ever before, is in a quagmire and at the periphery of the periphery of the international economy. Internally, our economies are still basically underdeveloped with a sharp bifurcation between the traditional and the modern sectors; they are not only extremely open and exposed to the vicissitudes of international economic changes, they are even, more than two decades after independence, excessively dependent on external stimuli - foreign trade, foreign technology, foreign expertise and even foreign ideas. The colonial economic system which we inherited at independence and which we should have striven hard to dismantle immediately thereafter has become so ingrained that all we do, in the name of economic restructuring and progress, is to nibble at it.

Is it any wonder, therefore, that Africa is currently faced and will for many years to come be faced with a development crisis of great portent if past trends were to persist? If the truth must be told, we cannot but admit to ourselves - that we have woefully failed to achieve high rates of growth and diversification and an increasing measure of self-reliance and self-sustainment because we have failed to achieve any significant success at economic decolonization. As long as we continue to operate within the framework of the present international economic system, so long will we continue to be "part of the lowest caste in the international (economic) hierarchy with our

place at the bottom of that hierarchy continuing to threaten "to be rigid"². In other words, as long as we continue only to nibble at the colonial economic system so long shall we continue to fail to achieve any breakthrough in socio-economic engineering. For, as Immanuel Wallerstein has so rightly pointed out in his "The Three Stages of African Involvement in the World Economy"³, dependent development leads nowhere fast. Indeed, Africa marching toward the future hand in hand with the present has no dignified future at all.

Let me say, right away, that I completely reject the assertion of such prophets of doom as V. S. Naipul that "Africa has no future" or that the continent will sooner or later disintegrate. Indeed, were I to subscribe to this doomsday prophecy about the future of Africa, I would not continue in my present job. Neither does the organization which I currently head, the Economic Commission for Africa, subscribe to this gloomy, rather defeatist, forecast. But in view of the near unanimous prognostication of all futurists about a dismal future for Africa, there is an urgent need for all of us, and particularly for our leaders and governments, to take all measures to ensure that the prophets of doom are proved wrong.

It is not enough for us to keep repeating that Africa has tremendous potentials for development. We have to prove this by turning these potentials into actual wealth for the welfare of our people. And we can do this only by removing the yoke which has fastened upon us an economic system which inhibits the range of national resources we utilize; which put us into a straight jacket

² Ali Mazrui, Africa's International Relations: The Diplomacy of Dependency and Change, (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1977), pp.17-18.

³ In Peter C. Gutkind and Immanuel Wallerstein (eds), The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa, (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage 1976), pp.30-57.

Let me now bring this lecture to an end. There is no doubt that a great deal more can still be said on the topic which I have chosen for today's lecture. I also have no doubt that there must have been a lot to disagree with in what I have said. Therefore, if the lecture provokes new thoughts, new ideas and new approaches, it would have served a useful purpose because it is my earnest hope that our Universities and our social and economic research centres will join ECA in this search for a genuinely African-oriented development strategy which will bring about the total economic decolonization of our continent and lay the foundation for an enduring African socio-economic prosperity.

Finally, let me express my warmest thanks to the Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research - the organizers of this Distinguished Lecture Series - for their initiative in launching such a series and for their thoughtfulness in inviting me to speak on its platform today.

of producing what we do not consume and of consuming what we do not produce, and, which makes us exporters of raw materials at low and, in most cases, declining prices in order to import semi-finished and finished products at high and rising prices. Indeed, no programme for economic liberation, no blueprint for economic decolonization can succeed which does not strike at the heart of the system of subjugation and exploitation which constituted the main thrust of colonial economic policy inherited by us at independence and perpetuated by us ever since then.

The ECA has engaged itself since 1975 in the herculian task of striking the death knell of colonial and neo-colonial economic strategy and of initiating the process of economic decolonization. It was the series of steps taken by the Commission since 1975, that culminated in the adoption of the Monrovia Strategy in July 1979 and the Lagos Plan of Action for its implementation, in April 1980. These two seminal documents now constitute the guiding light for our economic and social struggle for the rest of this century and beyond. While considerable progress has therefore been made in promoting a better understanding of the kind of development that Africa needs and how that kind of development could be engineered, one cannot but admit that we still have a long way to go in getting this new approach at economic decolonization become totally acceptable by policy makers at all levels in every country.

II. THE PRECURSORS OF THE MONROVIA STRATEGY AND THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION

It would, of course, be wrong to give the impression that the struggle for the formulation of an alternative economic strategy and policy which would, if properly executed, lead to the economic decolonization of Africa began only in 1975. The ECA, as the first pan-African organization had right from its inception on 29 April 1958 regarded this task as one of its main challenges. And the OAU, which was established five years later, as Africa's pan-African political organization, has lent its full political weight to the ECA in this endeavour. The Monrovia Strategy and the Lagos Plan of Action are, therefore, not the first all-Africa economic strategy to be designed.

The place of honour in this context should be accorded to the ECA's Africa's Strategy for Development in the 1970s adopted by its Conference of Ministers at its first meeting in February 1971 and to the OAU African Declaration on Cooperation, Development and Economic Independence adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the 10th anniversary of the organization in May 1973. One must also add the global strategies promulgated for the first and second United Nations Development Decades for the 1960s and the 1970s respectively.

But in spite of all these -- or was it because of them? -- the ECA deemed it necessary to initiate a series of actions in 1975 that led to the eventual adoption of the Monrovia Strategy in 1979 and the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action in 1980. WHY?

There are several reasons for this but let me concentrate on a few of the most important ones. First and foremost, these earlier declarations were based primarily on inherited theories of development and economic growth. The rate and direction of internal socio-economic change continued to be linked with the export markets and with the imports of skills, technology and capital goods and services as well as with consumer goods. Discussions in academic circles and among

planners centred around trade-gaps, savings gaps, investment gaps and balance of payments disequilibria. Very little attention was paid to national resources availability, to local entrepreneurship, to skilled manpower and technology, to domestic market and to the limitations of inherited international division of labour on the African development process. Needless to add that the attachment to these inherited theories of development simply reinforced the colonial patterns of development.

Unfortunately, the export trade of African countries has been plagued over the years by instability due to (i) the relatively low elasticity of demand for agricultural export products; (ii) the attempt of many developing countries to expand production at the same time in an effort to compensate for falling prices; (iii) the differing elasticities in the production of tree crops and annual crops in response to changes in export demand; (iv) the fact that for many products, such as beverages, the volume of consumption is habit-determined; (v) the shift in consumption patterns in developed countries and in favour of consumer durables, and, (vi) the emergence of synthetic substitutes. All these factors combined to make the export sector of Africa's trade which was supposed to constitute the engine of growth by conventional theories a most unreliable instrument for engineering socio-economic changes. And the earlier strategies fought shy of advocating a complete break from this heavy dependence on the external sector.

Instead, they advocated a policy of diversifying the production of export commodities and of multinational arrangements for commodity management and price stabilization. This policy of diversification only resulted, within a few years, in a greater number of agricultural export commodities in surplus supply on the world market. And the multinational arrangements for commodity management and price stabilization ran into a number of problems. First, there was the high cost involved; secondly, many of the products involved were susceptible to quality deterioration; third, many developing countries, driven by

necessity, undermined the agreed prices by selling below the price floor; and, finally, the developed countries which have always been lukewarm about price stabilization have aided and abetted any development that would make the agreements unworkable.

But even more serious is the fact that because of our commodity export-oriented strategy, Africa has, for decades, been consuming capital as income by exporting minerals, hydro-carbons, timber and the like without seeking effectively to develop alternative, renewable potentialities for expanding and diversified growth. Is it surprising that we have thereby set in motion the process of dessertification and the plague of droughts that are now becoming part of our ecosystem? Needless to add that this is a conceptual issue which, for many years, has gone unrecognized.

These earlier strategies also placed considerable emphasis on import-substituting industrialization policy. But as experience has now amply demonstrated, this policy which was a parallel of the export-oriented strategy has led us to the same dead-end. The policy of import-substitution has concentrated on consumption goods whose production has invariably entailed importation of capital goods, technology, managerial skills and intermediate inputs, which are highly amenable to transfer pricing, even if these are available or can be produced locally. The heterogenous character of these industries, their interminable need for subsidies in one form or another, the considerable dependence of many of them on imported factor inputs and their failure as a whole either to mitigate unemployment or provide a dynamic thrust to the economy made the search for a new strategy both inevitable and urgent.

It was this bankruptcy of the earlier strategies for development that led to the incessant demand for the establishment of a new international economic order in the early 1970s. Yet, broadly speaking, that demand was based on the basic proposition that a re-arrangement of the international economy in such a way as to remove constraints on international trade would facilitate the acceleration and diversification of economic growth in the world on an equitable and fair basis.

The main negotiation issues from the perspective of the Third World in this endeavour to restructure the international economic system are (i) commodity stabilization; (ii) discrete treatment of Third World debts; (iii) restructuring of international trade and removal of protectionist policies in industrialized countries; (iv) massive transfer of resources from the industrialized North to the underdeveloped South; (v) easy access to Western technology; (vi) redeployment of world industrial production capability in favour of Third World countries; and, (vii) the reform of the international monetary and financial system i.e. the World Bank and the IMF. It is worth noting that almost all of the above negotiation issues call on the rich countries to give away something thereby eroding their currently favoured position with its concomitant loss of economic, political and cultural hegemony.

In believing in this approach, Third World countries have by their attitude, behaviour and utterances given the strong impression that they believe that the establishment of a new order will be a great action of benevolent generosity by the rich nations and that the countries of the South must queue up, as so many supplicants, to 'beg' for its final emergence. They have not realized that the establishment of any meaningful world order - economic, social, political and cultural - is a concrete reflection of the strengths of domestic orders. They have also given the impression that they do not realize that the restructuring of power relationships, whether within nations or amongst them, is a process not an event. Its pace can be accelerated by the goodwill of the rich and its unfolding can become less traumatic, but its real trigger lies in the strength of the poor not in the benevolence of the rich. In fact, unless the poor are well prepared and organized, whatever is offered to them on a silver platter will remain mortgaged to the interests of the rich.^{1/}

¹ Adebayo Adedeji, Africa and the New International Economic Order: A Reassessment (National Bank of Egypt Cairo 1979), p. 24

It was because of the realization of the basic truth inherent in the statement which I have just made that led the ECA to advocate since 1975 that Africa must first and foremost put its house in order by installing a new national social and economic order in Africa as a whole. Without doing, Africa will not be able to participate on an equal and equitable basis in any new international economic order that may eventually emerge. Indeed, we firmly believe that unless we institute fastly, a new social and economic order in Africa, Africa will remain marginalized and peripheral in the restructured international economy. Hence, we came out, in 1976, with a basic document entitled the Revised Framework of Principles for the Implementation of the New International Economic Order in Africa, 1976-1981-1986.^{1/} As this was the foundation of the Monrovia Strategy and the Lagos Plan of Action, I shall deal with it in extenso.

¹ ECA Document No. E/CN.14/ECO/90/Rev.3.

III. ECA'S REVISED FRAMEWORK OF PRINCIPLES FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC ORDER

The importance of ECA's Revised Framework is that it provided the main intellectual and theoretical foundation for the preparation of the Monrovia Strategy and the Lagos Plan of Action, including the Final Act of Lagos. Its immediate impact arose from the challenge it posed to conventional wisdom in the field of development economics as it applies to the African realities with special reference to Africa's development strategy and its systematic exposé of the inappropriateness of that strategy for bringing about the economic transformation of the continent. And its lasting contribution lay in its clear and precise definition of the meaning and scope of self-reliance for Africa. Finally, the Revised Framework identified the instruments and means for bringing about the fundamental change in strategy that is advocated in it.

After noting the dominance of the interests of former metropolitan countries as one of the major determinants of Africa's continued economic backwardness, the Revised Framework draws two conclusions from Africa's experience at socio-economic development since independence. The first was that the available pool of knowledge and experience of how economies grow and how socio-economic changes can be managed was limited. The second was that even after independence, policy making in Africa took the form, in most cases "of successive responses to diagnoses of social and economic ills originating outside the region. Both the diagnoses and the prescriptions were greatly influenced not only by a firm belief in the efficacy of international trade and associated economic relations as an engine of desirable economic growth and social change but also by strong adherence to a particular interpretation of the genesis of international trade".^{1/}

¹ Revised Framework, pp.6-7.

The validity of the hypothesis of international trade as an engine of growth was finally put in doubt. So also was the conventional linear thinking by which economic growth is regarded as a semi-mystical process, the outcome of which is measured by **increases** or decreases in the GDP or GNP and which is the result of a semi-mystical input called investment which consists mainly of resources received by means of foreign exchange. In such a conventional approach, the role of indigenous factor inputs is hardly examined or, if examined at all, is not given a central role in the development process. Because of lack of national or multinational programmes for the production of such indigenous factor inputs, we have had to rely heavily on foreign exchange as a means of commanding these factor inputs. Hence the vital importance of our monoprodukt exports, and the net flow of foreign private investment and our willingness to "beg" for foreign gifts and loans to supplement these two.

Of course, our greatest weakness, as a people, is not simply the perpetuation of colonial economic policies and strategies nor the lack of coherent constructive policies, strategies, programmes and institutional arrangements for accelerating economic growth and structural change nor is it only the excessive external dependence of our economies. It is, fundamentally, the lack of any visualization by our political, social, and community leaders and by our captains of industry as to what they would like to see our countries become individually and as a group, in say twenty to twenty-five years from now. It is this image of one's self in the future that is a condition of policy-making and strategy design in every developed and semi-developed country. Without it, no reliable path towards the future can be followed either by individuals, communities, countries or groups of countries. And it becomes easy to go astray or to be led astray.

Accordingly, in order to put a stop to our going or being led astray we tried in the Revised Framework to articulate our perception as to the kind of Africa which we would like to have in future years and the development strategy that has to be adopted in achieving that objective. We put forward three major social and economic objectives. These were:

- (i) the deliberate promotion of an increasing measure of self-reliance;
- (ii) the acceleration of internally-located and relatively-autonomous processes of growth and diversification; and,
- (iii) the progressive eradication of unemployment and mass poverty and a fair and just distribution of income and the benefits of economic development among the people.

Our basic proposition in ECA is that an increasing measure of self-reliant and self-sustaining development and economic growth is a most important accompaniment of political independence since it would lead to the economic decolonization of Africa.

Self-reliance is defined by us in terms of:

- the internalization of the forces of demand which determine the direction of development and economic growth processes and patterns of output;
- increasing substitution of factor inputs derived from within the system for those derived from outside; and,
- increasing participation of the mass of the people in the production and consumption of the social product.

Increasing self-sustainment is taken to mean the deliberate installation of patterns and processes of development and economic growth in which different components mutually support and reinforce each other so that when related to the internalization of the forces determining demand and supply, the whole system develops its own internal dynamics.

A development strategy based on these four main pillars - self-reliance,

self-sustainment, the democratization of the development process and the fair and just distribution of the fruit of development - calls for a complete departure from the past. It is inward-looking rather than externally-oriented. It does not make a sacred cow of foreign exchange earnings and therefore does not attach much importance to foreign trade, particularly the type of foreign trade with which we are familiar in Africa, as the basis for initiating development. It puts domestic market, including sub-regional and regional markets, rather than external foreign market at the heart of the development effort. And when it emphasizes indigenous factor inputs, it means African scientists and technologists, African entrepreneurs, indigenous market analysts and distributors and indigenous technology. In the new development strategy, external trade is seen as being mainly supplementary in character and not constituting the heart of our development effort.

It will also be seen that even as far back as 1976, when the Revised Framework was issued, ECA has been deliberately trying to evolve a development strategy that does not suffer from the limitations of foreign ideologies which we in Africa are wont to imitate. In other words, we had embarked on evolving a development strategy and ideology which will be genuinely African and not imitative. For a close examination of the variety of socialist and market economies patterns of development and life styles shows clearly and unmistakably that notwithstanding the problems of justice and equity, and of providing the material as well as the non-material needs of a society and its people, there are no models of socio-economic development which do in reality have universal validity and applicability. Each society has to develop its own pattern of development and life style which, while borrowing from other societies, is neither imitative nor does it alienate its people from their cultural

heritage. Let me venture to say that none of the already extant models which have been pressed so hard upon us by outsiders and by many of our foreign-trained intellectuals for so long will enable us to achieve the kind of development that Africa needs or indeed deserves.

That is why in the statement which I subsequently made at the OAU/ECA colloquium in Monrovia, three years later in January 1979 I expatiated on the question of the kind of development that Africa needs more clearly and succinctly as follows:

"My answer to the question: what kind of development does Africa need? is that we need to set in motion a development process that puts the individual at the very centre of the development effort; a development process that is both human and humane without necessarily softening the discipline that goes with development but which enhances man's personality; a development process that does not alienate man from his society and culture but rather develops his self-confidence in himself and identifies his interest with those of his society and thereby develops his ability and willingness for self-reliance."^{1/}

In other words, in designing an authentically African pattern of development and life style we have, since the Revised Framework, been trying to ensure that it is within the framework of the following six basic conceptual and strategic pillars: national self-reliance and self-sustaining development; democratization of the development process; de-alienation; the creation of favourable political and social environment; the recovery of self-confidence by the peoples of Africa in themselves;

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Adebayo Adedeji "Development and Economic Growth in Africa to the Year 2000: Alternative Projections and Policies" in Alternative Futures for Africa by Timothy H. Shaw (ed) (West view Press 1982); p.209

and, the willingness to achieve an increasing measure of collective regional self-reliance through effective and meaningful co-operation among African States.

It will, of course, be obvious that if the development strategy we are advocating is to have any operational meaning, governments will be required to play a large and central part. They will act as planners; as entrepreneurs running State enterprises; as developers; as promoters of social and technological innovations and, as allocators of national resources through fiscal and monetary policies, incentives and disincentives. But as we concluded in the Revised Framework, these functions would require from our governments "genuine self-appraisal preparatory to altering philosophies, structures and procedures". ^{1/} I shall comment later on this in view of the current arguments about the necessity to privatize our economy because of the failures of governments in the efficient and effective performance of these functions.

^{1/} Revised Framework, *ibid*, p.54.

IV. THE MONROVIA STRATEGY AND THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION

The Revised Framework was not only approved by the Executive Committee of ECA in 1976 but it was also endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU in June 1977. Although my colleagues and I at the ECA Secretariat regarded this development as marking the beginning of a breakthrough, we recognized that a lot still remained to be done. Accordingly, between 1976 and 1979, the ideas contained in the Revised Framework were expanded and improved upon through a series of internal ECA Secretariat brainstorming exercises and a series of specialised meetings such as the Joint OAU/ECA Colloquium on Perspectives of Development and Economic Growth in Africa up to the Year 2000 held in Monrovia in February 1979 and the joint ECA/UNEP Seminar on Alternative Patterns of Development and Life Styles for the African Region held in Addis Ababa in March 1979.

The continuing and relentless search of ECA for a genuinely African approach to development was given a great deal of spur by the need to prepare the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (IDS). Having not participated effectively in the preparation of the strategies for the earlier Decades, we were determined to ensure that our voice would not only be heard this time but also that we would play a crucial role in determining the contents and scope of the IDS.

Accordingly, at the ECA Conference of Ministers of Development and Planning and 14th session of the Commission held in Rabat, Morocco, in March 1979, the Development Strategy for Africa during the Third United Nations Development Decade was prepared. In addition, the Ministers, having decided that the Strategy should be submitted to our Heads of State and Government at their meeting in Monrovia which was to take place some four months later (July 1979) as well as to the United Nations, also decided to prepare for submission to them a draft Declaration of Commitment of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity on Guidelines and Measures for National

and Collective Self-Reliance in Social and Economic Development for the establishment of a New International Economic Order (ECA Resolution 332(XIV)). Upon the adoption of both the Strategy and the Declaration of Commitment by the Heads of State at their meeting in Monrovia they were christened the Monrovia Strategy and the Monrovia Declaration of Commitment. It was also at that Monrovia meeting that the Heads of State decided to hold an Economic Summit in Lagos in April 1980.

Again, the ECA Conference of Ministers at the Addis Ababa meeting early in April 1980 prepared, for the consideration and endorsement of the Heads of State and Government, the Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa^{1/} After its adoption by the Lagos Economic Summit it was christened the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa 1980-2000.

Both the Strategy and the Plan, carried the analysis and argument of the Revised Framework further by emphasizing:

- (i) the importance of the domestic, subregional and regional markets for the supply of factor inputs (raw materials, machinery, technology, and manpower skills for entrepreneurial activities, project identification, analysis and implementation, management, marketing, and support services, whether advisory, banking, insurance, transport and communications, etc.) and the demand for final consumer goods and services;
- (ii) the imperative need for knowledge of the natural resources base, not only for determining product lines but also for planning the internal development of the skills required for the identification, exploration, evaluation and development of such resources and for organizing and managing production and distribution;

^{1/} Document No. E/CN.14/781/Add.1.

- (iii) planning in terms of multiple objectives (both from the supply and demand sides) and in real terms, as opposed to planning approaches based on the assumption of a single main objective (e.g. economic growth);
- (iv) the intra and intersectoral linkages, intra and intergroup and spatial considerations that such an approach to planning demands. Thus, the industrial sector is designed to make possible the supply of the bulk of the industrial inputs required for agricultural production, processing, storage and transportation (agricultural chemicals, equipment, including implements and tools, etc.), as well as building materials, metal and engineering products and chemicals for the transport and communications, mining, energy and other sectors which make use of capital goods. The food and agriculture programme (which includes forest products and fibres) provides not only inputs to the processing industries but also markets for industrial products of the kind just listed. The importance of intra- and intersectoral linkages is also stressed for other sectors, such as transport and communications, energy, science and technology, and human resources development; and,
- (v) Finally, both the Strategy and the Plan emphasize the imperative need to involve, at all stages of the formulation and implementation of development plans, all the principal decision-making agents and instruments in the economy; State enterprises and public utilities; development corporations and development banks; indigenous and foreign private enterprises; R & D establishments; universities and polytechnics; farmers' organizations; community leadership groups; river and lake basin and similar authorities dealing with the development of agricultural or geological regions; business support institutions; associations of engineers, scientists and technologists; and subregional development organs such as ECOWAS, UDEAC and the ECA/MULPOCs, which may be entrusted with organizing and encouraging the participation of some of the agents and instruments referred to earlier.

The basic assumptions underlying the Strategy and the Plan can thus be summarized as follows:

- (i) that economic growth means increase in the physical output of goods and services for the benefit of the mass of African populations;

- (ii) that these increases must come from the exploitation, primarily, of raw materials drawn from the natural resources base of African countries, supplemented by trade in complementary raw materials;
- (iii) that the process of converting raw materials into semi-finished and finished products requires an expanding indigenous supply of relevant factor inputs;
- (iv) that a restructuring of national domestic markets is necessary, as well as a combination of national markets in order to achieve economies of scale; and,
- (v) that the key factor is the development of indigenous entrepreneurial capabilities (public and private), underpinned by appropriate support services.

The adoption of the Strategy in 1979 and of the Plan in 1980 indeed proved, even to the most incorrigible of cynics, that the welcome and support which the Revised Framework received in 1976 was not an aberration but the beginning of a process. It showed that our governments, having become increasingly aware, if not alarmed, at the growing gap between promises and performance and having come to recognize that to continue with the historical colonial trends was not only futile but was also fraught with the dangers of continued mass poverty and the consequent risk of political and social instability, were willing to try a new development approach.

It is also fair to add that our leaders, in adopting the Strategy and the Plan, were not unaware of at least three crucial factors - time, sacrifice and assistance from abroad. In all development efforts that require problems to be identified, analysed and decisions taken as to how to solve them, time is very important. African countries are, therefore, not so naive as to think that the goals and objectives which they have set themselves will be achieved overnight. Indeed, they are aware that the process will be a lengthy one. Similarly, they are aware of the basic truth that there is no such thing as

instant development and economic growth. Hence, there is no way of avoiding either sacrifice or the real costs of development and economic growth. Finally, they are also aware of the need for assistance from abroad. However, such assistance must be supportive of our new approach to development. I shall come back to this point shortly.

Indeed, our Heads of State and Government made this abundantly clear in their Declaration of Commitment when they solemnly declared as follows:

- "1. That we commit ourselves individually and collectively on behalf of our Governments and peoples to promoting the social and economic development and integration of our societies with a view to achieving an increasing measures of self-reliance and self-sustainment;
- "2. That we commit ourselves individually and collectively on behalf of our Governments and peoples to promote the physical integration of the African region in order to facilitate social and economic intercourse;
- "3. That we commit ourselves, individually and collectively, on behalf of our Governments and peoples to establish national, subregional and regional institutions which will facilitate the attainment of the objectives of self-reliance and self-sustainment;
- "4. That, most specifically, we commit ourselves, individually and collectively, on behalf of our Governments and peoples to:
 - (a) Self-sufficiency in food production and supply;
 - (b) The complete implementation of the programme for the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa;
 - (c) Subregional and regional internally located industrial development;
 - (d) Co-operation in the field of natural resources exploration, extraction and use for the development of our economies and for the benefit of our peoples and the setting up of appropriate institutions to achieve these purposes;

(e) The development of indigenous entrepreneurial, technical manpower and technological capacities to enable our peoples to assume greater responsibility for the implementation of our individual and collective development goals; and,

(f) Co-operation in the preservation, protection and improvement of the natural environment.

"We hold firmly to the view that these commitments will lead to the creation at the national, subregional and regional levels of a dynamic interdependent African economy and will thereby pave the way for the eventual establishment of an African Common Market leading to an African Economic Community."

V. THE FUTURE OF AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT

Let me hasten to add that in spite of this Declaration and in spite of the adoption of the Strategy and the Plan, Africa's economic situation has continued to deteriorate since their adoption. Indeed, I have since my 1980 end-of-year assessment of Africa's economic performance during that year and of the prospects for the coming year (1981) been talking about Africa's six devastating and debilitating crises. These are (i) chronic food deficits; (ii) pernicious droughts which are spreading throughout Africa; (iii) high costs of imported energy; (iv) deteriorating terms of trade with the consequential chronic balance of payments deficits; (v) mounting external debts; and, (vi) poor economic management. The worsening economic conditions in Africa have remained unabated.

The question then is, why has there been no dramatic or at least some significant change for the better since the adoption of the Strategy and the Plan? The answer to this question lies partly in what I said a while ago - time. There is no such thing as instant development. A development strategy that runs counter to conventional wisdom and challenges orthodoxy and a Plan that calls for fundamental structural changes are not unlikely to experience a slow start in their orientation. A complete and sudden revamping and re-orientation of government policies and programmes is something that is difficult to happen particularly if such a government is faced - as indeed all African governments are so faced - with a menacing economic crisis which daily challenges the very survival of their economies.

But in spite of the lack of dramatic turn-around, the Strategy and the Plan provide the long-term basis for Africa's socio-economic survival and development. In saying this, let me recall what I said earlier about the search for the establishment of a new international economic order. As we all know, the negotiating process on the new international economic order is yet to begin in spite of the tremendous

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effort of the General Assembly of the United Nations; in spite of the persistent pressure being extended by Third World countries; and, in spite of the strong advocacy of the Brandt Commission in its report entitled North-South: A Programme for Survival. Indeed, the North-South Summit held at Cancun, Mexico, in the fall of 1981 was a disappointment for all. It fell short of even minimal expectations. It produced no new guidelines nor any clear impetus for future negotiations. It did not even come close to launching the idea of a world economic recovery programme. This failure to launch the negotiating process for restructuring the international economic system in the face of rapidly deteriorating international economic situation has led the Brandt Commission to issue last month, another report entitled Common Crisis in which it proposes emergency measures for immediate and urgent international action.

Indeed, no breakthrough has been achieved for even initiating the negotiating process for bringing about North-South agreements on any or all of these issues and for taking concrete steps toward's improving constructive North-South cooperation because the North has continued to stall and has failed to substitute "imagination for tradition; generosity for shrewdness; understanding for bargaining; toughness for caution; and wisdom for prejudice." ^{1/}

This is why we strongly believe that there is no alternative to a vigorous pursuit of the implementation of the Strategy and the Plan. In this connection, we have recently conducted another study on the prospects of Africa to the year 2002. This study which is entitled

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^{1/} The Brandt Commission, Common Crisis North-South: Cooperation for World Recovery (Pan Books); p.3

ECA and Africa's Development, 1983-2008 is one of the major contributions of the Secretariat of the Commission to its Silver Jubilee Anniversary Celebrations. I have no doubt that you are all aware that 1983 is the Silver Jubilee Year of ECA.

In exploring the possibilities for the future, this preliminary perspective study has concentrated on two scenarios - one is an analysis of Africa by the year 2008 under the assumption of the continuation of the historical trends: that is, under the assumption of the continuation of the present socio-economic trends and patterns and policies while the second is an assessment of the nature and content of a development scenario by the year 2008 based on the goals and objectives of the Strategy and the Plan.

The time horizon of 1983-2008 has been chosen because of the need to have a period long enough to highlight the importance and implications of structural changes in production patterns and the lifestyles of our people and partly because of the legitimate desire to analyse the kind of Africa that may exist by the year 2008 when ECA will be celebrating its Golden Jubilee.

Although we are all familiar with the current economic plight of our people, the future that emerges from the historical trends scenario is horrid. If it ever comes to pass - which may the Almighty forbid - the 1960s and the 1970s may by the 1990s and during the first decade of the 2000s appear in retrospect to have been almost a golden age! To imagine that the African region will be externally dependent in all critical areas by 2008 than it was in 1980 is more than a cause for consternation. Yet according to the historical trends scenario the continent would require more food imports and more food aid; over 90 per cent of all the capital goods required for development would still have to be imported even almost half a century after independence; fewer people relative to the population would be able to have access to

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education, health care and pipeborne water: cities would become even more overpopulated shanty towns as housing would become less available; and, social services would deteriorate both in terms of quantity and quality.

The political consequences of such a scenario are too grave to contemplate. Riots, crimes and misery would be the order of the day by the year 2008, if present trends were to continue. And with the weak and fragile socio-political systems, the sovereignty of African states or whatever may still remain of it, will then be seriously at stake. Indeed, as I said earlier on in this lecture, Africa marching toward the future hand in hand with the past and the present has no dignified future at all.

However, Africa can invent or will a dignified future for itself - a future that will give rising prospects of prosperity, of economic self-determination, and of national and collective self-reliance and self-sustainment. This is the normative development scenario predicated on the proposition that the path - the narrow and difficult path - to that future lies in the determined and vigorous pursuit of the goals of economic decolonization through the implementation of the objectives of the Strategy and the programmes and projects of the Plan.

No doubt, there are heights that the African economy will not have been able to reach by 2008 even after a relentless pursuit of the goals of economic decolonization. Given the limits to any expansion at so short a span as 25 years which this willed future based on the Strategy and the Plan can achieve, we must not pretend that the year 2008 will be an El Dorado. But it will certainly be a much better qualitative and material life than is promised by the historical trends scenario based on the continuation of the colonial and neo-colonial economic policy. For us, Africans, there is, therefore, no, repeat no, alternative to the total economic decolonization of our respective economies

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and of the economy of Africa as a whole. And the Monrovia Strategy and the Lagos Plan of Action together with the Final Act of Lagos provide a sound basis for this. They provide a basis for making a planned but nevertheless complete break with our undignified past. But above all, they provide also an opportunity for willing for ourselves a dignified future.

VI. CONCLUSION

Before bringing this lecture to an end, I wish to make two or three closing remarks. Even after we should have changed course in favour of the normative scenario as required by the Strategy and the Plan, there are certain conditions which are essential for success and for the full realization of our objectives. The most important among these is sound and efficient economic management.

In the 'willed' future on which our normative scenario is based, the role of Government is crucial to any success - as planners, as entrepreneurs, as promoters of social and technological innovations and as allocators of scarce national resources. Yet evidence abounds of poor economic management or, to put it differently, of a high degree of economic mismanagement in many an African country. Colossal wastages of public funds in the midst of severe shortages constitute one of the many paradoxes that are currently the plight of Africa. More often than not, such wastages are due not only to ignorance and inefficiency but also to greed and avarice by those who have been put in position of authority and responsibility and who have sworn to protect the interests of the people.

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But the wastage of public funds is only one of the problems connected with the efficient mobilization and utilization of resources in general. We are all aware of the problem of leakages of foreign exchange resources through over- and under-invoicing by indigenous and foreign enterprises, through the collusion between our public officers and our foreign suppliers and through smuggling. There is also the problem of the non-maintenance of our existing capital assets which constitute a most regrettable yet avoidable source of resource wastage. One only has to go round Africa, as I do frequently by the nature of my current responsibility, to see how fast public assets are deteriorating due to benign neglect. Furthermore, the way we exploit our natural resources, including land utilization to which I referred earlier, also constitutes a serious wastage of resources and the consequent environmental degradation should surprise no one. Finally, there is the enormous wastage of human resources, both through the non-use or non-efficient use of available manpower and through brain drain. Our failure to create the environment which is conducive to R and D activities is resulting in growing emigration of scientists, medical doctors, and scholars out of Africa to developed countries.

Indeed, the poor management of our economies, has put a question mark on the ability of the public sector to play the kind of dynamic role in the development process called for by the Strategy and the Plan. This has led some well-meaning people as well as some highly reputed institutions to put too strongly the case for the privatization of the African economy. However, the question is not one of private enterprise versus public sector. It is a question of efficient mobilization and utilization of scarce resources.

Let me say quite clearly, here and now, that I believe in a strong private sector. Let me add however that I also believe in a dynamic public sector playing a pervasive role in socio-economic engineering. What is required is for each society always to strive to

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achieve a judicious balance, an optimality, in the allocation of roles and responsibility to both sectors and then for each to play its part efficiently with honesty, integrity and dedication.

Finally, I did say earlier that both the Strategy and the Plan by putting all emphasis on self-reliance and self sustainment do not exclude the need for international assistance. But as I said on 26 October 1982 in Washington D.C. in a statement which I delivered at the formal opening of the Annual Policy Meeting of the Cooperation for Development in Africa Conference, ^{1/} while we need massive transfer of resources from developed countries to Africa, we need, no less importantly, their understanding, their appreciation and, above all, their acceptance of our perception of the kind of development that we need in Africa, of the direction we wish to pursue, and of our goals, strategies and priorities. If Africa is to develop the necessary self-confidence to pull its economy out of the shadows of backwardness and underdevelopment, it is essential that our partners-in-development respect our priorities, perceptions, goals and strategies. It also means that the provision of financial and technical assistance from such partners must reflect those African priorities and goals. It is only by so doing that the ghost of the suspicion that the African economy is being manipulated by outside powers with a view to frustrating the achievements of national and regional economic objectives can be laid to rest. ^{2/}

^{1/} The CDA member States are the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy and Belgium.

^{2/} Address by Dr. Adebayo Adedeji, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Africa at the formal opening of the Annual Policy Meeting of the Co-operation for Development in Africa Conference, Washington D.C. on Tuesday, 26 October 1982; pp. 18-19

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