
By Ayodele Aderinwale

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1 Executive Director, Africa Leadership Forum aderinwale@africaleadership.org
INTRODUCTION

To contemplate the crisis of economic development in developing countries of the world, it is essential to locate its roots in colonial exploitation and the allegiance, which it nurtured between imperialism and the indigenous bourgeoisies. It is the contradictions within that alliance and between it and the exploited peoples of these territories that continue to deepen the crisis of economic development.

In Africa, the heirs of the colonial state, having committed itself to a vision of replacing colonial relationships of exploitation with another to be supervised and dominated by its members, proceeded to use their massive political power to facilitate economic and material base using necessarily, legal, illegal, orthodox and unorthodox means of accumulation. This process to a large extent violated the rights to development of people in Africa.

Accountability means different things to different people, but the central message is knowing, accepting and doing your assignment with a sense of probity and honesty. Accountability is a prerequisite for good governance and economic development. It instills a sense of responsibility in the officers, as they know that they can be called upon anytime to give an account of their stewardship, where this is not available, the people are held hostage. Accountability takes the following procedures:

Appropriate self-disclosure:

This makes it mandatory for every officer to subject himself/herself to reporting his activities to his employer or constituency if it involves holding a political position.

Scrutiny:

This is essential in economic governance that will lead to development. It means that there could be an impromptu auditing. The investigator can institute an unplanned check. And it is closely linked to freedom of information, which upholds the principle of maximum disclosure.

Lack of accountability in governance leads to corruption, which is not a prerequisite to good governance. Interest organs of government would not feel comfortable to uphold principles of human rights due to shady deals they are involved in. Thus, redress of abuse of fundamental rights cannot be guaranteed where there is corruption. Corruption is the perversion of or the attempt to pervert the legal or right procedure within an entity. It also includes the creation or use of bottlenecks within an entity for the purpose of private or personal gain.

Closely related to accountability is transparency. When a steward is able to provide timely, accurate update to a schedule prescribed by his principals at the same time as being deeply tolerant of scrutiny from his principle, the steward can be said to be transparent.
RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

The linkage between development and human rights is unambiguously reflected in the U.N. General Assembly Resolution 37/1999 of December, 1982, in which the Assembly declared that the right to development is "an inalienable human right" and emphasized that the United Nations should give attention not only to the human rights aspects of development but also the development aspects of human rights (Akinbode, 2000). The right to development is the result of a conceptual evolution within the United Nations, shaped first by the experience of de-colonization and later by the recognition that developing countries need sustained assistance in order to create the conditions necessary for the universal enjoyment of rights.

In 1997, Secretary-General, Kofi Annan stressed the crucial importance of the right to development for the international community, "Truly sustainable development is possible only when the political, economic, and social rights of all people are fully respected. They help to create the social equilibrium, which is vital if a society is to evolve, per se. The right to development is the measure of respect of all other human rights. That should be our aim: a situation in which all individuals are enabled to maximize their potential, and to contribute to the evolution of society as a whole".

The right to development has the potential to provide the integration of human rights that the international community has been striving to achieve for over five decades. This right not only encompasses all civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, but it also promotes the recognition of interdependent and indivisible ties between various human rights, permitting the individuals full participation and involvement in economically durable, politically free and socially just development. There are long-term goals that have yet to be realized and will require the commitment and efforts of all development actors - from local and regional NGOs and nations/government/international organizations and global financial institutions.

According to Mary Robinson, President of Ireland from 1990 to 1997 and current United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "The right to development has been recognized as a fundamental human right that synthesizes all others. In other words, the right to development encompasses all human rights but cannot be identified just as the sum total of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. It enables the integration of the body of rights from the perspective of the individual's participation in sustainable development. It is important to understand that human rights empower the individual and the communities, and therefore are central to development. The realization of the right to development as all encompassing demands the promotion of all human rights and requires a rights-based approach to all on activities. The right to development has the potential to become the integral approach to human rights that the international community has been seeking for over five decades".

The issue of poverty eradication should henceforth be located firmly within the courts of human rights. A government and a society that creates room for reproduction and spread
of poverty are violating the rights of the people to development. We should, in fact, begin to talk of poverty abolition rather than poverty eradication. There is nothing that impacts and impinges on people's rights more than poverty, which to me should form the crust of every discourse on development.

CHALLENGES FOR AFRICA INITIATIVES (NEPAD/CSSDCA)

If the eighties were the lost decade for Africa, the nineties seemed to mark the dismantling of power oligarchies and titans who presided on humankind's most appalling era of distress and despair. As we entered the decade, ordinary citizens witnessed a unique era emerging in human history testifying to the systematic disintegration of totalitarianism and with them the miraculous reprieve of humanity that tend to relegate earlier "great' events in history to the backstage. These high hopes were soon replaced by the fear that we had yet to deliver the vision of a new era we had held self-evident - the nineties marked the bloodiest era in the history of the continent.

Enter, the next century... this century, and we are at it again, seemingly, Africa looks like it is on the rise again!! For once a broad spectrum of accord has been created, Africa's leaders have endorsed the New Partnership for Africa's Development, NEPAD, the project, nay! The New Partnership for Africa's Development lays out a commitment by all African states to pursue development through common initiatives. NEPAD establishes, through several initiatives joint responsibility among African leaders in a variety of areas, including the strengthening of mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution, and the promotion of democracy and human rights.

Prior to this time, African leaders, in 2000 had adopted the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) as a policy coordination framework for Africa. Its standing conference component as well as its capability to monitor and evaluate Africa development progress as made a veritable marriage partner for NEPAD.

As part of the Democracy and Political Governance Initiatives, NEPAD, sets out the commitment of African states to "respect the global standards of democracy, which core components include... open, free and democratic elections periodically organized to enable the populace (to) choose their leaders freely". The Heads of States Forum is tasked to serve as a mechanism to monitor and assess the progress made by African states in meeting their commitment to achieving good governance.

The first step is to raise and maintain the commitment of political processes that sustain equitable and effective governance. This requires bringing about democratic rule and respect for human rights, underwritten by the necessary constitutional legislative and institutional arrangement.

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2 Constantinos Berhe, Africa Forum, Vol. 3 nos 2&3 Agency and ideological constructs in post-transition conflicts and human security
At a time when conditions are steadily improving for many people around the world, the socio-economic plight of Africa remains a matter of great concern. The situation has reached a critical stage. Of the 47 least developed countries in the world, 33 are in Africa. Today, over 220 million Africans live in conditions of absolute poverty, and Africa is the only region in the world where poverty is expected to increase.

The surge towards political liberalization which is spreading across the continent and the emergence of an increasingly strengthened civil society are enhancing the chances for further entrenchment of democratization, pluralism and more accountability and transparent political systems. There is also movement to incorporate women more fully in positions of economic and political prominence. Advancement of women and achievement of equality are matters of human rights and a condition for social justice.

**CSSDCA, NEPAD AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA**

But what does NEPAD and CSSDCA portend for the human rights in Africa?

Meaningful economic activity is impossible under conditions of armed conflict. It is also inhibited by the existence of states either captured by narrow private interests, or lacking in capacity to deliver on their development mandates. While commitments to peace and security, democracy, human and sound economic governance must be seen as preconditions for a programme of Africa's renewal, there will continue to be the need for constant vigilance, consolidation and the strengthening of capacity.

In those regions and countries marred by armed conflict, the overwhelming priorities are to achieve peace, to disarm and demobilize combatants and to resettle refugees. Africa's capacity to prevent, mediate and resolve conflicts on the continent must be strengthened, including the capacity to deploy African peacekeeping forces when necessary. At the same time, it is recognized that sustainable peace entails creating appropriate conditions for economic development.

If peace and security is to precede sustainable growth and development, it is of utmost urgency that the capacity of the state to fulfill its responsibilities be strengthened. These responsibilities include poverty eradication and development, ensuring democracy, popular participation, human rights and the respect for the rule of law, creating a conducive environment for private sector mobilization, and responding appropriately to the process of globalisation.

Only if the state is equipped with the capacity to deliver, can it provide an unambiguous and tangible indication that good governance offers a better alternative to the ways of the past. Partnership with developed countries and the, multilateral institutions to bring about sustainable economic recovery and improvements in the standards of living are critical in this regard.

In recognition of the linkage between democracy and development, African governments have themselves made great strides in establishing democratic pluralism. Many African
countries have now created more participatory political institutions, in the form of
democratic electoral processes, and growing and diverse civil societies. These elements
constitute essential ingredients in promoting transparent and accountable governance.

This process has also signaled an unambiguous turn from authoritarian political
structures, with the Organization of the African unity OAU affirming its support for the
process by its isolation of dictatorial regimes.

In proposing the partnership, Africa recognizes that it holds the key to its development.
We affirm that both CSSDCA and NEPAD offers an historical opportunity for the
developed countries of the world to enter into a genuine partnership with Africa based on
mutual interest, shared commitment and binding agreement implemented within a regime
periodic evaluation and assessment.

The adoption of a development strategy as set out in the broad approach outline above,
together with a detailed programme of action, will mark the beginning of a new phase in
the partnership and cooperation between Africa and the developed world.

In fulfilling its promise this agenda must give hope to the emaciated African child that
indeed the 21st century is the century of Africa’s renewal.

Human rights must be central to the new partnership for Africa’s development NEPAD,
just as it is within the stability calabash of the Conference on Security, Stability,
Development and Cooperation in Africa CSSDCA, “The expansion of democratic
frontiers and the deepening of the culture of human rights are to be a foundational
element of the NEPAD which should be nonnegotiable.

However, a commitment to a “culture of human rights” must not stand-alone.
Governments must acknowledge the interdependence of all human rights; economic and
social, civil and political, and ensure that the provisions on human rights progress will be
monitored as clearly stated in the solemn declaration of the CSSDCA.

While Africa leaders have committed themselves to take joint responsibility in
“promoting and protecting democracy and human rights in their respective countries and
regions, by developing clear standards of accountability, transparency and participatory
governance at the national and sub-regional levels” Civil Society Organizations must
continue to renew and champion the caused of these commitments.

Recognizing the commitment contained in the NEPAD to promote peace, security and
conflict resolution and to combat the proliferation of small arms, light weapons and
landmines, that African leaders have special responsibility to actively contribute to the
solution of African conflicts. Ensuring the protection of human rights must always be the
central focus of the new initiatives. When the rights of the people are fully protected, the
expression of economic development becomes less difficult. It is feasible to meet these
challenges within the new initiatives. We have started; we have every reason to continue.