

# 1. INTRODUCTION

***“ Unless something new and radical is done, Africa will not achieve the International Development Goals (IDGs) and the 7% annual Growth Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate”<sup>1</sup>***

The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) is not only the newest and most fashionable game on the African continent, but also the latest in the efforts by African political leaders to deal collectively with the countless national, regional and continental political, socioeconomic problems and development challenges facing the continent. As much as a growing number of African political leaders enter the arena to declare their commitment to the agenda of Africa’s economic upliftment in the new millennium, there is very little civil society understanding of and support for a continental project such as NEPAD. The absence of meaningful and organic participation by civil society is the most vexatious of all the concerns that could mar the otherwise commendable vision of African sustainable development that NEPAD invokes. It is this absence of participation by civil society in the lives of their communities that has led to the failure of most commendable projects undertaken by African leaders since the early days of independence.

In the words of the NEPAD document, what is now known as NEPAD is a merger of the Millennium Partnership for Africa’s Recovery Programme (MAP) and the Omega Plan. This was finalised into a new document and framework called the New Africa Initiative, (NAI) on 3 July 2001 in Lusaka, Zambia. The NAI was then approved by OAU Summit Heads of State and Government on 11 July 2001 (Declaration 1 (XXXVII)). The policy framework known as NEPAD was finalised by the Heads of State Implementation Committee (HSIC) on 23 October 2001. The HSIC was to comprise of Nigerian President Obasanjo as Chairperson, Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade and Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika as Vice-Chairpersons and South African President Thabo Mbeki. The Committee of 15 tasked to drive the process forward had to have representation by a selection of 3 Heads of State from each of the 5 OAU regions, including the 5 initiating states, namely Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa. The regions were delineated as follows: Central Africa is represented by Cameroon, Gabon

and São Tomé and Príncipe, East Africa by Ethiopia, Mauritius and Rwanda, North Africa by Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia, Southern Africa by Botswana, Mozambique and South Africa, and West Africa by Mali, Nigeria and Senegal.

NEPAD is intended to be a holistic, comprehensive, integrated strategic framework for the socioeconomic development of the African continent, articulating the vision for Africa in the new millennium and serving as a statement of the problems facing the continent and a programme of action to resolve these problems in order to reach the stated vision. It is a plan conceived and developed by African leaders to address key social, economic and political priorities in a coherent, balanced and a forward-looking manner. It is a commitment that African leaders are making to the African people and to the international community in order to place Africa on a path of sustainable growth. It is a commitment African leaders are making to accelerate the integration of the African continent into the global economy. It is also a framework for a new partnership with the rest of the world - a call to the rest of the world to partner Africa in its own development on the basis of its own agenda and programme of action.

NEPAD is a pledge by African leaders, informed by the African experience of unfulfilled missions over the last decades of political independence. The motivation behind NEPAD is based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction that these leaders have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development in this millennium. The programme is anchored in the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalising world.

A great deal of the African reality that forms the background of the thinking behind NEPAD is the poverty and backwardness of Africa which stands in stark contrast to the prosperity of the developed world. The continued marginalisation of Africa from the globalisation process and the social exclusion of the vast majority of its peoples constitute a serious threat to global stability.

Africa's history is a history of the world, and indeed that of the development of the most industrialised economies that today boast of development, whereas

Africa continues to be underdeveloped. The historical relationship between Africa and the financial institutions of the developed world in general and that of granting credit to African countries in particular has underlined the logic of foreign aid to African countries for purposes of development. In other words, credit-giving to Africa has led to the debt deadlock that NEPAD is attempting to lessen on Africa by asking for debt forgiveness. From installments to debt rescheduling, a major hindrance still exists which truncates and short-changes the growth of African countries. As there are great efforts to create a new epistemology regarding foreign aid to Africa, it must be borne in mind that the reduction of private aid and the upper limit of public aid to Africa has lessened to the extent that it is now below the target that was optimistically set in the 1970s.

Thus, when the current crop of African leaders embarked upon the NEPAD journey of reinventing Africa, the reality that faced them and that informed fuelled their activism is the following:

*In Africa, 340 million people, or half the population, live on less than US \$1 per day. The mortality rate of children under 5 years of age is 140 per 1000, and life expectancy at birth is only 54 years. Only 58 per cent of the populations have access to safe water. The rate of illiteracy for people over 15 is 41 per cent. There are only 18 mainline telephones per 1000 people in Africa, compared with 146 for the world as a whole and 567 for high-income countries.*

Against this background, NEPAD is a programmatic call for the reversal of this abnormal situation by changing the relationship that underpins it.

Hence the resolve by Africa:

*Across the continent, Africans declare that we will no longer allow ourselves to be conditioned by circumstance. We will determine our own destiny and call on the rest of the world to complement our efforts. There are already signs of progress and hope. Democratic regimes that are committed to the protection of human rights, people-centred development and*

*market-oriented economies are on the increase. African peoples have begun to demonstrate their refusal to accept poor economic and political leadership. These developments are, however, uneven and inadequate and need to be further expedited.* <sup>2</sup>

## **2. BACKGROUND TO NEPAD**

NEPAD is a result of a number of initiatives undertaken by African leaders to spearhead a concerted effort by all Africa to punctuate and give meaning to what was started as an African Renaissance or African Recovery in the African Century. The idea of an African Renaissance was reintroduced in the new political language in Africa by the democratisation process in South Africa in 1994. In a South Africa free of settler apartheid, colonialism and white domination, most of Africa saw a window of opportunity to end the many conflicts on the continent, notably amongst them in Angola, the then Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), and other parts of the Great Lakes. The then South African Deputy President Thabo Mbeki popularised the vision of the African Renaissance. The response to this vision was reminiscent of the days of *Uhuru* and attendant cries for liberation.

Thabo Mbeki utilised South Africa's chairmanship of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to proclaim the vision of a renaissance in Africa during the course of the year 2000.

From 6 to 8 September 2000, the largest ever gathering of Heads of State and Government took place at the United Nations headquarters in New York. At the end of this extraordinary Summit, a *United Nations Millennium Declaration* was issued. The Declaration contained a statement of values, principles and objectives for the international agenda for the twenty-first century.

A deadline was set for a number of collective actions to be undertaken by the international community to place the planet earth onto a sustainable and more equitable path. The Declaration recognised that the trend of globalisation as

such was a positive force for all living in the world but that the costs of globalisation were not shared equitably, as the resources in countries in the rich north and those in the poor south were unequal. In particular, the Millennium Declaration called for global policies and measures that would correspond to the needs of developing countries and economies that were in perpetual state of transition.

In the same year, Mbeki as chair of NAM and SADC was joined by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo (who was at the time hosting the G77 Summit) and the Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika (who was the chair of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)). By virtue of the critical positions that these three African leaders occupied at the time, they were expected by Africa and the world to take the lead in spearheading a different agenda for Africa's engagement in the globalisation process.

It is important to note that the three leaders were tasked as far back as 1999 by the Extraordinary OAU Summit in Sirtre, Libya, to engage Africa's creditors on the total cancellation of Africa's external debt. In April 2000, the three Presidents were tasked by the South Summit in Havana, Cuba, to convey to the July 2000 G8 Summit attendees in Okinawa, Japan, the concerns of the South as expressed in Havana. Also, at the OAU Summit in Togo in July 2000, the three Presidents were mandated to prepare a comprehensive proposal on Africa's Recovery Programme and that would serve as a working document for the OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government scheduled to take place in Lusaka, Zambia, in July 2001. The three leaders came up with the Millennium African Recovery Programme (MAP), which was circulated in Africa in preparation for the OAU Summit. On 28 January 2001, Thabo Mbeki informed the World Economic Forum Meeting in Davos, Switzerland that MAP was a 'declaration of a firm commitment by African leaders to take ownership and responsibility for the sustainable economic development of the [African] Continent'.

In the same year, on 8 May 2001, Thabo Mbeki presented the MAP as the updated and final version of the joint efforts by the three Presidents to the Conference of Ministers of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in Algiers, Algeria.

While the three Presidents were continuing with MAP, the new President of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade developed a parallel programme, which he called *Omega Plan for Africa*. At the same meeting in Algiers, Wade presented his Omega Plan and at that time leaders felt it necessary to give space to both MAP and Omega, and thus recommended that both these Plans be presented to the OAU Summit in Lusaka in July. At the OAU Summit in Lusaka both these Plans were accepted as important efforts for the new direction Africa was to take in the new millennium. The two Plans were then merged into what was called the New Africa Initiative (NAI).

At the same summit, a Heads of State Implementation Committee (HSIC) was selected to fine-tune the details of the merger between MAP and Omega. The Implementation Committee, at a meeting in Abuja, Nigeria on 23 October 2001, modified NAI and renamed it *The New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD). The understanding was that NEPAD would then be endorsed by the launching summit of the African Union (AU) in July 2002.

It would appear that the spirit of NEPAD has overtaken the preparations on the launch of the AU:

The world is debating the merits and demerits of NEPAD rather than discussing the launch of the AU, which is the successor to the OAU. A great deal of the problems that NEPAD has to face is the fact that there is very little emphasis on the inevitable fact that NEPAD is essentially an instrument of the yet to be launched AU. In practical terms, however, NEPAD has taken its own course and it is not certain who will report to whom: NEPAD to the AU or the AU to NEPAD. The mandate at the Lusaka OAU Summit would suggest that what has become NEPAD is a comprehensive tool of the new AU to carry out its goals and objectives, as the HSIC is expected to report to the AU Summit annually, and the Secretary General and Secretary of the AU are *ex officio* members of the HSIC comprising of 15 members states (with three per African union region) and the five initiating states: South Africa, Nigeria, Algeria, Senegal, and Egypt.

In essence, NEPAD is intended to be a mechanism of the AU with which Africa is to combat the marginalisation of the African continent in the globalising international economy, and to take Africa off the periphery into

the center of international relations and economy in a manner that is determined by Africans for Africans.

Many people make the mistake of asserting that NEPAD is the first effort by African leaders to collectively state and undertake to place the destiny of the African continent and its peoples in their own hands.

Numerous efforts serve as antecedents to NEPAD, most notable amongst them the establishment of the Organization of African Unity in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in May 1963. One could even argue that the roots of NEPAD lie in the OAU, which roots in turn can be traced as far back the turn of the nineteenth century to the efforts of the descendants of former slaves who were not physically in Africa, but across the Atlantic Ocean, notably William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Sylvester Williams. Their movement and activities initiated what became the chant: *Africa for the Africans!*

Following on the impressive wave of political decolonisation, Africa leaders throughout the last four decades of self-rule have made attempts after attempts to pull Africa out of what many observers and commentators described as an economic crisis on the Continent. The political kingdom that Africa deserved did not lead to other areas of milk and honey. The long list of programmes and exercises that African leaders in post-colonial Africa embarked upon have, however, not produced the results that would have served Africa and the African people well. Africa is still in an economic and governance crisis.

The blame for this failure is to be shared by many, including African leaders and their sponsors. There are three main factors that contributed to this failure, namely:

(a) The prevalence of the Cold War which caused the bipolar international community to be divided between two contending ideological politico-economic systems, capitalism championed by the United States of America on the one hand, and Communism or Marxism-Leninism championed by the Soviet Union on the other;

(b) The dependency that African states had on their former colonial governments (with their international financial regimes) as centers or points

of reference, creating further schisms within Africa in accordance with the affinity African leaders had with Europe, and in the case of Liberia, the United States;

(c) The lack of real leadership in Africa to steer the continent into a brighter future as the independence leaders invariably were preoccupied with their own positions of power, tenure and material well-being, more often than not at the expense of their African citizenry. Almost all African leaders, be they civilian or military, ran Africa into the ground as they believed that their names were synonymous with the names of the countries they liberated. They became Perfect Men and tin-box dictators, the consequence of which was a pillaging of African resources, human and material by the developed world. In the end, political independence meant what it was meant to be only to a small handful of people and those blindly loyal to them. The ideals of the rule of law, good corporate governance and human dignity were left hanging on the scaffolding, with overt and covert assistance by the developed world.

With the wave of change across the world that commenced in the 1980s, African leaders began to turn to one another to find solutions for Africa's problems. These efforts cannot be left unmentioned, less the current crop of leadership takes too much credit and fail to acknowledge the historical stepping stones on which they most certainly stand today.

It is important to point out at this juncture that in spite of the many mistakes and failures that can be laid squarely at the behaviour of African leaders in post-independence Africa, heroic attempts have been made to develop frameworks and development paradigms with which to address the development inertia of Africa by appealing to the rest of the international community to cooperate with the continent to become a better competitor in the international economy. Five landmark strategies which together provided the continent's preferred development agenda emerged in the 1980s and early in the 1990s. These are:

1. The Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980-2000 and the Final Act of Lagos (1980).
2. Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER) 1986-1990,



which later became the United Nations Programme of Actions for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD) (1986).

3. The African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programme for Socio- Economic Recovery and Transformation ( AAF- SAP) (1989).
4. The African Charter for Popular Participation for Development (1990).
5. The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) in the 1990s (1991).

One has to add to this list other international efforts with the same objective: To help Africa get out of the quagmire of economic underdevelopment, such as the World Bank's' *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth*, in 1989, which, in its foreword stated:

*Africa's continuing economic crisis presents an extraordinary challenge to the development community—to both intellectuals and policymakers. Responding to this challenge during the past decade, the Bank has issued a series of reports on Sub-Saharan Africa.*

*These have increasingly concentrated on urgent measures needed to set Africa on the path to recovery, as have the efforts of the development community at large.<sup>3</sup>*

Even in the field of human and individual rights, African leaders under the aegis of the OAU have committed themselves as far back as 1986 to fundamental rights in African states. The African Charter on Human and People's Rights, adopted on 23 October 1986, committed African states to respect for human rights.

It is worth quoting from the Charter which declared:

*Every individual shall have the right to assemble freely with others... Every citizen shall have the right to participate freely in the government of his country, either directly or through freely chosen representatives...*

*Every citizen shall have the right of equal access to the public services of his country...*

*Every individual shall have the right to enjoy an attainable state of physical and mental health, etc.etc.<sup>4</sup>*

Between 1986 and 1996 the record of human rights violations on the continent was getting worse, and one would not have thought that the perpetrators were the same leaders who signed the Charter to protect rights in Africa.

This shows that it is erroneous to posit that NEPAD is the first attempt to address the economic problems in Africa seriously. What is true is that the previous attempts did not succeed and therefore Africa has every reason to want NEPAD to succeed where others have failed. It is also clear that Africa looked to the developed world to assist it on the path to recovery and sustainable development. These attempts bore negligible success as they were, for all intents and purposes, opposed, undermined and jettisoned by the very Bretton Woods institutions or international financial regimes that NEPAD is inviting to partner Africa today. The Africans who were involved in these programmes relied on foreign sponsorships from the developed countries, who placed strict conditionalities on the Africans' exercise of basic fundamental right to make decisions about the future of their nations and the continent. This situation, arguably, would have been ameliorated if the African leaders had shown the commitment to carry out their own development agenda. However, given their excessive external dependence, their narrow political base and their perennial failure to demonstrate real commitment, the implementation of these plans has suffered from benign neglect. Lacking the resources and the will to soldier on selfreliantly, they abandoned their own strategies, including the UN-PAAERD and UN-NADAF, which were crafted jointly with the international community under the aegis of the United Nations.

It is important to note that the Lagos Plan of Action, infamous and perhaps fruitless though it became, was the culmination of a four-year effort, initiated and led by the Economic Commission on Africa. It undertook an agonising review of existing development paradigms and strategies that Africa had been pursuing through the desalinisation period, which commenced in the 1960s. Significantly, the review was, in fact, prompted by the General Assembly of

the UN, calling upon the ECA, in concert with regional economic commissions ECE, ESCAP, ECLAC and ECWA at the time, to engage in a thorough assessment of long- term development trends during the period 1960 to 1975.

The findings of this important exercise were sobering and at best instructive to policy makers on African Development. Africa's performance was substantially below all the targets set by the UN Second Development Decade. Africa's annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate was 4.5 percent instead of the target of 6.0 percent; its export was 2.8 percent instead of 7.00 percent; its agricultural growth rate was 1.6 percent instead of the target rate of 4.0 percent while manufacturing grew at 6.0 percent instead of the target of 8.0 percent. The only macroeconomic aggregate whose performance exceeded target was import with actual growth rate per annum of 10.0 percent instead of the target of 7.0 percent.

From the assessment a realisation dawned: The fact that Africa's development crisis was indeed monumental: Of all five United Nations regions, Africa's performance was the worst. The overall regional picture concealed the growing differentiations between the different sub-regions and countries. Only eight countries managed to achieve their targets. The rest of the continent was well below the set targets. The saddest irony of this evolving saga is that performance during the remaining quarter of the twentieth century (1975-2000) was more abysmal than that achieved during the first decade and a half of self-ruled Africa (1960-1975). The average annual rate of growth in per capita GDP of Sub-Sahara Africa remained negative for thirty five years (1965-2000). North Africa's negative GDP per capita growth was limited to the 1980's only. Sub Sahara Africa's GDP growth rate averaged only 2.6%. The period of 1960 to 1975, was ironically, Africa's golden era.<sup>5</sup>

All this, despite Africa's ample natural resources, despite the continent's favorable population in relation to its natural resources, despite the generous and even indiscriminate incentives for foreign private enterprise, and despite the leaders' adherence to orthodox theories and prescriptions. Neither high rates of growth nor diversification, nor an increasing measure of self-reliance and socio-economic dynamism could be accounted for in free Africa. It should have become clear that Africa's ongoing inability to decolonise its political economy by confronting the past boldly and make the necessary changes

continues to impede the continent's much needed socio-economic and political transformation. When African leaders pretend to march towards the continent's future alongside their ex-colonial overlords, they continue to ensure that Africa remains a junior partner in the race, and with no dignified future for itself.

It must be remembered that it was during the 1970's that the demand for a New International Economic Order was intense. Given the poor performance of the African economy between 1960 and 1975 and the realisation that the continent was faced with a pressing development, it was important that it should first put its house in order or it would remain marginalised and peripheralised even in the reconstructed international economy.

This reality led to the ECA in 1976 - a landmark document entitled: "The Revised Framework of Principles for the Implementation of the New International Order in Africa", which was the intellectual and theoretical foundation upon which the Monrovia Strategy in 1979 and the Lagos Plan Action in 1980 were based.

The Revised Framework postulated that a credible and appropriate development strategy for Africa had to satisfy four fundamental principles: Self-reliance, self-sustenance, the democratisation of the development process and a fair and just distribution of the fruit of development through the progressive eradication of unemployment and mass poverty.

A measure of self-sustaining development is the only way in which to achieve economic decolonisation. The pursuit of self-reliance in Africa calls for Africans to internalise the forces of demand which in turn determine the direction of development and economic growth process and patterns of output; increasing substitution of domestic factor inputs for external factor inputs; and increase participation of the mass of the people in the production and consumption of the social product; and, increasing self-management through the promotion of the patterns and process of a holistic human development in which the different sectors and sub-sectors, and programmes and activities mutually support and reinforce each other, so that when related to the internalisation of the forces determining demand and supply, the whole economic, social and political system develops its own internal dynamics.<sup>6</sup>

### **3. STATED PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES OF NEPAD**

The following fundamental principles are stated in the NEPAD document:

- To ensure African ownership, responsibility and leadership.
- To make Africa attractive to both domestic and foreign investors.
- To unleash the vast economic potential of the continent.
- To achieve and sustain an average gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of over 7 per cent per annum for the next 15 years.
- To ensure that the continent achieves the agreed International Development Goals (IDGs)
- To increase investment in human resource development.
- To promote the role of women in all activities.
- To promote sub-regional and continental economic integration.
- To develop a new partnership with industrialised countries and multilateral organisations on the basis of mutual commitments, obligations, interest, contributions and benefits.
- To strengthen Africa's capacity to lead its own development and to improve coordination with development partners.
- To ensure that there is a capacity to lead negotiations on behalf of the continent on major development programmes that require coordination at a continental level.
- To ensure that there is capacity to accelerate implementation of major regional development cooperation agreements and projects already approved or in the pipeline.
- To strengthen Africa's capacity to mobilise additional external resources for its development.

### **4. STATED GOALS FOR NEPAD**

The following goals have been identified:

- To promote accelerated growth and sustainable development. (Enrol all children of school going age in schools by 2015; make progress towards gender equality by empowering women and eliminate gender inequalities in schools by 2015; reduce infant and child mortality

- ratios by two-thirds by 2015; reduce maternal mortality ratios by three quarters by 2015; increase access to reproductive health services by 2015, and to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015)
- To eradicate widespread and severe poverty. (cut poverty by half in 2015)
- To halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process. (implement national strategies for sustainable development by 2005 and reverse the brain drain)

In order to achieve these goals, a number of pillars on which success would depend were outlined in the NEPAD Plan itself, namely: (a) Creating conditions for sustainable development; (b) Working on Sectoral Priorities and (c) Mobilising Africa's resources.

## A. CONDITIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### A1. The Peace, Security, Democracy and Political Governance Initiatives:

- (i) Peace and Security Initiative
- (ii) Democracy and Political Governance Initiative

### A2. The Economic and Corporate Governance Initiative

### A3. Sub-regional and Regional Approaches to Development

## B. SECTORAL PRIORITIES

### B1. Bridging the Infrastructure Gap:

- (i) All Infrastructure Sectors
- (ii) Bridging the Digital Divide: Investing in Information and Communications Technologies
- (iii) Energy
- (iv) Transport
- (v) Water and Sanitation

## B2. Human Resource Development Initiative

- (i) Poverty Reduction
- (ii) Bridging the Education Gap
- (iii) Reversing the Brain Drain
- (iv) Health

## B3. Agriculture

## B4. The Environment Initiative

## B5. Culture

## B6. Science and Technology Platforms

## C. MOBILISING RESOURCES

### C1. The Capital Flows Initiative

- (i) Increasing Domestic Resource Mobilisation
- (ii) Debt Relief
- (iii) ODA Reforms
- (iv) Private Capital Flows

### C2. The Market Access Initiative

- (i) Diversification of Production
- (ii) Agriculture
- (iii) Mining
- (iv) Manufacturing
- (v) Tourism
- (vi) Services
- (vii) Promoting the Private Sector
- (viii) Promoting African Exports
- (ix) Removal of Non-tariff Barriers

## **5. STATED OUTCOMES FOR NEPAD**

- Economic growth and development and increased employment.
- Reduction in poverty and inequity.
- Diversification of productive activities, enhanced international competitiveness and increased exports.
- Increased African integration.

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS**

The Secretariat will coordinate the preparation of a business plan for each priority area. The plan will define clear objectives, value to be added by the initiative, key partners, required actions (research, consultation, negotiation, ratification, implementation, etc.) institutional arrangements and resource mobilisation strategies, where appropriate.

A project leader or task team coordinator will be appointed for each project. The leader/coordinator will mobilise expertise from existing institutions, both from the continent and internationally. Lead agencies will also be utilised in project development.

Expertise will be drawn mainly from African countries on the basis of relevant expertise. Cabinet Ministers and other political office bearers will be utilised where political leadership is necessary.

Project leaders and task teams will work closely with relevant African countries, regional economic structures, African development and finance institutions, relevant multilateral institutions and development partners.

Terms of reference with time frames will be prepared and submitted to the Steering Committee for each project.

New initiatives/projects will be approved only in cases where the management



structures of the initiative are convinced that it can add value, either through a new intervention or the strengthening or accelerating of existing processes or programmes. The intention is not to duplicate, replace or compete with existing initiatives/processes, or to establish a new bureaucratic structure.

The unique strength of NEPAD is that it is led by a group of mandated African leaders. In other words, it is a process that is owned and led by African Heads of State. It is this uniqueness that must be used to strengthen the many good initiatives that need the support and commitment of African political leaders. The chosen champions can use their credibility and political weight to forge new paths or to unblock existing ones in achieving Africa's regeneration.

## **7. A HISTORY OF DONOR-AFRICA PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S SAKE**

*Geben ist sehliger als nehmen (To give is holier than to take)*

An old German proverb

No matter how and from which angle one looks at the dialogue between the rich countries and Africa regarding NEPAD, the fact remains that it is not a dialogue between equals. It is a dialogue, if it is in fact a dialogue<sup>7</sup> between the beggar and the potential giver. This has characterized most of the aid and cooperation relationships between Africa and her former colonizers.

The process that is being described as globalisation is neither new nor has its history been without some measure of partnership between the developed world on the one hand and the developing world on the other. There could not be one without the other as it is the dialectical of the development of the core economies of the North that generates the underdevelopment of the poor South as the reverse side of the same coin.

Walter Rodney's book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*<sup>8</sup> is about nothing else but a historical account of how Europe retarded and deliberately skewed the development of Africa's economies for the benefit of the people of Europe, now the developed world. Thus, the underdevelopment of Africa as we know

it has been paralleled by the very success of the developed economies of the world, and the latter's supporting programmes and processes in Africa have been a major component of this history.

In 1980 the Independent Commission on International Development Issues under the Chairmanship of former German Chancellor Willy Brandt issued their "North-South: A Programme for Survival Report" with an extensive view on the relationship between the rich North and poor South, and the implications of such relation for the international community. The Report had, as one of its summaries, the following observation:

*In our opinion there are good reasons to propose and organize as rapidly as possible—after thorough preparation—an international meeting at the highest level, perhaps to be followed by others, to discuss North-South emergency matters and, if possible, to reach agreements, as concrete as possible, on how to turn certain mutual interests into creative partnerships, immediately and for the longer term.*

*We want to make quite clear that North and South cannot proceed with 'business as usual' only adding a few bits here and there. What is required is intellectual reorientation, serious steps towards structural change, increased practical cooperation. A more relaxed climate of negotiations should do away with rhetorical warfare and unjustified expressions of distrust...<sup>9</sup>*

Many times since that report, the developed world had streaks of benevolence and felt that they had a duty to assist Africa to develop –away from its old fashioned pre-capitalist, pre-industrial and pre-modern ways - and become part of the western world. The process of decolonisation itself was accompanied by a series of agreements and joint programmes between the former coloniser and the colonised to move forward.

Superpowers have had their share of aid to Africa, invariably linked to an understanding of their own national and self-interests. In that schism, Africa was a flashpoint of conflicts that were not of Africa's own making. Recently, the George W. Bush-led American Administration initiated the so-called African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which President Bush described as 'a road map for how the United States and Africa can tap the power of markets to improve the lives of our citizens'.<sup>10</sup> The mutual benefits of the undertaking have yet to be seen. What is clear, as it always was, is that

products from America are likely to have more access to African markets than the other way around, just as citizens of America and European countries can enter African countries without a visa whereas Africans have not only to have visas, but pay for the visas to enter America and Europe!

An important and instructive factor in this history is the fact that Africa was always on the receiving end of donor support, and as such, the support did not arrive in Africa without conditionalities that often curtailed Africa's ability to spearhead its own development strategies. Hence the startling reminder by the United Nations in its 1999 Human Development Report:

*The challenge of globalization in the new century is not to stop the expansion of global markets. The challenge is to find new rules and institutions for stronger governance - local, national, regional and global - to preserve the advantages of global markets and competition, but also to provide enough space for human, community and environmental resources to ensure that globalization works for people - not just for profits. Globalization with:*

*Ethics - less violation of human rights, not more.*

*Equity - less disparity within and between nations, not more.*

*Inclusion - less marginalization of people and countries, not more.*

*Human security - less availability of societies and less vulnerability of people, not more.*

*Sustainability - less environmental destruction, not more.*

*Development - less poverty and deprivation, not more.<sup>11</sup>*

What is critical at this juncture is to recognise that the distinction between the earlier African attempts at addressing the continent's economic woes and NEPAD lies fundamentally in the time at which NEPAD has come to say what others had said and failed to do much about. NEPAD comes at a time when there exists already a recognition by the international community that Africa has been marginalised over decades and something must be done, and that Africa's underdevelopment does not augur well for the development and well-being of the other side of the same planet.

The MAP, NAI and NEPAD documents all warn the international community that the one singularly significant threat to world peace and stability was not war, but poverty.

Given the fact that most of the poverty and attendant problems are in Africa, it stands to reason that the international community would be stood in good stead if Africa's economic crisis is tackled in partnership between African policymakers and the development community internationally. In this sense, NEPAD has a better leg to stand on than its predecessors.

It would also appear that there is a change in the language of international politics - the new buzz-word is international partnership. Cooperation is deemed inadequate as the term implies binding mutual commitments. Partnership, on the other hand, conveys the existence of a relationship stronger than cooperation but weaker than a compact. It suggests joint effort and joint responsibility. These words are sometimes lumped together as in the preface to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990's (UN-NADAF), where Ambassador Martin Huslid of Norway, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the Review and Appraisal of UNPAAERD, wrote about "shared responsibility and full partnership" between Africa and the international community.<sup>3</sup>

The concept of interdependence captures the essence of partnership and international cooperation.

However, as long as the objective of the developed countries is to maintain their economic progress along the present lines, the relations between the North and the South in general Africa in particular will continue to be characterised by a domination of the strong over the weak, a drain of resources from the already poor nations. This is a travesty of cooperation, partnership and interdependence.

There are currently 78 ACP countries, of which 48 are African countries. Among the EU countries are four of the members of G8 - Germany, UK, France and Italy. The question is, will these four countries treat Africa more generously under NEPAD than they have treated it under the Younde and Lome Accords?

## **7.1 The G8 and NEPAD**

The Group of 8 (G8) is an organisation of the eight most industrialised countries in the world. It comprises of Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Russia (the most recent member), whose representatives meet regularly as a matter of course to discuss and draw up collective agendas for the future and review their economic policies for the world.

The 2002 G8 Summit took place at the end June in Kananaskis near the city of Calgary in Canada. There was a great deal of discussions between representatives of the G8 and Africa on what the G8's role should be in the new initiatives to place the African continent on a more sustainable development path in the new millennium. The three African leaders who formed the NEPAD Implementation Committee, namely Thabo Mbeki, Olusegun Obasanjo and Abdelaziz Bouteflika, represented and made the case for Africa at the G8 Summit, with the aim of moving towards a compact which would become binding on African leaders on the one hand, and member states of the G8 on the other.

At the end of the summit, the G8 Summit came up with what is called the *G8 Africa Plan*, a comprehensive document spelling out some of the specific goals, obligations and measures to be undertaken by both sides to the interactions in a manner that would aid the African continent to move forward on the path that was determined by its leaders at the closure of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and at the commencement of the African Union (AU).

## **7.2 The G8 Africa Action Plan**

The pledge that was made by the G8 to NEPAD provides a fuller understanding of the current dialogue between Africa and the G8:

- 1. We, the Heads of State and Government of eight major industrialized democracies and the Representatives of the European Union, meeting with African Leaders at Kananaskis, welcome the initiative taken by*

*African States in adopting the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a bold and clear-sighted vision of Africa's development. We accept the invitation from African Leaders, extended first at Genoa last July and reaffirmed in the NEPAD, to build a new partnership between the countries of Africa and our own, based on mutual responsibility and respect. The NEPAD provides an historic opportunity to overcome obstacles to development in Africa. Our Africa Action Plan is the G8's initial response, designed to encourage the imaginative effort that underlies the NEPAD and to lay a solid foundation for future cooperation.*

- 2. The case for action is compelling. Despite its great potential and human resources, Africa continues to face some of the world's greatest challenges. The many initiatives designed to spur Africa's development have failed to deliver sustained improvements to the lives of individual women, men and children throughout Africa.*
- 3. The New Partnership for Africa's Development offers something different. It is, first and foremost, a pledge by African Leaders to the people of Africa to consolidate Democracy and sound economic management, and to promote peace, security and people-centered development. African Leaders have personally directed its creation and implementation. They have formally undertaken to hold each other accountable for its achievement. They have emphasized good governance and human rights as necessary preconditions for Africa's recovery. They focus on investment-driven economic growth and economic governance as the engine for poverty reduction, and on the importance of regional and sub-regional partnerships within Africa.*
- 4. We welcome this commitment. In support of the NEPAD objectives, we each undertake to establish enhanced partnerships with Africa countries whose performance reflects the NEPAD commitments. Our partners will be selected on the basis of measured results. This will lead us to focus our efforts on countries that demonstrate a political and financial commitment to good governance and the rule of law, investing in their people, and pursuing policies that spur economic growth and alleviate poverty. We will match their commitment with a*

*commitment on our own part to promote peace and security in Africa, to boost expertise and capacity, in encourage trade and direct growth-oriented investment, and to provide more effective official development assistance.*

5. *Together, we have an unprecedented opportunity to make progress on our common goals of eradicating extreme poverty and achieving sustainable development. The new round of multilateral trade negotiations begun at Doha, Kananaskis and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, are key milestones in this process.*
6. *NEPAD recognized that the prime responsibility for Africa's future lies with Africa itself. We will continue to support African efforts to encourage public engagement in the NEPAD and we will continue to consult with our African partners on how we can best assist their own efforts. G8 governments are committed to mobilize and energize global action, marshal resources and expertise, and provide impetus in support of the NEPAD's objectives. As G8 partners, we will undertake mutually reinforcing actions to help Africa accelerate growth and make lasting gains against poverty. Our Action Plan focuses on a limited number of priority areas where, collectively and individually, we can add value.*
7. *The African peer-review process is an innovative and potentially decisive element in the attainment of the objectives of the NEPAD. We welcome the adoption on June 11 by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee of the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance and the African Peer Review Mechanism. The peer-review process will inform our considerations of eligibility for enhanced partnerships. We will each make our own assessments in making these partnership decisions. While we will focus particular attention on enhanced-partnership countries, we will also work with countries that do not yet meet the standards of NEPAD but which are clearly committed to and working towards its implementation. We will not work with governments which disregard the interests and dignity of their people.*

8. *However, as a matter of strong principle, our commitment to respond to situations of humanitarian need remains universal and is independent of particular regimes. So, too, is our commitment to addressing the core issues of human dignity and development. The Development Goals set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration are an important component of this engagement.*
9. *At Monterrey, in March 2002, we agreed to revitalize efforts to help unlock and more effectively utilize all development resources including domestic savings, trade and investment, and official development assistance. A clear link was made between good governance, sound policies, aid effectiveness and development success. In support of this strong international consensus, substantial new development assistance commitments were announced at Monterrey. By 2006, these new commitments will increase ODA by a total of US \$12 billion per year. Each of us will decide, in accordance with our respective priorities and procedures, how we will allocate the additional money we have pledged. Assuming strong African policy commitments, and given recent assistance trends, we believe that in aggregate, half or more of our new development assistance could be directed to African nations that govern justly, invest in their own people and promote economic freedom. In this way we will support the objectives of the NEPAD. This will help ensure that no country genuinely committed to poverty reduction, good governance and economic reform will be denied the chance to achieve the Millennium Goals through lack of finance.*
10. *We will pursue this Action Plan in our individual and collective capacities, and through the international institution to which we belong. We warmly invite other countries to join us. We also encourage South-South cooperation and collaboration with international institutions and civil society, including the business sector, in support of the NEPAD. We will continue to maintain a constructive dialogue with our African partners in order to achieve effective implementation of our Action Plan and to support the objectives of the NEPAD. We will take the necessary steps to ensure the effective implementation of our Action Plan and will review progress at our next Summit based on a final report from our Personal Representatives for Africa.*



*11. To demonstrate our support for this new partnership, we make the following engagements in support of the NEPAD:*

***I. Promoting Peace and Security***

- 1.1 Supporting African efforts to resolve the principal armed conflicts on the continent – including by:*
- 1.2 Providing technical and financial assistance so that, by 2010, African countries and regional and sub-regional organizations are able to engage more effectively to prevent and resolve violent conflict on the continent, and undertake peace support operations in accordance with the United Nations Charter – including by:*
- 1.3 Supporting efforts by African countries and the United Nations to better regulate the activities of arms brokers and traffickers and to eliminate the flow of illicit weapons to and within African – including by:*
- 1.4 Supporting African efforts to eliminate and remove antipersonnel mines.*
- 1.5 Providing more effective peace-building support to societies emerging from or seeking to prevent armed conflicts.*
- 1.6 Working to enhance African capacities to protect and assist war-affected populations and facilitate the effective implementation in Africa of United Nations Security Council resolutions relating to civilians, women and children in armed conflict-including by supporting African countries hosting, assisting and protecting large refugee populations.*

***II. Strengthening Institutions and Governance***

*The NEPAD maintains that “development is impossible in the absence of true democracy, respect for human rights, peace and good governance”. We agree, and it has been our experience that reliable institutions and governance are a precondition for long-term or large-scale private investment. The task of strengthening institutions and governance is thus both urgent and of paramount importance, and for this reason, we commit to:*

- 2.1 Supporting the NEPAD”s priority political governance objectives*
- 2.2 Strengthening capacity-building programmes related to economic and corporate governance in Africa focusing on the NEPAD priority areas of implementing sound macro-economic strategies, strengthening public*

*financial management and accountability, protecting the integrity of monetary and financial systems, strengthening accounting and auditing systems, and developing an effective corporate governance framework.*

2.3 *Supporting African peer-review arrangements.*

2.4 *Giving increased attention and support to African efforts to promote and protect human rights.*

2.5 *Supporting African efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.*

2.6 *Intensifying support for the adoption of and implementation of effective measures to combat corruption, bribery and embezzlement*

### **III. *Fostering Trade, Investment, Economic Growth and Sustainable Development.***

3.1 *Helping Africa attract investment, both from within Africa and from abroad, and and implement policies conducive to economic growth.*

3.2 *Facilitating capacity-building and the transfer of expertise for the development of infrastructure projects, with particular attention to regional initiatives.*

3.3 *Providing greater market access for African products.*

3.4 *Increasing the funding and improving the quality of support for trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building in Africa.*

3.5 *Supporting African efforts to advance regional economic integration and intra-African trade.* 3.6 *Improving the effectiveness of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), and strengthening ODA commitment for enhanced-partnership countries.*

### **IV. *Implementing Debt Relief***

### **V. *Expanding Knowledge: Improving and Promoting Education and Expanding Digital Opportunities***

5.1 *Supporting African countries in their efforts to improve the quality of education at all levels.*

5.2 *Supporting efforts to ensure equal access to education by women and girls.*

5.3 *Working with African partners to increase assistance to Africa's research and higher education capacity in enhanced-partnership countries.*

- 5.4 *Helping Africa create digital opportunities.*
- 5.5 *Helping Africa make more effective use of ICT in the context of promoting sustainable economic, social and political development.*

## **VI. *Improving Health and confronting HIV/AIDS.***

- 6.1 *Helping Africa combat the effects of HIV/AIDS.*
- 6.2 *Supporting African efforts to build sustainable health systems in order to deliver effective disease interventions.*
- 6.3 *Accelerating the elimination and mitigation in Africa of polio, river blindness and other diseases or health deficiencies.*
- 6.4 *Supporting health research on diseases prevalent in Africa, with a view to narrowing the health research gap, including by expanding health research networks to focus on African health issues, and by making more extensive use of researchers based in Africa.*

In sum, the G8 Africa Plan is the international community's operational and quantifiable mechanism in response to specific goals, targets and time frames set out in the NEPAD Document.

## **8. NEPAD AND THE AFRICAN UNION CONSTITUTIVE ACT**

The Constitutive Act of the African Union was adopted by the 36<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on July 11, 2000 in Lome. It required the ratification by two thirds of the 53 members of the OAU. With the beginning of the deliberations of the Lusaka Summit in July 2001, a total of 50 member states had ratified the document and through that exercise, the AU was created to succeed the Organization of African Unity which was in existence for thirty eight years.

The Council of Ministers meeting held in Addis Ababa in March 2002 established a Unit of the NEPAD Secretariat at the OAU Headquarters in Addis Ababa for close collaboration.

NEPAD was a mandated initiative of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

The NEPAD Initiative came a year after the adoption of the Constitutive Act which established the African Union in conformity with the ultimate objectives of the OAU Charter and the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community. Just as the NEPAD initiative has been viewed by its sponsors to supersede all other partnership initiatives, so has the African Union been perceived as the most pre-eminent initiative to emanated from Africa. If it is successful, the AU will accelerate the process of implementing the Abuja Treaty of 1991 and the Final Act of Lagos of 1980.

The first meeting of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee, as mandated at the OAU Summit in Lusaka on 11 July 2001, was held in Abuja, Nigeria on 23 October 2001. A number of decisions were taken. This signifies the start of the vital implementation phase of the initiative:

- a) The name of the initiative was finalised with a change from the New African Initiative (NAI) to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). It is however clear that there is no unanimity amongst African leaders who were the NAI signatories that NEPAD is representative of their own sentiments as was NAI. Hence the number of outbursts that NEPAD was a western interest driven agenda whereas NAI was a composite of the views endorsed by the OAU Summit in Lusaka in 2001.
- b) The NEPAD document itself was finalised, although none of the substantive matters covered by NAI were changed from the format they were in when NAI was accepted by the OAU. It would appear that the Steering Committee was assisted in its work on refining NEPAD by the ECA.
- c) A three-tier governing structure was accepted for NEPAD, namely :
  1. The Steering Committee, consisting of the personal representatives of the five initiating Presidents, with the task of developing terms of reference for identified programmes and projects and overseeing the Secretariat.

The Steering Committee was mandated to develop a strategic plan for marketing and communications at the national, sub-regional, continental and international levels. An example of this task was the presentation of NEPAD to the G8 Summit in June 2002.

2. The Secretariat, consisting of a small core of full-time staff currently housed at the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) in Midrand, South Africa, bearing the responsibility of liaison, coordination, administrative and logistical function.
3. A number of Task Teams to develop specific detailed implementable projects and programmes based on the following identified priority areas:
  - Capacity building on peace and security
  - Economic and corporate governance
  - Infrastructure
  - Central bank and financial standards
  - Agriculture and market access

Apart from the above Task Teams, a Subcommittee on Peace and Security focusing on conflict prevention, management and resolution was established. President Mbeki (South Africa) is to chair the Subcommittee.

The leaders also agreed to set parameters for good governance (political and economic) and to consider an appropriate mechanism for peer review.

## **9. NEPAD AND THE AFRICAN UNION**

There exists a fallacy that President Thabo Mbeki or even President/Colonel Muammar el-Qaddafi, initiated the African Union agenda. Dede opines quite poignantly: ‘ The African Union is not a fly-by-night idea originating from an African leader; it is part and parcel of the Pan-African dream for African peace, cooperation, integration and unity.’<sup>12</sup>

The idea of an African Union, or a United Africa, or a Union of African

States, is neither a new one nor is it an initiative of the current leaders of Africa today. NEPAD is a creation and strategic project of the OAU/AU.

- The Implementation Committee has to report annually to the AU Summit.
- The AU Chair and Secretary General are ex-officio members of the Implementation Committee.
- The AU Secretariat participates at Steering Committee meetings.
- The management structures of NEPAD are designed to ensure follow-up and implementation in the phase of transition from the OAU to the AU.
- NEPAD is the socio-economic development blueprint for the AU to implement its objectives.
- It is the mechanism for accelerating implementation of the Abuja Treaty.
- The Secretariats of the Regional Economic Communities will participate fully in the NEPAD programme development through workshops and consultation.

## **10. RELATIONSHIP WITH EXISTING INITIATIVES**

Clearly NEPAD does not exist in a vacuum. There are many initiatives and processes on the ground already, e.g. the UN Millennium Declaration, the G8 Okinawa Declaration, the Copenhagen Declaration, the Skagen Declaration, the Cotonou Agreement, the EU / Cairo Plan of Action, the AGOA, TICAD, the Sino-Africa process, etc.

NEPAD does not seek to replace or compete with these, but rather to consciously establish linkages and synergies between NEPAD and these initiatives, and to determine where each initiative can make the greatest

contribution. NEPAD provides the focal point and the overall strategic framework for engagement as Africa's chosen agenda for development. Such engagement also includes aligning the NEPAD with work being done within the RECs, e.g. SADC and the AU. Engagements have been ongoing since the OAU Lusaka Summit to achieve the linkages and synchronicity described above.

There are a number of critical events in this process scheduled for 2002, namely:

- The Financing for Development Conference in Mexico in March.
- The AU Summit in South Africa in July 2002.
- The World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in September 2002.

## **11. THE NEW POLITICAL WILL OF AFRICAN LEADERS**

There is in the NEPAD Document a deliberate mention of the fact that there exists a new political will and a renewed sense of determination amongst African leaders with which to work towards something different. In that lies an admission that previous attempts have failed due, in part, to questionable leadership styles in the recent past.

It would appear that the AU/NEPAD leaders anticipated some cynical reaction from the peoples of Africa who needed to be convinced that what they are hearing now is markedly different from what they have heard time and time again in the past, and to which they were expected to dance, only to find that the only beneficiaries were the leaders and those in their inner circles of the political game. So they sought out to defend themselves in saying that their intentions were different and purer than those of their predecessors. With this segment the leaders also meant to declare that, unlike their predecessors who were suspicious of any democratic and human rights talk, they were committed to bringing about conditions and an environment in their countries that will be favorable to democracy, a human rights culture, the rule of law, good

governance, accountability, sound fiscal and good financial management policies and practices and popular participation in the processes of electing office bearers.

In this sense, NEPAD goes well beyond the AU in naming a different world for Africans and enunciating what actually needs to happen not only at the level of improving economies, but declaring that the leaders were willing to play by the game rules of democratic participation if Africa is to move in tandem with the rest of an enlightened international community in this millennium, and importantly if Africans respect themselves, affirm themselves and direct themselves as players to be taken seriously in international affairs and in the globalising world economy.

## **12. APPEAL TO THE PEOPLES OF AFRICA**

It would be remiss not to acknowledge one unique point about NEPAD, namely that unlike the OAU and all the other previous efforts at addressing the plight of Africa, the NEPAD leadership turned to the people of Africa and issued a bold invitation to ordinary people to become meaningful participants in the process reconstruction and sustainable development on the continent.

This is the first time that African political leaders have openly acknowledged that the crises in Africa cannot be solved by political leadership alone: ‘The New Partnership for Africa’s Development will be successful only if it is owned by the African peoples united in their diversity as an important link between the polity in Africa and the general populace without whose support and participation no real development can happen.’

In the past, political leaders acted as though they alone knew what was best for everyone and they alone had the solution to problems (which they have diagnosed very poorly in any event). The call also recognises for the first time thus the important and necessary contribution non-governmental organisations can and indeed have to play in moving the continent forward as an important player in the business of sustainable development not only in Africa but the whole world.



### **13. PROGRAMME OF ACTION: THE STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY**

Part V of the NEPAD Document is devoted to a Programme of Action, arguing that it is different from all previous plans in its approach and strategies. The goals that are seen to be achievable, such as the reduction of the number of people living in poverty on the continent by half by the 2015, are unpacked. Of importance is its emphasis on African-ownership and African leadership of the vision.

### **14. A NEW GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP**

The NEPAD New Global Partnership is a restatement of the history that brought Africa where she is today, and the new recognition to correct it in partnership with the developed world which is part and parcel of the problem.

The new Global Partnership also reaffirms Africa as a primary site for human life, and as such has played and will continue to play a role in the development of the human race. An acknowledgement is made of how, despite Africa's historical role in human development, the continent has been left out in the advancement of human life in the areas of technological revolution. The statement also restates what Africa has to offer in the field of human and environmental development to the international community.

Against this background Africa committed herself to the development and strengthening of South-South partnerships.

### **15. SIMILARITIES AND DISSIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE OAU AND THE AU**

The French novelist and journalist, Alphonse Karr, once said: *Plus ça change, plus ce la même chose* - the more things change, the more they remain the same. Let us hope that this is not a curse that will visit the continent of Africa and its people as we are grappling with issues of real transformation. The

future must be better than the past out of which we have come. The OAU and the AU are said to be two successive organisations serving two different eras and agendas. Whether this is true remains to be seen, as these two organisations are at once similar and dissimilar.

Consider the following:

Article 11 of the OAU Charter, signed by 32 independent African countries in Addis Ababa on May 25, 1963, declared as its sacred purposes:

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

To these ends, the member states shall coordinate and harmonise their general policies, especially in the following fields:

- Political and diplomatic cooperation;
- Economic cooperation, including transport and communications;
- Educational and cultural cooperation;
- Health, Sanitation and Nutritional cooperation;
- Scientific and Technological cooperation; and
- Cooperation for defense and security.

Article 3 of the Constitutive Act of the AU declares as follows:

The Objectives of the Union shall be to:

- Achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa
- Defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its member States
- Accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent

- Promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples
- Encourage international cooperation, taking the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Promote peace, security and stability on the continent
- Promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance

An examination of the purposes and objectives of these two continental institutions shows that their missions, purposes and objectives remain unchanged and continue to be propelled by the pursuit of the African dream for peace, unity, cooperation and integration. From the OAU, through the Abuja Treaty to the emerging African Union, Africa has remained faithful to the Pan-Africanist dream of luminaries such as William DuBois, Kwame Nkrumah, Ahmed Sekou Toure, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Gamel Abdel Nasser, Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Jomo Kenyatta, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda and Oliver Tambo.

In its defence, the OAU succeeded in accomplishing its high mission, namely that of making certain that every inch of the African continent was lifted out of colonial domination and guaranteed political freedom. As Nkrumah has aptly announced: *Seek ye first political kingdom, and the rest will be added unto it!*

The accomplishments of the AU have to be awaited. While the AU is hailed as a step closer toward realising the African Renaissance and representing peace, unity, prosperity, and development for the continent in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is not clear what is new about the AU other than the fact that Africa is operating in a different time frame in global politics.

It does appear that the AU has not significantly departed from its predecessor. The skeptical view in some quarters that NEPAD in general and the AU in particular is a repetition of the history of the OAU has yet to be proved. The fact of the matter, however is that it is hard to see how the current Heads of State and Government in Africa will conduct their affairs in fashions different from the pompous and self-celebrating patterns of their predecessors. The view that this is old wine in new bottles or the same old game with a new

name is well founded. If Durban is anything to go by, the lion remains exactly the same, roaring in the same old way, but with a bit of mimicked finesse.

The AU and NEPAD are caught up in the same old cocoon of rhetoric, semantics and political power upmanship. At one level it purports to be everything to everyone, which is indicative of the fact that it is a union governed by broad-based principles seeking not to offend peer states but to accommodate all viewpoints. The conflict between sovereignty and unity is one that African leaders have not been able to overcome, as they are protected by the sanacity of sovereignty. Unfortunately sovereignty is likely to be at the expense of stated high principles such as democracy, human rights and good governance. This was the problem with the OAU, which was chaired by the likes of Idi Amin Dada of Uganda at the time when they were prosecuting their citizens without the slightest compunction or fear of rebuke by fellow Heads of State.

This grey area still exists as there is ample rhetoric about protecting human rights. It must however, be stated that the effort by the AU at its launch to disallow the new President of Madagascar, Mark Ravalamanana from participating in the AU launch is, in principle, commendable. However, what happened in Madagascar after the December 16, 2001, Presidential elections is a tale of many countries in Africa and elsewhere. Ravalamanana declared himself a winner of the contested elections, and seized power through unconstitutional means. Later, as there was no real Head of State in Madagascar, the Constitutional High Court of Madagascar was reconstituted and in turn did a recount of the cast votes. After the recount, the Constitutional high Court declared that Ravalamanana the clear winner of the elections

Yet, the AU did not recognize him as the leader of his country after that country's judiciary has ruled on the matter. The world did not hold the same view of the American elections that produced George W. Bush as President only after the American Supreme Court declared him winner, not the voters themselves! And there are others, such as Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe who deserved some strong castigation by his peers because of his flagrant disregard for human rights in his country.

It would therefore appear that the principles of the union are antinomian—they contradict one another as the pages turn. For instance, the right of AU

member states to request intervention from the union in order to restore peace and security fly in the face of a commitment to respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance. It is not altogether clear as to who will qualify to request intervention in another country's affairs when the AU is committed to protecting the security of its individual members states. In other words, just like the OAU, the principles of a united Africa is contradicted by the commitment to existing sovereignty and national independence.

How will the AU then determine whether a desperate call by a member state is genuine and does not seek to stifle popular participation in his country? At whose behest, by whose order and definition, and by whose authority will peace and stability be protected and restored within the current African borders.

Like the OAU, the AU could easily be manipulated by those in power to silence opposition, put down popular sentiments towards democratic participation. How will materially vulnerable member states not succumb to bribery by the well-to-do leaders with intentions of buying power and influence, such as was the case at the OAU Summit when the Secretary-Generalship of the AU was secured by the promise of President Colonel Muammar el-Qaddafi?

How does the AU guarantee that member state whose financial contributions sustain the union will not dictate the pace, the agenda and outcomes of the Union's life as it affects the citizens of the continent?

Contrary to what the dignitaries of the AU and NEPAD would want us to believe, the success of the AU still has to be demonstrated, and the AU has less time to prove itself than the OAU did when people did not or were not allowed to ask crucial questions about decisions affecting their lives.

Lastly, how can Africans in this millennium trust that the AU signifies a new dawn when most of the leaders drinking to the toast of 'the new era' are themselves the problems that necessitate the quest to end the darkness on the continent? Many of them have defrauded and pillaged their economies, are, in the least too reluctant to vacate the space which they occupy way beyond their sell-by-dates? In other words, who is fooling whom?

It would appear that from the foundation of the AU and the pace at which NEPAD is being shaped, it is not hard to discern that the current crop of African political leaders are sinking into the same quagmire that has eroded the good names of the independence leaders over the last four decades.

A comparison of the governing bodies of the OAU and the AU makes one wonder whether it was at all necessary to recreate the organisation, and whether it would not have been better to reinforce the old organisation in light of current circumstances. African scholars such as Ali Mazrui are of the opinion that the creation of the AU was more to serve the interests of the current leaders as they want to go down in history as founders of an organization. It would have made more sense for the new leaders to have declared that the OAU has delivered on its mandate of overseeing political liberation of the African Continent, and that the time has come to embark upon an economic agenda and name the agenda something like OAU Phase 2. To reinvent the wheel that was already running was not that necessary altogether.

## 15.1 THE OAU ORGANS

**The Assembly of Heads of State and Government** with the overall responsibility of setting the agenda for the work of the OAU.

**The Council of Ministers**, a body of OAU Foreign Ministers responsible for the interactions and coeperation of states as well as monitoring the admission of new members states as they gained their political independence.

**The General Secretariat** with the responsibility of running the business and the interlocking network and liaison of the various stakeholders in the OAU.

**The Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration**, tasked with the responsibility of coordination the efforts of mediation, conciliation and arbitration of many disputes as part of the decolonisation process and with regard to border disputes on the continent.

**The Defence Commission** to oversee and coordinate the efforts pertaining to the member states' commitment to safeguarding their borders as well as joint efforts in case of collective efforts to defend the interests of Africa.

**The African Group at the United Nations (with an Executive Secretary)** which was responsible for making sure that African issues remained on the agendas of the United Nations for a, particularly matters of decolonisation and the right of self determination.

**The Liberation Committee** which was singularly responsible for making sure that African countries still under the yoke of colonialism were attended to and that liberation movements fighting for independence were materially supported.

**The Department of Education, Science, Culture and Social Affairs**, with the responsibility for coordinating efforts in the fields of education and technology, culture and social affairs to strengthen the unity and cooperation of the continent.

**The Department of Economic Development and Cooperation** to see to an ongoing and well coordinated strategies for Africa's integration and mutual cooperation in all fields.

**The Department of Political Affairs** to coordinate the political relationships and alignments on the continent and the extent to which Africa would develop areas of interdependence with the rest of the international community.

**The Department of Administration and Conferences** with the responsibility of assuring synergies in the administrations of African states and arranging conference and summit of its governing bodies.

**The Department of Finance** with the overall responsibility of financial and budget administration.

## 15.2 THE AU ORGANS

### **The Assembly**

The heads of government of all member states constitute the Assembly, which is the supreme decision making organ of the union.

The Assembly meets once a year at an annual summit of the AU at which a chairman is elected. It makes decisions by consensus, failing which, by two-thirds majority. Its functions are to determine common policies of the union, establish other organs, consider requests for membership, adopt the budget, give directives on the management of conflicts, war and other emergency situations, and to appoint and terminate the appointment and terminate the appointment of judges of the Court of Justice.

It also determines appropriate sanctions against member states that do not comply with AU decisions and policies or who fail to pay membership fees.

### **The Executive Council**

Ministers of foreign affairs make up this council, which is accountable to the Assembly. It coordinates and takes decisions on matters such as foreign trade, social security, food and agriculture, communications, health, education and immigration. The Executive Council prepares material for discussion and approval by the Assembly.

### **The Permanent Representatives Committee**

This committee is composed of country representatives or ambassadors to the AU and is responsible for preparing the work of the Executive Council and acting on its instructions. It will be stationed at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

### **The Commission**

This is the secretariat of the AU and is composed of a chairman, a deputy and eight commissioners. They will operate from AU headquarters and handle administrative functions and the implementation of union decisions.

It is the central communication organ and is responsible for coordinating meetings and activities of the AU structures. States wishing to attain or renounce membership of the union do so by informing the Commission chairman.



## **Specialised Technical Committees**

There will be specialised committees dealing with the rural economy; monetary and financial matters; trade and immigration; industry, science and technology; transport and communications; health, labour and social affairs; and education and culture. They will set up and coordinate projects and programmes of the union.

## **The Pan-African Parliament**

The Parliament will be made up of elected representatives from member states nominated by the five regions in Africa. The body will ensure the participation of people on the ground in the work of the AU, particularly in areas of development and economic integration. The powers and functions of the Parliament are still to be determined by the Assembly.

## **The Court of Justice**

The court will be responsible for pronouncing on human rights abuses in African states. A statute or legal framework will be set up within which it will operate.

## **The Economic, Social and Cultural Council**

This is an advisory council composed of professional and civic representatives.

## **The Financial Institutions**

Three institutions – the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund and the African Investment Bank – will be set up to provide funding for AU projects and programmes. The regulations governing these institutions are still to be defined.

## **The Peace and Security Council**

It is envisaged that the council will have 15 members who will be responsible for monitoring and intervening in conflicts. An earlywarning mechanism is

to be set up to alert the council about possible threats to security on the continent. The Council is to be financed by a peace fund. A pre-stationed African force will act on instructions of the council and a 'group of elders' will act as an advisory body.

## **16. IS NEPAD A MARSHALL PLAN FOR AFRICA?**

A great number politicians and commentators have evoked the Marshall Plan as the way to pull Africa out of the misery that it has been plunged into by colonialism over the last several decades. It is thus important to distill this comparison by placing in context what the Marshall Plan really was in order to demonstrate that the continuation of the comparisons of what happened in Western Europe following World War II and what Africa requires NOW is not quite appropriate if a solution is to be found for Africa's maladies in this millennium.

The Marshall Plan refers to an interventionist policy by the United States of America following the war that has ended in a world divided into two ideological camps, the American system and that of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR). As the war ended in 1947, the then US secretary of State, General George Marshall, argued for a European Recover Programme with which the USA would assist Europe recuperate from the devastation of the war. The essential ingredients of the Marshall plan were:

(a) clarity of the diagnosis of what had transpired in Europe; (b) adequacy of resources to be committed to the programme; and (c) a vision by a political leadership capable of setting aside short term conflicts of interests and even historic rivalries, in favour of longer-term (yet by no means utopian) mutual gains.

The conceptualisation, execution and consequences of the Marshall Plan were clearly spelled out by Marshall in a way that the Plan, though it was meant for Europe, was consonant with enlightened US self-interests and generosity of spirit. In a lecture announcing the Plan at Harvard University, Marshall said:

*Our policy is not directed against any country or doctrine, but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist. It would be folly to sit back and do nothing<sup>13</sup>*

With the Marshall Plan the US rushed to the aid of a Europe brought to its knees by a war caused by European rivalry and competition for spheres of influence. America in a sense recreated Europe and indeed assisted to strengthen Europe to unite. In this context, it is not altogether true that either Europe or the US had in any way, shape or form come rushing to Africa's aid after some type of one single deplorable devastation of the Continent as was Europe after World War II.

NEPAD is an African plan for which foreign support is sought, and unlike Europe in 1947, Africa is not devastated by war but by the ills of underdevelopment, poverty, illiteracy, poor leadership, corruption at the hands of those who plunder Africa's resources and bad financial management.

During the decolonisation period of the 1960s and 1970s, African countries, as did other developing countries, made requests for another Marshall Plan in order to accelerate their development not only through the provisions of massive financial resources but also through large scale transfer of technology available in the advanced countries. At times, representatives of the developed economies themselves made reference to some kind of a Marshall Plan for Africa. For instance, when Canadian Prime Minister, Jean Chretien visited Morocco, Algeria, Nigeria, South Africa, Mozambique, Ethiopia and Senegal in April 2002, it was reported that NEPAD was modeled on the Marshall Plan, unmindful of the fact that there are fundamental differences between the historical Marshall Plan of 1947 and NEPAD in 2002.

The Marshall Plan was joint endeavor of the war-devastated European countries creating a particular relationship, namely that between America as the donor on the one hand and Europe as the recipient on the other, for a specified period of four to five years. To buttress the work of the Plan, America

sponsored the creation of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) to attend to the administration of the Marshall Plan as such. Hence, in the 1960's, the Alliance for Progress among the governments in the western hemisphere was created to coordinate and monitor the use of American aid beyond its borders.

By all accounts, the Marshall Plan contributed positively to pulling Western Europe out of the ruins of World War II and assisted European member countries to rebuild their own capital bases and infrastructures. The sum total of the Marshall Plan was the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the post-World War II European economy.

When invoking the Marshall Plan as a solution to the problems facing Africa, we ought to bear in mind that there are fundamental differences between the conditions in Europe before and after the war on the one hand, and Africa in 2002 on the other. The pre-war Europe had a developed industrialised market economy. The greater part of Africa still does not. Thus, what the Marshall Plan did was simply to facilitate, within a time frame of four to five years, the rehabilitation and reconstruction of what existed in Europe before the war. Furthermore, a favourable human factor was still in place in post-war Europe, in spite of the devastation. In other words, without the environment that enabled the Plan to function, it would not have been possible to reconstruct Europe.

Africa is a different story altogether. What Africa needs is neither rehabilitation nor reconstruction. There is hardly anything to reconstruct and rehabilitate. The crisis in Africa calls for what the Romans would have dubbed as *renovatio ab initio* - starting from scratch or renovation from the bottom up! This entails building anew, and transforming the African polity, the African nation-states and their economies and indeed establishing all the essential infrastructures and institutions required for development to take off and be sustainable. That means that the imperatives advocated in virtually all the African development paradigms, namely, *self-reliance and self-sustainment encompassing socio-economic transformation* must, of necessity, be accompanied by the politics and policy of restitution, holistic human development and the democratisation of the institutions and process and policy-making processes that will undergird development.

It further means that African leaders must desist from paying lip service to a new transformation ethic that is informed by a human-centered development paradigm which puts the people at the centre of what sustains their nations, such that the ordinary people drive their own programmes in which they, the people themselves participate fully and meaningfully.

The arguments of NEPAD's proponents that its fundamentals are different from those of the LPA, that NEPAD is the first of its kind to provide a holistic framework for pursuing Africa's continental development agenda as against the prescription usually foisted by what Adedeji describes as development merchant systems (DMS), can therefore not be true. In fact, such a stance is at best spurious as it assumes that NEPAD will cause more foreign aid and freer trade to flow to Africa. The postulation in NEPAD that if Africa is to begin to exit from poverty, it needs to achieve consistently a GDP growth rate of 7.0 percent per annum and that given its percent low saving and investment ratio, the continent would need some \$64.0 billion of resource inflows every year. This is about 12.75 per cent of Africa's gross national income per annum at US\$ 62.57 billion in 1999.<sup>14</sup>

This expectation contradicts the new development cooperation paradigm, which has emerged since globalisation replaced superpower geopolitics as both the driving force and organising principle. This is so because the history of the international economy that the world knows says something very different from what NEPAD prophets would want to have us believe.

A realistic reading of the world today would suggest the following:

First, the stronger motivating force of national self-interest has changed to the speeding-up of global economic integration and using aid resources to address cross-border problems which are of direct concern to the donor countries as much as they are to the recipient nations. These cross-border challenges include the spread of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, degradation of the national environment and organised international crime. These problems are now perceived to demand new global or regional actions and new uses of foreign aid to provide an array of international public goods.

Second, the current shift from geopolitics to globalisation is being complemented by a move away from special treatment for individual countries

in mitigating their systematic market failures and structural weakness to accelerated integration of these countries into the worked economy and into the management of these countries into the worked economy and into the management of shared problems which stem from rapid global integration - in other words, strengthening the hold of the DMS by tying the African canoe firmly to the West's neo-liberal ship on the waters of globalisation.

Third, is the problem that Adedeji describes as follows:

*“There is a shift from an entitlement to an effectiveness approach in the provision of development assistance, which is reflected in the move by donors to greater selectivity in allocating aid among recipients. Such selections are biased in favour of performance in areas of macro-economic policy, poverty reduction and the exercise of good governance. The assessment of performance is of course usually that of the donor rather than of the recipient. Inevitably, it is the standards of the developed economies that will be imposed on Africa and whenever they conclude that such standards are not met they will withhold aid. Herein lies the wishful thinking of making aid a major factor in NEPAD. Every time the behaviour or performance of one African country or a group of countries is adjudged unsatisfactory a cloud would hang over the project and the whole of Africa, not just the erring country. The whole continent will be lumped together and collectively vilified. The so-called African Review Mechanism (APRM) provided for in the project will only work if its judgment always falls in line of with that of the donors. Whenever it does not, the aid may stop flowing and the trade may become less free. Unfortunately, whenever any African country falls short of donors' expectations, it is not only that country that is condemned, there is also a collective criticism and stigmatisation of the entire region or sub-region.”<sup>15</sup>*

There is a point at which there must be some distinction between what is acceptable in the AU as a political organization to which all members states of Africa must belong, and NEPAD as a separate entity which accepts membership and/or participation of member states on the basis of performance in areas of good governance, adherence to human rights and acceptable financial practices. African states should exercise judgement over these matters, and not donors or partners from the developed world.

African leaders and policy makers continue to exhibit a childlike naivety that political rhetoric and reality are the same and that claiming ownership will amount to real ownership in a world where the schism between the rich North and the poor South continues to be where the game is and will end. While the Africans claim that they are forging a partnership, the other side is continuing to see it as a donor-recipient relationship with some degree of humanitarian flair.

The G8 Summit commitment demonstrates clearly that the developed world would rather save Russia and concentrate on the crisis in the Middle East than give Africa what Africa went to receive in Kananaskis. Yet Africa, and the NEPAD leaders such as Thabo Mbeki, continue to hope and promise Africans that under NEPAD the re-awakening continent will attract US\$ 64.0 billion every year for an unlimited period.

## **17. STRENGTHS OF NEPAD**

The first major strength that NEPAD offers compared to earlier attempts is the fact that there is a renewed effort and commitment on the part of Africa to do business differently. Even this is merely political, it could only take Africa away from the inertia that she is in.

Second, it must be accepted that the OAU had accomplished its major task of liberating Africa, and thus something more vigorous and less political is necessary to compliment the political efforts on the Continent. This is more important in light of the fact that the development institutions are more likely to listen to an African outfit with muscle and that is dealing with the bread and butter issues of development. NEPAD offers that possibility.

Third, one cannot over emphasise the importance of Africa united to bargain and compete in the economies of scale with collective strength and unity in purpose, strategy and commitment to deliver.

Fourth, the OAU was not accompanied by an economic programme tasked to do the thinking that Summits of Heads of State are known to do.

Fifth, it very important and useful for Africa today to engage the international community on issues pertaining to the continent's development in a new and forward-looking way. The fact that Africa was seen as one entity speaking with one voice to the developed world is a big step in the right direction.

Sixth, the new emphasis on creating conditions within Africa for a culture of human rights, the rule of law, respect for individual rights and good governance as a prerequisite for sustainable development is highly commendable, especially when it is coming from the Africans themselves in their admission that African leaders have failed their people and the continent.

Seventh, the presence of young leaders such as Thabo Mbeki who are not associated with the current largesse of autocracy, corruption and maladministration is certainly welcome music to many on the African continent and those beyond who have lost faith in the continent.

Eighth, the discourses of NEPAD on the continent and beyond has definitely begun to change the shape and content of the development debate and paradigms as Africans are challenging the development institutions to listen to those who are to benefit from the aid that they receive.

Ninth, it is commendable that African leaders have recognised and undertaken to address the problem of the brain drain in Africa. Now they can be called to account for their promises to lure back into Africa and individual African countries African brains who have run away from their homes to eke out a better living elsewhere.

Tenth, NEPAD has Africa and the world talking, about Africa, not in ways that depict the continent as a wasteland, but that its leaders are serious about doing something different, urgently and collectively to reverse the trend of the marginalisation of the continent and its peoples, and that on their part, they will ensure and protect freedom for real development, both human and material, to happen in ways that it can be sustained by the people of Africa themselves.

In this sense, there distinct weaknesses, discernible threats as well as major challenges that must be addressed in order for the NEPAD process(es) to succeed. Weaknesses are those factors that are inherent in the historical process



and that, once they are overcome, will bear testimony to the commitment and tenacity of the drivers of the process. Threats are those factors that, unless they are understood and tackled with the necessary sensitivity and dexterity, at the right time by the right personages, can scuttle the whole agenda. This is the terrain of politics and genuine leadership! Challenges are those factors that in the face of risks offer real opportunities to move things ahead in the context of clear targets and benchmarks.

## **18. DISTINCT WEAKNESSES IN NEPAD**

In addition to the delineated uncertainties about and crises<sup>16</sup> that accompany NEPAD, several problems can be identified as major weaknesses that hang as virtual albatrosses around the necks of heads postulating recovery of post-colonial Africa.

The most immediate problem is unity. In 1963, with the founding of the OAU, the experience of colonialism from which all African nations were determined to rid themselves of was so strong that the need to unite around a common enemy and for the same objective of political independence was more compelling than any other reason stated for African unity or partnership.

Human history shows that human beings in general and African political leaders in particular are unlikely to make the kinds of sacrifices required to propel Africa into a future that will benefit all of its peoples. Leaders simply do not share the experiences of the masses of the peoples of Africa to make the type of resolve leaders of independence struggles were also to make, namely to do everything to achieve the goal of freedom by any means necessary.

The plight of Africa today is the selfish and power-motivated behaviour of African leaders. Since the days of independence, African leaders, civilian or military, ran the economies of their nations into the ground as they siphoned off national treasures into their personal accounts, often offshore. These leaders personalised the business of the state to the point that ‘The Fathers of the Nations’ could not conceive of the existence of the nations they liberated without themselves as Heads of State.

The experiences of Africa post 1990 reveals that this trend is continuing in the face of commitments made by various leaders to honour and abide by their Constitutions when they enter political office.

The second problem is that it is not too clear whether the AU is not a continuation of the OAU. A reading of the NEPAD Document is not substantively different from a reading of the 1963 OAU Charter. One could even argue that the OAU was more qualitatively the product of a energetic debate amongst the African leaders at the time, with intellectual giants such as Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), Ahmed Sekou Toure (Guinea), Gamel Abdel Nasser (Egypt), Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), Ahmed Ben Bella (Algeria) and Modibo (Mali) Keita - all disciplined subscribers of the 'Africa for the Africans' doctrine which undergirded the spirit of Pan-Africanism that shaped and formed their characters, their thinking and their intellectual orientation.

The absence of a Nkrumah in the NEPAD philosophical grounding creates a serious void within the current crop of African leaders. Thabo Mbeki's commendable activist orientation which forms the strongest basis for NEPAD is just not sufficient to sustain the spirit which should form the lifeblood of NEPAD, that is the naming, establishment and implementation of frameworks, institutions and processes with which to combat the ills of illiteracy, poverty, underdevelopment, the spread of opportunistic diseases such as HIV/AIDS, corruption and the general malaise of moral degeneration and chronic mimicry in post-colonial African societies.

The third problem is the preoccupation amongst the leaders of NEPAD to establish partnerships with the developed North before they establish a firm foundation for workable integration programmes within Africa upon which to seek additional support from outside. One would have hoped that this time around, African leaders would have work shopped their own partnership at the time of the launch of the AU, and having developed stratagem and mechanisms with tangible, measurable benchmarks based on the capacities of African states as a bedrock for international cooperation and partnership. There is still no serious commitments on the part of African states themselves as to how they as the most vital components of the agenda will devote their own resources to the programmes of NEPAD. The most logical modus

operandi would have been to constitute an African foundation first to which other countries, such as the G8, could contribute. To first rush to secure donor support from the outside world before Africans had made their own capacity inventory and commitments is putting the cart before the horse, smacks of the earlier attempts that led to disunity and failure in Africa.

The fourth is the ambiguity around the issue of partnership. At the rate developments around NEPAD had been going, one cannot help but wonder whether the attempts to woo the developed world to support NEPAD before Africans themselves could say what they were committing is not another exercise of going to the North with a begging bowl in hand. This is further compounded by the fact that the NEPAD secretariat is almost wholly funded by the outside world, such as the European Union. Further, all the fund-raising efforts by the NEPAD Secretariat is done outside of Africa. In fact, it is clear that the Implementation Committee was more serious about explaining NEPAD to the developed North in attempts to obtain the acceptance and buy-in from them than it did to persuade Africans to embrace NEPAD.

This problem then raises fundamental questions about the issue of ownership, that is to say, if NEPAD is by and for Africans, why was so little effort made by the Implementation Committee to sell NEPAD to the people of Africa? At times it appeared as though NEPAD was meant for the G8 more than the Africans themselves. Hence legitimate concerns were raised by a number of African leaders that the matter of ownership of NEPAD was insufficiently explored by the Implementation Committee.

The sixth is the lack of clarity amongst African leaders themselves regarding a clear distinction between arguing that Africa be given its rightful place in the international economy on the one hand and marketing Africa international aid on the other. It would appear that the NEPAD leaders did more marketing Africa than placing Africa on a competitive footing with the rest of the world. In this sense, there is nothing new or different about NEPAD, it is still African leaders going with a begging bowl to get assistance, and feel good about it. They forget that Africa has been marketed before: its vast natural resources, its fauna and flora, its Motherhood as the Cradle of the human species, its hospitable people, its Song and Dance with its scantily dressed people singing and dancing for guests at airports, and so on and so forth. This is in line with

the way Europeans marketed Africa to and for themselves. For Africans to believe that they are doing something different by singing the same song that was written for them by others, then raise the bowl for donations, is not what the New Africa needs.

Hence, the unfortunate nomenclature in NEPAD, such as investing in Africa's people. The question is: who does the investing in Africa's people? The sad part is that the leaders, perhaps inadvertently, see the investments and commitment of the African people not as the essential ingredient of Africa's development, but as additional to what the developed world would have given. Then the developed world can only do well by giving in order to recreate itself in Africa.

A further weakness in NEPAD is that the OAU looked to the future of Africa with Africans in charge, to manage or, as Nkrumah would have put it, mismanage their affairs whereas NEPAD, or perhaps even the AU, looks towards the Africanisation of the EU experience. If this is so, then the AU and NEPAD would be less authentic compared to the OAU.

The last inherent weakness is the notion of a peer review. The idea of an African Leaders' peer review juxtaposed with the classical and OAU notion of non-interference in another state's affairs is a problematic one. Perhaps the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Ahmed Mayer El-Sayed is more forthright than the NEPAD document itself when he states that the suggested peer review will be friendly meetings or brotherly discussions of African leaders who would come together and advise one another because they know one another's problems.<sup>17</sup>

It must be emphasised that while the mechanisms for review are clear enough on paper, the success of the peer review will be highly dependent upon considerable institutional capacity and political will amongst the peers to act against others and in so doing open themselves up for review by others.

There are already indications that the members of NEPAD have great difficulties criticising one another. It is difficult to see how African leaders as members of the AU (Nyerere once described the OAU as a Trade Union of Heads of State) who have the same interests of staying in power will raise

yellow or red cards to one another on behalf of the citizenries of others. In other words, is the Implementation Committee or the Peer Review Committee the bodies to receive bounced cheques and act at the same time as the Credit Bureau with the power to blacklist their peers? Who will submit a bounced cheque and on whose behalf?

This is not to say that NEPAD is not an important step in the right direction. The point is that unless the greatest number of African people move with some equilibrium in the same direction, and understand why they are moving there, it may be a thing which is not theirs. African leaders over the decades have embarked upon wonderful programmes and projects, but did not harness and summons sufficient emotional wherewithal from the people to guarantee success. Hence, many of the programmes and projects failed in no time.

## **19. MAJOR THREATS TO NEPAD**

In addition to asking the real question, what is new about the AU in general and NEPAD in particular that warrants excitement on the African continent, a few threats are discernible in the context and at the pace that developments in Africa have been evolving over the last eight years since the arrival of democracy in South Africa. Also, in the context of the failures of the OAU, it is important to identify some of these threats and address them before it is too late.

The first has to do with South African commentators' characterization of NEPAD as current leadership, especially Thabo Mbeki as the first time that 'Africans (are) taking their destiny in their own hands' suggesting that up until now this has not been done and that the African leadership over the last several decades did something other than direct their own affairs. In fact, the NEPAD Document itself acknowledges that there have been attempts in the past that aimed at setting out continent-wide development programmes.<sup>18</sup> This inclination on the part of the leadership of today is not unlike what Africa had experienced with the chronic lack of continuity on the continent. In other words, one of the weaknesses of African leaders is to pretend that what they are doing is totally new and had never been done by others. This spirit also contradicts what the NEPAD Document in the New Political Will of African leaders suggests, namely, that there have been attempts at addressing

African's problems before and from which the NEPAD leaders can learn. If the likes of Mbeki persist in these self-praising pronouncements, it will alienate others who believe they have been around longer and that they have made serious contributions to bring Africans where we are today. There are signs already of tension between the older guard and the younger lions with the older presidents such as El-Qaddafi (soon to be joined by others) to fight a rearguard war to retain the anti-imperialist fervour of African Unity and to argue that the likes of Mbeki are pandering to western interests and thus not to be trusted. If such a schism ensues, that could be the end of NEPAD.

The second is that it is not enough to emphasise and work on the economic decolonisation of Africa in the globalising international economy. The international economy is buttressed by a mind set in the West and elsewhere that serves to marginalise Africa further. Therefore, what Ngugi waThiong'o describes as the decolonisation of the mind must accompany, if not precede the dialogue between Africans and their potential sponsors in the developed world. This is so because as long as Africa remains an expense on the developed world's balance sheet, Africa will continue to be where it has been, or, when African leaders seasonally think they are exiting, they find themselves to be moving with a revolving door which brings them back every time they think than have exited.

What will it take to teach Africans that foreign aid has never developed a single economy in the world. People develop themselves, and investments come because investors have confidence that they will benefit from their investments.

The third is the reality that in order for the AU to succeed, NEPAD must be utilised and is in fact a prerequisite to the AU's own success. Beyond symbolism and giving Africa a pan-African look, the AU has very little to hang on to after virtually all of Africa has been liberated politically. What colonialism and the politics of political liberation have in common is the fact that they have both underdeveloped Africa. Thus something new is needed and required to take Africa out of the misery that it is in. It is totally understandable therefore that NEPAD emphasises good governance and the rule of law and democracy in a way that the AU itself would be too vague about. This is so because the malaise in Africa today has been brought about

by African leaders who have, like their colonial masters, plundered and pillaged Africa for their own personal enrichment and engrandisement . They are part of the problem and their role in finding the solution must therefore be limited. Many African leaders who are part of the problem cannot be part of the solution. There must thus be areas where member states of the AU may not qualify to be players in NEPAD.

In other words, the AU, like the OAU were more about political issues and less about economic issues. Both the OAU and NEPAD could not make the governance-development connection, NEPAD can and does. While the AU is a continuation of the OAU, NEPAD represents more directly the second phase of the struggle for total emancipation of the African continent. In this case, the dilemma exists that the leadership will find very difficult to deal with: Which of the two have the power and authority to sanction the other? The trouble is that NEPAD is the tail, and the AU the dog. Thus the tail will wag the dog and not the other way around.

The fourth is the inability of African leaders to rely on their own human resource base and the ease with which they accept the advice of those who do not look like them as fine and scientific. The brain drain that is mentioned by most leaders when they address one another has been brought about in part by the fear and resentment that African decision makers have exhibited hitherto towards their own nationals and race group. African leaders are more inclined to seek advise from outside whereas they have the reservoir in their backyard which they unwilling to tap into.

Unless Africans begin to develop and show confidence into themselves and fellow Africans, it will be difficult for Africans to take into their own hands the destiny of the continent, unless it is to understood that the only people who are true Africans and who can take the destiny of the continent in their hands are the political leaders who are already there and will be there for ever.

The fifth is the crippling reality of the politics of patronage in Africa, whereby positions, roles and material well-being are distributed to loyal members of ruling parties only. It is unfortunate that the inheritance of political parties by Africa from their colonial masters has unleashed the severe blow upon the

African personality such that when Europeans view and treat political parties as an instruments of managing elections and smooth transfer of power, political parties in Africa have subsumed everything in life, to the extent that leaders are wont to saying that their lives have been shaped by political parties. Political parties such as the ANC in South Africa and SWAPO in Namibia have surpassed religion and have become the line that determine whether one is relevant or irrelevant in life. The ruling party has become indistinguishable from the state. Therefore if Africa is serious about reinventing herself, the role of political parties and their high priests must be revisited and contextualised in Africa post independence.

The sixth is the fact that African leaders have, over the decades, demonstrated a serious lack of what is referred to as a 'common room culture' - an environment of dialogue wherein no one person knows the truth, but every participant can contribute as an equal, and each and all in search of the truth. African leaders are obsessed with upstaging one another and stealing the media headlines in their countries and in the west and they do this with great enthusiasm at the expense of the business of collective leadership. As if this is not enough, they are surrounded by local (often party loyalist) job seekers and sycophants who prey on the insecurities of their leaders and manipulate the fears of their leaders to get jobs.

The seventh is what appears to be a lack of urgency on the part of the current leadership unlike that urgency that characterised the formation of the OAU. The following two statements by the two strongest proponents of the OAU and the AU/NEPAD respectively illustrate the difference. Whereas the OAU leadership's immediate objective was to start something new, the immediate objective of the leadership of the AU was to celebrate themselves. In what was expected to be the most important statement of the moment, Thabo Mbeki started his launch of the African Union on 9 July 2002 as follows:

*We have gathered at this stadium in Durban to carry out a solemn and historic act, the launch of the African Union. We are meeting here to celebrate and rejoice in a great achievement of the people of Africa, the formation of the African Union.*

At the launch of the Organization of African Unity on 24 May, 1963, its strongest advocate, Kwame Nkrumah said:



*I am happy to be here in Addis Ababa on this most historic occasion. I bring with me the hopes and fraternal greetings of the Government and people of Ghana to His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie and to all Heads of African States gathered here in this ancient capital in this momentous period in our history. Our objective is African union now. There is no time to waste. We must unite now or perish. I am confident that by our effort and determination we shall lay the foundation for a continental Union of African States.*

The eighth threat has to do with what most analysts have identified as a major shortcoming in the evolution of NEPAD, namely that the process has not evolved as a product of hard nosed thinking and dialogue amongst African leaders, but rather that it is an obsession of a few who started to market the plan before there was a sufficient buy-in from the Africans themselves. If this sentiment manifests itself beyond opportunistic rhetoric by the likes of El-Qaddafi, it could mean that NEPAD put the cart before the horse, and could slow down the process of fund-raising with the developed world which is major ingredient of NEPAD.

The ninth is the generational gap between African leaders that must at point rear its head and manifest some fundamental differences in philosophies, conceptualisations and even preferences on how to deal with African issues on the way forward. It is difficult to see how the likes of Thabo Mbeki with the belief in and commitment that Africa must be transformed can be fully supported by the likes of Daniel arap Moi of Kenya, Muammar El-Qaddafi of Libya, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Joachim Chissano of Mozambique, Eduardo Do Santos of Angola, Charles Taylor of Liberia, Denis Sassou-Nguesso of Congo Brazaville, Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo, and Omar Bongo of Gabon, who are part of the disorder in post-independence Africa.

The tenth is the fact that not all African leaders support NEPAD, and their support for the establishment of the AU should not be seen as synonymous with a committed nod for NEPAD. In this sense, the Implementation Committee in general and South Africa in particular is a precarious situation in that they are expected to deliver on a mandate which they do not quite have. In other words, African leaders who are not part of the Implementation

Committee and who have reservations on NEPAD would still want the Committee to bring in the money from the developed world to alleviate their own problems, yet they do not like the fact that if that money, praise will go to those who went to solicit it. This tension is exacerbated by the reality that African countries do not have the same level of development, and thus their needs are not the same. Part of the NEPAD preparations would have been to make a assessment of different scales of capacities and needs within Africa. Without this clarity, it will be difficult to assign money to countries once it is given by the international development community. Rivalry for resources is a threat that needs to be dealt with in earnest if NEPAD is to succeed.

The eleventh has to do with South Africa's leadership of both the AU and NEPAD. Many African countries are not happy with South Africa's attempts to reinvent the wheel by claiming to have discovered the cure to Africa's ills when so many have tried and failed. Africa has been on the path of recovery before, and South African commentators insistence that this is the first time Africa has decided to take its destiny into its own hands is not helpful to Mbeki and borders on national arrogance. In the same vein, it is difficult to see how Mbeki will succeed in steering both the AU and NEPAD at the same time. One can argue that Mbeki stands a better chance of succeeding with NEPAD than with the AU. Thus his embrace of the leaderships of both may just cause him to trip over one as he is trying to push the other.

Lastly, it must be borne in mind that the pillaging of African resources by African leaders has taken place with the assistance of western banks and western institutions. If the call is for Africans to partner with the developed world to develop Africa, then it stands to reason that western banks and institutions have to return what has been stolen and in the future refuse to stash stolen wealth from Africa. They cannot continue to cry that African leaders are corrupt when at the same time they facilitate the theft and the robbery. It is not clear who will start this dialogue and what the developed world's reaction will be when they have to do something that will not bear them immediate profit. Without this commitment as part of the partnership, NEPAD may be stillborn.

## 20. MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR NEPAD

As the NEPAD leadership has failed already to mobilise the most qualified good governance police force, the civil society in Africa, how will the leaders act in times when crises occur as a result of the conduct of elected politicians? The case of Zimbabwe is a case in point. In other words, the body with the power to review the behaviour of political leaders is not some body of peers who belong to the same trade union, but those who are on the receiving end of the behaviour of the leaders - a well informed civil society with a capacity to recall delinquent leaders.

The leaders of NEPAD thought of themselves and their donors first. They did not even think of galvanising their own parliaments and civil societies to embrace the idea that they were rushing with overseas. African parliaments got to learn about NEPAD in the newspapers when they should have been a major source of information on this great idea that was bringing hope to the nations of what the Economist described as a hopeless continent<sup>19</sup>. It is only later that the leaders remembered that there were experts in Africa who could be involved in the process of elaborating it. These experts were then stung into action by the call of the Heads of State. For the most part, these experts are themselves job seekers who tend to describe the process for the leaders rather than subject the whole historical period that NEPAD symbolises to critical examination.

The challenges are immense and need to be faced if Africa is to embrace this period and process, however paradoxical they may be.

First, NEPAD is a government led and government driven initiative. NEPAD, or the AU for that matter, did not become an agenda of the African electorate. Unlike the evolution of the European Union where individual member countries held referenda to test the understanding of and the support by the general populace of the unification of Europe, African leaders, as usual, arrogated to themselves the right to know best and decide for their nations.

The role of an increasingly sophisticated - not sycophantic - media cannot be overemphasised in Africa - a public media that is mandated and able to focus on truthful reporting and comprehensive analysis rather than 'packaged'

reportage. Similarly, progressive reporting does not necessarily mean government bashing, as not everything that government does is bad or good. As part of society government must be given praise when it is due, and criticism when it deserved. To this effect, the media, the education sector and other disseminators of the continent's values ought to be sufficiently resourced in terms of personnel, skills and funds so that they are able to monitor the process of governance and not be merely episodic. In other words, NEPAD has yet to capture and electrify the imaginations of the African masses without whose support and internalisation it cannot be sustained in the long run.

Second, under NEPAD, African governments had committed themselves to standards of good governance and democracy through a system of peer review and institutional mechanisms. These are the foundations for the operation of the programme, the core principles of successful development and without which donors will be loath to invest at current let alone increased aid levels. The commitment of the G8 which suggests already certain requirements in the realm of good governance, the rule of law and human rights, is a case in point.

Third, the role of business has not been fully appreciated by the African political leaders. The role of business, or the corporate citizens of African countries is crucial, not least because the bulk of the US \$64 billion targeted for annual investment and expected to come from the developed world is in fact monies to come from the private sector, not the governments. African leaders have an inclination not to remember that when they speak to heads of governments in the developed world, these leaders do not themselves possess the money asked for, but that they in turn go back to their private sector and corporate representatives and raise the money by way of investment in Africa. For this the financial investors ask of their government leaders for assurance that their monies would be safe in African countries where they are urged to take their investments. In the same vein, African leaders are in a hurry to ask foreign investors to invest in their countries while they do not encourage their own local investors to do the same. This schizophrenia can only fuel suspicion, lack of faith and ultimately sustainable investment practices as the foreign investors continue to have doubts about the commitment political leaders to providing conducive environments for their invested monies to gain profits. NEPAD should in all earnestness address the question of domestic

investment with the same vigour that Foreign Direct Investment is sought. After all, domestic investment would boost the confidence of foreign investors whose emotional and political loyalties will always lie elsewhere and not in Africa.

Fourth, a couple of fundamental conceptual questions remain unanswered: For example, why would and how do we know that the African aid package that the leaders are seeking now can deliver where so many others have failed in the past? Is increased donor aid to Africa's development the best way to advance development on the continent, in light of the fact that international donor regimes such as the World Bank has spent more than US \$500 billion on foreign aid to Africa before? Why do Africans today remain on aggregate less wealthy than three decades ago? Have Africans exhausted all their resources towards their collective development in the last three to four decades, and what have they learned which they cannot repeat? How different is what we are saying today from what we have been saying all along, qualitatively and quantitatively? Is NEPAD sufficient to remedy this condition? Do we not have to re-examine the core problems with the African state which is so weak, so fragmented and so arbitrarily defined, such that we face the real question: seeing that the OAU for purposes of expediency chose to honour and perpetuate colonial borders, should the death of the OAU not create a fresh platform to begin to collapse these artificial borders for the sake of a more integrated and truly united Africa?

Fifth, in providing an overarching continental development framework, NEPAD runs the risk of African states overlooking the small issues which they can do something in isolation about - the small policy changes that can effect change without a new development paradigm that NEPAD offers. NEPAD, put crudely, runs the risk of being seen as a 'cure-all' for the continent's problems.

Sixth, NEPAD assumes that aid works, through historical evidence over the past decades does not support such an assumption in the absence of local capacity and good governance policies. Curiously, African states now want more aid, forgetting that often the conditions that accompany foreign aid have often undone exactly what the foreign aid was intended to do.

Seventh, there exists a danger that business, arguably the genuine engine of growth and development, does not share the view that governments have on foreign aid. Business sees foreign aid as a catalyst to create conditions wherein entrepreneurship can prosper, whereas government sees aid as the *Deus ex Machina* that would fund what governments should be funding themselves with austerity and discipline. Thus business and government are not in agreement as to what the sought aid will effectively do.

Eighth, there exists a core tension within NEPAD itself in that the NEPAD agenda has to be inclusive to be adopted by all Africa, whereas it has to be exclusive to be successful. This tension manifests itself in relation to state relationships where one country, such as South Africa does not want to take a controversial position with regard to another, such as Zimbabwe. Yet, states are principally motivated by sovereignty and self-interests first, and interdependence second.

Ninth is the need for a forward-looking leadership in and for Africa to steer the progress ahead. The United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan was himself offering a word of caution in his speech at the Summit. “This historic effort”, he said, “will require leadership, courage and a willingness to depart from the ways of the past”.

It must finally be admitted that NEPAD does offer a new conceptual framework potential with which Africa can reinvent herself and realise the aspirations of the African Renaissance. A beginning has been made. As much as many of the utterances are unrealistic, NEPAD got Africa talking to herself and rest of the world. This is no small accomplishment. Now is the time to look for a way forward. A great deal will depend on the political will to translate dreams into practical and realistic programmes of action, not based not upon expediency, but a genuine call for change on the continent. Mbeki is right in reminding us that ‘Africa’s time has come’.

Hopefully the current leaders will see their contributions with a sense of urgency and an imperative to be consistent with the stated goals, hopes and aspirations of NEPAD, and that this initiative will assist Africans to transcend the age old schisms of cultures and ideologies. The time has come for Africa to cast aside those factors that might appear difficult to surmount and move onto higher planes of purpose, self-reliance and the kind of self-development that was truncated by the history and experiences of colonialism and apartheid.

## 21. CONCLUSION

As the Namibian Prime Minister, Theo-Ben Gurirab has pointed out poignantly, the idea that underlies NEPAD, namely as a comprehensive robust economic programme to give feet to the agenda of the AU after the achievements of the OAU, can only be a meritorious notion and one to be embraced by all Africans.<sup>20</sup>

This is not the first time that Africa has come up with a major initiative with which to deal with the endemic crises of underdevelopment, poverty, diseases, and the dysfunctionality of the many states on the continent. There have been a series of fine and commendable initiatives and undertakings as part of the decolonisation process since the hey-day of political independence on the continent. Plans like the Lagos Plan of Action and the Abuja Treaty have come and gone, with few results that Africans can boast about. These initiatives have failed due to a number of factors, some petrifugal while others are centrifugal.

Petrifugal reasons have had to do with the myopia and megalomania of African independence leaders who, with the exception of Kwame Nkrumah, internalised the logic and sacredness of the inherited artificial borders of African nation-states. The inability of African governments to tackle the artificiality of the nations they have inherited contributes to the suffering of African masses despite the gains of the liberation of the continent as a whole. The very leaders who proclaim African integration are part and parcel of the xenophobia and brain drain that continue to bleed the continent. While the Europeans, the very people who created the border situation in Africa were moving towards unity, African states were moving away from one another, often with the support of their former European colonial masters.

Secondly, the backwardness and illiteracy of the vast majority of the African civil societies have fed very comfortably the egos of the African Heads of States who preyed upon xenophobia and lack of meaningful participation of their subjects.

Third, there was and continues to be a transparent lack of political will on the part of African leaders to transform Africa from enclaves of European outposts

to a home for Africans *qua* Africans. Thus far, only Nkrumah and Nyerere demonstrated genuinely breaking the barriers that stood in the way of a united Africa. Nkrumah committed politically and materially to making his country, Ghana, a home for all Africa, to an extent that he had in his administration non-Ghanaian nationals as a prelude to what African administrations ought to be like. It is thus no accident that the father of Pan-Africanism, Web Du Bois, spent the latter part of his life in Ghana where he died. President Julius Nyerere opened the University of Dar Es Salaam as a home for Africans on the continent and in the diaspora. The West African intellectual activist Walter Rodney spent years teaching at that University before he was assassinated. There is not one non-South African in President Mbeki's Presidency to assist with the thinking about the African issues that Mbeki is legitimately purporting to champion. There is not one non-Nigerian in President Obasanjo's Office to add to the Nigerian thrust and propel the continent forward. One would have expected African leaders, especially Mbeki and Obasanjo to have spearheaded a continental campaign to create an atmosphere for African Heads of State and their Foreign Ministers to draw skills and expertise from African scholars who are not from their nations to deepen their understanding, enrich their commitments and facilitate the dissemination of their agendas and programmes.

Centrifugal reasons had to do with the timing of the African Agenda. The Cold War bedeviled good efforts to the extent that whenever Africans attempted to delink from European edifices and practices, they were summarily called communists, thus to be removed from where their people could hear them. The Cold War paradigm was one that Africans borrowed unquestioningly and used it against one another in their unsavoury game of politics.

It must also be mentioned that the usage of the word partnership to describe what NEPAD is seeking to achieve is perhaps premature as the relationship between Africa and the developed world is not one of equality. It remains a relationship between the richer donor and the poor recipient of the donation. Cooperation would have been a more appropriate description as cooperation does not require equality, but a synergy of purpose.

The NEPAD leaders have been fortunate to compose their new song as the



international community is living under circumstances different from the Cold War Era. The recent decade plus has seen a convergence of agreement on international development goals and a common agenda towards an amelioration of the problems in the developing world in general and Africa in particular. It is not certain, however, how and whether African leaders and development planners wish to take advantage of the prevailing consensus around the world that deliberate actions are needed to address the problem of underdevelopment, not only in Africa, but around the world. For Africa, Mbeki is right when he asserts that Africa's time has come, as it did in the past, to set its house in order by doing what is contained in NEPAD, and invite the development community internationally to augment Africa's own efforts. The sad part is that it does not look as though that is the way things are going.

Despite the main challenges ahead, NEPAD still offers the best hope for Africa at this point in time. The way forward would be better paved if all African countries who are members of the AU would undertake a consciousness – raising programme within their own constituencies and inform their citizens of the changes that were introduced by the political leaders with the ushering in of the AU and NEPAD. This is very crucial as many commendable programmes and projects in Africa fail because the people who are supposed to be served by them have neither the knowledge nor the necessary understanding of such programmes and projects. In the end, the programmes might be and often are very good, but they are not part of the people. In the very least, African parliaments should extra sessions just on the significance of the AU and NEPAD so that the leader who purport to have access to the people of the grassroots and grasstops can be more informed than those they represent. The importance of raising awareness and generating a buy-in from the electorates of Africa cannot be overemphasised. It took the creation of the European Union decades and several national referenda—in nations where the levels of illiteracy are not close to where illiteracy is in the African Continent. This is not the time for political leaders to believe that what they, by virtue of being leaders at a given time know, think and prefer is necessarily shared by the greatest numbers of people in their nations. If the AU and what NEPAD seeks to achieve is to have continuity beyond their founders, these agendas ought to be inscribed on the hearts of the African peoples who will elect the leaders in times to come. Leaders go, but countries stay.

Let us hope that this time around, at the first AU Heads of State and Government Summit review of NEPAD in Maputo, Mozambique, in 2003, Africa will not confirm the adage that the more things change, the more they remain the same! Better yet, it is time for Africa to heed the words of the Algerian revolutionary, Frantz Fanon:

*Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission. Fulfil it or betray it!*<sup>21</sup>

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**UNDERSTANDING THE NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR  
AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT  
(NEPAD)**

joseph diescho

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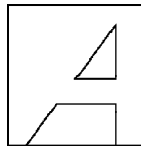
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