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BY **VASU GOUNDEN**

This issue of *Conflict Trends* focuses on leadership in Africa, since leadership is one of the many factors that influence conflicts. This is even more significant in Africa and other parts of the developing world, where broad-based governance within democratic parameters has not yet taken root and where voting for personalities is still more common than voting for party manifestos. Consequently, power becomes centred at the top and leaders wield immense influence, often holding positive societal change hostage until they are overthrown (like Mobutu of Zaire) or die (like Abacha of Nigeria). In the process, their actions have negatively influenced the future of their countries for generations to come.

Africa is currently experiencing a generational change. New leaders will, for the first time, have very little exposure, experience and attachment to the colonial struggles waged by their predecessors. The legacy of colonialism, the Cold War, the structural adjustment policies of the eighties, despotic rule, poor socio-economic developmental choices and the myriad of ongoing and potential conflicts are what the new generation of African leaders will inherit. This 'inheritance' will occur in the context of a rapidly globalising world in which Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, is being increasingly marginalised.

The next generation of leaders is also faced with the challenge of the second scramble for resources in Africa, with many more 'outside' players competing to feed their rapidly developing economies by accessing and exploiting African resources. This is occurring at a time when we are observing the rampant accumulation of personal wealth, unlike the previous era of the 'colonial-struggle leaders', whose leadership was defined by the fight to socially uplift all people.

The danger today is that leaders may be tempted (and there are many current examples in Africa) to collude with multinational corporations and other such organisations seeking concessions for mining minerals, drilling oil and operating utilities to accumulate personal wealth, with little regard for the future of their people. As Africa has experienced, the social consciousness of the Nyereres, Nkrumahs, Mandelas, Lumumbas and Nassers can so easily be replaced by the self-interest of the Mobutus and Abachas.

It may very well be a positive step for the new generation of leaders to break with the past and assume future-oriented positions. On the other hand, an awareness of African history and struggles is important as it shapes the future – and leaders must have clear analyses of the causes and consequences of Africa's current situation and challenges. In this context, the formation of the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development and other African initiatives of the last decade are steps in the right direction in addressing the structural causes of conflict.

Africa needs a new breed of leaders with deep social consciousness, who are prepared to become 'servant leaders' for the common good of their people. Time is of the essence, especially with the tremendous challenges that Africa currently faces: increasing poverty, poor infrastructure, rapidly growing populations, climate changes and the growing dominance of narrow identity groups and subsequent conflicts that arise. These challenges require the urgent attention of leaders who understand such problems and are committed to the common good. They need to utilise whatever national resources they have to lead their nations, their regions and the continent at large to sustainable solutions, by implementing strong developmental plans that will address these challenges over the next several decades. Unless we develop leaders who can accomplish this, we will likely be in grave danger of replicating many more Somalias in Africa.

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A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

WRITTEN BY **JAIRAM REDDY**

We live in a complex and interdependent world, easily vulnerable to disruption. This is well exemplified in the post 9/11 context by the war in Iraq, with its mass sectarian killings, and the continuing turmoil in Palestine and Israel; a fragile planet whose ecosystem is threatened by global warming, largely due to emissions from the use of fossil fuels; millions of deaths from the HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa; vast sectors of the population living in dire poverty without adequate food, sanitation or potable water. In this unfolding scenario, the need for leadership has never been so great, at every level of society. Leaders who can broaden horizons, uplift spirits and mobilise the necessary resources and empower others to act in the best interests of their organisation and the larger society are needed.

Definition and Conception of Leadership

Unlike well-established disciplines like philosophy, economics or sociology, leadership is an elusive and contestable concept. What really constitutes leadership? More importantly, how can we differentiate between good or effective and bad leadership? Leadership is a relatively new and emerging discipline, is multidisciplinary, and embodies theoretical concepts as well as a strong experiential component. It is also a matter of debate as to whether leaders are born, or if they can be developed. Despite these uncertainties, there has emerged a growing body of knowledge in the scholarship of leadership. There are approximately 50 000 to 60 000 books on the subject, with several hundred added every year, in addition to a number of reputable leadership journals.

Decades of study, research and analysis have provided numerous definitions of leadership. While there is no agreed definition of leadership, two themes consistently emerge[1]:

1 it influences the behaviour of others; and
2 this influence is intentional and directed towards some desired objective, for example, developing a new product, or mobilising support for HIV/AIDS prevention.

Left to right: Examples of effective leadership in Africa include that of Sam Nujoma, former president of Namibia; Ketumile Masire, former president of Botswana; Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa; and Joaquim Chissano, former president of Mozambique.

The following definition of leadership captures its essence:

Leaders have a significant role in creating the state of mind that is society. They can serve as symbols of the moral unity of the society. They can express the values that hold the society together. Most important, they can conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their petty preoccupations, carry them above the conflicts that tear a society apart, and unite them in the pursuit of objectives worthy of their best efforts.[2]

Leadership and Democratic Governance

Successful democratic governance requires at least two elements:

➔ **Institutions** – free and fair elections, an elected parliament, an independent judiciary, a free press and a vibrant civil society are the cornerstones of democratic governance.

➔ **Leadership** – credible trustworthy leadership complements the institutional framework of democratic governance to provide the necessary stability and a climate for sustainable development, peace and prosperity.

This interrelationship is well captured in post-apartheid South Africa, where the government failed to provide scientifically proven antiretroviral drugs to its large population of HIV-infected patients. The Treatment Action Campaign, a powerful non-governmental organisation, campaigned for its provision, eventually triumphing at the Constitutional Court, which compelled the government to provide the drugs. This is an instance of a clear failure of leadership, but an organ of civil society was successful in redressing this failure.

Global and Cross-Cultural Leadership

Global leaders are expected to execute leadership strategies across countries, borders, time, nations, functions and products. This requires a paradigm mind shift from the traditional domain of leadership exercised in a country, community or organisation. The competitive global economy requires adaptation to change and being attuned to world-class concepts and competencies. And yet leaders must be aware that in the global economy,

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Distinguishing Features of Leadership

There are numerous qualities associated with effective leadership. While these qualities are largely based in organisational leadership examples and cases, the following four qualities have application across all levels and are pivotal for effective leadership:

Vision – A critical element of successful leadership is providing a sense of direction, to focus the attention of the organisation. A shared vision is a necessity for all successful organisations. The vision articulates a view of a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organisation, a condition that is better in some important ways than what now exists – for example, Bill Gates aimed to put a computer in every home. The vision provides an important bridge from the present to the future of the organisation.

Trust – Trustworthiness is a vital characteristic of successful leadership, and the capacity to generate and sustain it is imperative. It is hard to gain and easy to lose. Trust implies accountability, predictability and reliability. Leaders who are predictable and make their positions known are trusted. It is trust that keeps an organisation together and binds followers and leaders. The accumulation of trust is a measure of the legitimacy of leadership. It cannot be mandated or purchased, it must be earned.

Empowerment – Good leaders do not seek power but empower others to translate intentions into reality and sustain it. Many theorists, including Machiavelli and Marx, regarded power as the basis for political leadership. The exercise of power can be understood from a number of points of view: taking it from someone else and using it to dominate and prevent someone from gaining it, finding common ground among different interests and building collective strength, and a person's sense of self-worth and self-knowledge as unique potential to shape his or her life and world.

Values and principles – A set of guiding principles and values shape the organisational culture, for example, an emphasis on the quality of the products of an organisation, or the working conditions and social welfare of its workforce. At societal and community levels, core values may include gender equity, democracy, community participation, collaboration, social responsibility and concern for the environment.

driven by knowledge and information technology, large numbers of people are being marginalised, and the gap between the rich and poor is widening.

Global leaders need to also consider cross-cultural differences, and the differences and implications in knowledge, meanings and the value systems of followers. Like leadership itself, there is no agreed definition of culture, but it may be understood as a set of characteristics that differentiate groups – ways of thinking, reacting and feeling, value systems, languages, music and artistic creation, amongst others. At times, there are sharp intercultural differences within countries, but they are more likely across countries and continents. In some cultures, the supreme power that rests in a monarchy, for example, may be acceptable; in others, such a notion will be fiercely resisted. Reaction to the degree of uncertainty to the rapidly changing nature of the contemporary world order, collectivism versus individualism, and masculinity versus femininity will vary from nation to nation, and from culture to culture.[3]

Ethical Leadership and the Moral Capital of Leaders

There are at least four features of this notion: excellence of character, virtues appropriate for a human being within a particular socio-cultural context, integrity and what makes a person good as a human being.[4] This refers to the moral capital of leaders, their trust and their integrity. Leaders will be forgiven if they make mistakes or commit errors of judgment, but will not be forgiven if they are dishonest and cannot be trusted. Of all the characteristics of leadership, trustworthiness and integrity are the most important. Good leaders are honest, caring and principled individuals who make fair, rational and balanced decisions, speak to their followers about ethical standards and practice what they preach.

The African Leadership Context

Not all has gone well for post-colonial independent countries in Africa, in terms of democratic governance and credible and ethical leadership. Military dictatorships (Uganda and Nigeria), corruption (Democratic Republic of Congo), ethnic conflict (Rwanda and Burundi) and elections manipulation (Zimbabwe) have been the hallmarks of this period. Yet there have been success stories of efficient, effective and worthy leadership in Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Mozambique.

In these countries, not only have there been sustained levels of economic growth, but leaders have stepped down after their mandatory terms expired, and have allowed free and fair elections to choose their successors. Thus, the Africa Commission Report had this to say about the importance of leadership in Africa:

> *Africa needs leaders. Strong leaders committed to change are one of the key drivers to progress. Developing the capabilities of leaders at all levels and in all spheres – political, the public sector, business and civil society is critical to African led sustainable development.*[5]

Is there a uniqueness or peculiarity about African leadership, in contrast to that of other cultures or countries? Gordon postulates that the foundations of African leadership are deeply rooted in African cosmology and world views – the major elements of this foundation are religion and philosophy, the family, ageism, kinship and tribalism.[6] What has the impact of the imposition of European values and concepts of leadership, political institutions and nationhood been on Africa's leadership? In particular, with reference to the leader's abilities, personalities, disabilities, oratorical powers, charisma and their ability to manage the mass media.[7]

Leadership succession has followed two trajectories in Africa. The first has been the dynastic trend. Recently the Togolese president succeeded his son, Joseph Kabila succeeded his father in the DRC and, in Egypt, Hosni Mubarak's son is reportedly being groomed for succession. The second trend has arisen out of the liberation movements – Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki in South Africa, Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe, and Sam Nujoma in Namibia being examples. In a number of the countries ruled by such liberation heroes, the opposition tends to be weak and hence, in effect, there is a one-party state, although democratic in name. Meredith refers to this genre of African leaders as "the long distance men" – those who determinedly cling to power for long periods: Mugabe of Zimbabwe, who has been in office for 27 years; Mubarak has ruled Egypt for 24 years; and Paul Biya, who has ruled in Cameroon for 24 years.[8]

Leadership Development

There is a lack of empirical research on the effectiveness of different approaches to leadership development.

What should be the target group for leadership development? A strong emphasis is placed upon the importance of reaching children at school, through formal education in citizenship skills, which would provide tangible experiences in leadership and community involvement at an early stage. This could be complemented by informal education, offered by bodies such as the worldwide Scout and Girl Guide movements and, later, through encouraging young people to volunteer their services overseas. The second group of 'youth' candidates includes those between the ages of 16 and 24 years of age – children of the digital and web-based IT revolution. They are suitable as targets for leadership development as they position themselves with regard to the big questions of life ahead of them, and could also be targeted, as appropriate, upon graduation.

The most widely targeted group is between the ages of 25 and 40, commonly referred to as emerging leaders. Among this group are experienced managers who may have lost their moral bearings or may have been exposed to corruption, as well as those who are poised to assume vital positions of leadership in the near future. Most leadership programmes provide one or another form of leadership training to this age group, in the belief that this group will then be best placed to assume leadership positions at an early stage. At the top tier of the pyramid are established leaders. They are

modern information technology to design a set of activities that could bring alumni into closer contact and into working relationships is a good idea. Web-based activities, for example, are eminently suited to this task. Developing alumni is an area where the sharing of best practices, as well as ongoing monitoring, evaluation and research, should have a central place in any global leadership strategy.

Leadership development is a continuous systematic process. Structured learning activities could include a mix of topics: self-reflection and personal awareness, knowledge of political systems, confidence-building, skills in facilitation and communication, team-building, conflict resolution, planning and analysis.

In contrast to individual leadership, which is seen as heroic, transformational or charismatic, there can also be shared, distributed, dispersed or co-leadership. Such leadership results in team-building, collective action, delegation and the sharing of responsibilities. Successful leaders do not see themselves as 'top dogs', but as facilitators. They do not regard fellow team members as subordinates, but as colleagues and fellow crusaders. Leaders see their primary role as unleashing the talent of others, so that collective action can be taken. They discover and nurture talent, and recognise the best ideas.[10]

The Academy of Chief Executives (ACE) of North East Teeside, England, comprises small groups of 14

LEADERS HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN CREATING THE STATE OF MIND THAT IS SOCIETY

comparatively fewer in number, but of great importance because they are the chief executives, the presidents, ministers and world leaders. Some would argue that it is somewhat late to influence or improve this group, because of their entrenched positions and attitudes. However, it should not be regarded as a monolithic group, in that some of the more humble and modest may be willing to learn and change.[9]

Tracking the alumni from various programmes is a challenging exercise and few institutions, including universities, do this particularly well. From the rapidly changing nature of modern knowledge and a digitally-based society, it is clearly evident that a 'one event' training in leadership, such as a five-day course, no matter how intensive, is no longer adequate to sustain the qualities required for long-term leadership development. It is necessary to enable, energise and empower the alumni on a continuing basis. It is recognised that this is more easily achieved between alumni within a country or between neighbouring countries, rather than across a wide international spread of countries. Exploiting

people. Meetings are held once a month, each for a day – a speaker session in the morning and an issues session in the afternoon, and one-to-one coaching sessions. Once a year, the group holds a two-day retreat for more extended discussions and leisure. Regular national seminars are held for groups across the country, and the ACE also runs a 'Leaders Quest' abroad. Chief executives value this continuous learning, and are thus good role models for leadership development. This approach facilitates leadership development through social capital and intra-organisational relationships, based on mutual trust and reciprocity. In the ACE group, participants interact with people at their own level with a good knowledge of business and practice experience. They find it helpful to raise matters of concern at the monthly meetings, as well as to contact other members or the Chairs. Senior managers use the sessions as a means of facilitating self-evaluation, comparison and reflection, and recognise that people's skills are a key ingredient in their roles of advancing the company. The advantage of being part of the same small group is that people get
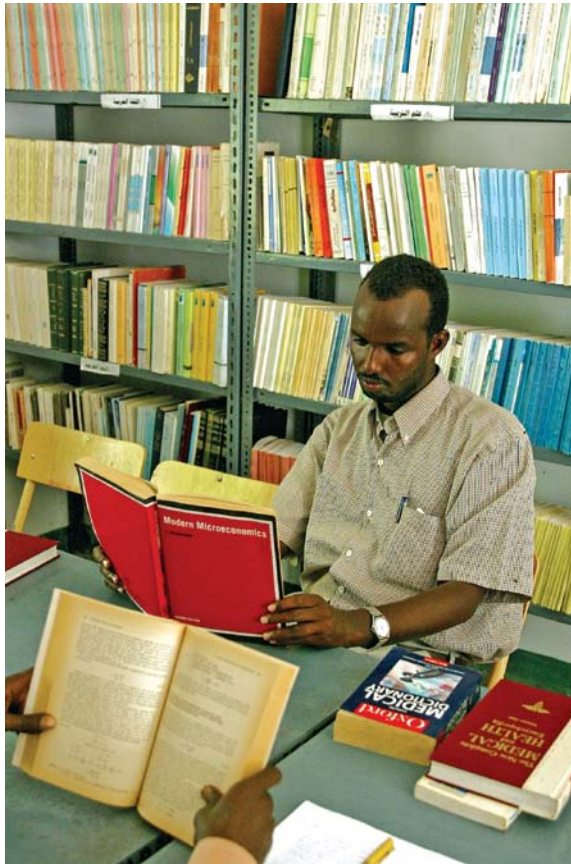
Leadership training and education for young and emerging leaders is necessary for developing effective leaders for Africa.

to know each other. They relax and interactions become less formal and more open.[11] This is a good model of leadership development at the level of chief executives, as it is generally believed that their development is either not possible or rarely occurs.

Leadership Development for Africa

The objective for Africa's future leadership development is to introduce new approaches and modalities for leadership growth across all segments of society, in order to lay the foundations for a new generation of leaders equipped for meeting the challenges facing the continent. Implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will require, amongst others, leaders equipped with creative and innovative skills as well as commitment and dedication to Africa's future sustainable growth and development. Without leadership in all spectrums of society, it will prove difficult to realise the relevant goals, among them the MDGs. Of particular significance is the fact that the Africa-wide project has already been incorporated as an integral part of the Programme for

Public Sector Leadership Capacity Building for Good Governance in Africa, which was under consideration by the African Union (AU). In response to the issues related to developing future leaders in Africa, the African ministers of Public Service recognised – at the AU and New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) sponsored meeting in October 2004 in Johannesburg, South Africa – that internships and attachments provide young graduates with an environment and the opportunity that shapes their character and value systems, right from the beginning of their working life.[12]

Perhaps the first step in order to develop a sustainable strategy for African leadership development is to convene a 'leadership summit', under the auspices of the United Nations University's International Leadership Institute (UNU/ILI), the African Association of Universities and the AU. This and other papers could serve as useful background material for the summit. Among issues to be discussed would be strategies for African leadership development, appropriate target candidates, and the location and resources for education and training.

The following strategies for developing Africa's leadership are advocated:

➜ Leadership training for young and emerging leaders – recent university graduates, and those already in managerial and leadership positions, including those from civil society, various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and entrepreneurs. This would, in the main, take the form of short training courses comprising lectures, group discussions, field visits and attachments.

➜ Leadership training for ministers, chief executive officers (CEOs) and others in senior positions – the ACE model described in this paper is one approach, and many other variants could be developed.

➜ Internship placements and professional attachments in development institutes and programmes through exchanges among African countries, and mentorship programmes.

➜ The offering of postgraduate programmes in leadership studies at masters and doctoral levels by selected African universities. This should be preceded by a survey of all universities, colleges and institutes offering leadership courses in Africa and, depending on the outcome, anticipate fostering networking between these programmes.

➜ The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's Leadership Chair, established in 1997 at the UNU-ILI in Amman, Jordan aims to promote an integrated system of research, training, information and documentation activities in the field of leadership studies. It also facilitates sub-regional and regional collaboration between high-level internationally recognised researchers

and teachers, and the research and teaching staff of the ILI; and initiates research and helps to provide seminar activities on leadership, on issues of sustainable democracy, sustainable development and peaceful resolution of disputes. Similar chairs could be established in strategic leadership institutes across Africa.

➜ Encouraging, promoting and facilitating a research culture to understand the complexities and nuances of good and bad leadership better, including what the best modalities for leadership development are, and the dynamics and interrelationships between leaders and followers.

➜ A programme involving the training of youth leaders in leadership skills and workshops for a network of youth organisations, and leadership training for a prospective African National Youth Service Corps.

➜ A programme to develop women's leadership, given the paucity of women leaders. Issues such as violence against women, the sexual exploitation of women, female genital mutilation and honour killings can be confronted.

➜ Adding value through the incorporation of leadership training into relevant programmes, such as the AU programme for Public Sector Leadership Capacity Building for Good Governance in Africa, civil society, NGOs, rural leaders, teachers training colleges, and primary and secondary schools.

➜ Contributing to the promotion of sustainable peace and security in war-torn countries, such as, the incorporation of psycho-social counselling and training for the traumatised as an integral part of personal leadership in such countries.

➜ An annual leadership conference, hosted in different regions of the continent. Such a conference could form the basis for an African leadership journal.

Concluding Remarks

Leadership is a complex multidisciplinary notion: in addition to its generic aspects, special features such as moral capital are profoundly important in shaping the quality and effectiveness of leaders; and that developing shared and collective leadership is just as important as developing individual leadership. Given the acute developmental challenges that Africa faces, and in its quest to meet the MDGs, the time is opportune for a concerted effort to educate and train a new generation of African leaders through a variety of new and innovative modalities.

The 'moral depravity' that characterises much of the present world order must be replaced by a 'collective morality' that is solidly embedded in both leadership and democratic institutions. It must have as its defining features the values of respect for human life and human rights – especially that of women and children, fairness and justice, responsibility and compassion. ₪

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REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP: FROM THE OAU TO THE AU

WRITTEN BY **TIM MURITHI**

African Heads of State and government at the opening of the African Union summit in Accra, Ghana (July 2007).

Introduction

Leadership is a privilege and an opportunity to serve others. Yet a significant number of African leaders view it as an instrument to assert their dominion and oppression of others. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was established in 1963, with the purpose of providing collective leadership to address the pressing issues of the day – in particular colonialism, underdevelopment and external economic exploitation. The OAU succeeded in delivering political independence, but was unable to secure the economic liberation of the African continent. The OAU's limitations were further exposed by its inability to provide effective leadership on the promotion of democratic governance, the rule of law and ensuring economic development. The African Union (AU) was inaugurated in July 2002, with the express purpose of addressing the limitations inherent in the structure and constitution of the OAU. A survey of the first five years of the AU demonstrates that, while there has been a prolific creation of institutions and mechanisms, the AU has not provided the leadership to significantly change the attitudes that prevailed during the OAU regime. An assessment of the OAU's 'absent leadership' will be contrasted with the AU's attempts to bring about a paradigm shift in the nature of leadership, and its attempts to project peace, security, democratic governance and development on the African continent. This article concludes by examining models of leadership that can inform the evolution of the AU and, ultimately, guide its transformation to the Union Government of Africa.

African Leadership in Historical Perspective

During the Cold War, nation-states on the African continent became sanctuaries and fortresses for despotic regimes. There were opportunistic African leaders who believed they could 'make it on their own' without their

neighbours, as long as they remained loyal servants to either the Western or Eastern superpowers. Such ideological promiscuity, and the tendency to switch between the former Soviet Union and the United States of America (USA), was a strategy deployed by many African leaders to shore up their regimes – for example, former presidents Said Barre of the now-fragmented Somalia and Mobutu Sese Seko of former Zaire (present-day Democratic Republic of Congo). The legacy of this ideological promiscuity still lingers in the mindset of several African leaders.

The process of decolonisation that promised Africa's liberation and cultural emancipation was subverted when the leaders of emerging African countries borrowed from, and incorporated aspects of, colonial state structures and systems of political authority and control. Most of the existing boundaries were drawn by colonial administrations without regard for, or knowledge of, pre-existing indigenous or cultural socio-political groupings. This resulted in an arbitrary logic of statehood that sparked the current instability and 'ungovernability' of several African states. This arbitrary division of community created, and continues to sustain, the potential for political tensions, and it also contributes towards the cycles of violence that plague African societies. With its policy of 'divide and rule', colonialism fostered 'bad governance' in the form of the uneven distribution of socio-economic resources, the authoritarian rule of law and unaccountability of government to the wider population. Indeed, "the post-colonial meddling of European nations in the internal affairs of African states, in conjunction with the influences of the Cold War powers on the disposition of African regimes, resulted in the creation and sustainment of *bad leaders* as well as political and economic underdevelopment."[1] This, in turn, created and perpetuated the conditions for ethnic division and competition.

Today, the citizens of a number of African states often feel alienated and marginalised by the actions of their leaders. Political violence has remained as the primary mechanism for attempting to achieve and secure political redress. This violence has, in turn, contributed to the collapse or decay of the institutions for governance. In southern Somalia, the government has virtually collapsed and, in the Democratic Republic of

Congo (DRC), the fragmentation is gradually becoming more concretised in that the recognised government is no longer in control of large sections of its territory. In Rwanda, the presence of refugees in neighbouring Congo means that the consolidation of peace or democracy is far from over. In Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo-Brazzaville, Sudan and Chad, the unequal distribution of resources and the inability of sections of the community to feel included in the political process continues to fuel conflict. In several countries where excessive violence has not yet become the means to achieve political goals, tensions are mounting, and insecurity is promoting increasingly widespread political unrest and sporadic incidents of violence. This is also evident in countries like Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria, Burundi and Zimbabwe, where disenfranchisement by the state is giving rise to politically unstable societies. Many post-colonial states that retained the colonial logic of bad leadership are today faced with crises of legitimacy.

Leadership as Subservience

Some African leaders have struggled to democratise their states, but a genuine conviction remains lacking. In fact, African leaders that sought the democratic path were often strangled or negatively impacted by the coercive policies of the international financial institutions and donor governments. As a result many African governments have not made authentic or successful democratic transitions.[2] African citizens have found that their demands for more inclusive, transparent and accountable mechanisms for collective decision-making are often marginalised by predatory forms of leadership, in what remain highly centralised structures of government across the continent. Some of these African governments are more responsive to the international community and regulatory bodies than to their own citizens.

Some African leaders have the tendency to 'play tough' to the gallery of international public opinion, and often betray the continent's cause and the memory of Africans who came before them and died for the freedom to determine their own destinies. This is witnessed in their continuing subservience and diffidence, when they go to prostrate themselves before their economic masters in Europe, North America and, increasingly, China. This can

LEADERS WHO GUIDE THEIR SUBORDINATES AND CITIZENS TO ASPIRE TO HIGHER GOALS AND IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS, RATHER THAN FRIGHTENING THEM WITH SANCTIONS OR COERCIVE MEASURES, ARE MORE LIKELY BOTH TO ACHIEVE THE NECESSARY OBJECTIVES AND PRESERVE THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LEADERS, CITIZENS AND SUBORDINATES

Ghana's President, John Kufuor was elected Chairman of the African Union in January 2007.

be observed, for example, when a US president flies to a select group of African countries, and other leaders are summoned to meet with him. This type of diffidence can only perpetuate the view, in the minds of foreign leaders and governments, that Africa and Africans are indeed infantile and in need of perpetual guidance. The net effect is to emasculate African people and governments. This present-day post-colonial hypocrisy is evident when we consider that western countries, historically, have never had altruistic sentiments towards Africa, beyond finding ways to position themselves as righteous friends of Africa while they plunder its resources and exploit its people.

The as-yet unexplored fact is that, historically, it was the tacit, covert or overt support by the so-called West for rebel leaders such as Jonas Savimbi in Angola, and dictators like Idi Amin in Uganda, that led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Africans. The West also adopted its preferred policies of 'constructive engagement' instead of imposing immediate and direct sanctions on apartheid South Africa, which perpetuated institutionalised racism on the continent and wreaked havoc in the affairs of frontline states in southern Africa. The effects of this historical hypocrisy are producing some of the social, economic and political pathologies evident on the continent today.

Leadership as Dictatorship

Corrupt African leaders, who are often among the most afflicted by these conditions, masquerade as champions of Africa, but instead they are effectively reversing the gains of the liberation struggles and striving to become masters over their own people, in their fictional nation-states. The most extreme form of this was the Central African Republic's (CAR) Bokassa who, in September 1976, abrogated his country's constitution and declared himself 'the imperial majesty' or 'emperor'. Today, the CAR continues to be afflicted by the lack of sustainable peace. African dictators and pseudo-democrats overtly and covertly operate as agents of the new forms of colonialism, by continuing to allow the penetration of their economies and societies. Such pseudo-leaders permit the unfair and exploitative extraction of their natural resources and foster the conditions that force the departure of human talent and, in doing so, perpetuate and sustain a neo-colonial framework. During the post-colonial era there was evidence that, in some countries, leadership became synonymous with depravity. According to Walter Rodney, there is a need for Africans to engage in self-liberation by rejecting the de-Africanisation of their own identity and the self-deprecating attitudes fostered by colonialism and neo-colonialism.[3] Combating the effects of colonialism and neo-colonialism requires the restoration of African dignity through a process of self-definition in the educational, social, economic and political spheres. This, above all, requires principled leadership.

The OAU: An Absence of Leadership

The inauguration of the OAU in May 1963 represented an effort to institutionalise pan-Africanism and

its principles of social solidarity, political self-determination and economic independence. By the time that it ceased to exist, in 2002, the OAU had successfully delivered on decolonisation, but failed to deliver on social solidarity and economic independence for the continent. At the inauguration of the OAU, there were heated debates about what shape and function the organisation should take. On the one hand, there was the radical view – promoted by, among others, Nkrumah of Ghana, Nyerere of Tanganyika (present-day Tanzania) and Nasser of Egypt – for ever-closer political unification. Nyerere argued, rightly so, that the boundaries that divided African states were nonsensical, as they had been arbitrarily drawn by Europeans in the 1885 'scramble for Africa'. The more conservative African leaders were unwilling to assume such a stance, and preferred to retain the illusion of national independence. As a result, the OAU was, in effect, impotent in its efforts to influence national policies positively, monitor the internal behaviour of member states, and prevent human rights atrocities from being committed.

Historically the OAU's record indicates that a policy of non-intervention was applied to the extreme point of African leaders oppressing their people with impunity, and doing little or nothing to prevent massive human rights abuses in their neighbouring countries. In effect, the OAU was a superficial body. Indeed, the OAU did not intervene as much as it should have in the affairs of member states to prevent war crimes and crimes against humanity, which has bequeathed upon the present generation of Africans the legacy of human rights atrocities and the domination, exploitation and manipulation of societies within states. The tragedy of the Rwandan genocide took place during the OAU's watch. Inhumane atrocities were also perpetuated in the conflict situations in Angola, the DRC, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mozambique and Sudan during the OAU's reign. The challenge remains to begin to redress past wrongs and enhance institutional protections for societies on the continent.[4] The OAU's leadership on issues relating to democratic governance and human rights was effectively absent. The emergence of this perception was not helped by the OAU's top-down approach to leadership. It is often said that 'politics is the art of the possible', and indeed the 1963 Charter of the OAU was the result of what was possible at the time. As a consequence, it was based on the lowest common denominator rather than the highest aspirations of African visionaries. It recognised the inviolability of colonial borders, and it defined sovereignty as residing with governments, rather than with

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has sought to advance development and good governance on the continent.

people. Regrettably, governments were left to do their will with their people. The new wave of democratisation across the continent had an impact on the OAU. The OAU could only be as democratic and effective as the social and political will within member states. As a consequence of this, the OAU has been criticised for inaction. OAU leadership was effectively absent.

The AU: A Crisis of Leadership?

The AU was inaugurated in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa, with much fanfare. The Constitutive Act, signed in Lomé in July 2000, was a charter for improved governance, peace, security and development. Five years after the euphoric creation of the AU, it is clear that not much has changed in terms of leadership on the continent. Old leadership habits, perfected during the OAU's existence, have become internalised so as to seem almost normal. Today, the roadmap charted by the AU has not paved the way for fundamental changes on the continent. Violent conflicts still afflict African societies, and poor leadership and its effect on governance is experienced in the majority of the AU's 53 member states. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which was an initiative wholly conceived by African leaders, without civil society consultation, has sought to bring about a paradigm shift in terms of advancing a development agenda on the continent. Its impact is yet to be felt on the ground. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) seems to be one innovation adopted by leaders that promises to begin to transform the relationship between the governed and the governors in Africa. However, some leaders have begun to shy away from the demands and exigencies of the APRM, and seem more inclined to issue rebuttals and counter-arguments to peer review reports, rather than act on the criticisms and transform their countries to benefit their people.

In January 2006, the AU concluded a summit of its leaders, in which the controversial issue going into the meeting was the possibility that the government of Sudan would ascend to the chairmanship of the Assembly of heads of state and government. Traditionally, the country that hosts the summit becomes the chair of the Assembly for the next 12 months. The

chair acts as the de facto voice of the African leaders, particularly on matters of pan-African and international concern. The chair therefore has to have maximum credibility as a leader, and be the head of a government that has a relatively positive reputation. Such a leader also has to come from a country that can claim to espouse the AU's long list of principles and values. Among the AU's core principles, written in its Constitutive Act, are "the peaceful resolution of disputes" and "the respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance".[5] Sudan, with its ongoing internal genocide in Darfur, would have failed on all counts. A compromise decision was made to bestow the chair to Congo-Brazzaville, a country with its own catalogue of problems, but slightly more respectable than Sudan. At the Khartoum summit, the AU promised to 'grant' Sudan the chairmanship at the next summit in Addis Ababa, in January 2007.

If Sudan had been granted the AU chair this year, the credibility of the organisation would have effectively been destroyed or, at the very least, suffered almost irrevocable damage. It would have been unthinkable to have officials of the Sudanese government travelling around the continent representing the voice of all Africans, when Africans are dying in their tens of thousands and others are displaced from their homes, by this very same regime, in the Darfur region. Postponing the Sudanese chairmanship of the AU was a political sleight of hand by the continent's leaders. In January 2007, Ghana's President John Kufour was elected chairman of the AU Assembly. The AU Assembly effectively outmanoeuvred the Sudanese leader, in what was perhaps one of its rare acts of principled leadership.

The motivation behind Sudan's desire to chair the AU was probably linked to the AU's intervention in Darfur. What better way to demonstrate that an internal problem is being taken seriously, than by heading the organisation that is attempting to resolve the crisis and restore peace? Many doubt Sudan's commitment to restoring peace in the Darfur region. Independent humanitarian workers on the ground have corroborated the fact that the pro-government militia, the Janjaweed, are guilty of conducting 'ethnic cleansing' against the inhabitants of the Darfur region. The current debate is

whether certain leaders in the government of Sudan and in the militia should now be referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, The Netherlands, for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

This crisis, however, is part of a wider malaise that afflicts the AU. The majority of heads of states and governments are undemocratic leaders with dictatorial tendencies. Many of these so-called leaders do not adhere to the AU's principles. They continue to subvert democracy and to inflict terror on their own people. If the AU member states all adhere, without condition, to the AU principles, Africa could be stable and relatively free from poverty. The true test of an African leader is in the respect that he or she shows for his or her own people, and the extent to which he or she strives to improve the conditions under which they live. The first line of defence for African people, when it comes to protection of their livelihoods and well-being, should ideally be their leaders. Unfortunately, African people have been largely betrayed by their leaders. Many siphon developmental funds to foreign bank accounts and spend frivolously on luxury cars and other trappings of power, to perpetuate the illusion that their illegitimate power is perhaps real.

This crisis of AU leadership reveals a much more fundamental problem, with the calibre of leaders that sit as the representatives of the African people within the AU Assembly. It places a spotlight on the need to continue to transform the AU's lofty principles and values of peace and democracy into practical policies and programmes on the ground, which can genuinely improve the lives of all Africans across the continent.

Towards a New Paradigm of African Leadership

For the most part, African leaders exhibit some common flaws that are not unique to Africa but are, in fact, commonplace around the world. Depending on the style of leadership adopted, a leader can either succeed in raising the standards that their citizens live by or causing general frustration, anxiety, fear and suspicion. Colonialism relied on the effective deployment of fear to control the colonised. The majority of contemporary African leaders are utilising similar strategies. A cursory glance at the state of governance on the continent reveals that the dominant paradigm of leadership tends to rely on leaders consolidating their power, and using intimidation and coercion to get their citizens and subordinates to do what is expected. This has bred a culture of indifference among followers. In turn, this has nurtured an egotistical society where everyone has to fend for themselves. This attitude has created a culture of exclusion and fostered some of the social, economic and political problems that face the continent. Leaders who bully and coerce their subordinates will ultimately be ineffective. A paradigm shift is urgently required for the sake and survival of the continent.

Leaders who guide their subordinates and citizens to aspire to higher goals and improved livelihoods, rather than frightening them with sanctions or coercive measures, are more likely both to achieve the necessary objectives and preserve the relationships between leaders, citizens and subordinates. Leaders should rather uplift their citizens and subordinates, and encourage them to believe that they can achieve more than they think is possible. The paradigm of the 'servant' leader is one who views leadership as a service to be provided to people. This concept would be completely alien to some of Africa's leaders. However, there are important insights to be gained: a servant leader is in a position of power, but does not utilise that power to exploit or manipulate others. A servant leader does not, above all, seek to consolidate his or her good lifestyle and profit from the privileges that come with being in a leadership position. Regrettably, this is the antithesis of the majority of Africa's leaders. The key objective of such an ethical leader would ultimately be to cultivate a community of values, where all actors support each other.

Conclusion

The OAU was perceived as a club of African Heads of States, most of whom were not legitimately elected representatives of their own citizens, but self-appointed dictators and oligarchs. At the inauguration of the AU in 2002, this perception was transferred, for the most part, to the new organisation. The question is whether the fairly newly-established AU will be able to adopt a more interventionist stance than its predecessor, and effectively provide the leadership that Africa requires to prevail in the twenty-first century. ⚑

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Endnotes
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3   Rodney, Walter (1974) 'Pan-Africanism and Neo-Colonialism in Africa' in *Black Liberator*, Vol. 2/3, June 1974.

4   Odinkalu, Chidi (2003) 'Back to the Future: The Imperative of Prioritizing for the Protection of Human Rights in Africa' in *Journal of African Law*, Vol. 47, 2003, pp. 1-37.

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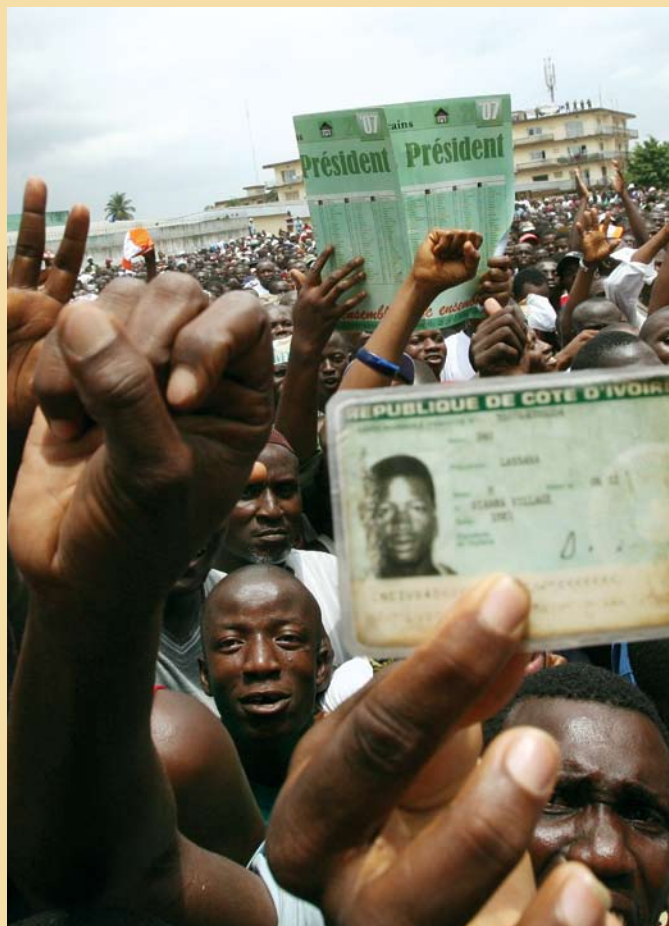
PRESIDENTIAL TERM LIMITS IN AFRICA

WRITTEN BY **DANIEL VENCOVSKY**

Introduction

In the early 1990s, "it was hoped that the introduction of new constitutions with a two-term limit on power would consign the 'big man' syndrome of African politics to history."[1] The political culture on the continent has changed considerably since the end of the Cold War.[2] However, the attraction of power remains a strong motivating factor for many leaders. Indeed, recent years have witnessed a number of heads of state attempting to extend their tenure beyond the constitutionally permitted number of terms, or maintain power via a back-door strategy of hand-picking a docile successor and remaining in the powerful post of the chairman of the country's dominant political party. In analysing this issue, this article proceeds in four stages. Firstly, consideration is given to the importance of term limits. This article contends that timely and responsible departure from power is a central feature of a democratic polity and constitutes an integral component of responsible leadership. Secondly, this article asks, now that leaders are increasingly expected to heed these constitutional provisions, what strategies do they employ to stay in power? This paper offers an overview of modes of African leaders' departure from power since the early 1990s, and deals in detail with leaders who left at the end of their constitutionally sanctioned tenure, those who extended their tenure by amending the constitution, and those who sought to amend the constitution without success. In addition, cases when leaders sought to prolong their grip on power via the 'successor strategy' are considered. Thirdly, attention is devoted to factors that contributed to the success or failure of presidential endeavours to extend their hold on power. And lastly, the implications of Africa's current record regarding presidential term limits are addressed.

The Importance of Term Limits

Presidential term limits, most often two terms, are a common feature of democratic constitutions adopted in Africa in the 1990s. Thirty-three of the 48 new constitutions contained such provisions, at least for some time. However, not all politicians subscribe to the importance of a two-term presidency. Across Africa, proponents of additional presidential terms have

Côte d'Ivoire's constitution does not contain a two-term only presidential term limit provision.

argued that a third term, when achieved via a legal constitutional amendment and an election, is a perfectly legitimate development that reflects people's will to re-elect the incumbent. Moreover, third-term advocates have proposed a range of country-specific arguments. They often speak of the fear of instability, in particular in cases of absence of a clear successor, or of the need to complete or sustain reforms.

Critics of these claims retort that presidents may be motivated by more selfish considerations, such as vanity

TERM LIMITS OFFER A PERIODIC GUARANTEE OF PERSONAL CHANGE, AND
THUS ENHANCE THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE OF PARTY IN GOVERNMENT.
THIS IS SIGNIFICANT, AS POWER ALTERNATION IS AN IMPORTANT FEATURE OF
A DEMOCRATIC POLITY

and hunger for power, fear of prosecution for corruption or human rights abuses and the lack of opportunities for retired presidents. It has also been suggested that tenure extensions may be spurred by the anxiety of the neo-patrimonial network[3] that fears the loss of connections and privileges. The most-often cited reason for the adoption of term limits in the early 1990s was to "prevent arbitrary and violent rule often associated with lifelong presidencies from recurring".[4] In the case of Nigeria, it has been suggested that the term limits can contribute to the zonal rotation of the presidency among the country's three main geo-ethnic-political zones, thus alleviating the danger of one of the groups feeling permanently politically marginalised.[5]

In fledgling democracies, the main importance of term limits stems from its positive impact on power alternation which, in turn, contributes to democratic consolidation. In Africa, elections are heavily burdened by advantages that incumbents have at their disposal, and these make electoral change more difficult than in established democracies. "If the incumbent has a tight grip on the electoral system (perhaps including the appointments of the electoral commission); has access to slush funds for the party campaign; can determine the date of the election; can have opponents disqualified or harassed by the legal system; controls much of the media and has the advantage of exposure and familiarity before the general public, all can be turned to personal advantage."[6] Clientelist networks that incumbents develop during their tenure can also secure additional votes. It comes as no surprise that incumbents have an extremely high re-election rate. Even a hand-picked successor tends to fare significantly worse in elections than the incumbent.[7] Term limits offer a periodic guarantee of personal change, and thus enhance the possibility of change of party in government. This is significant, as power alternation is an important feature of a democratic polity. Prolonged time in office allows for greater centralisation and personalisation of power, and deeper entrenchment of informal patronage networks. Prolonged tenure also creates an accountability deficit that allows for an increase in corruption. It has also been suggested that power alternation is important for the consolidation of democracy. While in life-presidencies power transitions are orchestrated by the gun, by increasing the likelihood of change, term limits also increase the chance

that power contestation will take place in a non-violent manner. Indeed, the two-turnover test (power peacefully changes hands twice) has become a definitional feature of a functioning democracy.[8]

Overview of Term Tenures

In spite of constitutional term limits, many leaders have not resisted the call of power and sought to extend their tenure beyond two terms in office. As Table 1 indicates, since the early 1990s, 18 African presidents completed two terms in office. Eight presidents stood down without seeking a constitutional amendment to remain in office, while 10 attempted such an amendment and the majority (seven) were successful. All seven presidents won the subsequent elections. Leaders that failed to secure a constitutional amendment to remain in office resorted to an indirect strategy: they hand-picked a successor candidate hoping that, once he became president, they would be able to control him via their political parties. All these scenarios are considered in turn in subsequent paragraphs.

Honourable Departures

Eight presidents left their office in an honourable fashion and stood down at the end of their constitutionally permitted terms in office without seeking a constitutional amendment. These included Mathieu Kerekou of Benin, Mascarenhas Monteiro of Cape Verde, Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, Daniel arap Moi of Kenya, Alpha Konaré of Mali, Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, Miguel Trovoada of São Tomé e Príncipe and Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania. In addition, Nelson Mandela was also hailed as a responsible leader for stepping down after one term in office. Rawlings and Moi, veterans of their countries' politics, were both obliged by their post-Cold War constitutions to step down after two terms in office. Despite misgivings to the contrary, both of them resigned. Both Rawlings' and Moi's quest to maintain influence via the 'successor route' proved unsuccessful, as their designated successors (John Atta Mills and Uhuru Kenyatta) failed to be elected. In spite of Kenyatta's electoral defeat, Moi has remained on good terms with the new government, which granted him immunity from prosecution on corruption charges. It has been noted that international pressure was one of the key factors in persuading Rawlings to step down. United

opposition, increasingly independent media, change of popular attitudes and a vocal opposition from Kenyan churches, civil society groups and foreign aid donors' pressure all reportedly played a role in Moi's decision to leave office.[10]

Constitutional Amendments

Seven presidents, most of them long-serving leaders of their countries, secured constitutional amendments that allowed them to stand for a third term in office, and all seven won subsequent re-elections. These were presidents Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, Idriss Deby of Chad, Omar Bongo of Gabon, Lansana Conte of Guinea, Sam Nujoma of Namibia, Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo and Yoweri Museveni of Uganda.

Many of the these leaders are veterans of African politics, and had been in power before the adoption of term-limiting constitutions in the 1990s. Their continued rule lays bare their lack of commitment to the new constitutions, as term limits were abolished as soon as they threatened to affect them. Gabon's Omar Bongo is a case in point. He came to power in 1967, and he is the continent's longest-serving leader. He ruled in a one-party polity until 1991, when a new constitution introduced a multiparty system and a two-term limit. Following two terms in office under the new constitution, he secured an amendment that again abolished term limits. In a similar manner, Guinea's Lansana Conte served as a military ruler, and then oversaw the transition to civilian rule and the introduction of a two-term provision in the early 1990s. In 2003, he won a referendum that removed term limits on the presidency. Burkina Faso's Blaise Compaore first had the term limit scrapped, and later agreed to reinstate it. However, by a ruling of the Constitutional Court, the reinstated limit was only to apply for future elections, which made it inapplicable to his previous terms in office. Successful overstayers also include Yoweri
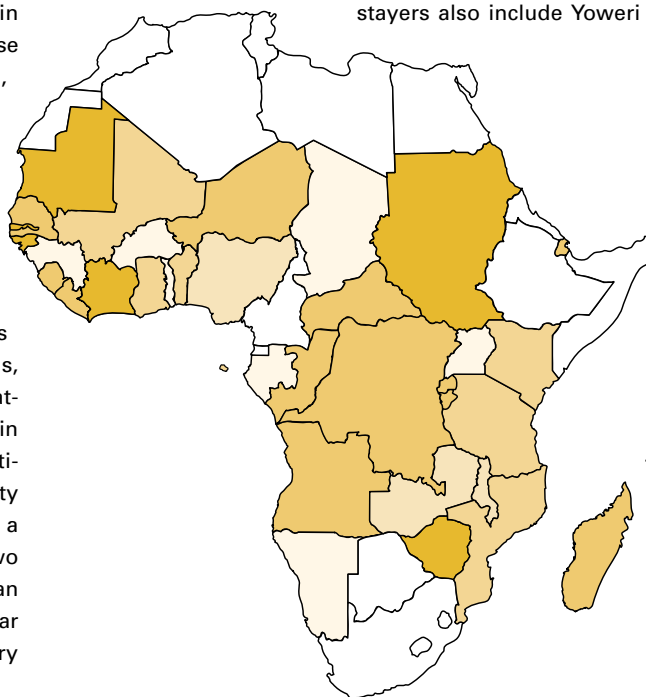
Table 1: Third-Term Amendments in Sub-Saharan Africa Since 1990[9]

Constitution does not contain a two-term only provision (8 countries)	Constitution contains a two-term limit on the presidency (30 countries)			
	Two terms not served by any president (12 countries)	Two-term limit was reached (18 countries)		
		Constitution amendment not attempted (8 countries)	Constitution amendment attempted (10 countries)	
			Without success (3 countries)	With success (7 countries)
Côte d'Ivoire **Eq. Guinea** **Gambia** **Guinea-Bissau** **Mauritania** **Sudan** **Seychelles** (3-term limit) **Zimbabwe**	**Angola** **Burundi** **C.A.R.** **Congo** **Djibouti** **D.R.C.** **Liberia** **Madagascar** **Niger** **Rwanda** **Senegal** **Sierra Leone**	**Benin** (Kerekou) **Cape Verde** (Monteiro) **Ghana** (Rawlings) **Kenya** (Moi) **Mali** (Konare) **Mozambique** (Chissano) **São Tomé e Príncipe** (Trovoada) **Tanzania** (Mkapa)	**Malawi** (Muluzi) **Nigeria** (Obasanjo) **Zambia** (Chiluba)	**Burkina Faso** (Compaore) **Chad** (Deby) **Gabon** (Bongo) **Guinea** (Conte) **Namibia** (Nujoma) **Togo** (Eyadema) **Uganda** (Museveni)

Elections and presidential term limits offer a periodic guarantee of power alternation and a change of party in government.

Museveni and Sam Nujoma. Despite a professed dislike of presidents for life and promises of 'orderly leadership succession' at the end of his second term in office, Uganda's constitution was amended to allow Museveni to remain in office. Towards the end of Nujoma's second term in office, a constitutional amendment was adopted to allow him to serve for another term. Following the conclusion of his third term, Nujoma has stayed very much within the political life of his country. His hand-picked successor and Namibia's current president, Hifikepunye Pohamba, is not only ideologically very close to Nujoma (people used to joke they even look alike), but Nujoma retains considerable influence in the political life of the country as he remains the leader of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), the country's dominant political party.[11]

Unsuccessful Attempts

Three countries experienced unsuccessful attempts to have their constitution changed to allow their president an additional term in office. All three countries then saw an attempt of the outgoing leaders to continue to exercise power by hand-picking a presumably obedient successor.

In Zambia, both the national constitution and the constitution of its ruling party – the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) – contain a term limit on their presidents. Frederick Chiluba's quest for a third term faced stiff opposition from parts of the MMD, including a number of senior politicians, civil society, trade unions, student unions, women's organisations, churches and lawyers, and widespread disapproval by the public, the extent of which was demonstrated by the wearing of green ribbons and car hooting and whistling campaigns. Chiluba had the advantage of having control over some of the media and the state's law enforcement agencies. While succeeding in changing the MMD's constitution, Chiluba failed to garner sufficient support for an amendment of the national constitution, and confirmed that he would stand down. However, unwilling to relinquish the reins of power, he resorted to an indirect strategy: he selected Levy Mwanawasa as the MMD presidential candidate. Mwanawasa was expected to be easily controlled by Chiluba via the MMD, with Chiluba

intending to stay on as the party's leader. Mwanawasa duly delivered an electoral victory, but subsequently broke free of Chiluba's influence and ultimately turned against his old patron. Eventually, he consented to lifting Chiluba's immunity from prosecution on corruption charges.[12]

Malawi's Bakili Muluzi also unsuccessfully campaigned for a constitutional amendment to allow him to run for a third term. A parliamentary bill to that effect was narrowly defeated. Subsequently, Muluzi attempted to put another two bills before the parliament. However, these met with a rising opposition and were withdrawn. Muluzi's actions sparked a wide-ranging opposition from civil society, including lawyers and churches, traditional leaders, political parties and the media. Public disapproval was expressed by wearing purple ribbons and car hooting campaigns. There were attempts from the president to stifle the campaign, including an initial ban on demonstrations. Muluzi then followed Zambia's example and nominated Bingu wa Mutharika, seen by many as a political lightweight and obedient successor, as his party's presidential candidate and campaigned heavily on his behalf. After Mutharika's inauguration as president, Muluzi was expected to continue to pull the strings from his post as the ruling party's chairman.

used by the president in his quest to ensure Yar'Adua's victory, both in PDP nominations and in the presidential ballot. In a highly controversial manner, a number of would-be presidential candidates were disqualified from the ballot. These included Yar'Adua's main contender, Atiku Abubakar.[15] Abubakar fought this decision in the courts and the matter was finally resolved a few days before the ballot by Nigeria's Supreme Court, which ruled that Abubakar was permitted to stand. Yar'Adua, however, emerged victorious from the election.

Factors of Success

While some leaders found it easy to prolong their stay in power, in other countries the constitution proved to be a powerful reference point that constrained the leader's behaviour. What are the determinants that account for the varying outcomes of third-term amendment struggles? They include factors within society (the level of popular dissatisfaction with the leader, the strength of civil society and the level of media independence), within the polity (the ability of the incumbent to suppress opposition, the size of parliamentary majority of the ruling party, and factors affecting the coherence of the ruling party), international pressure and factors affecting the leader personally (the possibility

PRESIDENTIAL TERM LIMITS, MOST OFTEN TWO TERMS, ARE A COMMON FEATURE OF DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTIONS ADOPTED IN AFRICA IN THE 1990S

However, it did not take long for Muluzi and Mutharika to fall out, with the official reason being Mutharika's unhappiness with Muluzi's resistance against his anti-corruption policies.[13]

In Nigeria, supporters of President Obasanjo attempted to push through a constitutional amendment that would allow him to serve for a third term. However, this met with a strong backlash from the media, the public, the international community, and even Obasanjo's own party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP). The amendment was voted down in the Nigerian Senate. According to some observers, Obasanjo resorted to a strategy that would see him maintain power by indirect means. He hand-picked Umaru Musa Yar'Adua as PDP's presidential candidate. The International Crisis Group commented that "the choice of Yar'Adua confirmed that, though defeated in parliament, Obasanjo was not ready to relinquish power. [Yar'Adua] is widely perceived as a weak frontman for Obasanjo. Without strong bases in the PDP, [he] would have to rely on Obasanjo to determine policy and make many appointments."[14] According to the International Crisis Group, the state apparatus was

of impunity, opportunities for retired presidents and the dedication to constitutionalism).

The outcome of third-term struggles may hinge on the strength of civil society and the independent media, and on the degree of popularity that the president enjoys among the population. While some (for instance, Conte in Guinea) have found it easy to harass the opposition and faced only weak civil society; in other countries (such as in Zambia), leaders faced a much more formidable opposition from the people and a well-organised civil society. While Nujoma's time as president was widely perceived as successful and he was held in high regard as the hero of the liberation movement, Chiluba in Zambia was associated with negative economic growth and high levels of corruption. The experience of third-term struggles in Namibia, Zambia and Malawi led a recent analysis to conclude that the varying outcomes can be explained by factors affecting the coherence or fractionalisation of ruling political parties. In particular, the following factors were considered: institutional structures (that give party leadership power over the party rank and file, such as being able to determine whether parliamentarians can

stand for re-election), intra-party distribution of resources, habits of dissent and unity, and political opportunities outside the political party. This thesis is supported by the fact that Namibia's SWAPO displayed a high degree of support for the third term, while in Zambia, the ruling party splintered dramatically over the issue. In Malawi, the party lost much of its unity in the concluding stage of the amendment debate. It has also been noted that international pressure can play a significant role, whether it be peer pressure from other leaders or behind-the-scenes pressure from donor countries and their support for civil society organisations opposed to third-term amendments. International pressure reportedly played an important role in Ghana, Malawi and Zambia. Others have argued that, in order to ease their exit, retired leaders may also need to be provided with material well-being and a prestigious role to play, so that they retain their important status.[16]

Future Implications

The overview presented indicates that Africa has a mixed record on term limits. Since the early 1990s, the number of leaders who decided not to attempt a constitutional amendment to remain in office, or failed to secure such an amendment, has been greater than the number of successful overstayers. This is indicative of a pattern of change. Indeed, these developments have led some authors to believe that the political culture in Africa is slowly changing.[17] At the same time, it should be noted that while there have been substantial advances in some countries, there has been little or no progress in others. However, the mere trend towards increased respect for constitutional term limits is important for two reasons.

Firstly, increased adherence to term limits may result in the emergence of a nascent norm that in itself may contribute to further change. Cases where leaders observed constitutional term limits may turn out to be precedents delineating acceptable behaviour. Increasingly common examples of the observance of term limits have the potential to become a powerful reference point that could make it more difficult for future third-term attempts to gain popular and international acceptance.

Secondly, some of the examples in this article demonstrate that there is a clear scope for meaningful action by civil society and the international community in similar situations in the future. The fact that these actors can have an impact on the outcome of third-term presidential challenges suggests that there are opportunities for action on a variety of levels, such as invigorating civil society, working towards media independence and plurality in the ruling political party, pressure from other leaders and donor countries, and the provision of opportunities for retired presidents. In addition, it is important to note that the example of success in some states is likely to encourage increased involvement from civil society and the public in similar scenarios in other countries.

Conclusion

The attraction of power is still strong, and many African leaders are keen to stay in office for as long as they can. This article has explored the opportunities for the extension of power that are still open to presidents, in the operating environment of the new constitutions adopted by many African states in the early 1990s. The starting premise is that term limits play an important role in a democratic polity, and their extensions are undesirable. The methods that African leaders utilise to extend their influence beyond the constitutionally permitted two terms in office were also explored. Some leaders achieved constitutional amendments, while others failed to do so and resorted to an indirect strategy of maintaining power via a hand-picked successor. This strategy has, almost invariably, displayed very limited success, and the hand-picked successor either did not get elected or turned against his erstwhile patron. The varying scenarios across Africa suggest that there are a number of factors that have a bearing on the outcome of presidential endeavours to extend their hold on power. This not only allows for optimism, as it shows that actions by civil society and the international community can be successful, but also suggests that there is a scope for action in similar situations in the future. In the not so distant future, third-term debates are likely to remain a common feature of African politics, and examples of adherence to term limits will serve as an increasingly significant reference point for responsible leadership, which includes timely departure from power. ⚖

Daniel Vencovsky runs www.africainfo.org.

RECENT YEARS HAVE WITNESSED A NUMBER OF HEADS OF STATE ATTEMPTING TO EXTEND THEIR TENURE BEYOND THE CONSTITUTIONALLY PERMITTED NUMBER OF TERMS, OR MAINTAIN POWER VIA A BACK-DOOR STRATEGY OF HAND-PICKING A DOCILE SUCCESSOR

REUTERS / THE BIGGER PICTURE

Elections and presidential term limits are a common feature of democratic constitutions in Africa.

Endnotes

1   Opening statement taken from 'When enough is enough' in *The Economist*, 6 April 2006.

2   Scholars have noted an increasing number of non-violent successions in Africa, increasing respect for constitutional provisions, an increasing number of elections and their increasing competitiveness. Posner, D.N. and Young, D.J. (2007) 'The Institutionalization of Political Power in Africa' in *Journal of Democracy*, forthcoming, available at <http://www.polisci.ucla.edu/faculty/posner/pdfs/Posner Young.pdf>, accessed on 2 July 2007. Southall, R.; Simutanyi, M. and Daniel, J. (2006) 'Former Presidents in African Politics' in Southall, Roger and Melber, Henning (eds.) *Legacies of Power: Leadership Change and Former Presidents in African Politics*, Cape Town: HSRC Press and Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, pp. 1-2, available at <http://www.hsrcpress.ac.za>, accessed on 1 April 2007.

3   The term 'neo-patrimonialism' describes informal client-patron power networks based on mutual favours. The point about neo-patrimonialism taken from Brown, S. (2004) 'Theorising Kenya's protracted transition to democracy' in *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 22:3, pp. 325-342; Sklar, R. L., Onwudiwe, E. and Kew, D. (2006) 'Nigeria: Completing Obasanjo's Legacy' in J*ournal of Democracy,* 17:3, and 'A president frustrated' in *The Economist*, 18 May 2006.

4   Citation from Baker, B. (2002) 'Outstaying one's welcome: the presidential third-term debate in Africa' in *Contemporary Politics*, 8:4. Similar logic mentioned by Maltz, G. (2007) 'The Case for Presidential Term Limits' in *Journal of Democracy*, 18:1, pp. 128-142 and Mkandawire, M. 'Constitutionalism and Presidentialism in Africa: The case of open/third term in Malawi', available at <http://www.zesn.org.zw/docs>, accessed on 4 April 2007.

5   Fear of instability played a role in Namibia, as noted by Baker (2002) and VonDoepp, P. (2005) 'Party Cohesion and Fractionalization in New African Demoracies: Lessons from Struggles over Third-Term Amendments' in *Studies in Comparative International Development,* 40:3, pp. 65-87. Obasanjo's motivation could have been to sustain reforms as noted by the International Crisis Group (ICG) (2007) 'Nigeria's Elections: Avoiding a Political Crisis', available at <http://www.crisisgroup.org>, accessed on 4 April 2007, and Sklar, Onwudiwe and Kew (2006) pp. 100-115; Baker (2002).

6   Citation from Baker (2002), p. 298.

7   Baker (2002), p. 289. Posner and Young (2007) notice that incumbents still win over 85 percent of elections they contest. Maltz (2007), pp. 131-134 futher notes that "in 35 [selected] elections in sub-Saharan Africa, incumbents won 96 percent of the time, while successors won only 60 percent."

8   Independent institutions point taken from Malz (2007), pp. 136-137. Accountability deficit and centralisation and personalisation of power points taken from Baker (2002), pp. 297-298. Two-turnover test taken from Baker (2002), p. 298 and Malz (2007), p. 135, who were drawing on Samuel Huntington. Also see 'Booting out the big men' in *The Economist*, 19 December 2002.

9   The main source was Posner and Young (2007), who surveyed 38 sub-Saharan African countries with directly elected presidencies in the period between 1990 and 2005. Other sources were Baker (2002) and BBC News.

10 Brown (2004), pp. 327-335; Malz (2007) p. 132; and Gyimah-Boadi, E. (2001) 'A Peaceful Turnover in Ghana' in *Journal of Democracy*, 12:2, p. 104; BBC News.

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12 Baker (2002); BBC News; Habasonda L.M. 'Presidentialism and Constitutionalism in Africa: "Third Term" phenomenon/ extension of tenure: The Zambian experience', available at <http://www.zesn.org.zw/docs>, accessed on 5 April 2007; Southall, Simutanyi and Daniel (2006); VonDoepp (2005).

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14 Citation from ICG (2007), p. 4. Also see Sklar, Onwudiwe and Kew (2006) and 'A president frustrated' in *The Economist*, 18 May 2006.

15 ICG (2007) and Sklar, Onwudiwe and Kew (2006), pp. 111-113.

16 Point about Conte is from Baker (2002), p. 291. VonDoepp (2005) records the use of state aparatus against third-term activists in Zambia and Malawi. Arguments about leaders' retirement and international pressure from Ingram (2007) and Maltz (2007). International pressure in Kenya, Malawi and Zambia from Brown, S. (2005) 'Foreign Aid and Democracy Promotion: Lessons from Africa' in *The European Journal of Development Research*, 17: 2, pp. 179-198 and Baker (2002), and 'When enough is enough' in *The Economist*, 6 April 2006. Popularity of leaders point and analysis of party coherence from VonDoepp (2005).

17 Posner and Young (2007).

LEADERSHIP AND DIALOGUE

WRITTEN BY **VASU GOUNDEN**

Introduction

Harry Truman said, "A leader is a man who has the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do, and like it." It is obvious from this comment that a leader can influence the actions of people, either positively or negatively. History has borne witness to how trite this conclusion is. Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela used this leadership ability positively, through dialogue, and Adolf Hitler and Slobadan Milosevic used the same ability negatively, through violence. The mantle of leadership therefore places a huge responsibility on the shoulders of those to whom leadership is entrusted.

In the 21st century, leadership and dialogue need to be inextricably linked. Every leader should possess dialogue skills. Dialogue is an art form: it is more than talking and more than discussion. It is often confused with diplomatic negotiations where compromise is sought to 'cut a deal'; where parties use diplomatic negotiations to promote their own political and economic interests. Dialogue involves a deeper set of skills. It involves listening, empathy, open-mindedness, understanding and cooperation. To cooperate, one has to understand; to understand, one has to be open-minded; to be open-minded, one has to empathise; and to empathise, one has to listen. In dialogue, one is not seeking merely to 'cut a deal', but trying to build cooperation or cooperative relationships, and arriving at a confluence of ideas and expectations.

The most important skill in dialogue is listening, which requires rigorous training to master. Most people are not good listeners; at best, they are passive listeners, who hear what other people are saying but do not absorb themselves in the world of the speaker. Although they hear every word spoken, a mental barrier prevents them from appreciating the point of view of the speaker, the world experience, and the values, culture and emotion behind the statements. To achieve this depth, one has to practice active listening by becoming a participant in the world of the speaker and grasp all their emotions

and experiences. Our contemporary world with all its challenges needs leaders who are skilled in the art of dialogue.

Dialogue and Violence: Changing Mindsets

From leaders of small communities to leaders of nations, all will be challenged in how to deal with the conflicts of the 21st century. Creativity and innovation, on the one hand, and determination and resolve, on the other, is needed. The question is whether, in addressing the conflicts of the 21st century, these leaders will invoke their creative and innovative talents and exercise a determination and resolve that is characteristic of Gandhi and Mandela, or that of Hitler and Milosevic.

Gandhi and Mandela faced rigid mindsets: people who were passionate, emotional, full of anger and hatred, and ready to die for a cause in which they believed. In their cases, it would have been easy to channel their emotion and energy into mass violence, but each leader chose to be creative and innovative against all odds, against conventional wisdom at the time, and with a determination and resolve admired by many. They persevered with their quest to mitigate the number of deaths that could have otherwise resulted, had they not chosen to engage their opponents in dialogue. Hitler and Milosevic, however, chose to engage their opponents in protracted wars, utilising their creativity and innovation to train and equip large armies with sophisticated weapons. They achieved this with a determination and resolve despised by many, since the consequences have tested our claim of being the most evolved and civilised creatures on earth.

Experience has shown that it is far easier to move passionate, emotional people who are filled with anger and hatred to take up arms against each other, than to move them to dialogue. Experience has also shown that it is plausible that angry people have a more intuitive and instinctual disposition to attack than to understand, especially when hurt and suffering. When that anger is

THE WORLD IS IN NEED OF LEADERS WHO CAN FOSTER A SPIRIT OF DIALOGUE BY TRANSFORMING THE CURRENT STATE OF DIVISIVE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CREATING A NEW PARADIGM OF UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE
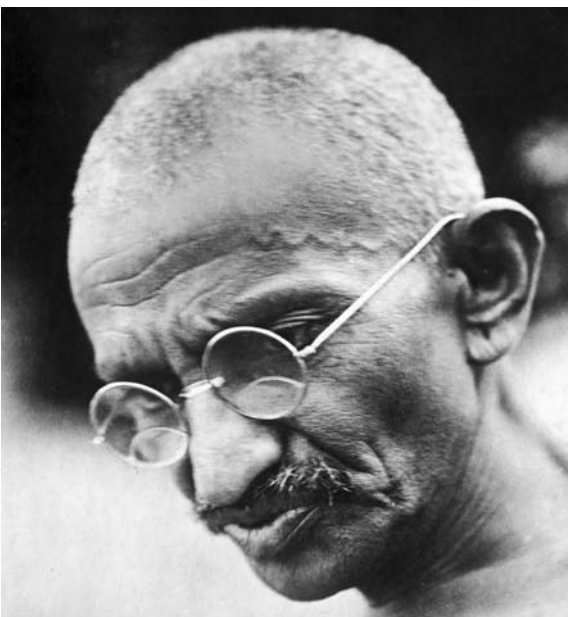
Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela are examples of leaders who were able to positively influence the actions of people through dialogue.

exacerbated by manipulative rhetoric and on occasion facts – whether biased or unbiased – it becomes very easy to channel this into violence. Leaders who have mastered the art of oratorship can use their skill to move large masses of people to engage in activities in which they may not normally engage, but in a sea of emotion reinforced by numbers, people can progress very quickly from being passive listeners of a speech to active participants in violent action.

Under such zero-sum circumstances and volatile emotions, a call by a leader for understanding, tolerance and cooperation through dialogue can easily be met with rejection of the leader and, in some extreme cases, even expose the leader to death. Martin Luther King and Yitzak Rabin are two leaders of recent history on whom such fate has befallen.

Building a New Culture of Dialogue

How then do we encourage people to dialogue and, more importantly, how do we encourage leaders to dialogue? Dialogue, like violence, depends on acculturation. Mankind has built a culture of violence through many wars and conquests over the centuries. Violence has been glorified through symbols and songs, and role models of bravery are often people who have been victorious or died on the battlefield. Might has, throughout history, been portrayed as right. Today, although real-time newsclips from the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan show the brutality of war and violence, our physical distance from the battlefield

allows us to accept the justifications provided by leaders for the use of counter-violence or pre-emptive violence; all in the name of our security.

How do we ensure that dialogue, as a means to resolving conflicts, prevails over violence? Our world view, as humanity and of humanity, needs to change. We need to build a new paradigm of dialogue. It cannot be stated with certainty that there are more violent resolutions to conflicts than there are conflicts being resolved through dialogue. However, it is true that the resources being put into violence far outweigh those being put into dialogue and other non-violent conflict resolution interventions. Billions of dollars are spent each year training leaders in war, yet how much do we spend training leaders in dialogue?

The development of leaders in the art of war involves years of theoretical and practical exposure at national war colleges. The theories come from treatises written thousands of years ago by masters such as Sun Tzu in his most famous work, The Art of War, and later writings have been codified into the laws of war. But like war, dialogue has also been with humankind for thousands of years, yet there are no treatises on dialogue, nor are there national dialogue colleges where leaders can be taught the art of dialogue.

Dialogue is a trained perspective that rejects violence and embraces understanding, open-mindedness and empathy. It is not good enough merely to be accul-turated away from violence. The monks of Myanmar[1] are certainly more distant from violence than most people
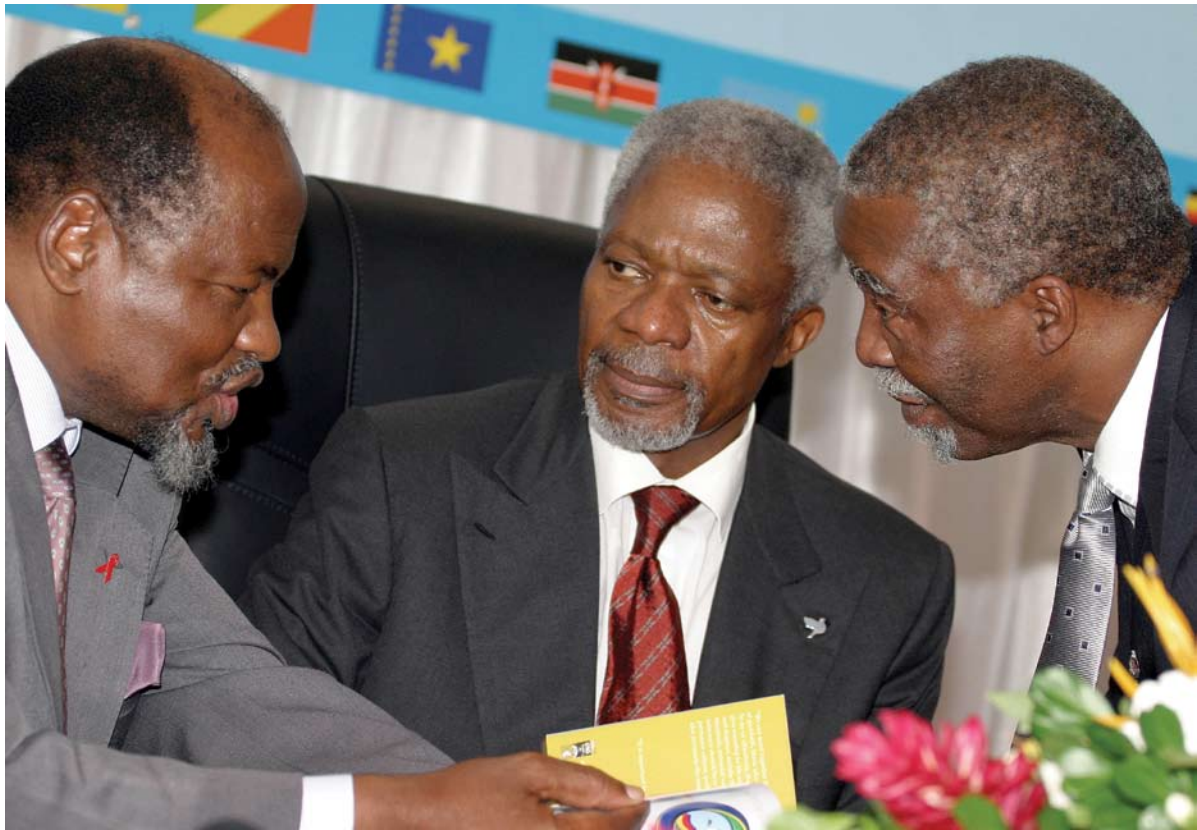
Joaquim Chissano, Kofi Annan and Thabo Mbeki engaged in dialogue.

but, without dialogue skills, one wonders how likely they are to transform their situation.

Global Dialogue

Leaders of the 21st century will have to have an acute understanding of the triggers to global destruction, and then invoke a global dialogue to avert this. The 20th century was arguably the most devastating century in the history of mankind. Two world wars were fought amidst the growing advances in military technology, which resulted in the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These events shocked the world and brought home the realisation of the destructive power that humankind possesses. In the 21st century, the atomic bomb pales into insignificance when one considers the capabilities of more advanced weapons of mass destruction. The spread of science and technology has ensured that such weapons are now in the hands of many nations, not just the two original superpowers.

Today, several regional conflict systems are home to nuclear powers. Another world war in an increasingly polarised world is a very real and growing possibility. The Middle East is the most volatile region and home to two nuclear-capable countries, Israel and Iran. The recent stand-off between Russia and the United Kingdom has deepened the tension between the former country and the Nato Alliance. The continuing stand-off between China and Taiwan, as well as the unresolved issue of North Korea, threatens regional and international peace and security. The regular clashes between India and an increasingly unstable Pakistan, both nuclear powers, are another source of concern.

In this high-stakes political arena, brinkmanship – the practice of taking a dispute to the verge of conflict in the hope of forcing the opposition to make concessions – could be highly dangerous. The world needs leaders who can master the art of dialogue rather than brinkmanship. In a world where weapons of mass destruction are readily available, there is no room for error and brinkmanship, as miscalculations can result in fatal errors. Even if nuclear war is not a possibility, our economically interdependent yet politically polarised world renders every conflict a threat to international peace and security. Iraq is a typical example: the massive destruction of life, culture, antiquity and infrastructure in this country must surely make our leaders rethink war as a means to resolving differences.

Today, many perceive the challenges facing the world as a 'clash of civilisations'. For example, the great civilisation of Islam is pitched against the modern Western civilisation, dominated by an Anglo-Judeo-Christian character. The future outcome of such polarisation is a frighteningly bleak projection. In response to growing misunderstandings among nations and nationalities, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 56/6 on 9 November 2001, calling for a 'Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilisations'. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has also established a series of dialogues, entitled 'Dialogue Among Civilizations', to promote greater understanding and cooperation among and between nations and nationalities.

In the context of growing misunderstandings, incorrect perceptions and tensions between nations and nationalities, it is especially incumbent on leaders throughout the world to develop the art of dialogue to prevent such conflicts from deteriorating into civil,

(NEPAD) – did such international perceptions begin to change. These African leaders entered into genuine dialogue with their Western counterparts, where they sought to share challenges in relation to the continent and in relation to the international community, as well as the concerns that were being articulated by their counterparts.

Africa needs massive investments to deal with the huge challenges facing it. Governments and individual investors will not invest in Africa unless they are convinced about the continent's capacity to absorb such investments, protect them and generate a return. There are many countries in Africa that are prepared for such investments and that can guarantee absorption, protection and very high returns. However, few international investors and governments understand African countries, contexts and developments. African leaders in the political, business, civil society and academic spheres must therefore play a significant role in engaging their international counterparts in dialogue,

BILLIONS OF DOLLARS ARE SPENT EACH YEAR TRAINING LEADERS IN WAR, YET HOW MUCH DO WE SPEND TRAINING LEADERS IN DIALOGUE?

regional and global wars. The world is in need of leaders who can foster a spirit of dialogue by transforming the current state of divisive international relations and creating a new paradigm of understanding diversity and difference. The United Nations General Assembly should be an example of leaders coming together to make such shifts in global political thinking, by engaging in genuine global dialogue about the challenges facing the world.

Shaping Perceptions of Africa through Dialogue

African leaders should be painfully aware of the negative stereotypes that continue to shape perceptions about the continent. Africans are considered by many outside the continent to be backward, and lacking in vision, intellect and skills. African leaders are considered to be corrupt, selfish and despotic. While Africans know these perceptions to be broad generalisations, few outside of Africa share such views.

For a long time, people in Africa, including the leaders, engaged the international critics by heaping blame on them for the continent's plight. This changed nothing. The world continued to perceive Africa in the same way, and only engaged with African countries as 'humanitarian crises needing assistance' or 'a treasure chest of resources to be exploited'. Only when some African leaders developed an African-inspired and -led agenda – the New Partnership for Africa's Development

to break stereotypes and misperceptions and reinforce Africa's positive attributes and developments.

Dialogue in Africa

Africa is home to diverse nationalities and an abundance of resources. While the plentiful resources should ideally ensure the prosperity and security of all people in Africa, this is sadly not the reality. While some countries boast good growth rates, there are still many countries that continue to be caught in the quagmire of conflicts. Many of these conflicts have deep structural roots, which require fundamental institutional transformation to broaden democracy and create equity and justice.

Such changes are unlikely to occur without genuine dialogue between and among people within specific conflict contexts and regions. This dialogue has to start at the level of the top leadership of these countries and regions. This requires that leaders be willing to engage their constituents, listen to their grievances and be open to understanding and empathising with peoples' contexts and experiences. Such action on the part of the leaders will eventually garner the cooperation of their people. This is the essence of dialogue. South African President Thabo Mbeki and his cabinet regularly participate in what is locally and traditionally known as an 'imbizo' (a Zulu word that means 'a gathering of people'), where

they meet with communities, listen to their concerns and engage them in dialogue. These opportunities are also used to inform policies and to inform the communities of government initiatives.

The South African government describes the 'imbizo' in the following terms:

"*Imbizo is about unmediated communication between government and its people. It is a forum for enhancing dialogue and interaction between senior government executives and ordinary people. Imbizo provides an opportunity for government to communicate its action programme and the progress being made directly to the people. Imbizo also promotes participation of the public in the programmes to improve their lives. Interaction through Imbizo highlights particular problems needing attention, blockages in implementation of policy, or policy areas that may need review. It draws public input into how best to tackle challenges. It gives the President and others direct access to what people say and feel about government and service delivery, to listen to their concerns, their grievances and advice about the pace and direction of government's work.*"[2]

Such dialogue brings governments closer to their people and vice versa. It helps leaders to stay engaged and connected with their people, and to identify with their experiences. It sensitises leaders to peoples' needs and consequently makes them more responsive to those needs. More African leaders need to take the initiative to engage their people at all levels through dialogue; rather than concentrating power and resources at the centre and marginalising communities.

Conclusion

Our world has not experienced a time in its history when so many people are politically awakened to the paradoxes around them, and how these affect them. An unprecedented number of literate people in the world, coupled with the massification of information through the radio, television and more recently the Internet, have provided people with awareness and proximity to their condition in a world characterised by huge gaps between the rich and poor. In many cases, people are now aware that their poverty and suffering is a result of their exploitation to feed the lifestyles of the rich. The resultant widespread anger and hatred then becomes manifest in violent conflicts.

In addressing the global challenges facing us, it is not enough that we merely attend to the structural causes of conflicts by transforming the institutions of global and local governance. We also have to appreciate and

REUTERS / THE BIGGER PICTURE

South African President, Thabo Mbeki and his cabinet regularly participate in 'imbizos,' where they meet with communities, listen to their concerns and engage them in dialogue.

embrace diversity and cooperate with each other, despite differences. Building lasting peace in the world should be our leaders' highest priority today. Globalisation, technology and climate change have ensured our common destiny. Humanity stands on the threshold of mutual destruction or common prosperity, and our choices will determine our destiny. Choosing violence to resolve our differences will inevitably lead to our mutual destruction. Choosing dialogue presents opportunities to build mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation, which will surely lead to common prosperity and a better world. It is hoped that years from now, when history tells of this time, when the world's leaders faced a critical juncture in determining solutions to global and local challenges and conflicts and the outcome for the future, it will reveal how enough responsible and courageous leaders arose to the challenge of building relationships and healing divides through dialogue.

Vasu Gounden is the Founder and Executive Director of ACCORD.

Endnotes

1   The monks of Myanmar (formally Burma) have been protesting against the military government and other injustices in the country. They have recently faced violent and deadly repercussions.

2   The Presidency – Republic of South Africa. Available at <www.thepresidency.gov.za>, accessed on 9 October 2007.

AFRICAN LEADERSHIP: THE SUCCEEDING GENERATION'S CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

WRITTEN BY **AHMED MOHIDDIN**

Introduction

We live in a world of continuous changes, challenges and opportunities. Changes are inevitable. They may pose threats and fears for some and generate challenges and opportunities for others. The issue is not that of changes or no changes; it is rather: what kind of changes? Changes initiated by whom, how or in what circumstances? It is the capacity to anticipate changes wisely and to respond to them effectively that has distinguished successful countries (or people) from the not-so-successful or problematic states. Historically, successful countries have been those that, for various reasons, have had the capabilities to anticipate important changes in the domestic or global marketplaces of goods and services, and new ideas or principles of production and organisation, and have responded to them timely and effectively.

Young African leaders who are comitted to developing synergy between the generations are likely to be successful and effective.

The world has been in a state of continuous shift, with major changes in science and technology, scales and types of production, organisational principles, invention of new goods and services, and in various forms of social, economic and political development. Those who were involved in, or were aware of, those changes – countries such as India, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea – acquired the capabilities to respond positively and timely to the challenges and opportunities generated by those changes, as well as to predict and prepare for future changes, challenges and opportunities.

There has never been a time in modern African history when the issue of leaders and quality of leadership have been so crucial. In light of the endemic socio-economic problems facing Africa, the first generation of African leaders have been subjected to severe criticism. It cannot, however, be maintained that they totally failed. To do so would be both unscientific and unjust. Some leaders responded to the problems confronting them in the best manner they could. There were successes and failures.

It is, nonetheless, arguable that the first generation of African leaders failed to anticipate and respond effectively to the challenges generated after independence. For various reasons, these leaders lacked the capacity to comprehend the long-term implications of political transformation from colonial rule to African self-government, and the challenges likely to be created for their societies and economies. They also failed to create an environment that would enable a continuous generation of young African leaders with the intelligence, competence, vision and commitment to steer Africa through subsequent changes, challenges and opportunities.

The Succeeding Generation of Leaders

As the world is settling into the 21st century and globalisation becomes inescapable, a new breed of leaders and leadership is needed in Africa. Leadership is needed that has the intelligence and capacity to anticipate wisely the possibilities of domestic as well as global social, economic or political change, comprehend its significance and effectively respond to it. Africa needs leaders who are intelligent, and respect education; who are educated, skilled or experienced themselves; who value knowledge and information, and know where and how to access the advice and expertise required for policy formulation and implementation; who are committed to the promotion of African perspectives on democracy and good governance, and economic development strategies that are compatible with African socio-cultural realities; and who have integrity, vision, competence and can inspire people to realise such future vision. Leaders, moreover, who acknowledge the

Jomo Kenyatta, former president of Kenya is a good example of a reconciliation leader.

positive contributions of the previous generations, recognise the importance of the generational linkages and are committed to develop the synergy between the generations, are likely to be successful.

Each historical epoch demands particular kinds of leaders and leadership. The kind of leadership needed during the anti-colonial period was clearly different from that needed during the post-independence period. There are leaders needed in circumstances where reconciliation is very critical. There are those needed for organisation and mobilisation, inspiring people for major societal transformations. And there are those leaders who have the unique qualities of effecting the needed transition from one type of regime to a totally different one. There are thus different types of leadership appropriate to specific circumstances.

Nelson Mandela and Jomo Kenyatta are good examples of reconciliation leaders. They were able to bring about reconciliation between the immigrant races and the indigenous peoples, maintained peace and managed to conserve the economic structures and their potential for development in South Africa and Kenya respectively. Julius Nyerere was able to inspire and mobilise his people in search of the New Jerusalem of Ujamaa and, despite some of the major failures of his policies, left his country united in peace, security and stability. Those who succeeded him as leaders in the peaceful electoral process were able to effect the transition from the centralised economy he created to one of relative economic liberalism and political pluralism. And there were also other leaders, such as Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana and Leapold Senghor of Senegal, who managed to effect the transition from colonial rule to a long period of indigenous rule and maintained environments of peace and security, and regimes of relative good governance.

There is now a new generation of young Africans, the majority of who were born after independence. They are better educated, more knowledgeable about the world around them, aware of what happened in the past but not as traumatised by the colonial experience as their predecessors. They have, however, experienced the consequences of post-independence

Although the future belongs to the young generation of Africans, they are not yet sufficiently involved in the formulation of policies that are bound to affect their future, either as beneficiaries or victims. These educated, talented and highly motivated young African leaders must be systematically and meaningfully involved in public affairs, sensitised to the major development and governance issues confronting Africa, and gradually assume the responsibilities of formulating the appropriate policies in response to these issues. They must be provided with the opportunities to participate in the shaping of their own future, and that of their respective countries.

Amongst the first generation of African leaders, there are those who are prepared to share the accumulated knowledge and insights that only age and experience can offer. The knowledge and experience they have accumulated over the last five decades of tremendous domestic socio-economic and political transformations, and grappling with global political forces ranging from Cold War manipulations and the impacts of the externally imposed structural adjustments to the ongoing challenges of globalisation, are invaluable to the succeeding generation of leaders.

The young leaders need the experience, wisdom and sagacity of the elder leaders to enable them better to understand human nature, statecraft and the world

LEADERS, MOREOVER, WHO ACKNOWLEDGE THE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PREVIOUS GENERATIONS, RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GENERATIONAL LINKAGES AND ARE COMMITTED TO DEVELOP THE SYNERGY BETWEEN THE GENERATIONS, ARE LIKELY TO BE SUCCESSFUL

governance, as victims and beneficiaries of the policies and practices adopted by the first generation of African leaders. They are concerned with individual freedoms, human rights, good governance, democracy and the promotion of human development. They value the importance of peace, security and stability, as some of them may have been victims of violent conflicts. They are aware of the threats of Africa's marginalisation from the world economy and politics, and of the incremental pauperisation of Africa due to mismanagement and bad governance. They are aware of the challenges and opportunities in the rapidly globalising world, and of the possibilities for new partnerships at national and international levels. But they are constrained by the existing systems and structures of governance. They are critical of their governments, but loyal to their countries.

of economics and politics, mobilising and managing resources, and inspiring people to participate in development processes. The elders need the professional expertise, energy, enthusiasm, vision and commitment of the young to complement their own missions. In the past, senior leaders trained and used the youth (referred to as the Youth Wingers) to harass and intimidate any competitors to leadership positions. Competition for leadership was severely obstructed.

The major challenges to leadership succession are, firstly, how to integrate the disparate intergenerational experience, insights and wisdom of the elders and the expertise, energy, enthusiasm and global perspectives of the aspiring leaders, to create the needed capabilities to respond effectively to domestic and global challenges. Secondly, is the creation of the appropriate institutions

that would promote and sustain the synergistic impulses of the two generations of leaders, in a world that is rapidly changing. Unfortunately, there are no institutions in Africa that promote the interfacing of the two generations and facilitate the exchange of views on visions and aspirations, and the experiences or the practicalities of implementing them.

Challenges Confronting the Young Generation of Leaders

Consolidating successes and avoiding repetition of past mistakes

There has been a tendency in Africa for those who take power to undervalue the successes of their predecessors and to undermine their achievements, instead of selectively utilising them as possible building blocks and thus maintaining a sense of continuity in development strategies. Development is an incremental process, requiring capacity development and resource mobilisation, consensus building and continuous consultations with leaders and various other people

in civil society. Development also entails winners and losers. As one development issue is resolved, another emerges as a by-product of the solution, and the process continues as long as there are development issues to be resolved. How to moderate the excesses of the winners and assuage the disappointments of the losers are critical issues. Given the post-independence experience in governance and leadership, there is clearly the need to create an environment in which consensus amongst the various leaders on major national issues could be amicably generated and promoted.

Developing a capable state, that is socially engaged and effective in responding to domestic and global challenges

One of the biggest challenges facing Africa in the 21st century is the development of a capable state that is democratic and grounded in societal realities. Such states must create, promote and sustain environments of peace, security and stability, in which people can engage in creative and productive activities of their choices, thus contributing to the promotion of development and,

A young Ivorian leader at the summit of African Youth Leaders in Abidjan, Ivory Coast (2006).

in the process, generate employment and tax revenue supportive of public goods and services.

A capable state is a society that is engaged, flexible and adaptable; and continuously reassessing its mission, governance structures, human resources and leadership capacity; and partnership in the private and public sectors, in order to respond effectively to the emerging challenges. In the past, Africans have tended to be reactive or passive to global changes; consequently, they became victims rather than potential beneficiaries of the changes. Africans now need to be proactive, acquiring the essential knowledge and information, building the appropriate capabilities, identifying the possibilities and opportunities and responding to them effectively.

Promoting public-private sector partnerships and creating a flexible balance between the efficiency of the market and the availability of public goods and services

In the course of the last two decades, Africa has undergone tremendous transformation, from state-led and government-controlled economies to free enterprise and government-regulated, private sector-led strategies in the economic and social development of African countries. There has been transformation from one-party authoritarian government to multiparty politics and democratic governance. The principles and rules pertaining to the regulatory framework for the private sector may be universally recognised but, because the private sector operates within a given social context, these rules have to be adapted to the specific context. To be socially engaged and of benefit to the people, the private sector must be adapted to the domestic cultural and traditional values of the society, and respond to the social and economic needs and aspirations of the people. It is for these reasons that the specificities of the regulatory framework for the private sector differ from country to country.

Many African countries began their sovereign independence existence committed to public sector-led development strategies. The private sector was later adopted largely as a consequence of various factors, including the failures of the public sector, bad governance and external pressures via structural adjustment programmes. It is not sufficiently engaged in the societal context. There is thus the issue of balance: between the demands of the market forces and the needs of the people for public goods and services, and between the profit incentives and general welfare of the people, their lives and livelihood, living and working conditions. There is also the issue of poverty reduction, and the prevention of gross socio-economic inequalities. In a democracy, these are critical and debatable issues,

The Internet, the wireless telephone and other information and communications technology enable people to communicate and obtain information in ways never before possible, dramatically opening up possibilities to participate in decisions that affect their lives. From the fax machine's role in the revolutions of 1989 to the email campaigns that helped topple Philippine President Joseph Estrada in January 2001, information and communications technology provide powerful new ways for citizens to demand accountability from their governments and in the use of public resources.

UNDP Human Development Report, 2001, p. 2

but also the ones that sustain the dynamism and vitality of the democratic system of governance.

As the private sector is in the 'formative stages' in many African countries, an innovative public-private sector partnership – based on the balance between the exigencies of the market and the basic needs of the people – should be crafted, in order to promote a better understanding of the role of the private sector, and the means by which it could be strengthened through popular participation in the private sector development process.

Managing diversities, preventing violent conflicts, promoting resolution and reconciliation

Ethnic and other socio-cultural diversities are the major characteristics of the continent. As these diversities are bound to compete, they are inevitably linked to conflicts, but they need not necessarily be violent or destructive. Better-understood, comprehended and acknowledged by all concerned, and given mutual trust, national consensus and vision, commitment and political will, diversities could be converted from potential liabilities for violence into dynamic and creative assets for the promotion of human development and cultural enrichment.

The first generation of leaders – the nationalists – detested societal diversities and feared their impact on nation-building. In the name of unity, nation-building and development, diversities were severely controlled. They were regarded as essentially divisive, and obstacles to the unity of post-colonial Africa. These fears were compounded by the nationalists' perceptions of the traditional leaders – and traditional institutions – as functionaries of the colonial state, since some of them were used to frustrate the anti-colonial struggles.

Some nationalists regarded the traditional institutions as anachronistic and thus unable to cope with the exigencies of the modern state, the challenges of nation-building and economic development.

Diversities continue to be an enduring reality in virtually all African countries, and traditional governance institutions are still respected in many African countries. Indeed, the struggle for diverse identity recognition is part of the struggle for political democracy – people asserting their identity, and the need for recognition of their cultural rights and traditions. Moreover, diversities constitute a huge reservoir of talents, traditions, skills, enterprise and experience. Appropriately managed diversities could be converted into creative and productive forces. Creatively modernised traditional governance institutions could provide the inspiration for African perspectives on democracy and good governance. These could be formidable building blocks for the promotion of the African Renaissance.

countries. There is also technology that can facilitate access to all sorts of information, knowledge and data that the first generation of leaders could not even imagine. With a laptop at his or her side a young policymaker, bureaucrat or entrepreneur could source the relevant information or data from an incredibly wide range of sources worldwide. With a portable printer, the material can be printed and circulated for discussions – and the results of the discussions circulated via the Internet to all concerned, whether across the country or worldwide. All this could be conducted in the shade of a mango tree – many miles from the office. E-governance, e-commerce and e-democracy are now issues of choice, and not technical impossibilities.

→   There is a general consensus on the principles and strategies regarding the promotion of economic

GIVEN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE EXPERIENCE IN GOVERNANCE AND LEADER-SHIP, THERE IS CLEARLY THE NEED TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH CONSENSUS AMONGST THE VARIOUS LEADERS ON MAJOR NATIONAL ISSUES COULD BE AMICABLY GENERATED AND PROMOTED

As diversities are natural societal phenomena that can inevitably trigger conflicts of interests, opinions and actions, the need to understand them better and prevent them from being transformed into violent or deadly conflicts will continue as long as the life span of humanity itself. But the strategies, methods and processes of preventing, managing and solving conflicts are bound to change with changing knowledge, conventional wisdom, ideas and circumstances – as well as the changing generations of young citizens and potential leaders. It is thus imperative that each generation of leaders should ensure that the succeeding generations of young African leaders are inculcated with the cultures of peace and trust, in order to facilitate the evolution and promotion of future peaceful, secure and stable societies led by competent, responsible, responsive and accountable leaders with commitment, integrity and honesty.

Opportunities Confronting the Young Generation of Leaders

→   There is a half century of experience and insights into African development and democratisation struggles at the disposal of the succeeding generation of leaders, as well as knowledge and information from other non-African developing

development, democracy and good governance. The major ideological issues and Cold War manipulations of the past have disappeared. The transformation of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) are indicative of the emerging consensus and commitments. There are, moreover, supportive continental and regional economic and political institutions, and networks of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that are actively engaged in promoting and protecting human rights and individual freedoms, calling to account those in authority, ensuring transparency and integrity in the governance systems. NEPAD provides the principles and strategies for economic and social development, and the APRM ensures that the principles and standards are observed. People are better informed and are aware of their citizenship entailments and obligations. What is now required is the implementation of these strategies, mobilisation of the resources, building and developing the appropriate institutional capacity, leadership, commitment and the political will. In

other words, the new generation of leaders must be ready to take action and implement good governance.

→ The global environment is also propitious. It is now possible for any young person or an NGO to establish partnerships within Africa and across the world. Notwithstanding some of their limitations – or interests – development partners are also very keen to establish partnership with African NGOs, promoting identified objectives. In this 'global village' and 'villagised globe', in which business is a 24-hour affair, cities in wealthy countries have become home to numerous ethnic and cultural groups, some of whom have organised themselves into very powerful NGOs and act as agents and spokespeople for their original home countries and people. Given creative collaboration, the African 'brain drain' phenomenon could be converted into a 'brain gain' phenomenon to promote Africa's interests abroad.

Concluding Comments

Given the pressures of domestic needs and demands, and the global challenges and opportunities confronting Africa, it is imperative that there is an institutionalised transition of leadership from one generation to another. Leadership succession should be a relay race and not an obstacle race. Two types of leaders are needed: functional and political. Functional or operational leaders are those that are responsible for ensuring the efficient and effective performance of the various institutions of governance, and other governance agencies in civil society and the private sector. These are professional people, trained to perform specific functions in the various domains and levels of the governance system – as senior civil servants or in other technical services – supportive of the various institutions and agencies such as health, education, communication road engineering security, defence, and so on.

But leadership entails the ability to identify, mobilise and organise the relevant talents, expertise and experience for the performance of the expected functions of an institution or agency. It entails the creation and maintenance of the appropriate environment, working conditions and incentives. However, although the functional leaders may be professional and technical people, for them to be effective in the performance of their leadership functions that require collective efforts – working with other people, and possibly other governance agencies – they need the art and skills of identifying, mobilising, energising and synergising the multitude of people, and blend their various talents and expertise into a series of common actions. They

thus need to be appropriately sensitised to the major governance issues and the societal context in which they function.

In the modern governance context, in which knowledge and information are crucial to the effectiveness of a governance system, political leaders also need training. In the past, African political leaders have generally emerged from society in response to the political demands of the moment, without training or prior preparation. However, as Africa is undergoing multiple transformations and must be prepared to respond effectively to the global challenges and opportunities that are likely to emerge as the 21st century unfolds, a new breed of leadership is needed. To be efficient and effective players in the various domains and levels of governance, policymakers need to have the relevant information and knowledge in order to formulate and implement the appropriate policies or decisions. Beyond the abilities to mobilise, organise and inspire people to collective actions, political leaders must also have sound understandings of the fundamental issues – economic, political or social – with which they are dealing. In the absence of this understanding, political leaders will not be able to perform their functions efficiently and effectively. They will be unable to make informed decisions or fully understand the advice of their senior bureaucrats, or evaluate their performances objectively.

Thus, to be efficient and effective in the performance of their respective functions, both types of leaders – the functional and political – would require a reasonable grasp of the issues they are dealing with (economic, social, political, global, etcetera), a sound understanding of the governance systems in which they are working, the principles supportive of good governance and the practices that might create bad governance in their respective societal contexts. As governance is a dynamic and continuous process, responding to needs and demands and changing societal contexts, in an equally rapidly changing global environment, it is a life-long education and training for both types of leaders.

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LEADERSHIP AND NATION-BUILDING: THE PROMINENCE OF THE SUCCESSION DEBATE AND 2010 IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL IMAGINATION[1]

WRITTEN BY **JUSTIN VAN DER MERWE**

Two issues seem to be dominating popular political discourse in South Africa (SA) recently, and are likely to remain so for a while. The first is the presidential succession debate in the ruling African National Congress (ANC), and the other is SA's hosting of the 2010 International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) World Cup. Both issues will have a profound impact on the future of SA's democracy.

The succession debate is proving particularly lively, not least because of how it relates to the broader divisions within the tripartite alliance – between the ANC, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) – over the current South African government's neo-liberal economic policy. The SACP and COSATU are seen to represent the interests of the working class masses, whilst the ANC under President Mbeki's administration is being viewed as out of touch with grassroots issues, especially following an economic policy (GEAR[2]) that has been criticised as being inimical to the interests of the poor.

This is why the SACP and COSATU, or at least large sections of the parties, are strategically choosing to back Jacob Zuma – the populist former deputy president and current deputy president of the ANC – in the succession debate, as he is viewed as a means to obtaining their ends – a man for the people. It is in this light that the groundswell of recent support for Zuma has become a focal point for anti-Mbeki sentiment. Rather than being a complete reflection of Zuma's hard-earned popularity, his newly-acquired popularity in the leadership race appears to be partly a reflection of general disillusionment with the current ANC leadership.

Other contenders for the presidential position – and they are varied and many – have often been defined not according to what policies they themselves would follow, but rather how they relate to the Mbeki or Zuma camps. Although such a candidate could potentially become a strong president in his or her own right, typically such a candidate is framed as a compromise candidate – someone who literally will be able to satisfy both camps.

Should the new leader not be able to repair the relationship between the alliance partners, the alliance could potentially split up, thus arguably weakening the ANC's grip on the black majority vote and power base. What is likely in such a scenario is for the SACP and COSATU to either remain independent, or merge to form a party appealing to the working class and poor. Over time, it is not inconceivable that the new party or parties would be able to rival the ANC, or at least enter into a ruling coalition. This, however, could take many years to materialise, and may not occur at all.

Whatever the outcome, if the new president can negotiate the immediate problems within the alliance and win over the hearts and minds of the workers and the poor, his or her term holds tremendous promise. Despite SA being at a particularly divisive juncture in its short democratic history, it is also entering a particularly strong phase. Economic growth has never been better and SA is starting to be viewed as a major international player, having recently been awarded a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

The new president who, according to the Constitution, must be inaugurated in 2009, will also arrive at an opportune time with the spotlight on the 2010 World Cup, and will immediately be elevated to the level of world statesperson, thanks to this major event. The event will provide powerful moments for the new president to project common political identities, and continue to build on the much-loved theme of sport and nation-building in post-apartheid South Africa. The event will also be a strong catalyst and incentive for a range of developmental and infrastructural projects,

THE 2010 FIFA WORLD CUP WILL PRESENT SPECTACULAR MOMENTS FOR THE NEW INCUMBENT TO ENGAGE IN NATION-BUILDING EXERCISES, BUT IT WILL ALSO PRESENT CERTAIN CHALLENGES

South African President Thabo Mbeki and former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan with other FIFA and AU officials during a ceremony to unveil the '2010 World Cup in South Africa' logo.

most of which will be well underway by the time the new incumbent takes office.

Although FIFA is notoriously prescriptive in how nations are expected to host the event – thus leaving little scope for self-styling – the question of how the event is likely to be appropriated to reflect or imitate a new style of presidency becomes increasingly important. As an emergent democracy whose state elites have actively sought to capitalise on the euphoria produced by sporting events to engage in statecraft exercises, SA understands the importance of the role played by a strong central figure during the hosting of such an event.

After re-admission into the international sports arena in the early 1990s, South African state elites quickly realised the potential of hosting sporting events as an opportunity not only to enhance the profile of the country internationally, but also to engage in some much-needed nation-building and developmental efforts. SA was emerging from a long and arduous transition

period, and required something more than just voting to unite the nation. Hosting sports events proved to be exceptional moments to celebrate its fragile, but new-found, national identity.

The 1995 Rugby World Cup proved cathartic for SA, at a time when the nation was galvanised through the 'one team, one nation' slogan. The slogan, which extended into the identity building of the 'Rainbow Nation', was to become a cornerstone of Nelson Mandela's presidency. The event appeared to capture the imagination of the nation and provided a poignant focal point for the country's multiracial aspirations. It became a classic example of the liberating nature of sports events, with powerful symbolic appeal. It caused the political elite to realise the significance of such events for strengthening national unity and manufacturing legitimacy for a newly created, still-fragile political order.[3]

At the time, journalists waxed lyrical and indulged in all manner of hyperbole about the uniting aspects of the sports event, which sparked an avalanche of nation-building rhetoric. The event was also credited with giving the White population of SA a historic opportunity to "embrace the symbols, leaders, and idea of a new, multiracial, democratic country", essentially, "to complete the symbolic journey from the old to the new South Africa".[4]

The fact that the event was a rugby World Cup was also important. Historically, rugby was predominately the game most favoured by White Afrikaner males, which in effect added to the chances that the White population of SA would identify with this reconciliation project. But, also because it was rugby, there was a risk that Whites might resist change by holding onto the symbols and anthems that had long been synonymous with the sport.[5]

The timing of the event was also particularly important. In 1994, SA had just held its first democratic election, and the country was in need of unification and the creation of a new national identity. Perhaps the most crucial aspect of this reconciliation project was the fact that Mandela himself harnessed the opportunity "to advance his own priority of national reconciliation".[6]

SA's decision to co-host the 2003 Cricket World Cup with Zimbabwe and Kenya was consistent with a pattern of foreign policy initiatives by President Mandela's successor, Thabo Mbeki, and went one step further in consolidating SA's African identity, after years of White rule under apartheid. The event was tied to President Mbeki's African Renaissance vision to rejuvenate the African continent socially and economically. The overall 'African Safari' motif of the tournament, which seems to have become the strategic marketing approach of choice, sought to stamp a uniquely 'Africanised' version of a game bequeathed to former British colonies, and

therefore broaden the cultural base of the game. What made the Cricket World Cup all the more interesting was the implicit attempt to undo a sport that had decidedly associated itself with the 'civilising' mission of the British Empire. By Africanising the Cricket World Cup, South Africa was implicitly trying to reconfigure – in a somewhat subversive manner – not only the hegemonic order of international cricket, but also the broader inequalities between the Anglo-Saxon world and Africa.[7]

The symbolic power of the Cricket World Cup had reconciliatory dynamics similar to that of the Rugby World Cup. However, the Cricket World Cup, because of its more regional focus, was operating on a larger scale between Africa and the Anglo-Saxon world. The Cricket World Cup presented an opportunity to engage in public diplomacy between Africa and the Anglo-Saxon cricket-playing Commonwealth countries (England, Australia and New Zealand). The Cricket World Cup was therefore more about Africa on the international stage forging reconciliatory links, than about domestic racial reconciliation gestures, like those of the 1995 Rugby World Cup.[8]

The Rugby World Cup quite clearly marked the rise of the 'Rainbow Nation' with Mandela at the helm, a president whose focus on multiracialism transcended the previous barriers between races. On the other hand, the Cricket World Cup projected a distinctly African identity, with Thabo Mbeki at the helm, a president whose legislative programmes and policy initiatives have quite clearly indicated a movement away from the 'Rainbow Nation' to that of 'Africanism'.[9]

President Mbeki inherited the full extent of social and economic transformation. By contrast, Mandela was president during the honeymoon phase of the transition period. Mandela's gregarious nature was well adapted to the immediate domestic reconciliation projects. Mbeki's natural inclination has been to focus far more on international politics and economics. In line with these shifts it appears that several years after the dawn of democracy, SA's primary focus has moved from reconciling Blacks and Whites in SA, to a much broader focus of integrating Africa into the international realm, under Mbeki.[10]

Similarly, the 2010 FIFA World Cup will present spectacular moments for the new incumbent to engage in nation-building exercises, but it will also present certain challenges. The new president will do well to stay attuned to the hopes, fears and expectations of the people. Most South Africans will, at some stage in the next three years, ask themselves: what do I think about SA's hosting of the World Cup, how will it affect me, and how will I have to adjust to accommodate it?

For those in the townships, the event signals entrepreneurial opportunities and an opportunity to improve their lives. In upper middle-class suburbia, the event signals foreigners invading their space, not being able to enjoy their lifestyle as much as possible and not being able to move as freely as they normally would because of the influx of visitors. What opportunities do African migrants foresee for themselves? What opportunities do neighbouring states and the region foresee? For those in government, the event signals an opportunity to lobby for funds and fast-track projects. Importantly, the event allows the country to dream a little and fantasise about making a claim on world affairs, the glitz and glamour of world football, the unfettered consumption associated with such a truly global event and ultimately, to dream of a better nation.

State elites will want to capitalise on the symbolic power of 'Mandelamania' yet again. However, given his age, Mandela is not likely to play an active role, but the highly populist, consumer-driven sport will have enough suitable African socio-cultural icons from which to draw. The new political icon elevated to a platform akin to the pedestal that Mandela occupies, will probably be President Mbeki himself, who will over time most likely succeed Mandela as the new, more business-savvy mega-events mascot.

The promotion of a regional African identity can be expected to be strengthened through the FIFA World Cup – not least because of the overwhelming popularity of the sport in Africa. Building upon these foundations, the

REUTERS / THE BIGGER PICTURE

Sports, in particular, soccer events, have a powerful symbolic appeal and play a significant nation-building role in South Africa.

AS AN EMERGENT DEMOCRACY WHOSE STATE ELITES HAVE ACTIVELY SOUGHT
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THE HOSTING OF SUCH AN EVENT

2010 football event will provide the new president with one of the most spectacular platforms for the affirmation of the African Renaissance. The FIFA World Cup will also bestow ascendancy to the recognition of the new president as a leader on the continent.[11]

The event will also pose challenges for the new president. Whereas the rugby and cricket World Cups were steeped in the symbolic importance of an 'imagined community', these sentiments are likely to become diluted in the face of a more consumerist global football milieu and the powerful role of FIFA in most decision-making. What is also likely to prove divisive or acrimonious within the public space are the governance and administration issues around the South African Football Association (SAFA) and the Local Organising Committee (LOC), and SA's capacity to host the event in general, more so than the Black and White issues that emerged during the rugby and cricket World Cups.[12]

Given SA's historical marginality within world football and the high calibre of competition, SA is unlikely to win the event, and will do well to get into the second round – a prediction that became all too apparent when SA did not even qualify for the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany. SA has never been a powerhouse within international football circles, let alone within the community of African states, and football development was not afforded the time to 'catch up' in terms of structural inequalities within SA's short-lived democracy. Even though SA is unlikely to win the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the country will 'score' in other areas.

The new president will have a role to play in managing these expectations, and will use the event to build trust and accrue political capital for the remainder of his or her tenure. The event will no doubt provide stringent early tests for the new president, and how he or she handles these challenges will go a long way in demonstrating how the candidate will fare. A particularly important issue for the new president will be managing the expectations around the much-anticipated economic and developmental windfall that the event is expected to bring the country. The extent to which these benefits will extend beyond big business and state-connected beneficiaries remains a particularly vexing issue that will require special attention. Many South Africans will use this as their criteria for a successfully hosted World Cup, despite the strong role played by FIFA in deciding who gets what related to the showpiece. Perhaps, most importantly, the new incumbent must realise and purposefully harness the event as a powerful vehicle to continue to transcend and overwrite South Africa's racially fractious history, and to dispel, once and for all, the myth that Africa is not suited to host such events.

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Endnotes

1   This article was partly inspired by Bea Vidac's work on the importance of football in Cameroonian society.

2   Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) was the economic policy adopted by the South African government in 1996, as the successor to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The adoption of GEAR was followed by much criticism, as the more left-wing, state interventionist measures prescribed by the RDP and viewed by many as a necessary policy to facilitate SA's development, gave way to a more centre-right, free market policy consistent with the pressures of globalisation.

3   Van der Merwe, J. and Van der Westhuizen, J. (2006) 'The Branding Game: The Role of Sport in South African Foreign Policy' in *Global Insight*, 67, October, p. 2 and Van der Merwe, J. (2007) 'Political Analysis of South Africa's hosting of the Rugby and Cricket World Cups: Lessons for the 2010 Football World Cup and Beyond?' in *Politikon*, 34(1), p. 72.

4   Black, D. and Nauright, J. (1998) *Rugby and the South African Nation*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, p. 131.

5   Booth, D. (1996) 'Mandela and Amabokoboko: the Political and Linguistic Nationalization of South Africa?' in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 34(3), pp. 459-477.

6   Black and Nauright (1998), p. 131.

7   Van der Merwe and Van der Westhuizen (2006), p. 2 and Van der Merwe (2007), p. 73.

8   Van der Merwe (2007), pp. 74-75.

9   Van der Merwe (2007), p. 76.

10 Van der Merwe (2007), p. 76.

11 Van der Merwe and Van der Westhuizen (2006), p. 2.

12 Van der Merwe and Van der Westhuizen (2006), p. 3 and Van der Merwe (2007), p. 67.

BUILDING ON THE VALUES OF THE PAST AS A FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

WRITTEN BY **YVES-RENÉE JENNINGS**

Africa, known as one of the richest continents, is endowed with an abundance of natural resources, vast expanses of land, numerous lakes, plateaus, plains, rivers, tributaries as well as arid and semi-arid grasslands and a diversity of animals and wildlife.

Yet Africa is the world's poorest continent. There are numerous reasons for this situation, with the main cause being the weakness of the continent's leadership. In many African countries, the leadership deficit has hindered socio-economic development, stability and the implementation of strong institutions that could ensure the fulfilment of all citizens' basic human needs or the creation of a safe climate that empowers communities

to contribute to their countries' development. Within this context, the main objective of this article is to highlight some of the historical factors that have played a major role in undermining Africa's ability to build strong leadership. An awakening of past values and their inclusion into contemporary leadership development efforts can help Africans build a robust foundation for sustainable,

Above: Many African Heads of State have partnered with traditional leaders to examine and determine how African values of the past can be applied to assist contemporary leaders fulfil their mandates.

> *In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness, to reach a higher moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other. That time is now.*
>
> WANGARI MAATHAI

responsible and accountable management and governance at all levels.

European Colonisation: Interference and Impact on Africa's Traditional Leadership

From the late 1800s to the early 1960s, European countries such as France, Belgium, Portugal, Spain and Great Britain colonised Africa and fragmented the many tribal kingdoms and traditional governments in different parts of the continent. The colonisers instituted their own rules to control the various groups they found on the continent. For instance, they swiftly discarded the traditional practices and past values that had kept communities interconnected and enabled the leadership of African societies to be effective. Dismantling the confidence, unity, collective responsibility, accountability and security provided by traditional African leadership systems, the colonisers imposed, for example, indirect rule[1], which gave authority to individuals randomly selected as chiefs in different communities.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the colonising powers' exploration and exploitation of natural resources and people provided European countries with riches that marginally benefited Africans. During the implementation of indirect rule, appointed chiefs looked after the interests of the colonisers to the detriment of their African kin through the strict oversight of native labour and the collection of taxes imposed by the Europeans, while ensuring that Africans did not build coalitions against the colonisers.

The European colonisers' interference with Africa's traditional government and leadership systems opened the door to dysfunctional practices that ruptured African society and the cultures of unity, collective responsibility and accountability. Misusing the authority bestowed on them through indirect rule, the chiefs at times abused other Africans in order to gain favour from the colonisers, or to safeguard their position and advantages. This gave rise to a new culture of African leadership, which was not accepted by many Africans because it promoted corruption among the selected few and created antagonism within African groups, clans and villages that had

historically functioned through transparent leadership and peaceful communal relationships. According to a World Bank report, Mamdani points out that European colonial rule created state institutions relying on customary law under a regime of "decentralized despotism", which was exerted through indigenous chiefs.[2]

Although African countries started to gain their independence in the 1960s after over a century of European domination, the colonisers' intrusion on the African way of life left a marked negative influence on many parts of the continent. For instance, a post-colonial legacy of corruption and dysfunctional social institutions continues to undermine the welfare of Africans in many countries. The confusion left behind by the former European colonisers' values, which differed from traditional African values, created a level of vulnerability that weakened African leadership's potential. According to a World Bank development report,

> … the nation-state as a mode of social organization was ill-suited to African realities. A European creation, it ignored the checks and balances embedded in indigenous power structures and their evolution in the years before colonial rule. It alienated political structures from the lives and needs of the population. As a result, following decolonization, modes of governance rapidly shifted to "neopatrimonal" systems of rule, characterized by "client-patron" relationships.[3]

After colonisation, because of their lack of interest in the African peoples' development, the former colonisers did not help African leaders formulate and implement a framework that reflected African values, or cultivate and maintain an African culture that encouraged the success of African leaders. Without formal capacity building in leadership, a sound cultural philosophy or knowing how to correct the ill-suited institutions imposed by their former colonisers, after almost 50 years of independence many African leaders are still governing through institutions and policies that their respective countries inherited. Therefore, these institutions and policies, while enabling the perpetuation of weak governance,

> *Africa will tell the West that today it desires the rehabilitation of Africa, a return to the roots, a revalorization of moral values.*
>
> PATRICE LUMUMBA
> (1925-1961), FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF
> PRESENT-DAY CONGO

have also contributed to corruption, state failure and social instability, because the imported European institutions and systems do not fit the African cultural ethos or way of life.

The Leadership Gap in Africa

The lack of adequate leadership has posed many challenges, mainly because many African countries are still at a loss to determine what to preserve, change or cast away from their colonial legacy, while they become more and more destabilised or continue to maintain an imperceptible dependence on their former colonisers. Given the need for strong leadership in most of Africa, it is crucial that leaders at grassroots, middle range and top levels consider how traditional African leadership values, such as the ubuntu philosophy, can be used in conjunction with modern societal advancement concepts to build a better future for their respective citizenry, countries and the continent.

Based on the premises articulated at the beginning of this discourse, building on African values of the past as a foundation for strong leadership in Africa would permit African leaders to promote, at all levels, the needed governance that can sustain the implementation of sound normative social institutions. Such a foundation, combined with new ideas of constructive and sustainable social transformation, would allow African states to build strong leadership capacity in different areas. Acquiring this competence would also help Africans to contribute constructively, responsibly and proactively to the development, formulation, design, implementation, coordination and evaluation of home-grown policies, institutions, programmes and activities that help maintain sound African leadership. In this respect, McElroy points out the views of Edward Wilmot Blyden, a prominent African thinker, who argued that Africans need to build their countries based on their own cultural norms and beliefs, instead of emulating practices from other parts of the world.[4]

Africa's Potential for Successful Leadership

Without any doubt, African leaders can achieve the kind of social change that helps achieve peace, stability, development and growth successfully, given the success of some African leaders in countries such as Botswana, Mauritius and South Africa.[5]

However, in order to attain similar success in the rest of the continent, the commitment of individual leaders will need to be strengthened by creating a bridge between the values of the past and contemporary practices, in order to build effective and sustainable leadership. As necessary, Africans need to also ensure that the beneficial aspects of Western civilisation that can help them promote sound African leadership are used in conjunction with African traditions. This paradigmatic shift will help promote stability, growth and peace on the continent while benefiting African countries, societies, communities and individuals. Moreover, this reorientation will allow Africa's governments to prosper, while they have ownership of their development agenda and proactively foster the level of capacity and capability that commands international recognition, as well as the local and national confidence necessary to integrate with the current global system successfully. Such constructive social transformation can be seen, for instance, in South Africa, based on the example of Nelson Mandela and other southern African leaders who have successfully established that bridge, while promoting positive capacity building within the social, economic, communal and political contexts of their respective countries.

Strong and effective leadership can help a country to create an economically and socially secure environment, where inclusiveness and equality help promote morally and ethically responsible and accountable humane communities. In such a climate, individuals can feel empowered to communicate and collaborate with their leaders, government agencies and other stakeholders, so they can achieve just and sustainable societies. Therefore, the focus on unique and home-grown strategies, based on African philosophies, can help promote development through participatory approaches. These efforts will allow the formulation of public policy and the implementation of sound governance, built on the transparency of open systems that promote dialogue and consensus building, while citizens take charge of their own destiny and the sustainable development of their countries.

Contemporary African Leaders and Traditional African Values

Looking back to how African societies relied on traditional values, the practice of African philosophies

> *African leaders such as Mandela, Khama, and Ramgoolam all led their nations democratically when they could have aggregated personal power. They demonstrated what few of their fellow African leaders then, or since, have demonstrated: that Africans are perfectly capable of building nations, developing sustainable democratic political cultures, and modernizing and growing their economies effectively.*
>
> ROBERT ROTBERG

NEPAD's African Peer Review Mechanism represents African leaders committment to helping their peers address their leadership challenges.

such as *sankofa*[6], *ubuntu*[7] and *undugu*[8] guided communities, villages and traditional governments before colonisation by European powers. Many African scholars and current African heads of state believe that such past values and philosophies can help Africans build the leadership they need, so they can develop the continent and promote personal and socio-economic growth of the African people. In this context, many African heads of state and traditional leaders have partnered to examine and discuss how African values of the past can be applied to assist contemporary leaders fulfil their mandates. In this respect, during a recent address of the National House of Traditional Leaders, President Thabo M. Mbeki[9] articulated that:

> Clearly, it is impossible to achieve all this without the full participation, as an integral and responsible component part of our system of governance, of an institution of traditional leadership that is strong, sufficiently resourced and has the necessary capacity to discharge its mandate; an institution that works for development in partnership with the rest of government, civil society and communities; an institution that relentlessly promotes the values of Ubuntu, and in every way helps to deepen our democracy and expand the access of our people to its benefits.

Another example of the belief of an African leader in the power of traditional leadership can be seen in the narrative of the Fourth African Development Forum keynote address, delivered by His Royal Majesty Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Asantehene of Ghana[10], which highlights the strength of past value systems, traditional leadership and governance. During his address, King Otumfuo asserted that:

> Before the advent of colonial rule, the traditional leader's role encompassed numerous functions, which revolved around the cardinal theme of guiding, protecting, defending and providing for the needs of the society he served …. Leadership was however predicated on a set of well-articulated norms and mechanisms. The multifarious functions were exercised with specific functionaries whose role was hallowed by ancient custom.

In this respect, referring to the past institutions that were governed by sound traditional leadership principles

before they became undermined by colonialism and "post-independence modifications and distortions", King Otumfuo pointed out that "democracy was not alien to all traditional African systems, and the rule of law, which provided checks and balances in the political system and imposed restraints on authoritarian rule, was a prominent feature of most traditional African systems". He further stated that:

> No concept of governance or development in Africa will be complete without acknowledging the role of traditional authorities. We therefore appeal to this forum, all African governments and all international organizations, to place the role of traditional authorities firmly on their agenda for development and governance .... I hope I have left you in no doubt that though weaknesses still exist in the traditional system, it is still a viable partner in the social and economic development of our communities in Africa. If Africa wants peace, truth and justice; if Africa wants to restore its traditional values of being each other's keeper; if Africa genuinely recognizes deep weaknesses in its developmental agenda, then I can only say that it is not too late to critically look for convergences between the modern state and the traditional state.

Integrating Traditional African Values with New Leadership Ideas

In the last few years, many African leaders have committed themselves to helping their African peers address their leadership challenges. At the 28 June 2007 G8 meeting, Sarah Gillam, an ActionAid spokesperson, asserted that "things are beginning to change in the region …" as she noted that "[African] citizens are increasingly holding their leaders to account, and the leaders, using the Africa Peer Review Mechanism, are starting to hold themselves accountable".[11] Furthermore, many non-governmental organisations and institutions based in Africa and in other parts of the world have endeavoured to guide Africa out of its leadership crisis. A few examples are:

The **InterAction** programme, which seeks to transform Africa through the development of a new generation of leaders, who are encouraged not only to practice sound leadership but also to help other leaders develop or improve their leadership skills, while they serve as role models for their respective communities and countries. According to Richard Bolden, instead of relying on external experts, InterAction designs and implements activities to help build leadership skills based on African philosophies, and on input from the leaders who participate in this programme.[12]

Africa is beyond bemoaning the past for its problems. The task of undoing that past is on the shoulders of African leaders themselves, with the support of those willing to join in a continental renewal. We have a new generation of leaders who know that Africa must take responsibility for its own destiny, that Africa will uplift itself only by its own efforts in partnership with those who wish her well.

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The **Abraham Index of Good Governance** system, which allows for the measurement of good governance systems based on the economic and social progress of every African nation. Such data originated from multilateral organisations such as the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, as well as non-governmental organisations such as Transparency International. Based on this index information, the foundation supporting this system "also wants to celebrate the achievement of exemplary African leaders; [and] to inspire and encourage Africans to expect the best in governance.[13]

The **Ubuntu Institute for Young Social Entrepreneurs** which, since 2005, assists in the development of African youth, offering education, leadership skills and capacity building training to young Africans. Such efforts aim at helping the youth learn how to contribute positively to the growth of their respective countries, and the African continent as a whole. Within this context, the Institute seeks to teach young Africans how to "solve African problems with African solutions."[14]

The **Africa Leadership Initiative** seeks to develop the next generation of community-spirited leaders of Africa, because it believes that in order to achieve growth and sustainable development, the next generation of African leaders need to work together to "identify and address their personal strengths and weaknesses as leaders; understand the challenges they face as participants in a rapidly globalising society; share and refine their respective visions of the society they would like to live in and to lead by example in building this society."[15]

The **World Bank Group Leadership Capacity Development Program** works with leaders in Africa to offer tailored capacity building assistance in leadership

development. Such assistance takes into account specific needs in terms of leadership capacity building, and also requires the commitment of leaders. Specific assistance combines the countries' values with contemporary ideas of social change and leadership development. To date government officials, civil society, political and private sector leaders from African countries such as Burundi, Central African Republic, Comoros, Liberia and Madagascar have benefited from these programmes. According to the World Bank, "Experience from the past decade demonstrates that high-quality political leadership is crucial for reform in the process of building good governance and shifting patterns of corruption."[16]

In conclusion, an approach that can help African leaders build a strong bridge between the strengths of past values and the best practices of nations such as South Africa, Bostwana and Mauritius will allow Africa to build an environment conducive to growth, development, peace and successful participation in the contemporary world economy. However, the task is daunting. Only a continued focus on integrating the values of the past with new leadership ideas will allow African leaders to overcome the dysfunctional legacy of colonisation, while working responsibly and accountably with their respective citizenry at the communal, state and national levels so they can achieve the stability that the continent needs. ⌂

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PREPARING AFRICA'S FUTURE LEADERS

WRITTEN BY **KWABIA BOATENG**

The quality of a society's future leaders – in government, business, communities and families – determines its capacity for survival. Africa's future leaders are today's youth. Former United Nations (UN) Secretary General Mr. Kofi Annan once wrote, "No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime … A society that cuts itself off from its youth severs its lifeline."[1] The type of future leaders that Africa gets will reflect the kinds of investment we are prepared to make in developing our future leaders. Leadership is a management-based competency that is not just discovered, but must be identified and developed.

This article examines Africa's development challenges and suggests a framework for preparing Africa's future leaders. The suggested framework is based on the idea of emotional intelligence, or what the Akans of Ghana refer to as '*efie nyansa*', meaning 'home wisdom'. 'Emotional intelligence' refers to the ability to reflect on one's self and others, and using this insight to learn and to solve problems in an efficient manner, including the ability to manage relationships effectively. This article identifies four main pillars for developing the emotional intelligence of the future leaders of Africa, namely:

➜ leadership with results, that is, the principle that leaders must produce optimal results;
➜ national values, that is, leadership guided by a common understanding of where we are coming from, where we are going and how we can get there;
➜ capacity development, that is, expanding understanding of the fundamental issues and the mechanisms for addressing them; and
➜ participation, that is, creating effective space for all in the development process.

Given the long history of mismanagement, not only of resources but more so of its people, this approach to leadership is perhaps the most appropriate for Africa today.

Context

Africa is a continent with vast resources and countless opportunities. But currently it is the continent with the worst socio-economic conditions: high rates of underemployment and unemployment, low literacy rates, high rates of mortality, high poverty statistics including food poverty, and high rates of civil conflict, among others. In addition, the gap in living standards between Africa and other continents is widening, in spite of Africa's abundant natural resources.[2]

The role of leadership is to transform the adverse circumstances that people face by inspiring hope and empowering them to achieve the desired results, which ensure stability and sustainable growth. But Africa's current situation renders its young people more desperate, vulnerable and hopeless. The continent needs future leaders who will help unleash its potential for socio-economic and political development, and recreate its image as the cradle of civilisation, peace and social harmony.

Africa's challenges in the 21st century include overcoming poverty, diseases and hunger. In addition, it must overcome challenges arising from the fast pace of technological advancements, which not only renders Africa incapable of competing in the globalised world of business, science and technology but also creates a great divide socially between Africa and the rest of the world. Future leaders must be aware that Africa's current predicament is partly self-inflicted, due to poor leadership and mismanagement, and only Africa's own leaders and people can address this predicament. For Africa to keep pace with the rapid changes in the world innovative, flexible, dedicated and responsive leaders are needed.

Leadership is about Taking Society to Mutually Desirable Ends

Leaders are not always identified by their positions on the national, social or economic ladders. They are also identified by the capabilities they possess: being role models; empowering others; being proactive; driving change and continuous improvements; showing courage in pursuing agreeable solutions; and developing relationships that are sustainable, inclusive and mutually beneficial.

Usually leadership is envisioned at only one level, namely the national-political level. For a nation to forge ahead, it needs not only a capable national-political leadership but also capable leadership at the regional, district, community and family levels. Furthermore, a nation needs as much leadership in business and economics, education and culture as in science and technology; as well as leadership in peace-building and conflict resolution, among others.

A summit of African Youth Leaders held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast (2006).

Africa needs leaders who can achieve sustainable results in terms of broad-based socio-economic progress and development. But the issue is which precise leadership behaviour can generate these results? Researchers categorise six types or styles of leadership, namely coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetting and coaching leadership.[3] Coercive leadership is one that demands immediate compliance with the leader's instruction; authoritative leadership is one that commands people towards the leader's goals; affiliative leadership is one that attempts to create harmony and builds bonds among groups of people; democratic leadership is one that forges consensus through participation; pacesetting leadership is one that sets high standards for performance; and coaching leadership is one that develops people for the future.

African leaders have often been associated with a leadership style that is more coercive and authoritative than democratic or pacesetting. The achievements of many past leaders were made at high social, political and economic costs to the nation, and thus could not be sustained in the long run. For example, the many achievements of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (the first president of Ghana) in terms of economic development were clouded by his unfortunate resorting to one-party

rule and the detention of his political opponents. He relied on his authoritative skills in the face of mounting difficulties to sustain the momentum of economic progress, and failed to use the best of his emotional capabilities.

Leadership styles emanate from the particular components or capabilities of emotional intelligence the individual possesses, namely:

➜ self-awareness (self-confidence, understanding one's emotions and the fact that they impact on personal performance);
➜ self-management (self-control, trustworthiness, initiative, achievement orientation and adaptability);
➜ social awareness (service orientations, empathy and organisational awareness); and
➜ social skills (being visionary, having influence, good communication, teamwork and team-building, being a change catalyst).

Therefore, to improve emotional intelligence, these capabilities (and their associate competencies) must be developed. Specifically, future leaders must have the desire and ability to achieve results; the desire and ability to self-manage by being guided by national values; the desire and ability to create social awareness and understanding; and the desire and ability to create

space for the participation of others. These competencies are fundamental in determining the leader's ability to formulate and implement the development policies required for creating a virtuous circle of hope: because there is a vision, work: because there is capacity, satisfaction: because there is effective participation, and development: because there is a focus on results. Unlike intelligence in the 'IQ' sense, emotional intelligence can be acquired, that is, transferred or taught.

How do we help the youth – our future leaders – grow their emotional intelligence?

➔ Coaching. This could take several forms such as counselling on leadership in schools, colleges and universities; and internship and apprenticeship programmes in workplaces, both in the formal and informal economies.

➔ Forums for organised interaction among young people – such as student associations, voluntary work camps, debating societies and development clubs – should be broadened and strengthened. These days such activities, which have normally provided the opportunity for young people to apply skills and competencies acquired through coaching and learning, have been scrapped due to cost-cutting measures. We need to rethink their role in shaping our future leaders and building solidarity amongst them.

➔ At the family and community level, our future leaders need to be given the space to exercise their intellect and test their beliefs – for example, by engaging young people in decision-making in their homes as well as their personal choices in education, work and health, amongst others, rather than treating them merely as a group of beneficiaries of others' decisions.

Fostering an Understanding that Values Matter

By distinguishing 'good' from 'bad', 'right' from 'wrong' and the like, values define the demand and supply conditions that determine the type of leaders we will have in the future. Where values are weak, such as in corrupt societies, there will usually be corrupt leaders who have the upper hand; but where values inhibit corruption, more upright persons have the opportunity to rise to positions of leadership. Donald Charumbira has argued that, "if national development is to be achieved by any nation, this requires the instillation of national values [in young people] which are in line with development goals."[4] The struggle against slavery and colonialism succeeded because they were based largely on the 'values' of respecting human dignity and the right to self-determination. Hence, the challenges of disease, hunger, joblessness, poverty and others can be tackled successfully if they are pursued on the basis of respect for human values.

Tomorrow's leaders must be imbued with values – personal values, cultural values, social values, work-

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Gender considerations need to be a significant aspect of any leadership preparation framework.

place values and 'national values' – without which no individual person or nation can advance. According to Charumbira, national values are the result – the sum total – of four types of values: patriotism, social responsibility, unity and economic productivity. The starting point in inculcating national values is understanding the national vision. Future leaders must be prepared with the national, business or community visions in mind, based on the examples of model leaders, through school curricula, and especially through community and family interactions.

Infusing Broad-Based Scholarship and Critical Thinking

Africa's future leaders must understand a wide range of issues: climate change and its implications for local livelihoods, poverty reduction, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), regional integration, market access, corporate governance, gender and more. Leaders who made significant impacts in the past were those who understood the evils of their time – such as colonialism and apartheid.

Investing in human capital is a basic requirement in preparing future leaders. Education provides the instruments for such investment. Yet Africa's educational and other training institutions largely produce individuals with degrees (reflecting the level of knowledge transferred and/or received). Many believe that these institutions do not develop the kind of capacities required of Africa's future leaders, namely capacities in relation to emotional intelligence and national values. Educational institutions are currently structured to be autocratic, inflexible in the application of standards of excellence, and driven by private revenues – and therefore cannot be the best vehicle for transmitting values to young people. Hence the first step towards using educational institutions for leadership capacity building purposes is to transform these institutions and make them more democratic and more value-oriented.

Furthermore, leadership capacity building institutions should develop curricula that aim not only at creating carpenters and masons out of unemployed youth, but also at creating awareness of shared values; helping individuals align their personal values with community and national values; encouraging accountability; developing communication skills; and providing an atmosphere for healthy debate, among others.

The next step would be to develop and expand opportunities for future leaders to apply, at least on

experiential terms, the values they have learned and the skills they have developed through direct participation in national, business and community affairs.

Encouraging Participation and Networking

Future leaders must be given the opportunity to learn to share relevant information with the cross-section of stakeholders. The buzzword these days is 'participation'. What does it mean, and what is its essence? Empirically, participation is simply a way to bring young people together and cause them to pronounce on an issue. This implies that participation is an end in itself, in contrast with 'productive participation', that is, engaging youth not only on the basis of their self-interests, but also informed perspectives and comparative advantages as a group that has physical claim to the present and the future, with a view to establishing consensus on development processes and their expected outcomes.

The lack of socio-economic development in Africa is partly ascribed to the over-centralisation of power and the impediments to effective participation of the population in national and community affairs. Thus, participation of future leaders – young people – is seen as a strategy for securing broad-based development.[5] The Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes emphasises participation as a way to promote education and training in democratic processes and the spirit of citizenship and civic responsibility. The World Bank notes that focusing on the youth makes sense because it is a demographic urgency, it has implications for the MDGs, it is economically efficient, it is politically imperative, and it has a demand.[6]

Productive engagement entails three main pillars of preparation:

1 productive communication, which recognises and respects young people as partners of today and leaders of tomorrow, and thus facilitates role learning;
2 constructive engagement, which provides the time, resources and nurturing tools that enable adaptation to and application of norms and values; and
3 long-term commitment, which ensures accessibility and accountability and facilitates individual and group devotion to mutually beneficial end-results.

Currently, in an attempt to promote youth participation in decision-making, parallel institutions have been established at national and regional levels, such as youth parliaments, youth councils, and regional and

sub-regional youth forums. The impact of these parallel institutions for preparing future leaders is yet to be systematically evaluated. But it could be said that amidst the constraints of resources, geography and timing, they have been marginal in providing leadership to the youth at large. Perhaps the time has come for greater focus on community and locally-based approaches to leadership development, especially leadership through service rather than only leadership in the exercise of political authority.

Service programmes that engage young people in responding to community needs also provide the opportunity to build skills whilst gaining work experience. The governments of Nigeria, South Africa and Egypt recognise the important benefits of youth service. In South Africa, through the efforts of 420 individuals working under the National Youth Service Programme in 2001, 25 hospitals and clinics and over 100 government buildings were made accessible to disabled people.[7]

Another avenue for preparing future leaders is through sport, art and music, which help strengthen the 'inner person' through continuous personal rediscovery, discipline and healthy competition. Such participation also builds competencies in communication and teamwork.

Leadership Preparation

Institutions, defined to include all the norms and standards that guide behaviour as well as the programmes and processes through which these norms and standards are reviewed and applied, are important matters in developing leaders at all levels. The role of governments at all levels is also crucial – creating the environment within which national values are given practical expression. But all sectors of society have a role to play in identifying and helping to monitor future leaders.

There are many leadership programmes in Africa today. In many African countries, one may find formal institutions devoted to leadership training. Even international organisations based in Africa are involved in leadership development. For example, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) established a project in 2004 called Foundations for Africa's Future Leadership, in response to the need for improved leadership across all segments and sectors of society. The project, with pilot programmes in countries such as Liberia and Tanzania, had training modules that included positive mental attitudes, developing self-esteem, goal setting and achievement, communication excellence, managing conflicts, negotiations, public speaking and time management. More of such leadership courses with sufficient government and private sector financial support are needed.

The InterAction leadership programme is one such transformational programme, designed by Africans for Africa in partnership with the British Council in Africa. The programme works with dynamic and innovative individuals who want to make a positive difference in their organisations and communities. The programme's methodology is based on the principles of "goodwill and good intent". By adopting an appreciative approach, participants can activate their leadership potentials with renewed confidence. They are encouraged to challenge the assumptions they hold about themselves, others, their environment and their continent, whilst creating a soothing opportunity to think and act differently, so as to make a positive difference. In essence, the programme aims to empower participants to engage with the challenges that Africa faces by learning from "what has worked and is working in Africa".[8]

Besides current approaches like the InterAction programme, there are other examples of excellent traditional leadership preparation programmes in Africa. In the Akan societies of Ghana, for example, leadership training is part of individual and social development. People assume formal leadership roles – including marriage – only when they are judged to have sufficient levels of emotional intelligence, besides other factors such as age, gender and lineage. Leadership training involves lessons in history, culture, knowledge and wisdom, imparted through proverbial ('*Ananse*') stories.[9] These lessons are reinforced through step-by-step participation, according to age, in various community and family activities and assemblies. Thus, when an individual is accepted as a 'chief' or 'queen', he or she is deemed to be a complete embodiment of all personal, cultural, social and workplace values.

Good leaders are not found by accident. They are made. Africa must decide now (and make resources available) to develop the future leaders needed, to assure stable, peaceful and progressive societies.

A Gender Perspective and Concluding Remarks

Gender needs to be a significant aspect of any leadership preparation framework. However, Africa is a largely patriarchal continent, even though women form at least 51% of the population. Women are responsible for 90% of the social care (in families and households), 70% of farm labour (as unpaid workers), and 80% are in petty trading, but they form a low percentage of leadership in businesses or in national and local governments. In the education sector, for example, the ratio of women to men who serve as teachers and administrators declines with the level of education – the ratio is highest at the primary level and lowest at the tertiary level.

Addressing Africa's poor socio-economic conditions, despite its abundant natural resources, is a major challenge for the continent's current and future leaders.

Young women must be prepared as future leaders through the provision of quality education, skills training and the provision of financial capital to complement their willingness to nurture the nation's human capital. Educating women is a vital part of educating the nation. When women are prepared for future leadership, then the nation is prepared for future social cohesion, stability and prosperity. 🕭

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8   This paragraph was taken from 'InterAction leadership training for youth participants of the ADF-V', a project proposal developed jointly by the British Council, Addis Ababa, and the Economic Commission for Africa in November 2006.

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QUALIFYING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

WRITTEN BY **KEMI OGUNSANYA**

Introduction

Since the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, women's status has changed. Giant strides have been achieved, and more opportunities are open for women in education and leadership positions at all levels of decision-making. Even though the African continent has been marred by armed conflict, violence, bloodshed and war, some member states have succeeded, in specific circumstances, to transform their conflict situations and to mainstream women into leading positions in government. Rwanda presently has the highest percentage of women in parliament in the world (48.8 percent), while Ellen Johnson Sirleaf became Africa's first democratically elected woman president. Internationally, a number of global and regional instruments have been adopted to protect women's interests, and many of these instruments have been recognised by a number of African nation states. Notably, the United Nations (UN) Resolution 1325 has been adopted by many women's groups to ensure their presence at peace tables in Northern Uganda, Darfur, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi. At the same time, the Durban Declaration (2002) emerged with 50 percent representation of women at all levels of decision-making in the African Union (AU), followed by the unanimous adoption of the Protocol on the Rights of African Women in 2003.

On special calendar days devoted to women, activists tend to commemorate their achievements and take stock of the serious challenges that still remain in the social, economic and political spheres. In politics, women now occupy key positions in the state and in opposition parties. In the private sector, women have made their presence felt as company directors, shareholders and senior management appointees. Women now enjoy stronger legal rights in many countries, take leadership roles in local communities, and stand at the forefront of peace movements. Moreover, women are still determined to confront issues that culturally debase women, such as gender-based violence and genital mutilation. This article attempts to qualify women's participation at all levels of leadership and decision-making ranging from the media, health, education, the environment, civil society, and the public and private sectors.

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia became Africa's first democratically elected woman president.

Women and Leadership

Culturally, Africa is largely a patriarchal society and leadership has been the domain of men. Consequently, African women hold leadership posts with limited experience, which presents enormous challenges and is costly, leading to limited success. African women need to be well equipped to assume leadership roles, in order to meet the challenges they generally experience in their private and professional lives. Women seeking leadership roles face several biases, and there is the need to leverage opportunities for women to overcome such challenges and prejudices. Dr. Specioza Kazibwe, the

former Vice-President of Uganda, described leadership as a concept that is gender neutral, but in practice has tended to be a male-dominated sphere. Most women in Africa are ill-prepared to seize leadership roles because they have been outside the leadership arena for a long time. Although the situation has improved statistically, women are still marginalised from the political apex, where laws and decisions allocating resources and safeguarding human rights are formulated.[1]

Women and Political Participation

In modern politics, Africa can boast of two female heads of state from Liberia, six female deputy/vice-presidents from Uganda, Gambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Burundi, and several female ministers holding different portfolios across the continent. Although men have dominated the political scene in Africa, ranging from the backdrop of colonialism to liberation struggles, single party dominance, military dictatorships and despotic rule, African women are now involved in politics and distinguished by their positive contributions to peace-making and peace-building in their countries. Many African women have been able to overcome numerous obstacles that have traditionally prevented them from enjoying full participation on the political

in political processes.[3] South Africa encourages women ministers to hold the office of the presidency while the elected president and deputy president are out of the country, in accordance with Chapter 5 section 90 (1) of the Constitution.[4] Three women ministers have held this position within a period of 24 hours, and one of these ministers is the current Deputy President of South Africa, Mrs. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. Similarly, the appointment of Mrs. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala as Nigeria's first female Minister of Finance, following her 20 years working experience with the World Bank, serves as a credible example.

Feminists argue that a critical mass of women with the support of women's groups can encourage the full participation of women in governance. Arguably, more women in parliament can motivate to push women's concerns favourably; yet this is still ultimately determined by the 'institutional masculinity' of the prevailing government. Ensuring the representation of women in governance can become a superficial political agenda for governments, simply to access funding and receive acknowledgement from the international community who have 'gender representation' stipulations while, in reality, refusing to change policies or regulations that hinder the acceleration and empowerment of women in

CULTURALLY, AFRICA IS LARGELY A PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY AND LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN THE DOMAIN OF MEN

scene. In particular circumstances, women activists have faced torture, political detention and unlawful imprisonment and experienced much defiance and resistance from their husbands, families and society at large for attempting to enter politics. Electoral reforms and quota inclusions in national constitutions and legislations have seen the numerical strength of women in governance in Mozambique, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Uganda, Tunisia and Morocco.[2] Notwithstanding, gender equity is crucial to encourage good governance, transparency and accountability.

There is a shift in emphasis from a 'quantitative' to the 'qualitative' participation of women in politics and decision-making processes. Occupying a seat in parliament is already a great achievement, but there is now the need to enhance women's effectiveness in political positions and strengthen their impact in decision-making forums such as government; cabinets; local, provincial and state assemblies; political parties; the judiciary; labour organisations; non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the media. In Uganda, to ensure the qualitative participation of women in politics, they need to hold a university degree or its equivalent to participate

political processes. Hence, it becomes crucial for pioneer women in government to avoid being 'male surrogates' when socialised into the legislature, and should be distinguishable from the men they replaced. Women need to be innovative and effective as parliamentarians, by understanding legislative structures and the functions of governance, towards advancing the goals and aspirations of women's interests particularly in a male-dominated system of government, thereby advocating for the qualitative participation of women in decision-making.

Bridging the Imbalance in Education for Women

A 2007 survey conducted by Higher Education Resources Services – South Africa (HERS-SA) in Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, revealed similar patterns in the constitution of women in academic institutions across the continent. The survey disclosed that even though women constitute over 50 percent of the higher education workforce, only eight percent were vice chancellors and 12 percent were registrars; while

21 percent of women were appointed as deputy vice chancellors and executive directors. In South Africa, the highest proportion of women are in the lowest academic positions and the lowest pay classes in support departments, despite employment equity legislation and the articulated priorities of the Department of Education.[5] Notably, Madame Graca Machel presently serves as the Chancellor of the University of Cape Town.

In attempting to bridge the gender imbalance, HERS-SA and similar organisations have embarked on developing the capacity of women to take up leadership positions in academic institutions through workshops, exchange programmes, shadow learning and internship programmes. Such institutions aim to develop and offer accessible education, training and development for women working in the higher education environment, and empower women take up leadership positions in universities, polytechnics/technikons and colleges of higher learning, thus serving as role models for women in their countries. It is hoped that the inclusion of women in leadership positions in academic institutions will challenge the culture of gender inequity, facilitate change in the workplace and enable women to participate fully in the workforce.

In situations of violent conflict – particularly experienced in Ivory Coast, Sudan and Somalia – the education of many youth has stopped, debarring young girls' access to essential skills such as reading and writing. Even private tuition is difficult, due to limited and inaccessible funds. Countries in post-conflict situations such as Angola, Sierra Leone, Liberia, DRC and Burundi have embarked on alternative adult education, which has facilitated and empowered women in households by providing soft training skills and guidance through varied training centres. These training centres focus on developing skills and learning abilities among women and children by training them in English language, computer literacy and subject-based learning with digital tools. Even in peaceful societies like South Africa, Swaziland and Nigeria, indefinite strikes and violent demonstrations have affected the educational systems, with many youth ill-prepared for external examinations. In this regard, extracurricular activities beyond school curriculums have been successful in supplementing mainstream education through creative measures, by developing better communication skills, affording students the opportunity to work in teams and presenting the results of their research as a collective. Research has shown that over 60 million girls of primary school age are not in school, and many are from sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.[6] The education of girls is a positive investment for nations. In the long term, it enables girls to make better decisions, such as delaying marriage and childbearing until a reasonable maturity which, in effect, reduces infant mortality rates.

Educated women also have the capacity to earn greater and sustainable incomes for their families and nations.

Women in Business

Africa has seen a dramatic evolution in the complexity and integration of women in the business and professional sectors, against the backdrop of vastly under-represented women in senior leadership positions in the private sector, civil service and NGOs. Supporting women in their career growth through the recruitment, engagement, advancement and retention of women, supported by critical training skills, has resulted in an increase in the number of women leaders in the workplace at directorate, middle and senior management levels. Enhanced networking opportunities for senior-level women has improved decision-making processes, and significantly increased the number of women appointed as managing directors and partners. This number has doubled from 2001 to 2006.[7]

Major successes for women in the workplace include the elimination of sexual discrimination in employment, feminisation of specific labour, equal pay for women commensurate to their capabilities, and the pursuit of a balance in work and life. In the huge engineering field, only 22 percent of women are managers, and less than 10 percent of women study engineering. As a result, employers aim to attract and retain more women engineers. This has led to an intensive campaign to encourage more women to study engineering, by providing scholarships, mentoring programmes and a handful of projects supported by the public and private sectors. Moreover, women engineers enjoy better remuneration than accountants and solicitors. Notably, in the aviation sector, only 38 percent of senior and middle management are women, with few women who are pilots.[8] South Africa has had modest success with black women entering this field, through the pioneering efforts of Sibongile Sambo.[9] However, more women are employed in other categories within the aviation sector – for example, 15 percent of traffic controllers are women.[10]

African Women in the Media

In 2001, the International Federation of Journalists reported that, around the world, 38 percent of all working journalists are women.[11] In South Africa, women journalists range between 33 and 45 percent in the newsrooms, particularly in the editorial divisions. On average, women earn 20 percent less than men in newsrooms.[12] While there are now roughly equal numbers of women and men in newsrooms across the continent, women are still largely scarce in senior and top management echelons, as well as in the hard news departments. There are, however, considerable

Wangari Maathai, an environmental and political activist from Kenya, became the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize for environmental conservation.

differences between the media houses in Africa, with some having a majority of women in senior management and others with none at all. Incisively, a majority of women are found in TV newsrooms rather than in research-related news, and dominate administrative categories, with more men in the technical section. Research has shown that women in Africa constitute about 17 percent of news sources, one percent less than the global average of 18 percent.[13]

Women journalists were restricted to issues affecting women only, while their male counterparts were able to cover stories on government policy, regional and international peace-making, service delivery and investigative reporting. To overcome these patriarchal norms in the media field, women journalists in Tanzania established the Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA) in 1987 in Dar es Salaam, at a national level. TAMWA published pertinent issues in magazines and hosted radio programmes on gender-based violence and sexual harassment, and profiled female candidates in preparation for national and local elections. TAMWA succeeded in reforming the laws subjugating women, and changed how women were portrayed in the media as sex objects, victims, 'iron ladies', and as dependents

to society. TAMWA expanded into filmmaking, to showcase the positive contribution of women as heroines in African society. Further, the wages for women journalists were reviewed and paid commensurate to their male counterparts. TAMWA conducted training for many young women journalists who entered mainstream media in the country.[14]

Women are, therefore, making their mark in the media profession. Since the 1990s, women have been awarded laurels for their contribution in print and electronic media reporting all over the world, including Africa. In southern Africa, a special award is dedicated to women, in an effort to promote women in a once-secluded, male-dominated field. One of the recipients of this award is SABC reporter Ms. Sandy McCowen, who won the award for her report on male rape in South Africa.[15] Her report played a significant role in the review and revision of South Africa's rape laws.

Women and the Environment

The global environmental debate has appreciated the significant role that women play in managing natural resources in Africa. Ecologically, most wars in Africa are driven by resource conflicts, including land and water scarcity. Environmental degradation can also be a source of conflicts: the shrinking of natural resources leads to intense competition for control of limited resources, and the inequitable access to these resources exacerbates the conflicts, thus creating a vicious cycle. The challenge facing African women in the protection of the environment is a combination of armed conflicts and the destruction of the environment in the face of bloodshed and war. These are many of the issues that are experienced by women in situations of violent conflict, driven by blood diamonds, deforestation, landmines, floods, famine and drought.

Critically, women have examined measures for the effective management of resources available to them, such as water quality management, agricultural production, wildlife conservation, ecotourism and the preservation of Africa's vast rainforests. "Between 1990 and 1995, Africa lost more than nine million acres of forest each year to civil unrest, agricultural conversion, overgrazing, wildfires, cutting for firewood and charcoal, and logging."[16] In recognition of the role of women in the preservation of the environment, Professor Wangari Muta Maathai, an environmental and political activist from Kenya, became the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize in the field of environmental conservation, for her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace.

Conclusion

Women have been duly acknowledged in leadership positions, but despite this significant success in

mainstreaming women into senior and middle management, they still face many challenges, and are generally discriminated against on the basis of sex, race, class, religion, culture and profession, and by economic, social and political power. Women must be empowered to become leaders at all levels of decision-making in families, communities and societies, which requires a qualitative change in the practice of leadership. Good leadership is based on the ability to communicate, listen, build consensus and work in partnership with allies to develop a collective vision and implement an action plan for the benefit of all stakeholders.[17] Empowering women for leadership is crucial for their equitable participation at the formal and informal sectors. NGOs, corporate enterprises and international agencies can provide training in electoral processes, public speaking, media skills, political rights and issues, conflict resolution, HIV/AIDS education, adult literacy and formal education for women.

The contribution of women in economic recovery cannot be overestimated, and it is necessary for women in leadership positions in the formal sector to engage and develop the capacity of women in the informal sectors, in an attempt to overcome poverty and remove the barriers that prevent development and prosperity. This remains a major challenge for the continent, but one that is not impossible to attain. Many African countries have set benchmarks in bridging the widening gap between the rich and the poor, and women are assuming leadership roles as campaigners for such positive engagement.

Even though African women now hold positions of leadership in governments, it has become evident that women in authority tend to marginalise the concerns of women once elected into government, and this falls short of the many expectations in the implementation of issues stressed by women. Paradoxically, increasing the participation of influential men as champions for women's change can bring attention and focus to the positive role women play in peace-building. Thus, by enhancing the capacity of all people, including men, to understand the challenges facing women, there is a greater possibility of bringing women's leadership capacities to the fore. This could also result in the establishment of pressure groups to engage governments on the social-cultural gender divides, and encourage such institutions to embrace and uphold the conventional laws and statutes that protect women, such as the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000).

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Endnotes

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5   HERS-SA, available at <http://www.hers-sa.org.za/about.htm>, accessed on 4 September 2007.

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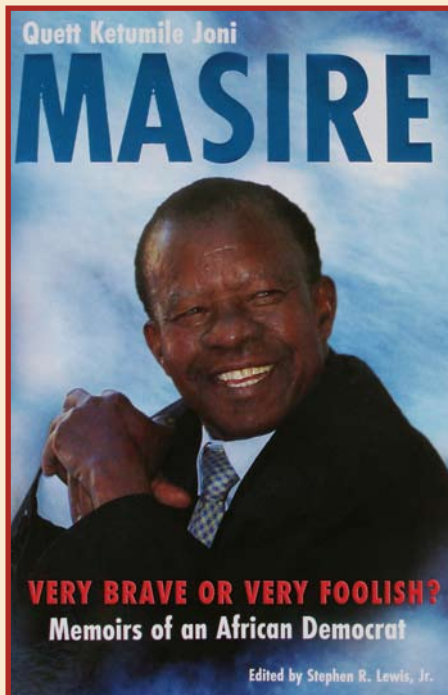
VERY BRAVE OR VERY FOOLISH? MEMOIRS OF AN AFRICAN DEMOCRAT

Author	**Quett Ketumile Joni Masire**
Editor	**Stephen R. Lewis, Jr.**
Year	**2006**
Publisher	**Macmillan Botswana Publishing Co.**
ISBN	**99912-404-89**
Pages	**358**

In a modest, true-to-type Botswana way, this significant insider account of an African success story quietly made its way onto the market in late 2006. It is a fascinating tale, narrated by former president Ketumile Masire and edited by Professor Stephen R. Lewis, Jr.[1] As the title informs, the memoirs are of – not by – Masire, based on approximately 65 hours of recorded conversations with Lewis. In addition to students of contemporary Botswana's domestic and foreign policies, the narrative is highly recommended to those concerned with issues of leadership (passim, but in particular pp. 83-102), political and economic governance (pp. 146-245) and conflict resolution in Africa (pp. 301-316).

While post-colonial sub-Saharan Africa has generally suffered from poor governance, recurrent violence, increased poverty and deepening marginalisation, it is also true that there are stable African countries that for decades have been governed under democratic multiparty dispensations and have become leaders in socio-economic performance. The island republic of Mauritius is one such example. More significant is the case of Botswana, established in 1966 in a neighbourhood of hostile, minority-ruled White regimes. It rapidly progressed from poverty to riches in a region which, between 1961 and 1990-1994, was engulfed in the southern African 'Thirty Years' War' of national liberation. Thus situated, the title of Masire's memoirs refers to the widespread scepticism noted ahead of Botswana's

independence, regarding its future prospects and its leaders' space and ability to steer the territory towards true nationhood and progress.

From the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s, Botswana registered the highest growth rates in the world. Boosted by the discovery of diamonds shortly after independence, the real annual average income growth per capita during these three decades amounted to no less than 8.2 percent. While diamonds as well as other mineral resources elsewhere in Africa have often been the source of looting, conflict and war, citizens of Botswana have enjoyed a stable climate of positive peace and surprisingly little graft. Over the years, Transparency International has regularly rated Botswana as having the lowest level of corruption on the African continent.

As minister of Finance and Development Planning (as well as vice president) from 1966, Ketumile Masire was the principal architect behind this exceptional development.[2] From the founding of the Bechuanaland Democratic Party in 1962, he was a close partner of Seretse Khama, Botswana's first president. Following Khama's death in 1980, Masire took over the presidency until his own retirement from official duties in 1998. As ex-president, however, he has continued to be actively involved in African affairs. In addition to his participation in the Global Coalition for Africa, Masire chaired the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU) international panel to investigate the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, which in

2000 produced the so-called 'Masire Report', entitled *Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide*. Above all, from the opening in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in October 2001 until its conclusion in Sun City, South Africa in April 2003, Masire served as the chief facilitator of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD), laying the basis for a democratic solution to the protracted conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In addition to notes on his childhood, adolescence and retirement "before and after national politics", Masire has divided his memoirs into three main parts, under the headings 'Creating and Leading a Nation', 'Developing the Nation and Our People' and 'Dealing with Our Neighbours and Other States'. Rich in detail, but always to the point, the captivating narration – where dry facts and figures are interspersed with very personal comments, humorous anecdotes and, not least in the chapters devoted to international relations, frank character portraits of other political leaders – takes the reader on an educational journey through the stages of Botswana's graduation from a poor, marginalised British protectorate to a modern multiparty democracy, classified by the World Bank as an upper middle-income country. The considerations behind the nation's stable foundations of democracy, development, unity and self-reliance are thus explained by the chief architect himself. In this context, Masire notes that "[o]ur luck in Botswana has not only been in discovering diamonds, but also that we have discovered people" – a pregnant remark on governance on a continent where political leaders are more often attracted to material and lootable resources than to the development of human potential.

In hindsight there are, naturally, issues where Masire would have taken a different path. Botswana's ravaging HIV/AIDS pandemic is one example. In words similar to those of his South African counterpart, former president Mandela, Masire notes that "our failure to deal with [the pandemic] in an effective way […] arose from judgmental errors", adding that "it is perhaps my greatest regret" and that the pandemic "is now threatening to destroy so much of what we have accomplished, economically, socially and politically". As Botswana's economic growth tapers off and income disparities increase, HIV/AIDS is now taking a ghastly toll on this exceptional African success story[3], and proving a tremendous human security challenge that the country shares with its neighbours in southern Africa.   ◮

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Endnotes

1   Stephen R. Lewis, Jr. is President Emeritus and Professor of Economics at Carleton College, Minnesota, USA. He began a long association with Botswana in 1975, serving as economic consultant to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning – led by Masire – on a resident basis in 1977-78 and in 1980-82.

2   For a critical assessment of what they characterise as Botswana's "elitist democracy", see Good, Kenneth and Taylor, Ian (2006) 'Unpacking the 'model': Presidential succession in Botswana' in Southall, Roger and Melber, Henning (eds) *Legacies of Power*, Uppsala, Sweden: The Nordic Africa Institute and Cape Town, South Africa: HSRC Press, pp. 51-72.

3   Statistics understate the human impact of HIV/AIDS. In Europe, the greatest single demographic shock since the Black Death was experienced by France between 1913 and 1918, when the combined effects of the First World War and the 1918 influenza reduced life expectancy from 51 to 35 years – a fall of 16 years. This pales in comparison to Botswana where, according to the United Nations, life expectancy is projected to fall from 65 years in 1988 to 34 in 2008, a decrease of 31 years (UNDP (2005) *Human Development Report 2005*, New York: UNDP, pp. 26-27).