Africa's emerging global partnerships

Their implications for the continent's development aspirations

INTRODUCTION

Important changes have been occurring in the ill-defined area of partnership in Africa, mainly in the context of the African Union's quest for development as well as peace and security on the continent. The purpose of this paper is to identify and describe the implication of these partnerships, as well as their long-term development objectives and, subsequently, to evaluate their relevance to the present economic conditions of African countries.

Compared with other developing regions, Africa faces a unique developmental challenge, especially in the early stages of economic development. The average size of the economy, as measured by the Gross National Product (GNP), is quite small; average household incomes in Africa are far below those in other less-developed countries (LDC); and the majority of countries classified by the United Nations (UN) as 'least developed' are in Africa. To make matters even more unsettling, domestic savings in Africa remain at a low level. This means that Africa relies heavily on foreign capital to sustain investment, coupled with stagnant or declining household incomes. The lack of domestic investment as a reliable source of capital formation means that African economies depend a great deal on exporting primary agricultural products to the external market.

This paper also attempts to analyse Africa's strategic partnerships: the Africa–Indian Forum Summit, Africa–Europe Summit, China–Africa Cooperation Forum (South–South) and the Africa–South America cooperation (South–South). Using historical analysis and comparative research methodology, the paper investigates the actions that have been undertaken since these rather competing partnerships were launched officially, and attempts to address the challenges and opportunities these partnerships/cooperation have generated. Furthermore, the paper tries to address the political, economic, cultural and social developments that have the potential to shape African society, and their implications on the peace and security agenda on the continent.

The paper concludes with recommendations and the proposed way forward.

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Although it is not possible to do justice here to the broad sweep of African history, it is important to point out the great heterogeneity and rich heritage of African societies before the advent of colonialism. In the centuries prior to European rule, Africa was home to large centralised empires and smaller segmentary communities, as well as an array of other political entities.[1] Cooperation, conflict, alliance, and rivalry among peoples could all be found in the region. Although pre-colonial economies were overwhelmingly agrarian, trade, crafts, and mining contributed to the livelihoods of many populations. Islam and Christianity were evident in some areas, and many parts of the continent had regular contact with European, Middle Eastern and South Asian cultures.[2]

> The events which transpired five thousand years ago; five years ago or five minutes ago, have determined what will happen five minutes from now; five years from now or, five thousand years from now. All history is a current event. [3]

Thus contemporary Africa reflects the lineage of its pre-colonial institutions and successive historical changes. Africa was profoundly affected by new cultures and social currents. The colonial powers typically cultivated a cultural mythology through a European lingua franca, education, and symbols of identity. Although most Africans did not readily identify with the culture of the colonisers, these new influences had far-reaching effects on colonial societies. Urbanisation, formal education, and the migration of peoples led to greater interaction among groups and ideas. Social change gave rise to a new stratum of elites, many with unique education and skills who ultimately usurped the traditional authority of their elders. By the middle of the twentieth century,

the spread of such ideas as democracy, egalitarianism, socialism, and self-determination created powerful intellectual currents throughout the continent, exerting a subversive effect on the maintenance of colonial rule. Finally, Africa became enmeshed in an international state system. African countries came under the jurisdiction of international law, and their external affairs were defined by predominant standards of global diplomacy. They were also powerfully impacted by the strategic and security objectives of the world powers.

Africa south of the Sahara encompasses 48 countries with more than 600 million people. The search for stable and legitimate government, the quest for unity among heterogeneous societies, and aspirations for economic attainment have been recurrent themes since the end of the colonial era. The importance of regional economic cooperation and integration as an efficient strategy for the orderly and coordinated development of the African continent and the interrelation between political stability, peace and security and regional integration have been recognised by Africans.

> The search for stable and legitimate government, the quest for unity among heterogeneous societies, and aspirations for economic attainment have been recurrent themes since the end of the colonial era

Long before the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), African leaders recognised that cooperation and integration among African countries in the economic, social and cultural fields was indispensable to the accelerated transformation and sustained development of the continent. This was concretised in 1963 in the objectives of the OAU Charter, as well as in the OAU Summits of 1973 and 1976, and the Monrovia Declaration of 1979. In 1980 the OAU Extraordinary Summit adopted the Lagos Plan of Action as a major step towards that goal. At that summit, African leaders stated their commitment, individually and collectively, to promoting the economic integration of Africa, in order to facilitate and reinforce social and economic intercourse. They also committed themselves to promoting the economic and social development and integration of their economies and, to that end, to establishing national, regional and sub-regional institutions, leading to a dynamic and interdependent African economy, thus paving the way for the eventual establishment of the African Economic Community (AEC).[4]

The commitments in the Lagos Plan of Action[5] and the Final Act of Lagos[6] were translated into concrete form in Abuja, Nigeria, in June 1991, when the OAU Heads of State and Government signed the treaty establishing the AEC. The AEC treaty has been in operation since May 1994, when the required number of instruments of ratification for its coming into force were deposited with the secretary-general of the OAU/AEC.

At regional and sub-regional level, African countries have embarked on programmes to promote integration, and have established organisations and institutions to support their efforts. So far, the AEC has established direct working relations with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA). In the southern region, the AEC has been dealing with the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In North Africa, there is the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), which has no direct contact with the AEC so far. Apart from these regional economic communities (RECs), there are groupings such as the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa (UEMOA) and the Customs and Economic Union of Central Africa (UDEAC), all of which are engaged in the promotion of integration. All these organisations were already operating when the AEC Treaty was signed in Abuja in June 1991.[7]

The major characteristic of the AEC (compared with similar communities) is that it is being established in six stages, according to the provisions of the Abuja Treaty (articles 6 and 88).[8] These concern mainly activities of the RECs. In fact, the establishment of the AEC is the final objective towards which the activities of all the RECs (existing and future) will be geared (article 88).[9] They consist of six stages of variable duration over a transition period not exceeding 34 years, from the date of entry into force of the treaty. Each of the stages consists of activities to be implemented concurrently.

First stage (five years)

Strengthening existing RECs and establishing new ones in regions where they do not exist

Second stage (eight years)

- At the level of each REC, establishing tariff and non-tariff barriers, customs duties and internal taxes

at the May 1994 level, and determining the timetable for the gradual liberalisation of regional and intra-community trade, and for the harmonisation of customs duties vis-à-vis third states

■ Strengthening sectoral integration, particularly in trade, agriculture, money and finance, transport and communications, industry and energy
■ Coordinating and harmonising the activities of RECs

Third stage (ten years)

Establishing a free trade area and customs union at the level of each REC

Fourth stage (two years)

Coordinating and harmonising tariff and non-tariff barriers among RECs to establish a continental customs union

Fifth stage (four years)

Establishing an African common market (ACM)

Sixth stage (five years)

Consolidating and strengthening the structures of the ACM, including free movement of peoples and factors of production; creating a single domestic market and pan-African Economic and Monetary Union, African Central Bank and African currency; establishing a pan-African parliament.

The Abuja Treaty also provides for measures to be taken concurrently with regard to formulating multinational projects and programmes to promote a harmonious and balanced development among member states. However, the stages are not inflexible; the process can be expedited with regular verification of completion of the stages.

African Economic Community and Regional Economic Communities

The Abuja Treaty accorded special recognition to the critical role of the RECs in establishing the AEC. Accordingly, a protocol was concluded on relations between the AEC and RECs which should serve as an effective instrument and framework for close cooperation programme harmonisation and coordination, as well as integration among the RECs, and between the AEC and RECs. This protocol has the advantage of enhancing the status and role of the OAU secretariat, which is also the secretariat of the AEC, in all matters pertaining to the implementation of the treaty.[10]

In November 1996, the Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC) of the AEC held its first ministerial session in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, and inter alia adopted its work programme, which is designed to accelerate the integration process on the continent. The AEC Assembly of Heads of State and Government held its inaugural session in Harare, Zimbabwe, on 2 June 1997. This was a momentous occasion in the process of African economic integration. The session was addressed by the current chairmen of ECOWAS, COMESA, ECCAS, IGAD, SADC and UMA, on the progress in the implementation of the AEC achieved in their regions.

Organs of the African Economic Community

The community has the following organs:

■ Assembly of Heads of State and Government
■ Council of Ministers
■ Pan-African Parliament
■ Economic and Social Commission
■ Court of Justice General Secretariat
■ Specialised Technical Committees:
  ■ Committee on Rural Economy and Agricultural Matters
  ■ Committee on Monetary and Financial Affairs
  ■ Committee on Trade, Customs and Immigration Matters
  ■ Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment
  ■ Committee on Transport, Communications and Tourism
  ■ Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs
  ■ Committee on Education, Culture and Human Resources

Chapters and articles of the treaty cover issues in all these social and economic sectors, and the operating modalities of its organs as well. In addition, there are provisions on the legal aspects of the treaty as well as the functions of high officials of the secretariat.

NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was established with a vision and strategic framework for Africa's renewal. The NEPAD strategic framework document arises from a mandate given to the five initiating heads of state (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa) by the OAU to develop an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa. The 37th summit of the OAU in July 2001 formally adopted

the strategic framework document. NEPAD is designed to address current challenges facing the African continent. Issues such as escalating poverty levels, underdevelopment and continued marginalisation needed a radical intervention, spearheaded by African leaders, to develop a vision that would guarantee Africa's renewal. Its objectives include:

- To eradicate poverty
- To place African countries, individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development
- To halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process and enhance its full and beneficial integration into the global economy
- To accelerate the empowerment of women

DEVELOPMENT

We are discovering the essential truth that people must be at the centre of development. The purpose of development is to offer people options. One of these options is access to income – not as an end in itself but as a means of acquiring human well-being. But there are other options, including long life, knowledge, political freedom, personal security, community participation and guaranteed human rights. People cannot be reduced to a single dimension as mere economic creatures.[11]

To date, there is no consensus about the meaning of development. Until the end of the 1960s, the modernisation perspective on development held sway. Development was seen as an evolutionary process in which countries progressed through an identified series of stages of modernisation. The form of the future did not require the imagination and speculation evident in the work of earlier evolutionary theorists such as Marx, Durkheim and Weber. The future for developing countries was already in existence and could be seen in the shape of advanced Western societies, especially the USA. The means of getting there were also delineated. The tools of scientific planning would enable underdeveloped nations to escape from this undesirable status and become fully modern in a few decades.

Development versus ideology

The ideology of development was at once optimistic and ethnocentric. It was optimistic in assuming that the problems of underdevelopment – such as poverty, inadequate social services and low levels of industrial production – were amenable to straightforward solution through the application of rational management techniques. It was ethnocentric in that modernity was

perceived as being Western, and that Western technology, institutions, modes of production and values were superior and desirable.

Development requires rethinking and renewal. As critics point out, development has often degenerated into mere rhetoric in which admirable official goals, such as the satisfaction of basic needs, job provision and better social services, are supplanted by operational goals which focus on debt-servicing, crisis management and defence of privilege. But this does not mean that the concept of development should be discarded, rather that it should be rejuvenated. It should be subject to critique and there should be efforts to make official and operational goals coincide. There should also be clear appreciation that any definition will be value laden, a product of personal preferences, and that there will never be universal agreement on a single meaning and policy package.

However, certain approaches that capture the multidimensional nature of development, and the importance of ethics and wisdom in determining what it should be, do hold out hope for the future of Africa. These points of a definition of what constitutes development were the outcome of a 1986 seminar at the Margi Institute, Colombo, Sir Lanka:[12]

- An economic component dealing with the creation of wealth and improved conditions of material life, equitably distributed
- A social ingredient measured as wellbeing in health, education, housing and employment
- A political dimension such as values of human rights, political freedom, enfranchisement, and some form of democracy
- A cultural dimension in the recognition that cultures confer identity and self-worth to people
- The full-life paradigm, which refers to meaning systems, symbols, and beliefs concerning the ultimate meaning of life and history[13]

In addition, commitment to ecologically sound and sustainable development should be included. Moreover, to pursue authentic and successful development, there must be a concerted effort at re-engineering the processes and paths towards sustainable development, based on local conceptions, initiatives, and understandings of the local political economy. The legitimacy of a central government depends ultimately on its responsiveness to the demands and felt needs of ordinary people. It is tempting to argue that efforts toward the achievement of development are most satisfactory if the initiative comes from within the communities themselves.[14] This entails reorienting the conventional development discourse toward a more people-centred, but culture-sensitive approach.

LONG-DISTANCE TRADE

There are almost limitless opportunities for positive-sum interaction among members of societies in a nation or among nations. The opportunities they identify stimulate invention and innovation, and these in turn create further opportunities. As Wright (2000) argues, 'several trends span all of human history, including improvement in the transport and processing of matter, energy, and information'.[15] As the technologies of travel, transportation and communication have improved, so inevitably have returns from exploiting these opportunities. If the means exist to transmit information and transport people, goods or services cheaply, someone somewhere will seize the opportunity to exploit the growing demand for mass transit. Such a phenomenon has often resulted in an ever-denser web of exchange, spreading over an ever-wider geographical area.[16]

Long-distance trade is far from new. For instance, though there has been a marked decline in direct contact between Ethiopia and India over the years, a look at the historical record in international commerce and trade will show that prior to the seventh century, Ethiopian ships had sailed across the Indian Ocean, carrying durable and non-durable commodities from and to Ethiopian and Indian ports. This was mainly because traffic between India and Ethiopia had passed into the hands of Muslims. The items of trade that attracted foreigners were many and varied, but the most important were ivory, tortoiseshell, ambergris, incense, spices, gold, iron, live animals and animal skins.[17] These relations were borne out and facilitated by gold coins which, unlike present-day mediums of trading, were used not only as a currency, but also as one of the most sought-after commodities.

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In the middle of the twentieth century Arnold Toynbee stated that 'the great event of the twentieth century was the impact of Western civilisation upon all other living societies' of the world of that period. He argued that the spread of Western civilisation was so powerful and so pervasive that it turned the lives of all victims upside down and inside out, affecting the behaviour, outlook, feelings, and beliefs of individual men, women, and children.[18] The impact of Western civilisation is found everywhere in Africa and will be felt by generations to come.

AFRICA IN A GLOBAL MARKET

It is by no means sufficient for citizens of Africa to be equipped with the knowledge and skills required for competition in the global marketplace.[19] They must be imbued with strong confidence and self-assurance that their efforts will not be squandered, dominated, or otherwise squelched by distant, overarching, and soulless forces and institutions whose immanent logic they cannot understand. The dependency school of thought argues that the global economic structure is an exploitative system that has generated and maintained 'the development of underdevelopment' of the peripheries.[20] Since the advent of a world economy in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the exchange of goods and services between the core and the periphery has been based on a dominant-dependent relationship. The core, in its often successful attempts at deepening the dominant-dependent relationship, has implemented a policy of conquest, threat, coercion, expansion, mercantilism, and protectionism. Such a policy enabled strong states to perpetuate the weakness of peripheral states. In the final analysis, a look at the economic relationships between the core and the periphery through the prisms of the dependency theoretical frame of reference leads one to take the view that African development could occur only through radical solutions that would essentially alter the core-periphery economic relationship to a more equitable one.

The political and economic history of Africa is filled with contradictions and paradoxes, where abundance in natural resources is more of a curse than a blessing, a major source of conflict rather than cooperation. Development policy experiments conducted over the past fifty years have worsened the disparity and disconnect between the majority poor and the minority rich.

GLOBALISATION

The march of globalisation has pushed the discourse of development in two directions simultaneously: upwards, beyond the nation-state; and downwards, into several 'indigenous' layers beneath it. What is evident is that critical problems of development such as the debt overhang, fair trading relationships, and external finance can be solved only at supranational or global level.[21] For

many of its proponents, globalisation is an irresistible and desirable force sweeping away frontiers, overturning despotic governments, undermining taxation, liberating individuals, and enriching all it touches. For many of its opponents, however, it is a no less irresistible force, but undesirable. With the prefixes 'neo-liberal' or 'corporate', globalisation is condemned as a malign influence that impoverishes the masses, destroys cultures, undermines democracy, imposes Americanisation, lays waste the welfare state, ruins the environment and enthrones greed.[22] Depending on the choices that are made, globalisation is, on balance, resistible. At the same time, globalisation may also be highly desirable.

> Despite the professed and well-known potential benefits from globalisation, the trade and development experiences of many developing countries, including those in Africa, have been to the contrary

While the degree to which one views globalisation as a desirability or an undesirable phenomenon may depend on whether a nation derives benefits or receives the short end of the stick in the long or short term, an objectively critical evaluation of globalisation requires conceptualising and defining exactly what globalisation is or is not. The simplest definition comes from Anne Krueger, first deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund. She defined globalisation as 'a phenomenon by which economic agents in any given part of the world are much more affected by events elsewhere in the world' than before.[23] There is, however, another more technically precise version of this process: the integration of economic activities, across borders, through markets. According to David Henderson, former chief economist of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), globalisation is the free movement of goods, services, labour and capital, thereby creating a single market in inputs and outputs; and full national treatment for foreign investors (and nationals working abroad) so that, economically speaking, there are no foreigners.[24] A consequence of such a process of integration is the increased impact of economic changes in one part of the world on what happens in the others.

Economically, globalisation is seen variously as a process by which business expands into markets around the world; as the increasing integration of world markets and the parcelling out of stages of production to areas with the most obvious competitive advantage; and as the increasing interdependence of business and financial systems. In economic terms, the huge increase in the volume of trade went hand in hand with major changes in the organisation of economic production. With barriers to trade effectively dismantled and technological changes dramatically facilitating transport and communications, companies could locate each stage of production to areas where factor costs were cheapest, allowing them to optimise sales of finished goods in the most lucrative markets. This expansion of trade, together with the geographical integration of production, came to be a significant piece of what became known as 'globalisation'.

Despite the professed and well-known potential benefits from globalisation, the trade and development experiences of many developing countries, including those in Africa, have been to the contrary. While there is no doubt that the process has intensified the global interdependence of economies, the nature of that interdependence has been worrisome to African countries for many reasons. For example, in trade, Africa's share of global export of goods and services declined trend-wise from 4,2 per cent in 1985 to a mere 1,8 per cent in 1999.[25]

In addition, despite the free trade era being championed by the World Trade Organisation (WTO), industrialised countries have protected themselves against the most dynamic exports of African countries, including textiles and clothing, agriculture, and processed raw materials, to the detriment of Africa. Furthermore, trade restrictions, including anti-dumping regulations and technical barriers to trade in industrialised countries, cost sub-Saharan African countries $20 billion annually in lost exports, more than total official development assistance (ODA) flows.[26]

Cultural globalisation

Many of the complaints of today are about the cultural impact of globalisation. But long-distance cultural impacts are hardly new. The great religions of humanity emanated independently from Africa, the Middle East and India, or as a result of interactions between these cradles of civilisation. The Roman Catholic Church, perhaps the most significant European cultural institution, emerged from a marriage of Jewish religion, Greek philosophy and Roman power. Islam has been an equally successful cultural export, to the point of eradicating the pre-Islamic cultures of the countries it engulfed. The most successful European ideas export of the twentieth century was Marxism-Leninism. Another example of

cultural globalisation can be traced back to the communist revolution in China. In that most enduring of empires, Mao Zedong triumphed in the name of an ideology developed just a century earlier by a German of Jewish origins. One can also argue that the relatively thin contact between places previously not in touch may well have had a cultural impact deeper than initially may have been imagined. The conversion of the Germans to Christianity, for example, changed the culture ineradicably.

It is true that today Western (the intellectual counterculture to business culture) is spreading quite rapidly across the globe. Other subcontinents, such as South America and Asia, are also spreading their business, political and economic cultures across Africa. Surprisingly, despite all the hyperbole about the narrowly conceptualised globalisation of trade, commerce, and the transfusion of cultural and political values from the core to the periphery, such desirable or undesirable interactions have never ceased to take place between nations or within nation-states. To reject such a phenomenon as merely emanating from and being propelled by the core is to insist that the periphery is always in a static state of nature. Human beings imitate or absorb the ideas of others on what to believe and how to live. While sometimes they are forced to do so, they are nonetheless in a dynamic state of nature.

Language and globalisation

Africa is an arena for the interplay between language and religion. This is particularly marked in the interplay between Islam and languages in Africa. Islam has helped the Arabic language to spread, but it has sometimes hindered the spread of Kiswahili, Amharic and Hausa. Religious hostility has spilled over into linguistic hostility.

Africa has also been a battleground between Western and non-Western languages

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Africa has also been a battleground between Western and non-Western languages. English, French and Portuguese have had particularly wide-ranging influence. Africa's ethnic heterogeneity is also reflected in language because Africa is home to a higher number of languages than any other continent. There are also more French-speaking, English-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa than anywhere else in the world.[27]

Africa is also an acute case of linguistic dependence. Credentials for ruling an African country are disproportionately based on command of a Euro-imperial language. In Africa south of the Sahara, it has become almost impossible to become a member of parliament or a president without being fluent in at least one of the relevant European languages.[28]

It is also possible that some of the languages that we have called Western may acquire Afro-Western tendencies. For example, there is a growing population of Afro-Saxons – Africans who, due to the divergent linguistic backgrounds of their parents, grow up speaking English, French or Portuguese as a mother tongue. As the ranks of such Africans grow, so will the potential of these languages to become Afro-Western.

ECONOMIC IMPERIALISM

The phenomena associated with the colonial power/ imperialism include monopolistic privileges and preferences, plunder of materials and seizure of territory, enslavement of the indigenous population, nationalism, racism, and militarism. There is general agreement in associating imperialism with economic, political, cultural and territorial expansion. However, there is a great deal of controversy about the meaning of economic imperialism. Patcher (1970), for example, strongly attacked Lenin for propounding the theory of imperialism. As he puts it, 'this kind of economic determinism is no longer tangible'.[29] George Lichteim (1970) has claimed that the radical left dumped together old forms of colonialism with 'the transfer of surplus value from poor countries through trade relationship which, in practice, discriminate against underdeveloped economies'.[30]

Geography has been a major factor in Africa's history. The continent is about five thousand miles wide from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean and is about the same distance in length. Africa is the second largest continent, almost three times the size of the US and several times that of Western Europe.[31] It contains 53 countries and accounts for one third of developing countries and more than one quarter of the total membership of the UN. It plays an important role in the international political and economic showground. The India–Africa Forum, the Africa–Europe Summit, China–Africa Cooperation Forum and the Africa–South America Summit/Partnership are examples of such growing interdependence.

The new scramble for Africa

The new 'scramble for Africa' is taking place among the world's big powers who are tapping the continent for its natural resources. Also, the new scramble is placed in the

historical context of imperialism and contributors show important continuities with the original nineteenth-century rush for colonies. While the previous stampede was between major European powers, today the continent provides a battleground for competition between the US, the EU, China and emerging players such as India and South America. Dramatically escalating prices of raw materials, driven by rapid industrialisation in China and other countries of the global south, as well as looming world shortages and the global recession of 2009, have promoted a new rush for Africa's natural resources.

In the past decade, Africa has seen an unprecedented boom in oil and gas investment. With big companies being shut out of or deterred from investing in the Middle East, in the past 15 years Africa has offered multinationals lenient terms and extensive access to its oilfields. Africa has the world's highest ratio of 'light' and 'sweet' crude oil, preferred by refiners in big consuming countries. In 2006, the US president, George W Bush, laid down a strategy for reducing oil imports from the Middle East, a policy that is likely to result in greater strategic importance for Africa.

Consequently, the Bush administration launched two new assistance programmes, the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) and the President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR), which direct significant amounts of new resources to Africa. These programmes were part of Bush's pledge to double US aid to Africa by 2010.[32] The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) opened up more of the US market to African countries as the result of a bipartisan initiative in Congress in 2000. The Bush administration also proposed to eliminate subsidies and other barriers to Africa's agricultural exports, if other countries, most importantly members of the EU, did the same.

The US is turning its diplomatic and military attention to Africa, not only to Africa's oil and natural gas supplies, but to its metal and industrial diamond resources

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The US is turning its diplomatic and military attention to Africa, not only to Africa's oil and natural gas supplies, but to its metal and industrial diamond resources.[33] It is establishing military training and equipment links with a number of countries to secure future supply lines. The creation of the United States Africa Command (Africom)

reflects contemporary concerns in Washington about the US's sustained access to dwindling global supplies of oil. Africom is a vital link in the huge military apparatus that provides 'national security'. In February 2007, oil imports to the US from sub-Saharan Africa surpassed imports from the Middle East. Therefore, major branches of the Pentagon, whose role is often to act as security guards watching over oil deliveries to the US, will have to be reconfigured to focus on Africa, which is now a region of vital importance to national security.

Another issue that is fundamental to the US is the rise of China as a global economic power, rampaging through Africa, and consolidating oil and trade agreements there at a pace hereto unseen. Economic forecasters predict China's economy will surpass that of the US by 2040.[34] Chinese industrialisation, unfolding at unprecedented speed, is driving a ravenous demand for raw materials and new markets.[35] What makes this story remarkable is that for the first time since the end of colonial rule, a major power sees in Africa not a charity case, a landscape of endless need, but an exceptional strategic and business opportunity.

Chinese investors are not inherently different from those of America. They are bolstered by advantages with which American companies cannot hope to compete. Much of Chinese investment is led by state-owned enterprises that do not have to turn quick profit, or any profit at all, since they can always be bailed out by the Chinese government. The government measures returns not simply in dollars, but in long-term strategic influence. American business is also hard pressed to compete with what China calls its 'non-interference policy', an indifference to conducting business with political regimes that might be complicit in torture or mass murder, or simply be corrupt. For example, China continues to invest heavily in Sudanese oil, despite the genocide in Darfur.[36]

For their part, many African leaders seem less concerned than Western leadership with China's own human rights record. . After decades of stagnation, many Africans have grown disillusioned with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, and look to China for a no-strings-attached alternative source of much-needed capital. While Western aid has emphasised food aid, health and human rights, China's bids for oil and mining rights come with offers of hydroelectric power dams, railroads, roads and fibre-optic cables, which have the potential to benefit ordinary people. If Western countries can be a healthy counterbalance to Chinese influence in Africa, they need a policy that looks beyond oil, beyond the images of famine and conflict. It requires that business look at Africa as it regards any other market – as an opportunity.

There is intensifying global competition for control of oil and gas production and supply. Worldwide, a new

generation of mainly state-owned companies – such as China's CNPC, Saudi Arabia's Armco, Russia's Gazprom, Venezuela's PDVSA, and Iran's NIOC – control one-third of the world's oil and gas reserves and production, while the major Western companies – ExxonMobil, Chevron, BP, and Royal Dutch Shell – control just one-tenth of production and only three per cent of reserves. [37]

Contrary to what some might surmise from this new version of jostling for Africa (especially by China, India, America, the EU, and South America), if African countries play their cards right, they have much to gain. Chinese and Indian companies are more willing to invest in infrastructure and in the 'downstream' facilities needed to bring products to port. In addition, the number of companies listed in stock exchanges in sub-Saharan Africa has gone up from 66 in 2000 to 522 in 2007, and hedge-fund and private equity managers are moving in.[38]

AFRICA-INDIA FORUM SUMMIT

The African Heads of State and Government and Heads of Delegation, representing the continent, the AU and its institutions, and the prime minister of the India, on behalf of the government and people of India, adopted the Delhi Declaration and the Framework for cooperation in April 2008 in New Delhi. The objective of the Africa–India Forum Summit is to strengthen cooperation between the partners in politics, security, economics, science and technology, human-resource capacity building, social and cultural cooperation and other fields of interest for mutual benefit. [39]

The forum was considered an opportunity to publicise the Africa–India partnership. Both groups recognised that Africa and India have undergone enormous positive changes, in particular over the last two and half decades, and that Africa and India have historically been close allies in the struggle for independence, equality, human rights, freedom and democracy. Bearing in mind that African countries and India have enjoyed close, cooperative and multi-sectoral partnership, encompassing politics, security, economics, science and technology, human-resource development, as well as social, cultural and other areas of mutual interest, they adopted a framework for cooperation which will strengthen their partnership in all areas for mutual benefit.

Africa-India Framework for Cooperation

The two parties agreed to cooperate in the following areas:

Economic cooperation: the two parties hereby recognise the need to foster such environment by reinforcing efforts to promote between them, trade and industry, foreign direct investment (FDI), development of

small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) and Africa's regional integration.

- Agriculture: Africa and India agree that agricultural development is an effective approach to ensuring food security, eradicating poverty and improving people's livelihoods, and agree to strengthen Africa and India cooperation in this sector.
- Trade, industry and investment: Africa and India recognise the need to expand two-way trade, promote greater market access, and facilitate investment
- Small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs): Africa and India recognise that for a sustainable and successful industrial policy, development of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises is necessary as the first step towards industrialisation in African countries
- Finance: Recognising the importance of the financial sector, capacity-building on policy and regulatory frameworks in the financial sector including microfinance, domestic savings, and development of cross-border stock-exchanges as well as Pan-African Stock exchanges.
- Regional integration: Provision of financial support to mutually agreed integration programmes carried out by the AU and the RECs.[40]

Political cooperation: Bearing in mind that peace, security and development are inseparable, as there can be no lasting development without peace, and recognising the need for closer cooperation in the field of governance structures, peace and security, civil society, education, health, water and sanitation, cultural and sports, poverty eradication, tourism, infrastructures, energy and development, media and communication, India resolves to support Africa in meeting its objectives of sustainable development, prosperity and peace.[41]

About 72 per cent of India's billion-plus people live in rural areas. For years, the poverty of rural India was seen as reining in the country's economic growth. However, today, analysts say, rural India is a critical audience for marketers because it has been relatively insulated from the global slowdown. India's rural destiny still depends on good monsoon rains and robust agricultural production, but four years of bumper crops and heavy government investment in rural infrastructure have given birth to what analysts call an emerging economy.

AFRICA-EU STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The Heads of State and Government of African States and of the EU, as well as the president of the European Commission, met in the first Africa–Europe Summit under the aegis of the OAU and EU, in Cairo, in April 2000. The Secretary-General of the OAU and

the Secretary-General of the Council of the EU/High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy also participated, as well as a representative of the Secretary-General of the UN.

The event has been viewed by some as a largely symbolic show of unity following a century of colonialism and exploitation. However, some governments and heads of state have concerns they would rather keep confidential or low-key, which can be guaranteed more satisfactorily through a bilateral format than an open and heavily publicised conference. Moreover, some African nations warned that they would not accept a domineering tone when Europeans raised human rights issues. The inaugural Africa–EU summit was meant to raise international awareness of Africa's potential and plight, promote its integration into the global economy, and develop peace and democracy in the region. The Africans wanted the summit to focus on debt relief, increasing foreign investment and better trade terms. Besides human rights, the EU wanted to talk about democracy, rule of law and good government as conditions for cooperation with Africa.

Over the centuries, ties between Africa and Europe have led to many areas of cooperation and confrontation, covering the political, economic, social as well as the cultural and linguistic domains. These have now changed and developed, based on shared values of strengthening representative and participatory democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, pluralism, international peace and security, political stability and confidence among nations.[42] In the light of the current rapid globalisation trend, Africa and Europe ought to strengthen this cooperation of mutual interest and make it more beneficial to the two regions.

> Over the centuries, ties between Africa and Europe have led to many areas of cooperation and confrontation, covering the political, economic, social as well as the cultural and linguistic domains

At the April 2000 Africa–Europe Summit, Africa and Europe deplored that more than half of all Africans were living in absolute poverty, and agreed to intensify the fight against poverty. The primary responsibility for alleviating poverty lay with each country, but this did not diminish the importance of the international dimension. Accelerating economic growth and sustainable development were prerequisites for poverty eradication in Africa in its quest for sustainable human development as an ultimate goal. Both parties noted that development through improvements in such priority sectors as education, health, food security, water and rural development were crucial to the continent's future.

Africa cannot integrate itself fully into the global economy by depending permanently on aid and preferential treatment. Neither of these has served Africa well. Aid has produced the phenomenon of the dependency syndrome that stifles imagination and initiative, whereas preferential treatment (especially under the Lomé Convention)[43] provided incentives to perpetuate activities that fossilise Africa's production structure in primary commodities. What Africa needs is not increased aid but equal opportunities. An important element in this is an unconditional debt write-off for indebted sub-Saharan African countries.

Debt relief for Africa's poorest countries is often suggested, but it comes with other requirements. If debt forgiveness allows a failed government to re-enter the credit markets to borrow again and waste again, debt relief is of no value at all. If debt relief allows a country to put more resources into its military establishments, debt relief is of no value.

Aid givers need to address issues of human security, including water-resource development, along with food security and agriculture, health, environmental conservation, microenterprise, civil society development, governance and emergency humanitarian aid. Water projects help to increase water supplies, enhance water distribution systems, and improve water-related sanitation throughout Africa. This includes the construction of large-scale irrigation systems, village-level sanitation infrastructure and wells. The combined efforts will bring wells and sanitation systems to villages in every region of sub-Saharan Africa. According to a recent study, a sum of $1 200 will dig a well for an entire community, providing access to fresh, potable water. It will also ensure year-round irrigation for farmlands, and promote better hygiene and sanitation. In active collaboration with local and foreign donor agencies, Africa may reach the Millennium Development Goal (MDG)[44] plan of eradicating poverty throughout the continent by 2015.

The Joint Africa–European Union Strategy/Partnership (JAES) identifies strategic priorities in the areas of peace and security, governance and human rights, trade and regional integration, and other key development issues. To implement the commitments made in the joint strategy, the EU and Africa should address and advance all identified objectives on all

the strategic priorities, notably to ensure that African countries will be able to attain all MDGs by 2015. In December 2005 the text 'EU and Africa: Toward a Strategic Partnership' was developed, and the current JAES document was adopted in Lisbon by the EU–AU Heads of States Summit in December 2007. It is a jointly owned partnership document envisaged to guide and structure mutually beneficial political and strategic dialogue and engagement between Africa and EU.[45] In Lisbon, Heads of States and Government agreed on a first Action Plan (2008–2010) with eight thematic partnerships to ensure that this long-term project yielded results quickly.

Eight EU-Africa partnership and priority actions were agreed:

- **EU-Africa Partnership on Peace and Security**
  - Enhance dialogue on challenges to peace and security
  - Fully operationalise the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)
  - Predictably fund African-led peace-support operations
- **EU-Africa Partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights**
  - Develop institutional architecture for the EU-Africa relationship
  - Enhance dialogue at global level and in international fora
  - Reinforce the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)
  - Strengthen cooperation in cultural goods
- **EU-Africa Partnership on Trade and Regional Integration**
  - Support the African integration agenda
  - Strengthen African capacities in sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and standards
- **EU-Africa Partnership on Effective Action to Achieve the Millennium Developments Goals**
  - Ensure the finance and policy base for achieving the MDGs
  - Accelerate the achievement of the food security objectives
  - Accelerate the achievement of the health objectives
  - Accelerate the achievement of the education objectives
- **EU-Africa Partnership on Energy**
  - Kick-start the implementation of the Energy Partnership
- **EU-Africa Partnership on Climate Change**
  - Build a common agenda on climate change policies and cooperation
  - Cooperate on the implementation of the 'Green Wall for the Sahara Initiative'
- **EU-Africa Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment**
  - Implement the Declaration of the Tripoli Conference on Migration and Development
  - Kick-start the implementation of the EU-Africa Plan of Action on Trafficking of Human Beings
  - Implement and follow up the 2004 Ouagadougou Declaration and Action Plan on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa
- **EU-Africa Partnership on Science, Information Society and Space**
  - Support the development of an inclusive information society in Africa
  - Implement Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA)
  - Enhance cooperation on space applications and technology[46]

Cooperation between Africa and the EU has developed and diversified rapidly. Both sides have established political strategies and policy documents to guide their cooperation, including the African Union Constitutive Act and Strategic Framework 2004–2007 and the European Union Africa Strategy of 2005. However, it is time for these neighbours, with their rich and complex history, to forge a stronger partnership that builds on their new identities and renewed institutions, capitalises on the lessons of the past, and provides a solid framework for long-term, systematic and well-integrated cooperation. There is a need for a new phase in the Africa–EU relationship, a new strategic partnership and a Joint Africa–EU Strategy as a political vision and roadmap for future cooperation between the two continents in existing and new areas.

CHINA-AFRICA COOPERATION FORUM

The ministers of foreign affairs, external trade and international cooperation, economic and social affairs from China and African countries met in Beijing in October 2000 for the China–Africa cooperation conference. This high-level conference was the first of its kind in China-African relations. The ministerial gathering adopted the constitutive documents of the forum, most importantly the Beijing Declaration; and the Programme for China–Africa Cooperation in Economic and Social Development. The document on procedure for the follow-up mechanism of the forum indicated that the ministerial conferences and their preceding senior official meetings were to be held alternately in China and Africa. The document added that African member countries would voluntarily indicate a desire to host the conference, and that each conference would agree by consensus on the host country for the next one. The

second conference took place in China in 2006, while its preceding senior official meeting took place there in 2005.

The Declaration of the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) established a 'new type of strategic partnership between China and Africa featuring political equality and mutual trust, economic win-win co-operation and cultural exchanges'. Chinese and African leaders reviewed the achievements of China–Africa cooperation over the past 50 years and adopted a declaration for a 'new type of strategic partnership' as well as an action plan for 2007–2009. Four areas of cooperation in the action plan were political relations, economic cooperation, international affairs and social development.

China–Africa cooperation in investment has begun to take shape. According to the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, by the end of September 2003, China had established 616 enterprises in 49 African countries with a joint contractual investment of US$1,2 billion. Indeed, Chinese investment in Africa has been accelerating since the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation of 2000.[47] Investment from China is concentrated in light industry, machinery, and electronics, as well as textile and clothing factories. Almost all these investments are bilateral, because China favoured a bi-lateral approach in its African engagements, avoiding complex multilateral negotiations. For example, China has been criticised for its sluggish support of NEPAD, including its main trading partner, South Africa.

Western commentators suggest that in recent years China has returned to Africa primarily to seek energy, raw materials and trade, and to advance narrow geopolitical interests

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Nevertheless, according to the Chinese General Administration of Customs, the total value of imports and exports between China and Africa increased sharply from an average of US$1 billion annually in the 1980s to over 10 billion in 2000.[48] The value of bilateral trade was about US$18,5 billion in 2003, representing an increase of 49,7 per cent over 2002. In this, Chinese exports stood at US$10,2 billion. The growth of export to Africa is much larger and expected to increase in the coming years.[49]

Trade between South Africa and China increased dramatically, transforming South Africa into one of China's major African commercial partners, accounting for almost 25 per cent of China's African trade. This has increased by between 20 and 30 per cent every year since diplomatic recognition in 1998.[50] However, the content of trade seems to reflect a typical colonial relationship with South Africa, with exports comprising a range of unprocessed raw materials to China, and imports comprising textiles, electronics and manufactured products.[51] South African official trade statistics at the end of 2007 noted South African exports to China at US$2,2 billion, with imports from China at US$7 billion.[52] However, despite this facts, the Europeans trade partnership still remain Africa's leading trading partners with 32 percent of Africa's exports. They are closely followed by the US, which receives 29 per cent, while the Asian come in at close third with 27 per cent. Moreover, many scholars in this field predict that for the future, Asia, China and India in particular look set to become the most dominant trading partners of Africa.

China's growing investment interests in Africa are driven primarily by domestic demand and economic necessity, rather than by an altruistic urge to advance Africa's development objectives. Thus China and South Africa often find themselves in competition as they seek political influence and economic gain on the African continent.[53] At the same time, China's planned expansion is related directly to its mounting food needs, particularly since China became a net food importer in 2007. With growing urbanisation in China, Africa's agricultural exports to China are expected to increase. This may create challenges and opportunities for Africa's agricultural sector.

Western commentators suggest that in recent years China has returned to Africa primarily to seek energy, raw materials and trade, and to advance narrow geopolitical interests.[54] China is characterised as a capital-driven competitor of the West, determined to advance a zero-sum game to achieve narrow objectives. This led many to believe that China has initiated a new scramble for Africa and they tend to view China through a reinvented cold war prism. For example, in his book *China in Africa*, Chris Alden seeks to determine whether China is a partner, competitor, or coloniser in Africa.[55]

How the new scramble will affect Africa has yet to be seen. No matter what the outcome may be, it is essential for Africans to think carefully about this new strategic partnership. If the partnership bases its principles on the Cold War mentality, which favoured one side and ignored the other, African societies will have less to gain from the current climate of commercial, trade, and strategic partnerships. What Africa needs today is

access to all western and eastern, southern and northern markets, based on fair and mutual benefit. When all its partners compete over Africa's resources, then naturally Africa would hold a bargaining chip.

African policymakers should take adjustment seriously. 'Adjustment' in this sense entails a dynamic view of society and its capacity to continually adjust to changing domestic and external environment. Perhaps the first important thing Africans can do is to reassume responsibility for plotting the paths of development in their own countries. The tragedy of Africa's policy making and policy implementation in the last several decades has been the complete surrender of national policies to the ever-changing ideas of international experts. A major irony of African development history is that the theories and models employed have largely come from outside the continent.[56] No other region has been so dominated by external ideas and models.

AFRICA–SOUTH AMERICA SUMMIT/PARTNERSHIP

According to the official statement by heads of states and governments in Africa and South America, strengthening and developing friendly and cooperative relations with all developing countries is an important component of the twenty-first-century South–South partnership. Africa and South America have strengthened consultation and mutual support in international affairs by cooperating on a series of major issues to safeguard the legitimate rights of developing countries. In recent years, economic and commercial exchanges and cooperation have gained momentum.

For the first time, the heads of state and government of African and South American countries met in November 2006 in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, to further South–South cooperation. Their leaders adopted the Abuja Declaration and the Abuja Plan of Action.[57] In addition, they committed themselves to exploring and exploiting opportunities for cooperation and collaboration in trade and investment, agriculture, energy, technology, water resources and tourism. They also pledged to immediately activate and implement all bilateral agreements between their countries, particularly in trade, air services and agriculture.[58] The objectives of the summit[59] are:

- To harmonise positions on international trades issues
- To promote and coordinate positions on bilateral and multilateral trade issues
- To support and promote mechanisms aimed at fostering inter-regional trade between Africa and South America, including preferential trade arrangements among countries of the two regions

The meetings were preceded by a preparatory phase, consisting of two segments, in November 2006:

- A meeting of senior officials/experts of the two parties
- A meeting of the foreign ministers of the two parties

Both meetings were tasked with examining and finalising the documents that would be discussed and approved by the summit. The summit was co-chaired by the former president of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, and President Luis lgnacio da Silva of Brazil. African[60] and South American countries were represented by their heads of states and governments. [61]

After the opening ceremony, the summit adopted its agenda and programme of work by dividing it in two sessions: the first plenary session was a presidential round table, and the second included adoption of the final documents, that is, the Abuja Declaration and Abuja Plan of Action. Accordingly, the theme of the round table was Africa–South American Cooperation, including conditions for partnership, present trends, future orientations, and institutional needs. At the end of the round table, the summit adopted the documents, namely the Abuja Declaration; Abuja Plan of Action; and the Abuja Resolution on the Africa–South America Cooperation Forum (ASACOF).

Abuja Resolution on Africa-South America Cooperative Forum

At the Abuja meeting (November 2006) the heads of state and government of Africa and South America recognised the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the resolutions of rapid economic development, peace and security of the two continents. They also recognised that the countries of Africa and South America were endowed with human and other resources sufficient to forge a partnership which would guarantee peace, security and development for their peoples (estimated at 1,2 billion).

Since World War II, development has been synonymous with economic, social and political change in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the South Pacific. Countries in these regions have been labelled 'underdeveloped', 'less developed', 'developing', 'Third World' and 'the South'. They are diverse, but are united in their declared commitment to development. A second component of modern underdevelopment is that it expresses a relationship of exploitation, namely the exploitation of one country by another. All 'underdeveloped' countries are exploited. Postcolonial African economic history has been one of respectable rates of growth for nearly a decade (including 'miracles' in a number of countries).[62] African societies were developing independently until they were taken over directly or indirectly by

others. When that happened, exploitation increased and the export of surplus ensued, depriving the societies of the benefit of their natural resources and labour.

In their statements, African and South American leaders emphasised the need for South–South cooperation and strategic partnership, strengthening links, engaging in constructive dialogue, working together to overcome racial prejudice, and working for a more equitable economic order. In September 2005, President Hugo Chavez Frias warned the member states that unless reform within the United Nations took place urgently, the MDGs would not be materialise at the envisaged date. In fact, 'reducing by half the 842 million hungry people by the year 2015, at the current rate that goal will be achieved by the year 2215'. He added that 'the United Nations has exhausted its model, and it is not all about reform. The twenty-first century claims deep changes that will only be possible if a new organisation is founded. This UN does not work. We have to say it. It is the truth.'[63]

The leaders of Africa and South America agreed that reform of the UN and expansion of the UN Security Council were essential. There was common acknowledgement that the two regions have many historical links in the form of colonisation and marginalisation. The challenges and aspirations are similar, and should serve as a basis for mutual cooperation and a collective solution based on collaboration with the developed world.

The Abuja Resolution[64]

The adoption of the Abuja Resolution took place as the countries of Africa and South America concluded a one-week summit. The first African–South American Summit set up a regular consultative mechanism, and a 'new strategic partnership' between the two continents in the future. As a result, the leaders established a 'follow-up action committee of the South–South cooperation forum'.

Follow-up on the Africa–South American Summit

In its context, priority was given to developing relations with the countries of South America within the framework of the Africa–South America (ASA) Summit Declaration, Resolution and Plan of Action adopted in Abuja, Nigeria. These documents established a follow-up mechanism comprising the current co-chairs and the incoming co-chair (Brazil, Nigeria, and Venezuela respectively), assisted by the AU Commission and the Secretariat of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) to ensure that the implementers of the cooperation mechanism were given the responsibility for 'proposing new initiatives and undertaking actions on previously agreed programmes and projects, reviewing

the progress of their implementation and disseminating information about cooperation arrangements.[65] According to the declaration, the summit would be held every two years, with Venezuela holding the second Africa-South America Summit in November 2008, which was postponed until September 2009.

The Caracas Meeting

The first meeting of coordinators in the follow-up mechanism was held in Caracas, Venezuela, in July 2007. It was attended by representatives of Brazil, Nigeria, Venezuela, the AU Commission and UNASUR, represented by Bolivia as the organisation's secretariat. The AU Commission chairperson and the Venezuelan foreign minister addressed the opening and closing sessions of the meeting. General aspects of the declaration and plan of action were discussed, as well as steps towards their implementation. Venezuela put forward proposals for a schedule of preparatory meetings for the second ASA Summit, as well as programmes and projects for implementation. These included a bank of the south, a university of the south, an education integration fund, and a network of TV and radio stations.

After reviewing the proposals, the coordinators agreed on a schedule for meetings of government experts and ministers in the seven core areas of energy; social issues; culture and tourism; multilateral issues; economy, particularly investment and finance; infrastructure and transportation; and agriculture and environment. It was decided that consultations should be held within regions to obtain further inputs on these proposals and mobilise the population to support them. The outputs of the consultations would be consolidated into a work programme at a subsequent meeting of the Coordinating Mechanism to be held in Nigeria in accordance with the principle of rotating meetings between the two regions endorsed by the Abuja Summit.

The new South-South relationship has indicated that the AU Commission will help to strengthen these relationships with a view to unity for development, and pledges to make unrelenting efforts to build a new-type of partnership with Africa-South America. This will be based on long-term stability; mutual benefits and equality. The basic principle of the South-South cooperation is to promote economic development. African–South American economic and trade cooperation developed smoothly and made remarkable progress in the second half of the twentieth century. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), South-South trade rose from $577 billion in 1995 to over $2 trillion in 2006, equating to 17 per cent of worldwide trade. African exports to southern countries tripled between 1995 and 2005.

The heads of state and government of Africa and South America agreed to deal with issues, such as peace and security; democracy, human rights and other political issues; combating hunger and poverty; legal cooperation; economic development; minerals; social and cultural cooperation, and youth and sports; cooperation in multilateral fora; science and technology; health; education; environment; gender; institutional development; information exchange; and sharing best practices.

Moreover, according to Kayode Garrick, a senior Nigerian diplomat and Nigerian envoy to several South American countries, speaking to reporters at the summit in Abuja, trade relations between Brazil and Nigeria have been impressive of late. Trade statistics showed that Nigerian merchandise exports to Brazil rose sharply from $1,5 billion in 2003 to nearly $5 billion in 2005.[66] This made Nigeria the fifth highest exporter of goods to Brazil after the US, Germany, Argentina and China. By contrast, Brazil's exports to Nigeria rose slowly, reaching just $64 3000 in 2005. However, there was considerable interest in Nigeria in certain products that Brazil had to offer. According to Garrick, 'in the area of energy, for example, Brazil has developed its bio-fossils and the use of ethanol as an alternative to fuel'. This is the kind of diversification Nigeria could learn from.[67]

> The AU's growing relationship with countries of the south must fill the gaps in Africa's relationship with the north

The ability of the developed world to effect economic development and prevent financial crises in developing countries is extremely limited. Each developing country has to build up the social capital whereby individuals in that country can work together to raise everyone's productivity. Each country has to organise and run its own education system and learn how to clean up the financial messes they encountered in the past. If countries in the developing world can become organised to do so, perhaps the developed world can speed up the process of economic development with open market access, financial aid, and a better international system for dealing with financial crises.[68]

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

The sad reality of our times is that the broadening frontiers of knowledge and the global march of economic,

technological, and scientific progress have not been matched with equally significant advances in justice, fairness, basic human rights, and related correlates of sustainable human or 'authentic' development. This perceptible 'failure of development' is reflected in the despicable life chances and poor quality of life facing the world in general and Africa in particular. Despite the emergence of global mega-trends favouring fast macroeconomic growth rates and economic stability, domestic liberalisation, deregulation, privatisation, market-oriented economies, and other pillars of 'economic adjustment', roughly 90 per cent of Africa's people face parlous conditions of human deprivation and misery. The framework of Africa's emerging partnership with other regions of the world provides opportunities and challenges. The next ten years may become a period of make or break for much of Sub-Saharan Africa. Slow economic growth, deteriorating terms of trade, the burden of debt servicing and stagnating flows of external financing make social and economic development in that region particularly difficult. If there is anything that Africans should have learned from past experiences with trading partnership, it is that it works best when prospective beneficiaries have a stake in the venture; when it is adapted to the particular circumstances of the situation in which it is being dispensed; and when it makes people feel enthusiastic and ready to cooperate to achieve a common objective.

The AU's growing relationship with countries of the south must fill the gaps in Africa's relationship with the north. It must be a relationship of mutuality and cross-advantage and a tool for economic, political, and social development. It must also add significant value to what exists in the member states in the sub-regions of the African continent.

One of the tragedies of Africa's poverty is the destructive pressure it can exert on natural resources – land, forests, and water on which the livelihoods of future generations depend. Climate change is expected to have devastating effects on Africa. Land is being overused and its natural fertility depleted; forests are being ravaged; rangelands overgrazed; water supplies exhausted; and wildlife eliminated. Sometimes these pressures are exploited and exacerbated by overseas interests that use Africa's poor as advance parties to open up forests or rangelands that can then be taken over for large-scale operations. Some of the environmental degradation attributed to the African poor is a matter of blaming the victims rather than the instigators. But in any case, farming and grazing practices in future must optimise productivity, with sustainability an urgent concern.

Given this pervasive reality, the most promising strategy is to address the problems of rural underdevelopment in Africa directly, without waiting for the benefits of

industrialisation to trickle down to rural people. This requires measures that will improve the productivity and quality of life for the hundreds of millions of small-holders and landless men and women who, with their children, will continue to live and earn their livelihood in rural societies, often on a natural resource base that itself is fragile and in need of special protection.

The rapid progress of high technology, including information and biological engineering, is changing not only the traditional industrial structure and demand, but also the way of thinking and behaviour of human beings. Owing to the wave of economic integration, regional and global partnerships have registered considerable advancement, which has facilitated the establishment of a fair, sound and balanced new international economic and political order. The political and economic integration of the EU, enlargement of the free trade zone of the US, inauguration of the AU, and the strengthening of East Asian Regional Economic Cooperation have added momentum to the integration of global political, economic, trade, diplomatic and military relations. The development of regional and sub-regional organisations has reinforced interdependence and interaction among nations. This, in turn, has helped create new mechanisms of regional conflict resolution that promote dialogue.

Africans should commit themselves to continuing to promote open, equitable, rule-based and non-discriminatory bilateral and multilateral trading and financial systems that benefit all countries in the pursuit of sustainable development. They need to support the successful completion of the work programme contained in the Abuja Plan of Action. It is equally important that they accept the decision contained in the Abuja Declaration to place the needs and interests of developing countries at the heart of its work programme, including through enhanced market access for products of developing countries.

At the Africa–India Forum Summit, Africa–Europe Summit, China–Africa Cooperation Forum and Africa–South America Summit leaders agreed that peace and security, good governance and respect for human rights and humanitarian law, along with economic development and the alleviation of poverty, are central to the prevention of conflict. Finally, a major significant effect of this growing network of partnerships is that it has raised the profile, vision and image of the AU in a manner that gives it high international credibility and standing. This has continued to attract the main crop of global decision-makers to interact with in a meaningful way.

Moreover, the principles of partnership and collective self-reliance which the AU and its member states have adopted recognise, in respect of human resource development and utilisation, that member states must first help themselves individually and collectively in striving for survival and progress. However, international support to aid human resource development is welcome as a supplement to the African self-reliance effort. Such assistance should be regarded as reinforcing national, regional and multinational development efforts that member states must make so that development and progress can take place. In this effort, the continued and active collaboration of all international partnership agencies in the UN system and other international, inter-governmental and non-governmental bodies should be effectively mobilised in support of national, sub-regional and regional efforts for human resource development and utilisation.

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45 Roba D Sharamo 2009, *Reflections from Africa on the implementation of the Joint Africa–EU strategy,* paper presented on Joint ISS–ECDPM Seminar 'The Changing Nature of Europe–Africa Relations in 2009', United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 3 March 2009.

46 First Action Plan (2008–2009), For the Implementation of the EU-Africa Strategic Partnership, Draft 1/rev0-14 September 2007.

47 Ibid, 121.

48 Kinfe Abraham 2005, *China comes to Africa,* Addis Ababa: EIIPD and HADAD, 96.

49 Ibid.

50   China–Africa, *Strategic Business Review* 1 (August 2008) .

51 Ibid, 2.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.

54 G Shelton and F Paruk 2008, *The Forum on China–Africa Cooperation: A strategic opportunity.* Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 51.

55 Chris Alden 2007, *China in Africa,* London: Zed.

56 Thandika Mkandawire and Charles C Soludo 1999, *Our continent our future,* Trenton: Africa World Press, vii.

57 See Assembly of the African Union, Eighth Ordinary Session 29–30 January 2007, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,

58   African Union press release, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, www.iss.co.za/dynamic/administration/file_manager/file_links/ASSEMBLYAGENDA.PDF?link_id=21&slink_id=4012...3 -

59 As stipulated in paragraphs 24, 25 and 26 of the plan of action.

60 Including Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte D'Ivoire, DR Congo, Egypt, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

61 Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Surinam, Uruguay and Venezuela were represented.

62 T Mkandawire and C C Soludo 1999, *African perspectives on structural adjustment: Our continent our future.* New Jersey: African World Press, 5.

63 Speech of the president of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez Frias, at the United Nations, 15 September 2005.

64 The objectives of the Abuja Resolution were to:

■ Establish Africa–South America Cooperative Forum of Heads of State and Government, which shall meet every two years alternately in the two regions

■ Implement the Abuja Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the first Africa–South America Summit, with collective determination and political will

■ Adopt strategies and measures that will translate the vision of the Africa–South America Cooperative Forum into concrete economic, political and social benefits for the two continent

■ Intensify cooperation and consultation at all levels to exploit the immense opportunities which abound in our two continents

■ Explore and exploit, in particular, opportunities for cooperation and collaboration in the areas of agriculture, trade and investment, energy, technology, water resources and tourism

■ Commit to deepening and strengthening the historical and cultural linkages which exist between the two continents

■ Immediately activate and implement all bilateral agreements between countries in the regions, particularly in the areas of action for maximum benefit

■ Set up appropriate institutions and mechanisms to give practical expression to the Cooperative Forum

65 See African Union, Executive Council Twelfth Ordinary Session 25–29 January 2008, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, www.africa-union.org/root/AU/Conferences/2008/january/summit/docs/decisions/Executive_Decisions_378-414.pdf.

66 *This Day,* 28 November 2006.

67 Ibid.

68 Lester Thurow 2008, *Fortune favors the bold: What we must do to build a new and lasting global prosperity*, New York: Harper Business, 221.

ANNEXURE 1: BEIJING DECLARATION

- The purposes and principles of the UN Charter and the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and other universally recognised principles governing relations among states must be respected. All countries should have the right to participate in international affairs, on an equal footing. No country or group of countries have the right to impose their will on others, to interfere, under whatever pretext, in other countries internal affairs, or to impose unilateral coercive economic measures on others. The North and the South should strengthen their dialogue and cooperation on the basis of equality.

- The principle of peaceful settlement of international disputes must be adhered to. Disputes between states should be resolved through negotiation, consultation or other peaceful means, rather than through force, or threat of force, including nuclear threat. All the nuclear-weapon-states must undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and not to use or threaten to use, nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states or regions. All the parties concerned should strive to advance the process of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, with a view to realizing the ultimate goal of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, so as to ensure security to all countries. The two sides are ready to enhance their cooperation in stopping the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons.

- The primary role of the UN Security Council in safeguarding world peace and security should be respected and enhanced and vigorous efforts should be made to push forward the reform of the United Nations and international financial institutions. The developing countries should be more adequately represented in the UN Security Council and international economic and financial institutions so as to fully reflect the democratic principles governing international relations. In this respect, we call for the recognition of the legitimate place due to Africa in the Security Council and the organisations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

- The universality of human rights and fundamental freedoms should be respected and the diversity of the world and the principle of seeking common ground while reserving differences must be upheld and carried forward. Each country has the right to choose, in its course of development, its own social system, development model and way of life in light of its national conditions. Countries, that vary from one another in social system, stages of development, historical and cultural background and values, have the right to choose their own approaches and models in promoting and protecting human rights in their own countries. Moreover, the politicisation of human rights and the imposition of human rights conditional ties on economic assistance should be vigorously opposed to as they constitute a violation of human rights.

- The principle of conducting mutually beneficial cooperating and seeking common development should be advocated. Developed countries have the responsibility and obligation to prove financial, technological and other assistance to developing countries, African countries in particular. They should work out feasible development programs for and coordinate with them on the basis of equality and mutual benefit with a view to achieving common development for both the North and the South. The developing countries, on their part, should unite and coordinate with each other more closely; maximizing advantages while minimizing disadvantages and adversities, as well as tackle together challenges brought about by globalization.

- We welcome efforts made by the African continent to enhance sub-regional cooperation and further consolidate African unity by establishing the African Union. We urge the international community and international organisations to support the measures adopted by African countries for this purpose. All parties concerned should commit themselves to solidarity, peace and development of Africa and properly settle the conflicts. We appreciate the active role by OAU and other relevant regional and sub-regional organisations in resolving African conflicts. The international community, especially the United Nations, should give special attention to the resolution of conflicts in Africa. In this connection, it should adopt all necessary measures, including formulating effective peacekeeping programs and relief plans.

- We appreciate the efforts made by African countries and the international community to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other infectious/communicable diseases as well as the actions undertaken to eradicate poverty. In this respect, we welcome the initiative to establish a World Solidarity Fund and call for vigorous support by appropriate institutions for the establishment of this fund. We also agree to work together to improve cooperation in the fight against terrorism with a view to eliminating this phenomenon in all its form and manifestations.

- We welcome the laudable efforts made by certain middle income countries and other bilateral initiatives by donors aimed at the cancellation of African

official debts. We appreciate the recent enhancement of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, geared at relieving the debt burden and alleviating poverty, particularly in Africa. We stress that the HIPC initiative, is being undertaken against the background of the decline in ODA to historical levels and that the rescheduling of Africa's debt must not be conducted with political strings attached or at the expense of official development assistance. We strongly appeal to the relevant international financial institutions and creditor developed countries to adopt more concrete measures aimed at debt relief and reduction for the least developed and middle income African countries. We welcome concrete measures and contribution to be made in this regard by China, a developing country itself.

- We are determined to further consolidate and expand China-Africa cooperation at all levels and in all fields and to establish within the framework of South-South cooperation a new-type long-term and stable partnership based on equality and mutual benefit. We will deepen dialogue, broaden consensus, continue to harmonize our positions on international affairs and enhance mutual support so as uphold the legitimate rights and interests of China and African countries and to expand and deepen this new-type partnership between China and African countries.

We decide to vigorously promote further China-Africa Cooperation in the economic, trade, financial, agricultural, medical care and public health, scientific and technological, cultural, educational, human resources development, transportation, environment, tourism and other areas on the basis of the principles enshrined in this declaration and the Program for China-Africa cooperation in economic and social development adopted at the Forum so as to promote the common development of China and Africa.

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ABOUT THIS PAPER

Important changes have been occurring in the ill-defined area of partnership in Africa, mainly in the context of the African Union's quest for development as well as peace and security on the continent. The purpose of this paper is to identify and describe the implication of these partnerships as well as its long-term development objectives and, subsequently, to evaluate their relevance to the present economic conditions of African countries. This paper also attempts to analyse Africa's strategic partnerships: the Africa–Indian Forum Summit, Africa–Europe Summit, China–Africa Cooperation Forum (South–South) and the Africa–South America cooperation (South–South). Furthermore, the paper tries to address the political, economic, cultural and social development that have a potential to shape the African society and its implication on peace and security agenda on the continent.

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