

Globalization and African Renaissance: The Challenge of Continental Strategies

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INTRODUCTION

The desire for a renaissance in present-day Africa must be evaluated against the background of forty years of post-independence economic delusion and political chaos. The continent's mediocre economic performance and its continued and increasing marginalization in the international economic order is likely to be intensified and consummated by the present trend towards globalization unless viable and novel alternatives are pursued. The central concern of this article is two-fold. We explain the causes of the failure of earlier attempts at African renaissance such as foreign development aid, Structural Adjustment Program, and Continental Union Government. We then proceed to suggest viable alternatives. Our major thesis is that these attempts failed principally because existing political and economic structures are not integrated enough and hence patently incapable of meeting the challenges of economic emancipation envisaged by African renaissance. Fundamental to this is the fact the considerations of sovereignty have often stifled private and local initiative at economic integration. We further assert that even if foreign development aid was gratuitous and an inevitable panacea for Africa's economic doldrums, African states would still need to integrate their economies and to surrender of a measure of their sovereignty in order for foreign aid to succeed. We posit that the fundamental solution to the problems of Africa's economic backwardness must not be sought in the efforts of its individual countries but in the collective effort of integrated economies of the various countries. These two reasons are fundamental to explaining the ineffectiveness of four decades of the inflow of development aid. Our methodology is to identify three main areas traditionally acknowledged as the major obstacles to Africa's economic, social, and political development, - economics, politics and security - and then proceed to demonstrate that these are hindrances that can be removed only by sub-regional economic and political amalgamation.

1. AFRICA'S GLOBAL EXPERIENCE: PAST AND PRESENT

In 1964 Basil Davidson concluded his book *Which Way Africa? The search for a new society* with the following paragraph:

Meanwhile, the battle is everywhere engaged. The 1950s presided over the struggle for political emancipation. The 1960s and maybe the 1970s will preside over an even greater struggle for the fruits of political emancipation - for the new and unified society without which the people of Africa cannot independently survive or prosper. (Davidson 1964: 182)

African renaissance could thus be perceived as seeking new ways of maximizing Africa's comparative economic advantage for profitable international trade by evolving and re-organizing continental structures in a global setting.

A critical assessment of the contemporary economic history of Africa reveals that what is today known as globalization is neither a new notion nor a novelty. From this perspective colonialism and imperialism would constitute forms of globalization. It is pertinent to note that in all these systems nations survived by their capacity for rapid adaptation to the vagaries of economic and political changes.

Its most recent apparition, and with which we are concerned in this article, is the worldwide movement of investing capital for greener pastures. Naomi Chomsky has described it as a process of "taking financial decisions out of the arena of democratic politics, out of the arena of public policy and placing them in the hands of unaccountable private tyrannies."(Chomsky 1997) The result is that the international trade sees an increase in the application of the non-discriminatory application of the principle of most-favoured-nation (MFN). How will Africa fare in this arrangement?

Africa started independence with a clash agenda only to realize that no single African state was large and resourceful enough to undertake any sustainable and meaningful development. Eclipsing this was the challenge of forging a national consciousness and identity among the hundreds of ethnic groups that constituted the individual new nations. Externally there was the cold war during which the legitimate and understandable aspirations of Africa were very often misunderstood and misinterpreted in the light of East-West conflict. There was also neo-colonialism as well as the work to de-colonize African irredenta. The hard times of colonial rule had created great expectations, which could be hardly fulfilled in that space of time and with such limited resources. Before long difficulties multiplied in several countries. For instance, ethnocentrism exploded into carnage and civil war and political scheming bred and condoned bureaucratic corruption. Again a quest for some fanciful cultural rediscovery deluded many countries to impose one-party state governments. In a further degeneration, self-appointed gun-governments hijacked several countries in military-cum-police coup d'etat, which have in turn been challenged by civilian armed opposition as in Liberia, the former Zaire, Uganda, and Sudan, for instance. The general effects of all these on economic performance and political stability have been detrimental to renaissance.

The varied performance of the economies of individual African states does not preclude valid generalizations concerning the continent's weak position in

international economic negotiations. This is because on at least six counts the countries of the continent possess common concerns, which demand concerted efforts to solve. One of these is the concern expressed by a report of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) which attributes Africa's present economic slow growth rate to factors which it presents in the following terms: The present slow progress stems from (a) the limited market size of many countries; (b) survival of the historical links of African countries with their previous colonial centers, which have created production structures entrenched in supplying the centers with raw materials in return for manufactured goods; (c) concentration on increasing export earnings from a limited range of commodities at the expense of diversification; (d) failure to exploit the potentials of inter-African trade through coordination of development plans at sub-regional levels and the development of complementary links among production units; (e) poor and inadequate inter-regional transport and communication facilities to support expanding intra-regional trade; (f) lack of harmonization of standards, specifications and trade documentation, and (g) non-convertibility of African currencies, inappropriate exchange-rate policies and non-availability of trade financing, and insurance and credit facilities. (Dinar 1997)

The lack of concert to remove these obstacles is compounded by the implications of the Uruguay round. These (situations) make the pursuit of a regional developmental planning expedient.

2. WHY RENAISSANCE TARRIES?

An observant writer has commented that:

“Clearly globalization poses a grave challenge to Africa's ability to achieve the progress which the spirit of Enlightenment promises all of humankind. Over the past decade or so the continent's intellectuals have been preoccupied with the internal dynamics of the crisis. Apparently oblivious of the global context of the continent's crisis, we have pursued the World Bank's agenda and researched and debated ad infinitum issues such as Africa's external debts, corruption, authoritarianism, civil society, constitutionalism, civil wars, ethnicity, structural adjustment and democracy while the continent's crises continue to worsen, and the suffering of its people deepened.” (AAPS Newsletter 1998: 2)

The above observation is typical of the conservative intellectual approach to the analysis of Africa's problems. Here, as in many instances, the author identifies Africa's problems in collective terms but sees their solution from an individual (national) perspective as if it will not need a common and concerted effort to confront common problems. The author, therefore, accepts the traditional axiomatic approach to the analysis of Africa's problems. The opinion does not even seek to answer the question why the "continent's crises continue to worsen". Is it not curious that the conception and disbursement of development aid were made upon

the facile assumption that the restricted and virtually non-viable individual African economies could achieve economic progress without a large measure of regional integration. There are no African countries whose economies are organized, capable and resourceful enough to undertake sustainable development and gain meaningful economic advantages on the international market commensurate with their immense potential and resources. They are all run separately, each in its own different way, and the world has laid on the shoulders of Western taxpayers the willful inefficiency of them all.

In 1988 the late President Mitterand of France advocated for a Marshall Plan for the Third World and Africa in particular, saying that it was the only way out of Africa's economic crisis. In his *Lettre a tous les Francais* he affirmed that: "Il n'y a pas d'issue qu'un plan mondial de developpement qui sera a l'economie du Tiers Monde ce que le Plan Marshall ete a l'Europe"(Mitterand 1988). What must, however, be rectified in this advocacy is that in Africa a Marshall Plan will fail to work for the simple reasons of lack of regionally integrated economies. The Marshall Plan worked only in the context of economic integration. On April 16th, 1948, sixteen European countries surrendered considerable aspects of their sovereignty and formed the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) in order to coordinate and corporately see to the effective utilization of the colossal financial assistance that the United States of America was showering on war shattered Europe. The need for Africa to emulate this European strategy is valid for at least two reasons. The first is that contrary to the funds of the Marshall Plan, which was administered in substantial sums at each given time, development aid to Africa is administered in insufficient trickles. The result is that the best way for any country to make good use of it is to pool them together into a substantial amount to ensure viability of investments. The second is that the failure of forty years of 'developmental strategies' demands that any new attempt must be one that emphasizes the circulation of investment profits by ploughing them back into the region's local economies.

Africa is politically and economically the World's most fragmented region. It has 53 independent and sovereign states. Eighteen of these countries have populations of less than three million each; ten countries have populations of ten million or less each; fifteen countries are landlocked; and only four countries have populations of at least 40 million each. The farce that such petty post-colonial balkanized economies can hold their own in international economic transactions has now proved to be one of the most ridiculous delusions in economic history. It has compounded the legacy of hindrance by the colonial economy. For instance, it is responsible for the fact that in choosing the way to solve its post-independence economic problem Africa opted for over-confidence in foreign aid. This option meant that to achieve sustainable economic development within the international economic system African countries could continue to work within the colonial-type network of international economics and receive foreign aid to produce raw materials for export. Vain hope! The second was the narrow path reality, the suggestion that African countries must integrate their economies and harness the

continent's potential for profitable international trade. Prominent among the basic contentions of the second position was that colonialism under-developed Africa by monopolizing trade with the colonies to the sole profit of the colonial powers, and to the detriment of the industrial development of Africa. The abrogation of the colonial arrangement was therefore a *sine qua non* (but certainly not a panacea) for Africa's progress. The first option rightly pointed to the need for the transfer of foreign capital into Africa to generate production since local resources were not capable of initiating large-scale development. If the validity of this assertion were evidenced by the successful implementation of the Marshall Plan, then it would equally be valid to indicate that the failure of thirty years of development aid in an economically and politically disintegrated Africa is equally demonstrative of the need for economic integration.

The gloomy implications of the emerging integrated international production system of the final Act of the 1995 Uruguay Round further exposes the structural weakness and ridiculous nature of the international economic strategies of Africa's balkanized economies or even the complete lack. Dinar notes that:

The continent (including South Africa) contributes no more than 3 per cent of globally traded goods, which is too small to have an impact on world trade. Secondly, the African contracting parties were negotiating individually rather than as a bloc with a common position, unlike notably EU and most of Asia and Latin America. Failure of African countries to coordinate their position eroded whatever influence they could have had on the outcome of the negotiations. (Dinar 1997)

One of the most eminent external efforts to solve Africa's developmental problems was when industrialized countries pledged 0.7% each of their resources to Third World development. It must be noted that the implementation was not as splendid as the pledge suggested, for by 1977 they had reduced it to 0.22% for the USA, 0.27% for Germany, 0.21% for Japan and 0.19% for Switzerland. Sweden, Norway and Holland on the other hand remained faithful and even increased theirs to 0.99%, 0.82% and 0.82% respectively. The general arrangement was that imports (mainly from the donor countries) had to be financed by aid loans and the increase of exports, which are usually primary agricultural and mineral products. Even at the very inception of foreign development aid programme some foresaw that "it will go hard with poor Antonio". For instance, a Kenyan Finance Minister, Mr. Tom Mboya, in 1967 warned the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) of the possible negative effects of foreign development aid. He noted that:

The present status of aid today holds no promise for the future. Optimistically, it means gently raising per capita income to achieve for the very poor countries perhaps US\$200 per annum by the end of the century; it means rising debts and perennial balance of payment problems; it means continuously falling terms of trade and continued barriers to the sale of industrial products; it means no escape from the abyss of primary production. (Mboya 1967)

After more than thirty years of the disbursement of development aid Africa's economy plagued by all the ills that Tom Mboya foresaw and warned about. These include falling terms of trade and standard of living, soaring foreign debts, widespread and endemic forms of hunger and starvation, wars, and anything except development. The lack of regional co-ordination among states continue to accentuate a crisis, which is currently assuming alarming proportions. And the resolution of the problems continue to seem beyond the capacity of the efforts and resources of individual African governments.

Tom Mboya was no prophet. He was not a priest as Laocoon, the Priest of Apollo in ancient Troy, who on seeing his people gullibly taking the colossal Trojan Horse into their city, struck the baneful wooden gift with his sword and warned them saying: "Beware of the Greeks even when they come with gifts." Mr. Mboya was rather an objective African patriot of vision, who understood that even philanthropy is sometimes an investment in fame and prestige, let alone foreign development aid. What Laocoon and Mboya had in common, however, is that both were patriots who were killed in circumstances shrouded in mystery. The broad way of aid was preferred to the narrow path of trade, and Africa has wallowed in it for forty years in the wilderness of economic delusion. Is there any Promised Land?

Already by 1972 Tibor Mendes had published an alarming book entitled *From aid to Recolonization: lessons of a failure*. In 1980 Rene Dumont who had in 1962 already warned of a false start in Africa (translated version of the original: *L'Afrique noire est mal partie*) hinted that somebody was holding the neck of Africa in a book entitled *L'Afrique Etranglée*. Lord Peter Bauer had noted in the following year (1981) that development aid was not necessary per se for Third World economic development. The synthesis of their analysis generally suggested that aid without integration, and without a massive mobilization of resources seemed hardly beneficial.

Africa's economic disintegration explains why increases in the production of raw materials such as cocoa, coffee and minerals continue to be negated by declining commodity prices, leading to soaring debts; it explains why the trickling disbursement of aid (quite unlike the constant flow of the Marshall Plan) could never give the necessary push for development to take off, hence unproductive investments and wasted ventures. It is equally responsible for the fact that the economies of recipient nations are too narrow to be able to benefit from economies of scale and undertake meaningful diversification, whence limited multiplier effect. It is again partly the reason why recipients of aid at times considered it a right and not privilege, a restitution of Western colonial past misdeeds, hence the compromise of its judicious management and consideration of its economic and financial repercussions.

These are typical of the weaknesses, which the Uruguay Round epitomizes. It presents a challenge in which it is estimated that Africa will lose as much as US \$3 billion per annum in international trade during the initial years of the agreement, as against the estimated increase in income of US \$500 billion per annum. This reduction in income is accompanied by the annulment of the special preferential

arrangements of the Lome Convention. More specifically tariffs against African exports will be raised by 28 per cent, 40 per cent and 16 percent in the markets of the European Union, Japan and the United States of America respectively. Coffee, for instance, has suffered a hundred per cent erosion of its Lome Convention's preferential margin. The corresponding figures for phosphoric acid, petroleum by-products, crustacean and leather, and tobacco are 50, 30 and 20 per cent respectively. The implication of the Uruguay round for tariffs and access of primary products to foreign markets, importation of food, foreign exchange and balance of payment, and the manufacturing sector raises the stakes in the search for strategies of regional developmental planning.

The frailty of individual African states in the face of these developments is made clear when we remember that the context of global trade liberalization means that African goods are faced with stark competition from products from Asia and Latin America. Africa's food importation bills are equally expected to mount due to the reduction in export and domestic subsidies as the world prices of food increase. It is certain that in the short-run this will exert great pressure on foreign exchange and affect the balance of payment.

It must be noted that the long term advantage that can be derived from this is possible only where there is a well coordinated effort to increase domestic food production to meet local demands. However, this capacity to meet the supply of the internal demand for food production is limited by Africa's lack of appropriate arrangements as regards markets and technology. Charity and relief from external sources often hinder this opportunity. These demand a measure of regional specialization, which alone could induce the emergence of a prosperous manufacturing sector. It must be underlined that this state of affairs is the result of forty years of economic choices and styles of implementation, typical of which is the idea that individual African countries can thrive in the international economic system by running their go-it-alone economies. Alas! These results make the practice of sovereign economies in Africa objectionable not only on moral grounds but also for its economic repercussions.

The way forward is one of accepting the challenge of creating wider markets, making independent choices devoid of neo-colonial constraints, improving manufacture-oriented diversification, increasing cross-border or inter-state collectivization in the areas of export and communication policies, as well as the standardization of financial and monetary policies.

3. REGIONALISM, SOVEREIGNTY, AND DOMINANT STATES

The current stage of the pan-African struggle - sub-regional integration - is too crucial a matter to be left solely in the hand of inter-state organizations and ruling governments. The role of present regional economic groups and political organizations will be necessary but they cannot be made the main instruments of change. We are aware of their faltering, foundering and stagnation. It must

nonetheless be acknowledged that the reasons for their shortcomings are not structural but functional, for no matter how well organized and efficient, their objectives fall short of tackling the root cause of Africa's backwardness - the hindrances of economic and political barriers. Some, like the Organization of African Unity (OAU), have demonstrated exceptional efficiency and would have been capable of a tremendous transformation of this continent but their charter, mandate, and terms of reference do not allow the innovative implementation of such vigorous projects as The Lagos Plan of Action. Having little power to enforce their noble decisions and carry out their projects, some of these organizations end up serving no more than ceremonial purposes. Thus, their recommendations could be overruled or thwarted by the decisions of governments, which give privilege to their tenure of office and not to the economic development of the people. The boot was on the other foot, the cart before the horse. In the defunct East African Economic Community, for instance, baneful trifles, petty sovereignty mentality, and especially the military ethnocracy that ruled Uganda between 1970 and 1979 undermined the serious consideration of vital matters.

The often very modest performance of African regional associations, despite the existence of immense opportunities for extraordinary advancement, has caused some to rule out any possibility of successful regional co-operation in African integration. It has led some scholars such as Jeffrey Herbst to opine as follows:

But the truth is that trade blocks within Africa have not worked; the continent is littered with examples of failed attempts at economic integration. The East Africa Federation collapsed because Kenya was seen as the dominant, and therefore, threatening partner. The omens are not good for the Southern African Development Community either. (Herbst 1996: B2)

He therefore recommends that: "Southern African countries will be better served by reforming their economies and take advantage of the roughly 99.4% of the world economy that is outside their region."(Herbst 1996: B2)

The pertinent question here is not answered: Should those countries undertake this reform individually or as an economically integrated bloc? For Herbst, obviously, they should not take this advantage as a trade bloc since as far as he is concerned "trade blocs in Africa have not worked."(Herbst 1996: B2) This opinion seems to suggest that every African effort at even trade blocs, let alone economic integration, is bound to prove sisyphian and doomed to failure. It is therefore clear that the economies of Southern African countries must merge, each in their own separate ways, with the 99.4% of the world economy, heedless of consequences, since they are historically incapable of forming even trade blocs to strengthen their collective interest. This opinion of Herbst is objectionable on three grounds: First, the objective truth, however, is that rather than being a permanent feature of African endeavour, these 'failed attempts' are no more than temporary setbacks. They are brief episodes in Africa's contemporary economic history. Africa cannot, ought not, and will not go on from error to error. The continent's response to the challenges of progress and modernization will not be *semper idem*. The myth of

African immobilism, characteristic of the Afro-pessimist campaign seems to object to the adage that change is the only permanent thing. It patently ignores the familiar fact that times change and we change with them.

A brighter side of the African story must therefore be highlighted. The fundamental element of change is that the conditions that sustained false hopes and projected the mirages of past years have changed. Southern African countries, especially, can learn a lot from the mistakes of their brothers to the east, north, and west. Second, it is exactly this 'litter' of 'failed attempts at economic integration' which is responsible for Africa's economic maladies. They therefore require that successful units of economic integration clean the continent of the debris of shattered attempts, and lay the foundation of healthy economies.

Contrary to Herbst's opinion, the dominant position of relatively advanced states is, in practical economic terms, not a hindrance to successful sub-regional economic integration. Herbst and those who share this opinion cannot be oblivious of the fact that decades of economic delusion have revealed to Africa the futility of go-it-alone economies, and the indispensability of a solid manufacturing base for Africa's economic progress. It has also shown that Africa can put development aid to a better use if instead of negotiating individually, the recipient states team up as an economically integrated bloc. It has therefore become self-evident from the long experience of Africa's peculiar circumstances that a sort of larger African industrial economic power playing the role of *primus inter pares* should be necessary for sub-regional economic development. In the context of an integrated regional economy the 'dominant' role of states such as South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, and la Cote d'Ivoire will enable a rapid and sure economic development. This will go beyond mere statistics, and mobilize resources to galvanize industrial drive.

The benefits of that will eventually spread through the region if the various states are willing to be patient for the greater and future permanent interest of their people. There exist in every industrialized country zones of industrial concentration, and an economically integrated sub-region will not be an exception. This fact, though obvious, has been discarded by some utopian analysts of African economic integration. They mean that regional integration is not possible unless the countries involved are at par in economic development. The problem posed by unequal industrial advantage will be solved by working out a system and passing laws to implement an effective mechanism, which will enable all citizens of all the countries concerned to have reasonable access and relative benefits from the comparative advantages of all their respective countries. In addition to mobilizing internal resources of the regions, dominant states will help attract foreign direct investment (FDI). The UNCTAD secretariat of the United Nations views the dominant role of South Africa in the Southern African region, for instance, in these words:

An important factor that may influence prospects for FDI in Africa is the emergence of South Africa as a politically stable and economically dynamic country. South Africa has a potential to attract sizeable inflows of FDI. Secondly, if such inflows materialize and contribute to an acceleration of

economic growth, then South Africa could well become a regional growth pole, and itself become a home country for FDI in the countries of Southern Africa. There have already been several acquisitions by South African banks of banking networks elsewhere in southern and eastern Africa. In addition, it could become a dynamic market for export-oriented FDI in neighbouring countries linked to South Africa by free trade agreements or other types of integration arrangements. Trade between South Africa and the remainder of Africa had already grown to a total of \$1.7 billion by 1992. In many cases the trade link could be completed by an investment link and a variety of efforts in this direction are being pursued or are under discussion. (UNTAD/DTCI 1995: 93)

Thus, rather than becoming obstacles in the way of economic development, dominant states will eventually be to the various regions what the dominant states of Piedmont-Sardinia and Prussia were to the fragmented and politically dominated states of 19th Century Italy and Germany respectively. The overwhelming economic prowess of these two industrial states was one of the most important factors contributing to the success of the economic integration and political unification of Italy and Germany in the early 1870s. Under the respective leadership of Piedmont-Sardinia and Prussia, Italian and German states mobilized and coordinated labour, capital, management, and especially technology at the inter-state level to build a manufacturing sector. They successfully formulated a strategy for the purposeful industrialization of their respective zones even when they were under the foreign domination of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Far from being a reason for despair and surrender, the failure of trade bloc in Africa confirms the fact that a realistic solution to Africa's economic problems must go beyond mere Preferential Tariffs Agreement, peripheral Free Trade Association, palliative Customs Unions, superficial Common Market, and dogmatic globalization. Only the solid rock of sub-regional economic integration can support a strong foundation for Africa's economic advancement. All other ground is sinking sand.

4. SECURING PEACE AND PROGRESS

Africa's economic delusion has its variant in matters of security. Can Africa remain in pieces and have peace? Here too, the inappropriate structures create problems of widespread and endemic political violence. It has led to a chaotic situation where bullets rather than the ballots are the makers and keepers of legitimacy. Self-appointed gun-governments and their sequel of armed opponents continue to plague human rights and civil liberties with impunity. This is insecurity, not the least doubts about it. The problem of endemic political violence and instability has been attributed to ethnicity, whereas ethnicity is never a problem unless its existence is overlooked and not reflected in the numerical proportions of the composition of national armies and the distribution of resources. The problem is endemic and widespread for want of appropriate structures.

Africa forms less than 10% of the world's population but she accounts for about 50% of the world's refugees. The reason for this is obvious upon very little reflection: It is possible for inordinately ambitious officers of the armed forces and blood thirsty tribalists to wreck untold havoc with impunity. Foreign support, which aggravates the conflict, is an effect rather than a cause. There exists no permanent structure to deal with wanton military mutiny against a democratically elected government in any country of a given region. A colossal force of armed contingents from countries of the region ready to be deployed to quell any destabilisation or self-appointed leadership at its very inception without fear nor favour would go a long way to enhance peace and prosperity. Recent incidents of usurpation and self-appointed leadership in Sierra Leone and the two Congos, political violence in Guinea-Bissau, and Lesotho lend credence to the need for concerted efforts to forestall destabilisation by military adventurers. It is in this context that President Mandela suggested at the last summit meeting of the OAU Heads of State in Burkina Faso that there is the need for state to intervene in the internal affairs of member states in certain circumstances. Amply armed tribalist criminals and their foreign collaborators would have sought and found peaceful alternatives to the disreputable carnage by which they degrade themselves with indelible shame.

The matter is of grave concern in that given Africa's political instability violence in a neighbouring country or region, has fatal consequences for neighbours; such that external affairs are often just as problematic as internal ones. When Rwanda catches fire Zaire and Tanzania receives floods of refugees. Somalia's pandemonium costs Kenya and Ethiopia a great deal of ordeal; the situation in Southern Sudan means a lot to Uganda for instance; Lesotho's chaos concerns South Africa, its sole neighbour; so does the plight of Liberia and Sierra Leone concern Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire. It is worthy of note that it is not by accident that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been able to keep the peace in Western Europe for a complete half a century by a policy of deterrence and containment. And there were no civil wars in the areas of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) until the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union were dismantled.

Central to Africa's security problem is that there are no structures or agreements, which could pose any obvious threat to potential bellicose power-seekers, fraudulent ethnocentric governments, and mischievous external support as the current war in the Democratic Republic of Congo indicates. A joint regional security force that is willing, mandated and ready to defend the peace or to impose a peaceful solution in internal conflicts will at least serve to deter potential self-appointed leaders who are fast turning Africa's military into the most baneful of the continent's colonial legacies. As a dissuasive force it will be a viable alternative of fear against mischief. Such a military arrangement will not only keep the peace but will equally buttress democratic practice and consolidate the rule of law. Those who undermine law and order must be made to fear chaos and confusion. It must however be underlined that the project will require the surrender of certain aspects of each country's sovereignty as regards matters of defense.

Another merit of regional political and economic integration is that it could be an effective antidote to the pestilence of inter-tribal carnage. Widespread inter-tribal violence in Africa seems to follow a general pattern. They are more probable and more intense in countries with a limited number of ethnic groups, such that the greater the number of ethnic units in a country the safer it seems to be for national peace and harmony. This observation is particularly assertive when the composition of the national armed force reflects the ethnic proportions of the country's population. For instance, in Somalia where there is only one ethnic group the state completely collapsed. In bi-ethnic Burundi and Rwanda the Hutu-Tutsi carnage is frequent, widespread, endemic, and incredibly horrifying. In the Sudan, the North is against the South, which sees itself as fighting religion-racist domination. The Nigeria that fought the 1967-1970 was essentially a trio-regional entity. Nor is this a peculiarly African phenomenon. A careful study of the history of Cyprus, Sri Lanka, and the former Czechoslovakia will supply further evidence.

Another merit of confederate sovereignty is that a regional collectivity of several ethnic groups is more likely to forestall ethnic domination than the present tiny sovereignties. Where the people see a government as a subtle ethnic imposition, a sectional domination or a full-blown ethnocracy with armed mobilization is sustainable even if it may not be immediately victorious. The armed uprising, which in March 1979 overthrew the military ethnocracy in Uganda, is a case in point. Again under apartheid, South Africa was essentially a white ethnocracy, which had inadvertently divided the nation into two camps. This is partly because it will be potently impossible for one tribe to dominate the national armed forces especially when a system is put in place to ensure a district-by-district quota system of recruitment. Fundamental to the problems of Burundi is not so much the bi-ethnic composition of the country but essentially the disproportionate composition of the national army. The Hutu constitutes 85% of the population whereas the nation's army is dominated by the remaining 15% Tutsi. The conflict here is essentially one between the ballot and the bullet over the issue of political legitimacy.

5. THE INTEGRAL WAY FORWARD

The failings of forty years of independence and especially the current lack of viable initiatives for development give credence to a continental challenge, which Lord Peter T. Bauer's sternly and thought-provokingly put in these terms:

African backwardness amidst ample natural resources is only one conspicuous example of the fact that material progress depends on personal qualities, social institutions and mores, and political arrangements, which make for endeavour and achievement, and not simply physical resources. (Bauer 1981: 194-5)

Immediate economic and eventual political integration will effectively reorganize Africa and exploit these human and physical resources for Africa's development.

The logic of African integration seems to be evident upon very little reflection and practical experience. Three examples illustrate this point. First, in September, 1909, the British Parliament enacted a Union Constitution drafted by representatives of the southern African colonies of Transvaal, Cape Colony, Orange River Colony, and Natal presented to it in 1908/9. The result was that on May 31, 1910, the 'South Africa Act', as it was called, came into effect and the four colonies became provinces of a new nation known as the Union of South. Second, French colonial authorities saw the need to rule their West African dominions as a single unit in order to ensure the effective creation of wealth for the Metropolis. Francophone West Africa was thus ruled as a single federal colony with, Dakar in Senegal, as its capital. They operated a uniform currency, one army, and one custom policy, among others. This federation was not dissolved until the eve of independence in 1957, when the colonial authorities passed the Loi Cadre, which balkanized the unit into separate states. Pan-Africanist like Nkrumah have explained that the measure of the Loi Cadre was to ensure French continued domination of these countries after independence, a phenomenon he dubbed 'neo-colonialism'. Third, British colonial authorities again saw the economic and political merits of African integration when in 1953 it created a single country out of the colonies of Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland (currently Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Malawi respectively). The Federation was dissolved in 1963 mainly due to what African nationalists deemed to be racist policies of the colonial administration.

The lessons of these past attempts remain valid and desirable today on a sub-regional scale. They demonstrate that to promote the unity of industry, the free movement of technology, labour, as well as capital and ideas it will be necessary for individual states to surrender parts of their sovereignty in the wider economic interest of their citizens.

6. STUMBLING BLOCKS AS STEPPING STONES

After their independence from Great Britain the original thirteen American colonies remained separated by political and economic barriers, different currencies, different trade, immigration, and tax systems, which hindered their economic development and often led to petty squabbles, and even trivial animosities. This made any idea of a possible United States of America a very ridiculous illusion. Josiah Tucker, a liberal philosopher and Dean of Gloucester, England, derided American states as follows:

As to the future grandeur of America, and its being a rising empire under one head, whether republican or monarchical, it is one of the idlest and most visionary notions that ever was conceived even by the writers of romance. The mutual antipathies and clashing interest of the Americans, their differences of governments, habitudes and manners, indicate that they will have no centre of union and no common interest. They never can unite into one compact empire

under any species of government whatever; a disunited people till the end of time, suspicious and distrustful of each other, they will be divided and sub-divided into little commonwealths or principalities, according to natural boundaries, by great bays of the sea, and by vast rivers, lakes and ridges of mountains. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1995)

Similar opinions are now being expressed concerning Africa by an Afro-pessimist such as Herbst discussed above. They will be debunked when Africans set out to implement radical and unprecedented solutions to revive their continent rather than to spend the rest of their history massacring one another just to prop up the liabilities of the obsolete legacy of colonial boundaries.

A Pan-African Union, which streamlines Sub-Saharan Africa into five sovereign Confederations of states, each with a single constitution, parliament and government, currency, army, industrial and custom policy. In proposing a single continental government Nkrumah overstepped the bounds of reality and safety. The practical difficulties of such a scheme invalidated the theoretical advantages.

It would, however, be tantamount to utter wishful thinking to purport that even economic integration will face no internal and external obstacles. In his explanation of the late development of some countries Lewis posits that:

“When all is said in extenuation, including the smallness of the agricultural surplus, a failure of the will remained. The tropical countries and the backward countries of Europe shared a common obstacle: reactionary landed aristocracies more interested in tribute than in growth; vested interests more interested in cheap imports than in industrialization; governments steeped in laissez-faire or positively hostile to domestic manufacturing for reasons of imperial power or agricultural domination.” (Lewis 1967: 58-9)

If the trapping of sovereignty continues to frustrate Africa's quest for a veritable economic integration, one could expect a situation where political parties with sub-regional concerns are formed or existing ones transform themselves into parties that embrace the agenda of sub-regional integration as a matter of indispensable and urgent priority. After wrestling their legitimacy amidst accusations of subversion from ruling governments such parties would establish branches in all the countries of the respective sub-regions with a coordinating bureau carrying out a common manifesto. In respect for the democratic practice of their respective countries they would thrust forward not by the baseness of self-appointed leadership or the law of force, but by the force of the Law. Ordinary people believing in sub-regional integration would therefore regroup, apply for authorization, register, mobilize and organize their political party and contest elections on the platform of sub-regional integration. The cause of African renaissance could thus be stripped of its trappings of dilatory scheming and bureaucratic charlatanism as ordinary people get convinced about the desirability and possibility of immediately implementing an eventual economic integration and a future political one. They would tie up the issue of sub-region integration to the tenure or exercise of political power in each

country so that sovereignty does not become a fanciful abstraction and governments nebulous entities.

7. CONCLUSION

The critical analysis made in the paper has revealed that the implications of the present trend of globalization will not be beneficial and in fact no different from former arrangements until the continent undertakes collective efforts at genuine integration based on comparative advantage and specialization. The foregoing analyses are not intended to question the right of nations to non-interference in their internal affairs. It, however, serves as a reminder that no African country has the capacity for the kind of technological breakthrough needed to give the necessary push for massive industrialization. That a colossal percentage of foreign aid inflow to Africa has been for consumption rather than capital is indicative of the fact that with our present disintegrated economies this push is most unlikely to come from outside. The solution to the hydra-headed obstacles in the way of African progress lies in diversification, which in turn will need a measure of specialization. The internal difficulties that these changes will pose for individual nations demand that a system of collective regional responsibility be instituted to resolve the initial turbulence and temporary dislocation, which will accompany the measures of integration.

It is in this way that the continent can reorganize its resources, institute the appropriate political and security structures that will permit it to engage in profitable international trade, effective management of foreign investments and a strict control of capital flow to ensure its renaissance in a globalized economy.

Without these measures there will be no reason to expect that the implementation of the final Act of the Uruguay Round will improve Africa's performance in the world economics order which has let her down for the past four decades.

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