

# What is new in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)?

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**Abstract:** *This treatise highlights the recent dreams and dialogues of African Renaissance and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). These dreams and dialogues have been driven as much by Afro-optimism as by Afro-pessimism, by both the positive and the negative political and economic changes that have taken place in postcolonial Africa. The paper briefly surveys the resurgence of the idea of the African renaissance in the 1990s and the foundation of NEPAD at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It then reviews the ingredients of the NEPAD policy document with the hopes for African redemption. This is followed by an assessment of NEPAD initiatives, focusing on the reality of its formulation, implementation and ownership. The essay concludes by trying to profess the future of Africa and the continent's alternative efforts to find solutions to its peoples' problems.*

**Key words:** NEPAD, African Renaissance, African Union, Omega Plan, Millennium Africa Renaissance Programme, New African Initiative

## INTRODUCTION

Different strategies have been adopted by the African leaders since the second half of the twentieth century to collectively lead the continent out of political and economic misery. These strategies range from zonal, regional and continental, the recent one being the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). This initiative was adopted almost at the same time when OAU dropped its initial 'O' to remain with the two final letters. All those initiatives notwithstanding, Amuwo (2002: 69) argues that Africans are worse off today materially than they were at nominal independence, and the majority of those 1.2 billion people the World Bank says live on less than one US\$ per day are found on the continent.

As last year we commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization of African Union (OAU)/African Union (AU), marking half a century since it was created on 25 May 1963, we think we should take this opportunity to assess the New Partnership for African Development - NEPAD, enquiring on what is new in this new partnership. The discussion in this treatise concentrates on vacuums existing in the NEPAD document taking into account the existing socio-political African setting to draw a conclusion and suggest working recommendations. It should be noted that the African political economic environment has been undergoing evolution with time. The evolutionary atmosphere of the continent has mainly been filled with consciousness of its people with painful memories of suffering, struggle, and survival against the historical ravages of slavery, colonialism, and neocolonialism, as well as a desire for sustainable development (Nunn, 2008). Slavery and colonialism have been regarded by many Afro-centrists, including Ifeanyi (2013) and Nunn (2008) to be the cause of the current state of African economies.

In an attempt to address such adversities, African statesmen have effected a number of institutional changes at the continental level, especially at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, among

which being the transformation of the OAU into the AU (Apuuli, 2012: 136; Sithole, 2012: 111) and the formation of a New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). This paper presents an assessment of the latter's decade-or-so-old efforts (NEPAD initiative) to strengthen Africa's profile and role in the international community. It focuses on NEPAD policy document aiming to define a far-reaching common denominator for African states in their collective developmental aspirations within the context of globalization. The paper seeks to address the following key questions: Does NEPAD—a program adopted by the (O)AU and endorsed by virtually all international agencies and bilateral donors—present a genuinely new model of development that avoids the shortcomings of previous development plans? Is it a real tool for advancing prosperity in the continent?

### **NEPAD: WHERE DID IT COME FROM?**

Following the attainment of political independence in the mid- and late twentieth century African states have experimented with numerous projects of economic and development initiatives at the continental level. As per Mahmudat Olawunmi Muhibbu-Din (2011: 1). these initiatives range from the New International Economic Order in Africa (1975 to 1977). through the Monrovia Strategy (1979) that culminated in the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action (1980 to 2000) and the Final Act of Lagos (1980). to Africa's Priority Program for Economic Recovery 1986–1990 (APPER) which later converted to the United Nations Program of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery 1986–1990 (UN-PAARED). Other prominent strategies include the Abuja Treaty of 1991, the Africa Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Program for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation 1989 (AAF-SAP). the African Charter for the Popular Participation for Development 1990, and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa 1991 (UNN-NADA) (ibid). The recent continental policy document is the NEPAD, which is partly a way to achieving the African Renaissance. The 21<sup>st</sup> century mission to identify common aims and objectives among African countries by means of policy documents namely 'the African Renaissance' and 'NEPAD' has to be directly linked to the practical role played by former South Africa's President, Thabo Mbeki.<sup>1</sup> With the rebirth of black African rule South Africa in the 1990s, the country started exerting its influence (or flexing its muscles) on Africa, "either actively assuming or sometimes passively receiving a leadership role far beyond its borders" (Melber, 2002: 186). It was Thabo Mbeki who coined the slogan "African Renaissance" during the late 1990s. This idea is to a certain degree rooted in various elements of earlier African philosophical discourses on Pan-Africanism, Negritude, Ubuntu, and Black Consciousness (Melber, 2002: 187).

Thabo Mbeki believed that the African Renaissance had begun in the political sphere. Africa's history therefore *demand*ed that Africans must do everything in their power to "defend the gains that had been achieved", to encourage all other countries on the continent to move in the same direction "according to which the people shall govern, and to enhance the capacity of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to act as an effective instrument for peace and the promotion of human and people's rights to which we are committed" (Mbeki, 1999: 211-212, Kotze and Steyn, 2003: 40).

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<sup>1</sup> Thabo Mbeki's voice was among the loudest in promoting NEPAD around the globe. His role in the project is examined in detail in Ian Taylor's "NEPAD and the Global Political Economy: Towards the African Century or Another False Start?", in J. O. Adesina, Yao Graham, and A. Olukoshi (eds.). *Africa and Development Challenges in the New Millennium: The NEPAD Debate*, CODESRIA, Dakar, 2005, p. 64-65.

According to Mbeki, the African Renaissance was the third moment in Africa's contemporary historical cycle that is dated from the 1950s (and more specifically from Ghana's independence 57 years ago). The "first moment" was Africa's rebirth after years of colonialism and exploitation by foreign powers - the period of the liberation struggles of the immediate post-Second World War years, which culminated in the continent's political liberation. The "second moment" dates to the end of the Cold War in 1989, which resulted in the collapse of the socialist community of states. This historical event gave rise to "the resurgence of more open political and economic interaction on a world scale.... and manifests itself in campaigns for democratization in independent African countries". In this regard, South Africa's *political liberation from the minority whites* in April 1994 was one of the climaxes of Africa's "second moment". The "first and second moments", however, serve as dress rehearsals for the African Renaissance "which has a far broader and deeper agenda than political liberation and democracy" (Mbeki, 1999: 210). The African Renaissance project is praised by some analysts (such as Melber, 2002: 187) for its contribution in revitalizing the values considered and appreciated as both genuinely African and human (in the sense of "civilized" as opposed to the derogatory views of "primitive"). Accordingly, it managed to consolidate a philosophical foundation dating back to the first attempts at breaking loose from the Eurocentric dominance of the industrialized Western world of Africa's colonizers. In their view, the project managed to rally policy makers, bureaucrats and intellectuals alike behind the notion of African self-respect, dignity and pride based on previous achievements (ibid). Nevertheless, the concept failed to materialize as a fully fledged and concise new paradigm. It essentially failed to establish a political concept and instrumental strategy in practical policy matters.

The translation of the African Renaissance into policy concepts and programmes to some extent led to the gradual phasing out of the phrase itself within the predominantly political public discourse. Its systematic introduction into the international arena may be dated to the briefing on the "Millennium Africa Renaissance Programme" (MAP) provided by Thabo Mbeki to the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos on 28 January 2001. In his presentation, he qualified MAP as "a declaration of a firm commitment by African leaders to take ownership and responsibility for the sustainable economic development of the continent."

Mbeki was supported by his colleagues Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania and Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal, although the latter had still his own ideas (the Omega Plan for Africa). which were made known at a later stage. The MAP document originated during a process that had begun in 1999, when the South African, Nigerian and Algerian presidents were mandated by the Extraordinary OAU Summit in Sirte, Libya, to approach Africa's creditors on the total cancellation of Africa's external debt. The presidents were tasked further by the South Summit in Havana in April 2000 to convey the concerns of the South to the G8 Summit in Okinawa (July 2000). The OAU Summit in Togo (July 2000) mandated the same presidents to prepare the Millennium African Recovery Programme (Melber, 2002: 188; Gelb, 2002: 1; Tawfik, 2009: 64; Muhibbu-Din, 2011: 1-2).

At the Conference of Ministers of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in Algiers (8-10 May 2001). the South African government presented the

'Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme'. On that occasion, Abdoulaye Wade, then Senegalese President, presented the 'Omega Plan for Africa' and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) presented a 'Compact for African Recovery'. It was decided that the documents should be tabled in a merged version to the OAU Summit in Lusaka (Melber, 2002: 188). The Omega Plan for Africa and MAP were finally merged into the New African Initiative (NAI), the final draft of which was eventually unanimously adopted by OAU Heads of State at their Lusaka Summit meeting on 11 July 2001 (Gelb, 2002: 1-2; Adesina, 2005: 35; Taylor, 2005: 76-77). and "was internationally endorsed as Africa's official development strategy through a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly" (Melber, 2006: 5). This diplomatic compromise, aimed at reconciling different interests and approaches in a face-saving manner, prevented the initiative(s) from ending in a *cul-de-sac* at the early stage. Subsequently, on 23 October 2001 after a meeting in Abuja of an Implementation Committee of Heads of State, the modified NAI document was renamed as "The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)" (Melber, 2002: 189, Kotze and Steyn, 2003: 40-41). The current President of Algeria and the then Heads of State of Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa were at the forefront of this movement (Taylor, 2005: 63; Kotze and Steyn, 2003: 41) and were involved in the initiative since its early stages.<sup>2</sup>

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE NEPAD POLICY DOCUMENT

As per Article 1 of the NEPAD policy document (2001). "[t]his *New Partnership for Africa's Development* is a pledge by African leaders based on a common vision and a firm conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy and body politic" (NEPAD, 2001: 1; Amuwo, 2002: 70; Landsberg, 2012: 52). The same Article emphasizes the "common vision and a firm and shared conviction" of African leaders to anchor the programme in "the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalizing world". Article 7 goes on to claim that, "African peoples have begun to demonstrate their refusal to accept poor economic and political leadership". With reference to the continent's painful historical experience of impoverishment, it postulates as a lesson in Article 27 that "Africans must not be wards of benevolent guardians; rather they must be the architects of their own sustained upliftment". This latter emphasizes the ownership claim previously articulated by Thabo Mbeki and defines "a new framework of interaction with the rest of the world ... based on the agenda set by African peoples through their own initiatives and of their own volition, to shape their own destiny" (Article 48). Article 49 constitutes the African leaders' declaration aimed at achieving the aforesaid objectives. Accordingly, the leaders are supposed to take a joint responsibility to: strengthen mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution and ensure that they are used to restore and maintain peace; promote and protect democracy and human rights by developing clear standards of accountability, transparency and participative governance; restore and maintain macroeconomic stability by developing standards and targets for fiscal and monetary policies and appropriate institutional

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<sup>2</sup> They were latter joined by another ten African states (Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, and Tunisia) on an Implementation Committee. See Henning Melber, "The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) - Old Wine in New Bottles?", *Forum for Development Studies (NUPI)*. Vol. 29, No. 1, June, 2002, p. 189.

frameworks. Leaders are also jointly responsible for instituting transparent legal and regulatory frameworks for financial markets and auditing of private companies and the public sector; revitalizing and extend the provision of education, technical training and health services (with priority to HIV/AIDS, malaria and other communicable diseases); promoting the role of women in social and economic development; building the capacity of the state in Africa to set and enforce the legal framework and maintain law and order; and promoting the development of infrastructure, agriculture and its diversification.

Other joint responsibilities include poverty eradication in Africa and the promotion of the role of women in all activities. They constitute NEPAD's long-term objective (Article 67). Ensuring Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of above 7 percent for the next 15 years and fulfillment of the agreed International Development Goals (IDGs) (Article 68).

Moreover, NEPAD identifies three areas as pillars for sustainable development. These are: (a) peace, security, democracy and good governance (Articles 71–85); (b) economic and corporate governance, with a focus on public finance management (Articles 86–92); and (c) sub-regional and regional approaches (Articles 93–98). According to Funke and Nsouli (2003) the above elements are core to achieving NEPAD's objectives. However, Funke and Nsouli put much stress on the areas of governance, private sector development, regional and global economic integration and the development of pro-poor sectors such as health, agriculture, infrastructure and education as pivotal in achieving the goals.

Concomitantly, "mobilizing Resources" (NEPAD, 2001: 36–49 i.e. Article 147–173) comprises the core of the project. It puts forward the measures to be taken to realize the targets within the priority sectors. A rather sobering but realistic assessment begins this discussion. To achieve the target of 7 percent annual growth rate, "Africa needed to fill an annual resource gap of 12 percent of its GDP, or US\$ 64 billion" (Article 147). The elements needed to achieve this are identified in the same Article as increased domestic savings, improved public revenue collection, and, most importantly, funds from outside the continent. Thus, NEPAD "focuses on debt reduction and Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) as complementary external resources required in the short-to-medium-term, and addresses private capital flows as a long-term concern". Notwithstanding these declarations, the challenges remain to achieving results that will contribute meaningfully to sustainable development.

Reading the document with a critical eye one can observe that it sounds like an unworkable '*white-elephant*' project merely made up of 'wishful thinking'. This can be viewed even in the minds of the drafters themselves who had realized this well in advance. Pessimistic as they were, they stressed that "*unless something new and radical is done*, Africa will not achieve the IDGs and a 7-percent annual GDP growth rate" (Article 70). While this sounds more down to earth, the document fails to spell out clearly enough what it considers as the "something new and radical" in its endeavor (Melber, 2002: 192).

Related to the above, there is the issue (un)preparedness and somewhat belongingness that revolved around the minds of the architects of NEPAD. The initiative was brought to life by few elites on behalf of the many, without the consent of the many. At one point, Melber quotes Thabo Mbeki as saying:

We now have an urgent responsibility to develop implementable plans, to ensure that the excellent programmes and policies that exist on paper succeed in practice, that African technical expertise from within Africa and the diaspora is harnessed to convert those programmes and policies into practical and implementable programmes and projects, that the African people come to own these programmes as belonging to them (2002: 193).

### **A NEPAD Critique: Prospects, Challenges and Failures**

It is at least rhetorically unquestionable that the NEPAD initiative was welcomed wholeheartedly by African Heads of State and Government. However, the practicality of the initiative has been uncertain right from the onset. The most critical areas in the NEPAD initiative include its relationships with the African Union and other key African organizations, the question of ownership as many Africans feel it is a foreign imposed initiative, the political review component African Peer Review Mechanism (Shilimela, 2004: i). democratic governance and human rights ethos (including the fight against corruption) conflict management, and leadership crises.

### **The AU/NEPAD Relationship**

NEPAD was established as a fully integrated organ of the African Union developed to achieve the fourteen objectives (as outlined in Article 3 of the Constitutive Act) that aim at realizing economic growth and overcome poverty (Akume and Abdullahi, 2012). halt marginalization of the continent in the globalization process (Mamman-Sabba, 2011) and promote good governance in all its dimensions (Akokpari, 2003). In liaison with the AU Commission NEPAD has access to the African diaspora networks elsewhere outside Africa with a view to make the diaspora contribute to the African development (UNECA, 2012). and acts as the AU's instrument of integrating Africa into the world economy (Bunwaree, 2009). It also acts as a force towards achieving the long awaited dream of the United States of Africa (UNECA, 2012).

In the context of the debate over the African institutional relationships, Chris Landsberg (2012). a scholar from University of Johannesburg, has raised anxiety over the AU-NEPAD link, observing that it has harmed the prospect of the regional economic and political integration. The more or less parallel adoption of NEPAD and the final transformation of OAU into AU simultaneously resulted into a serious problem of institutional rivalries.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, "the relationship between AU and NEPAD has exposed competition over status, scarce financial and human resources, policy influence and petty squabbles amongst diplomats and officials. The tensions between these poorly anchored and weakly consolidated institutions and initiatives have prompted some to suggest that NEPAD needed to be fully integrated into AU and to fall under the command and control of AU as premier body" (Landsberg, 2012: 50, 52).

### **Who Owns NEPAD and NEPAD for Whom?**

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<sup>3</sup> NEPAD was established some nine months before the AU, but controversially, it is the AU that officially owns NEPAD. See Chris Landsberg, "The African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD): Restoring a Relationship Challenged?", in *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 2012, p. 52.

The question of ownership of NEPAD constitutes a brainteaser. The NEPAD document recognizes the problem of leadership and ownership as obstacles in setting continent-wide development programmes. The document affirms that past attempts “to set out continent-wide development programmes” have not succeeded, in part because of “questionable leadership and ownership by Africans themselves.” While NEPAD (Article 51) admits that “The New Partnership for Africa’s Development will be successful only if it is owned by the African peoples united in their diversity”, the African elite, foreign governments and donors have far too much influence and control over NEPAD, and this has contributed significantly to NEPAD’s legitimacy problems in Africa.

With very few exceptions, there is little knowledge about NEPAD among the African peoples. Since its ratification in Lusaka, in July 2001, much has been happening in form of workshops, conferences and seminars on NEPAD strategies. But most of such activities have been for the government officials along with representatives of donor agencies and other members of international community with a wide variety of interests in the plan ((Shilimela, 2004: 1). Its promoters have been marketing it on the international arena, particularly popularizing it to donors, while little has been done to popularize it among the civil society in Africa. For the critics, NEPAD has brought about a major dichotomy: abroad it is generally celebrated and respected; in Africa it has brought about divisions and suspicion (Landsberg, 2012: 62).

Furthermore, the NEPAD document itself is somewhat self-contradicting. On the one hand, the document stresses for Africa’s development future to be in the hands of the Africans themselves (Article 44). and on the other hand, it exposes itself to former colonialists’ influence and interests as the programme financing depends heavily on foreign capital for its implementation, and it does not say how it will match people-centered development with private sector-led growth (Anangwe, 2002). It will not be wrong for one to suggest that NEPAD was just created to act as a kneepad to support the knees of African leaders and political elites when begging for and taming the big financial flow coming forth to support the programme.

As a matter of fact, right from the start, South Africa’s then President, Thabo Mbeki, presented NEPAD to the G8 for the first time because he and other promoters of NEPAD believed that Africa could only develop through partnership and cooperation with the developed world. This was to get support for NEPAD from developed countries, which they in fact got, as Bunwaree (2009) argues that NEPAD gets massive assistance from the G8. Accordingly, \$56 billion of the \$64 billion needed by NEPAD every year is to come from donors (Shilimela, 2004: 7). In lieu of soliciting for internal means to combatting African miseries NEPAD continues to embrace and old dependence syndrome.

Concomitantly, China also claims to support NEPAD and AU (Tull, 2009: 326). However, Beijing’s support to those institutions “has so far proven little more than rhetoric and is ambivalent at best” (ibid: 340). Perhaps President Xi Jinping’s recent visit to Africa will redesign China’s support to the continent’s initiatives. Nevertheless, we are pessimistic of the Chinese undertaking in Africa. It is obvious that the era of old colonialism (political occupation) is gone; but it has been replaced by economic (neo) colonialism whose tentacles include foreign direct investment with the central motive of net transfer of profit. China

cannot be an exception in this political economic drama. Being an emerging superpower industrially China is just one among the many Africa's resources competitors under the multipolar international order.

B. Onimode (as cited by John Ohiorhenuan, 2002: 9) rightly has this to say:

The salvation of Africa lies primarily in Africa and with Africans themselves. Optimism must become a resounding virtue and widely disseminated psychological trait – even in the face of challenges... Robust optimism about Africa's future is a major requirement for the self-confidence that Africans so badly need to deal with the challenges of this historical juncture. Regardless of what Africa's detractors may say or do, Africans themselves must never lose faith in their own capacity and ability to change the course of events – to achieve the willed future for themselves.

### **THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM (APRM)**

One important, but also contentious, dimension of NEPAD that is frequently credited is the creation of APRM. The main activity of APRM has been the negotiation of selected members' adherence to a peer review process "by which African heads of state exercise some form of surveillance over their colleagues in a bid to ensure good governance" (Akokpari, 2004: 244). This surveillance is exercised not only over their internal economic stewardship, but also over their progress toward public participation and governmental accountability (Melber, 2006: 8; Zartman, 2009: 228). On one hand, the mechanism has been encountering resistance and criticism from many African politicians. On the other, APRM has again been criticized by NEPAD's donors for excluding the political review. What are the appropriate actions that can be taken if one African country or a NEPAD member country fails to maintain a good standard of governance? Firstly, already there are NEPAD member countries which are offensively involved in conflict. For example, Rwanda and Uganda, members of NEPAD, have intervened in war inside their neighbouring country, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Africans and their development partners appear to be divided on the type of actions to be taken if one African (not only NEPAD) country misbehaves (Shilemela, 2004: 4).

### **NEPAD AND GOOD GOVERNANCE**

Related to APRM is NEPAD's aspect of good governance. It is clearly stated that "The New Partnership for Africa's Development has, as one of its foundations, the expansion of democratic frontiers and the deepening of the culture of human rights" (Article 183). A good political governance initiative as enshrined in NEPAD policy document therefore, calls on African governments to respect the global standards of democracy, which include political pluralism, allowing for the existence of several political parties, workers' unions, and fair and open democratic elections periodically organized to enable people to choose their leaders freely.

However, questions remain about the quality of democracy in the continent. By the time of preparing this paper, most of the African countries have hardly ever met the level of electoral democracy, let alone the promotion and protection of human rights. The electoral processes and election results in the region have frequently been contested as neither free nor

fair, some of which have been accompanied by violence. Such miserable elections occurred in Cote d'Ivoire (2010). Kenya (2007 and 2013). Zimbabwe (2008). Tanzania (2010). Uganda (2010). and Nigeria (2012) to mention but a few.

As regards political pluralism, most African ruling political parties have increasingly developed enmity with the opposition parties. While ruling parties have been enjoying their power of incumbency, opposition parties and their leaders have been facing the iron hand of the power in place. Victoire Ingabire, a popular opposition leader in Rwanda, for example, has recently been imprisoned on allegedly genocide, divisionism and terrorism accounts, on the ground of documents found on Wikipedia.<sup>4</sup> Wilfred Lwakatare, opposition leader from CHADEMA was put in remand custody on charges of terrorism, the charges that were disapproved by the Court of Law<sup>5</sup>. Much the same can often be said about the frequent ill-treatment of Dr. Kiiza Besigye, Uganda's Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) opposition icon in Uganda. A malfunctioning legal system, undemocratic governance and a constrained freedom of expression and of the press are the orders of the day in Africa.

Borrowing from Bayart's words (2000). NEPAD is not less than a "make-believe game" or the "export of institutional image" played by the African elites to the international community. Using the financial resources they have accumulated during long years of plunder, the African power-holders (*washika-hatamu*) have trickily been able to maintain their positions. With these funds, they can purchase the support of some key political opponents, and finance the creation of a plethora of small parties calculated to divide the opposition (Bayart, 2000: 225). The 'transition to democracy' has actually been reduced to no more than a technique of self-preservation by various '*anciens regimes*'. The paths taken by Tanzania, Uganda, Cameroon and Zimbabwe from the early 1990s to date provide an adequate illustration of this '*fictitious*' democracy, the aim of which being an attempt to attract foreign aid and avoid sanctions by the West. "Africans are ... always ready to turn external constraints into some new creation" (Bayart, 2000: 240).

It is also declared in NEPAD (in Articles 83 and 188) that African leaders will undertake "effective measures to combat corruption and embezzlement" and "set up coordinated mechanisms to combat corruption effectively" as well as ensuring a return of "Africa's stolen monies" lodged in offshore banking vaults. However, experience shows that there is an uncontrolled increase in grand-corruption and Africa's monies are incessantly fled to the elite coffers in Europe and America. As a result, "both external private and public capital flows are drying up. This is a no-win situation" (Amuwo, 2002: 75).

## **NEPAD AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

Strengthening mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution and ensuring that they are used to restore and maintain peace is one of the joint responsibilities the African leaders vowed to fulfil (as per NEPAD Article 49). This being the case, there emerges a growing consensus that dependence on the extra-continental community to resolve Africa's internal problems is an extremely dangerous option for Africa. For this, one needs to look at the Libyan crisis in 2011, which clearly exposed this danger. Why did Africa fail to resolve

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<sup>4</sup> You may wish to refer to the joint motion of the European Parliament released on 21.05.2013, Doc. B7-0247/2013

<sup>5</sup> Tanzania Daima 10.05.2013

the conflict which erupted in February 2011 in Libya? On 10 March 2011, the Peace and Security Council (PSC)<sup>6</sup> established an AU *ad hoc* High-Level Committee composed of five heads of states of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Congo, Mali, South Africa, Uganda, and the Chairperson of AU Commission. The Committee was directed to see that there is an immediate cessation of all hostilities, cooperate with the competent Libyan authorities to facilitate humanitarian assistance for the needy, protection of foreign nationals, and the adoption and implementation of political reforms. On 17 March 2011, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 1973 authorizing “the use of all necessary means to protect civilians, enforce a ceasefire order and no-fly zone against Gaddafi’s forces in Libya”.<sup>7</sup> Thus the military intervention in Libya, authorized by the UNSC, obstructed the efforts of AU to put into practice the notion of “African solutions to Africa’s problems” (Apuuli, 2012) to end the civil war and make possible progress towards democratic change. Much the same can be said of the political crisis in Mali<sup>8</sup>, whereby the French ‘peace-building’ mission has an upper hand. Moreover, Africa’s failure to stop the recent (early 2013) coup d’état in the Central African Republic adds insult to an injury on NEPAD peacekeeping initiative.

### **DOES AFRICA HAVE THE RIGHT LEADERSHIP?**

Perhaps an even more challenging task is the view that Africa’s success through NEPAD depends on AU’s ability to enforce upon itself high standards of political leadership and seek to establish and adhere to a common set of values that must include respect for democracy, good governance, human rights, and accountability of leaders before their citizens. Congo’s President Dennis Sassou-Nguesso, Equatorial Guinea’s Teodoro Obiang Nguema, Sudan’s Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Uganda’s Yoweri Museveni and others who came to power through coup d’états, and are still in office to date, seem to contradict NEPAD’s commitment to taking a harder line on a wider range of unconstitutional forms of governance.

It may also be correct to argue that NEPAD was an elite statesmen’s initiative, thus it did not take roots not only to many African leaders but also to the subsequent generation of African leadership. Melber (2006: 5) is of the idea that NEPAD architects do not comprise an alliance free of self-interest and particular agendas”. It will not be wrong to suggest therefore that the agenda the framers of NEPAD sought to push had two consequences. One, it carried with it the seeds of the further marginalization of the majority Africa’s peoples. , Two, it granted a highly privileged segment of African elites the potential to benefit from the globalization process (Taylor, 2005: 66). This elite fraction wanted to continue to enjoy international financial and business networks. It is interesting to note that the three countries in Africa (Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa) that happened to be among the key promoters of NEPAD had been receiving the most foreign direct investment (FDI) between 1993 and 1998 (Taylor, 2005: 71).

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<sup>6</sup> The PSC is the AU Organ established in 2002 for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa.

<sup>7</sup> The full text of UNSC Resolution 1973 is available at: <http://www.newstatesman.com/2011/03/libya-arab-states-resolution-2>.

<sup>8</sup> The political situation in Mali has been unstable following the Tuareg separatist aborted attempt to overthrow the country’s constitutional government in March 2012. See Alexis Vines, “A Decade of African Peace and Security Architecture”, in *International Affairs*, Vol. 89, No. 1, 2013, p. 89-109.

It is not very certain whether the current African statesmen are sympathetic of NEPAD initiative. Regrettably, Thabo Mbeki, Abdoulaye Wade, Olusegun Obasanjo and Mohammed Hosni Mubarak, the initiators of NEPAD, are no longer in office as presidents<sup>9</sup>. On the other hand, Algeria's President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, the only one remaining NEPAD pillars still in power, has been preoccupied by recurrent political disorders in his country.<sup>10</sup> Worse enough, Muammar Gaddafi, the AU's renowned sponsor is no longer alive. It is sometimes tempting to believe that the foregoing leaders have moved out with 'their' NEPAD.

Furthermore, "by embracing the tenets of the neo-liberal framework" (Kotze and Steyn, 2003: 91) with the hope for sustainable development, NEPAD has probably followed the wrong path. A Kenyan politician-cum-scholar, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, cautioned about this earlier on: "... a poor man cannot negotiate equally with a man of property" (1967, 258). Consequently, NEPAD has been incapable of challenging the prevailing norms and rules within the World Trade Organization (WTO) which have long undermined Africa, and posed difficulties with trade access. Likewise, Samir Amin is correct in maintaining that underdevelopment in Africa is caused by the integration of the periphery into the world market, and is revealed by three features: "(1) unevenness of productivity as between sectors, (2) disarticulation of the economic system, and (3) domination from outside" (Amin, 1974: 15). NEPAD's wrong proposition is trying to take Africa back to the same exploitative world market in line with the Washington Consensus.

In his African "history of extraversion", Jean-Francois Bayart (2000) holds that, most of the elites (bright intellectuals) have in effect been co-opted and confined by the World Bank and IMF as they are now awarded with high salaries equal to those of international civil servants by celebrating the virtues of 'civil society' and 'good governance'. Thabo Mbeki may not be exception. Thus, with such African elite posture, the future of the continent thus remains largely open. The continent will consistently be more or less a "free rider", the majority of its people will mainly be "obliged to live from hand to mouth" (Bayart, 2000: 267). Quoting Jean-Paul Sartre in his preface to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, he asserts:

The European elite undertook to manufacture a native [African] elite. They picked out promising adolescents; they branded them, as with a red-hot iron, with the principles of Western culture; they stuffed their mouths full with high-sounding phrases, grand glutinous words that stuck to their teeth. After a short stay in the mother country [in Europe] they were sent home [back to Africa], whitewashed. These walking lies had nothing left to say to their brothers (Bayart, 2000: 264-265).

## CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATION

The African dream has remained a pipe dream for quite too long. Is NEPAD already beginning to lose momentum and interest among African analysts and, more importantly, among the African people? While hundreds of papers have been written on NEPAD, very

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<sup>9</sup> Tanzania's former President, Ben Mkapa, was also one of the staunch NEPAD initiators and supporters.

<sup>10</sup> During the commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the (OAU) in 2013, Bouteflika was hospitalized of minor paralysis in France (a symptom of dependence on foreign solutions to African health problems). The only figure that had placed value on African medical infrastructure and facilities was the late Nelson Mandela; never had he been hospitalized outside his country-South Africa-despite his recurrent health problems.

few are concerned with the implementation stages. As Taylor observes, there have been a number of African initiatives, like the African Human Rights Charter, to deal with the continent's problems. Agreements and instruments have been approved, signed and even ratified, without being used effectively to deal with wars, human rights violations, genocide, and also with prevailing underdevelopment and poverty (Taylor, 2005: 7). There is a danger that NEPAD may gradually transform itself into being little more than a series of routine meetings and celebrative gatherings that accomplish little and do not attract the attention of many.

NEPAD, like previous African development initiatives, has its shortcomings, but it also opens up new opportunities for creating a balanced relationship between the state and the market, promoting the capacity of state and civil society and increasing the autonomy of the state by combating corruption, widening democracy, and institute good governance. Theoretically NEPAD also opens doors to curbing corruption and impose economic reforms, but what is needed is political willingness and visionary leadership. Talking of economic reforms and combatting corruption, Cammack (2006: 343) puts it that African leaders instated "the reforms – on the economy and combatting corruption – that have been politically difficult".

In this regard, Africa needs to rethink how best to address the cost of attaining sustainable development. There are reasons why this issue is important. The first is that the misuse of resources limits Africa's free will to decide on the strategic, operational and tactical aspects of development that it desires to carry out. The second reason is that because of the lack of public financial accountability that results in the inability to fund such initiatives itself, Africa ends up looking for donors. The quandary with this is that dependence on extra-continental sources means that donors can effectively exercise a veto over which development programmes Africa should undertake, and in most cases their (donors) own national interests will guide their decisions. At critical moments, donors can decide on the scope of Africa's development initiative, and can manipulate the mandate of the initiative by placing terms and conditions for continued funding, or by withdrawing funding if national interests take precedence over the African development initiative. And finally, financial resources provided are not only inadequate but also lack flexibility and certainty needed to sustain development efforts.

Who should foot NEPAD bills? The question is how to mobilize internal funds for implementing *NEPAD*. The logic of political accountability should consist foremost of working towards downsizing plethoric, over-bloated and highly centralized bureaucracies that have proved economically and politically ruinous (Amuwo, 2002: 75). By so doing, Africa could free up funds for financing *NEPAD*. Overdependence on external funding for development is again and again held by African leaders to be a function of lack of resources in Africa. But is it true that Africa lacks resources? The answer to this question is 'No'. We believe that African states have plenty of resources capable of generating their own wealth, redistributing prosperity, creating employment and reducing poverty on their own. Only what is needed urgently is to reduce the cost of politics and corruption (Ake, 2001: 8).

There is also a need to reposition NEPAD from its current liberal framework to an African political economy framework. This approach addresses African problems in a way rooted in

the historical complexities of African society. It is imperative for NEPAD policy to truly address the poor Africans' problems in a way responsive to the needs and circumstances of the people. Hence, for the initiative to meaningfully address the problem of poverty, conflict and undemocratic governance, it must be a product of the people in the design and tailored to suit the plight of African poor in contrast to being a product of African elites and tailored along Western diagnostic prescription. NEPAD therefore, must be endogenous, people-centered, pro-poor, inclusive of popular participation, in a way that the poor can reproduce themselves while not injuring the chances of future generation to meet their needs (Muhibbu-Din, 2011: 7). No true democracy and development can be attained without being inclusive and participatory.

Besides, it is imperative now that incompetent leaders quit the corridors of power to pave way for dynamic and vibrant leadership. The time to live the African dream is now. African governments must concentrate on setting up infrastructure that will lift the living standards of the citizenry instead of concentrating on the so-called 'new initiative' paperwork. It is time the African dream was taken back from foreign capitals and donors and nurtured here in Africa. It is time African leaders invested in their countries instead of stashing money in their offshore bank accounts. It is high time it was legislated that Africa's looted funds be repatriated back to Africa, used for the benefit of the African people, and the assets of individuals encouraging capital flight be frozen. Let us begin to live the African dream from today.

The youths in Africa have already noticed the above discussed weaknesses, and it is likely that true African Renaissance is round the corner; it will come from the common people—the bottom-up sociopolitical movement. The movements that are on-the-go at the moment in Egypt, South Africa, Mali, the Central African Republic, Nigeria, Somalia, Uganda, Madagascar, and even Tanzania may bring about true change (African Renaissance) that is independent of the former colonial masters. What is professed here is that, there is no turning back. The recent Libyan political change is an exception as it was actually not a home-grown revolution; thus a subsequent revolution is underway, the movement of which is still precipitating.

A case in point is Nigeria's Delta State quasi-guerrilla struggle. This particular struggle is led by youth in the African sense of the word: people who have educational qualifications but who are without work ... Similar phenomena occur in Africa around mining enclaves and plantations, such as in Tanzania, where artisanal miners are at war with foreign investors who have been the main beneficiaries from the privatization of the gold and other precious germ mining sites.<sup>11</sup> The recent tragic explosions which took place in Mtwara and Lindi region in Tanzania early this year were the most appalling demonstrations of the importance of such movements.

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