CODESRIA: 30 Years of Social Research, Knowledge Production and Pan-African Networking

So, the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) is 30 years old! It feels almost unbelievable and yet it is true that the year 2003 already marks 30 years of the existence of CODESRIA, of the beginning of a journey which started with a few small, even tentative but nevertheless visionary steps and which, three decades on, has metamorphosed into one of the most important knowledge production and dissemination centres active on the African continent today. Those of us in the Secretariat who are fortunate to be in the service of the Council at this point in its history count ourselves uniquely lucky both to be part of this moment in the life of our organisation and to have the responsibility of putting together a worthy programme to celebrate the event. On behalf of the entire Secretariat of the Council, I would like to extend our felicitations to the members of CODESRIA and all those who have had occasion in the last 30 years to participate in one form or another in the scientific programmes of the organisation. Wherever you may be reading this message, I hope that you will be able to share in the spirit of joy and celebration that crowns this landmark occasion in the history of the Council even if you are unable to be with us physically in Dakar. And wherever they may be today, this 30th anniversary celebration presents an excellent opportunity for us all to recall the courage of the founders of the organisation and to salute their foresight anew. The celebration also offers us a chance to recognise the sacrifices made by the successor generation of scholars who took the baton from the founders and kept the flame of their dreams burning in various capacities as members of the institution's Executive Committee, Scientific Committee, and Secretariat leadership, and as animators of various scientific programmes.

Adebayo Olukoshi
Executive Secretary

History and context in the establishment of the CODESRIA mandate

30 years in the history of any institution is recent enough, indeed well within living memory for us to be able to recall in detail, the dreams of those who founded the Council, the challenges which they faced both in terms of obstacles that had to be surmounted and opportunities that were grasped, the teething problems that were encountered, the personal and collective sacrifices that were made to get the institution going and standing, the strategic visions that were developed to grow it into the formidable force that it has become on the African and international terrains of knowledge production, and the pains and pleasures of the early, pioneering years. And yet, 30 years are also long enough for us to attempt to tease out important stages, patterns and landmarks in the process of institution-building, and of CODESRIA's entry into an era of mature adulthood in a context where the environment of knowledge production and dissemination have undergone and continue to experience great transformations. These changes, as much to do with the macro-context of politics, the dynamics of the economy, the process of socio-cultural construction and overall framework of livelihood as with the environment of knowledge production, the governance of the higher education system and the technology of information and communication, have fed into internal institutional changes to make it possible, 30 years on, to offer a critical narrative of the CODESRIA story. (It has been proposed by the Secretariat to write such a story and the book resulting from the contributions of the authors who have been commissioned will be launched in the middle of 2004). Part of that narrative will, invariably, underscore the point that the Council is perhaps one of the greatest success stories of post-independence pan-Africanism. In this regard, there could be no better way of celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Council than by focusing the attention of African scholars in a collective reflection on the theme of Intellectuals, Nationalism and the pan-African Ideal.

When the Council was founded in 1973, just over 15 years after the proclamation by Kwame Nkrumah of the birth of a free and sovereign Ghana, the overall continental context was characterised by an admixture of the promises, potentialities, dilemmas, obstacles and difficulties of governing the structures and processes of independence. In particular, the political context that defined the African world was in the throes of rapid changes most eloquently symbolised by the rise, from the mid-1960s onwards of military and single party regimes. These changes, whose import consisted, at one level, of the narrowing of the post-independence political space in the countries that had attained their freedom from direct colonial rule, were, at another level, reflective of the gradual dissolution and dispersal of the nationalist anti-colonial alliance which fought the struggle for national liberation. The changes also embodied the impact which neo-colonial machinations had on political governance at a time when the East-West Cold War was at a new peak. Amidst these changes, contestations mushroomed in various African countries around the post-colonial social contract and the direction of the independence project. Within the framework of these contestations, the relationship between the state and the academy entered a phase of gradual deterioration which made issues of scholarly autonomy and academic freedom increasingly de rigueur in most countries. (This turn of events was certainly highly ironic given the fact that, as scholars such as Mahmood Mamdani have noted, the quintessential African university was a product of African nationalism, one of the more direct fruits of the nationalist independence project).

Although the economies of most of the countries were still generally functional and thus capable of supporting a minimum independent scholarly existence, the foundations of the crises of decline that manifested themselves with a vengeance at the beginning of the 1980s were in fact laid in the decade of the 1970s. The terrain of higher education across the continent was also itself witnessing some fairly rapid changes not just in terms of the expansion it experienced through the creation of new centres of advanced learning and research, as well as the enlargement of the existing ones, but also in terms of the continued "Africanisation" of curriculum and teaching positions, including the recruitment of lecturers and researchers from all over the continent and the African Diaspora. However, side by side with this process, the concept of the "regional" university, both de facto and de jure, serving a cluster of countries in the same regional neighbourhood also suffered a serious setback as new national institutions were created at the expense of existing joint multinational centres of training and research. The increasingly narrow, even outrightly hostile political environment, including a limiting conception and practice of the nation-building project that swept across the continent, discouraged the horizontal mobility of scholars as the 1970s progressed, further dimming the prospects for the survival of the "regional" university and serving to undermine the ideal of the university as a centre of excellence. In this connection, old forms of institutional diversity faded away, although new, if sometimes less vibrant and cosmopolitan diversities also emerged, including in institutions that were set up to be strictly "national" in composition and leadership.

European colonial rule in Africa was unique for its reluctance first to promote tertiary education on the continent and then to engage the modern educated elite as a serious social player when it eventually emerged and constituted a critical mass, opting instead to treat it with institutionalised suspicion and disdain. The international context of knowledge production was also one which reproduced aspects of the colonial logic and legacy not just by the content of knowledge that was produced about Africa and the methodology by which this was done but also by the vertical structure of power that defined the insertion of the modern African academy into the international knowledge system. The international division of labour that structured the participation of African scholarship in the global knowledge system did not allow much room for the legitimation of African perspectives; instead, it facilitated the imposition of external intellectual agendas on the continent in a process that involved African researchers virtually as manual labourers useful for the collection of raw data to be processed by others into grand theories. As part of this unwholesome division of labour, many African institutions of advanced learning and research were tied to Western centres of knowledge as appendages in a relationship that confirmed their junior partner status. Indigenous African knowledge systems and African scholarship were marginalized and the structure of scholarly mobility that existed simply reproduced and reinforced the colonial partition of the continent, the isolation of African scholars from one another, and the history and legacies of colonial domination.

This was the broad background context within which CODESRIA was established in 1973. The Council was born as a child of history, with all of the responsibilities which that carried with it from the very beginning. Inevitably, it had both to embody and reflect the values and promises of the African independence struggle and the pan-African ideal in fashioning out its mission; equally importantly, it had to respond to the challenges of valorising African scholarship and projecting the voices of African researchers. Furthermore, CODESRIA was challenged from the outset to define a role for itself in a political climate that was increasingly hostile to independent scholarship and at a time when the process of post-independence socio-economic development had started to falter. As can be expected, the context weighed heavily on the detailed specification of a mandate for the Council. As set out in its Charter, this mandate consisted of :

(i) mobilising the African social research community to undertake fundamental and policy-oriented research from a perspective which is relevant to the demands of the African people;

(ii) encouraging and supporting comparative research with a pan-African perspective that expresses the specificity of development processes in Africa;

(iii) promoting the publication and distribution of the research output of African scholars;

(iv) promoting an African network for the dissemination of information in the social sciences;

(v) promoting and defending the principle of independent thought and research and the liberty of researchers;

(vi) encouraging cooperation and collaboration between African universities and social science research and training organisations; and

(vii) promoting contacts and developing interaction between CODESRIA and similar international organisations.

An impressive record of achievement and service

In the period since its founding, especially during the 1980s and 1990s, the Council has invested itself heavily in the task of charting a course that entailed complementing the work of the universities and centres of advanced research, playing the role of a key catalyst of innovative research, helping to sustain a community of scholars united by a search for excellence and originality, contributing to the growth of a multidisciplinary and comparative research culture, nurturing the development of a younger generation of scholars, promoting an intergenerational dialogue, and supporting autonomous, national-level and continental research initiatives that either fed into the building of local or regional capacities or promoted local and regional networking among scholars drawn from different disciplines and universities/research centres. Of critical importance was the role of the Council in breaking the linguistic and geographical barriers to knowledge production in Africa, as well as overcoming the isolation of African scholars and the dispersal of their energies. The national working groups (NWGs) and multinational working groups (MWGs) which virtually became the flagship research programmes of the Council were particularly instrumental in the realisation of these goals; they also became a crucial part of an informal system of performance measurement in a rapidly growing and interconnected community of peers. Furthermore, the NWGs and MWGs were at the core of the establishment of a networked community that was conscious of the historic mission of the scholar in a setting such as that which defines the African context.

Equally critical was the early investment which was made in the establishment of a publications programme which, once it was properly set up, provided African scholars with a credible outlet for the dissemination of their research findings, including a stable of journals which continue to be circulated widely in Africa as in the rest of the world. Indeed, over the years, the publications output of the Council grew in importance, quality and range, offering voice to African scholarship in an international knowledge production system where asymmetries were getting sharper by the day and remain an important characteristic feature. Some of the publications produced in the CODESRIA Book Series or supported within the research programmes of the Council have been the winners of prestigious international awards; others have been adopted as teaching texts in several universities within and outside Africa. Because they were distributed free of charge to African university and research centre libraries, the books, monographs, scholarly journals and research reports that were produced, apart from stamping an African presence on research on and about the continent and being available in English, French and Arabic, also came to play a critical role in assuaging the worst consequences of the African book famine of the 1980s. The book famine was a direct product of the sharp decline in the funding for higher education by African governments which, faced with the most severe economic crises in the post-1945 history of the continent and a severe foreign exchange problem, not only cut back on funding to the universities and allocations for the purchase of books, but also imposed generalised austerity measures that resulted in the virtual drying up of support for research. CODESRIA's programmes, in terms of their thematic orientation, methodological innovativeness and disciplinary, linguistic, gender and generational diversity, became important outlets for the maintenance of a minimum culture of research and scholarly publishing in many parts of Africa. Indeed, the Council's research programmes and publications output developed into major sources of alternative analytic material both to a dominant and well-funded mainstream, and a growing consultancy industry that distracted the attention of an equally growing number of academics pursuing what Abdul Raufu Mustapha has described as multiple modes of livelihood.

The interventions of CODESRIA in support of research and scholarly publishing had to be sustained over the long haul because, in the framework of a continuing economic crisis and the neo-liberal onslaught of the 1980s and 1990s, African universities were exposed to systematic internal and external attacks that amounted to their being placed under a state of permanent siege. Hardest hit by this situation were younger scholars, those whom Thandika Mkandawire described in his perceptive essay on three generations of African social researchers as the third generation of academics trained entirely in Africa and coming of age at a time of decline and decay in the higher education system. Responding to the needs of this generation was to become one of the responsibilities of CODESRIA in the course of the 1980s and 1990s; the responses that were formulated set the stage for the launching of an integrated programme of training made up small grants for theses writing, an annual prize for the best theses produced in Africa, methodology training sessions, summer institutes, and short research fellowships. A text book project was also launched to respond to teaching and learning needs in the higher education system. The various initiatives that were developed for the benefit of younger researchers had the added benefit of networking the third generation of African scholars and encouraging an engaging dialogue between them and the older generations. For the more established scholars, programmes that permitted them to undertake extended periods of reflection on a particular theme were also introduced even as they were encouraged to take on mentoring roles in relation to advanced post-graduate students and mid-career researchers.

As can be expected, the relations between the African academy and the state, already under strain as the nationalist anti-colonial coalition began to unravel, and as the vision of nation-building espoused by political leaders came under increasing popular challenge, deteriorated even further in the 1980s in the environment of generalised repression that defined the management of the African economic crisis. Given the centrality of the protection and advancement of academic freedom to the CODESRIA institutional mandate, the Council developed both a programme area designed to track the state of academic freedom in Africa and a special fund to support scholars in distress, including those who are victims of political repression. But female CODESRIA members were also to observe that the representativeness of the organisation's agenda and the quest for the promotion of academic freedom could not be complete without the integration of Gender into the work programme of the Council and the pursuit of strategies for promoting the participation of more female scholars in its networks. This was without prejudice to the important role which the Council played in nurturing the Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD) in its early, formative years. The struggles for the inclusion of gender into the CODESRIA agenda represented, among others, by such prominent scholars as Rudo Gaidzanwa, Ayesha Imam, Amina Mama, Fatou Sow, Maréma Touré and Paul Zeleza succeeded in closing a missing gap in the Council's activity and institutional profile when, at the beginning of the 1990s, the process was set in motion for integrating gender, both as an analytic tool and research area, into the Council's activity profile as a core programme. Although there are still important roads to be travelled in the march to a fuller engendering of the Social Sciences and Humanities, it is certainly indicative of the substantial progress that has been made in CODESRIA that today, there has emerged a generation of younger male scholars who are as much at ease in employing gender as an analytic category as female researchers active in the domain of Gender Studies. Furthermore, the Council made history when, at its 10th General Assembly held in December 2002 in Kampala, Uganda, a leading female scholar, Zenebeworke Tadesse, was elected President of the Council along side three other female academics who were chosen to serve on the Executive Committee.

Responding to the challenges of changing context

In 2003, as CODESRIA marks 30 years of its existence, the context within which the Council is celebrating its anniversary and which will also impact on programme development in the future deserves to be reflected upon. First, it is nearly 10 years since the election of Nelson Mandela as the first President of South Africa to be freely chosen by the peoples of South Africa in a universal adult suffrage which included the participation of the black majority. Marking the formal end of Apartheid, it also symbolised the end of the long, dark history of European colonial domination in Africa. The struggle for the release of Nelson Mandela from life imprisonment and for the end of the odious system of institutionalised racism that was Apartheid

was one which united the entire CODESRIA community of scholars as did the unfinished business of national liberation in Southern Africa as a whole; ensuring the full reinsertion of the South African scientific community into the networks of African scholars is task which CODESRIA and its sister institutions are challenged to undertake, doing so with full sensitivity to historical injustices that still require to be corrected and the promise of new opportunities that could be tapped to the mutual benefit of all. The prospect of the emergence of a bright new era in African history which the end of Apartheid symbolised for many was reinforced by the emergence across the continent of popular movements for political reform, movements which crystallised in some cases into (sovereign)national (constitutional) conferences that, in most cases culminated in the demise of single party/military rule and the restoration of electoral pluralism. Furthermore, in tandem with the open agitation for political reforms, a variety of social movements, long repressed and sometimes forced to work in the underground, began once again to flourish even as civil groups of various hues came into existence. In different ways, members of the Council have been called upon by the sheer weight of the historical moment both to engage the reform process in defining their work and to orient the institution in a direction that will ensure that, in its role as a premier and pioneering African research organisation, it can continue to serve as a vehicle that is relevant to the popular aspirations for the democratic development of Africa.

But 1994 did not only mark the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as President of a liberated South Africa. It was also the year of the latest, most deadly genocide in the history of Africa, claiming the lives of about a million Rwandese. That tragic event was to pave the way for a season of great turmoil and prolonged tragedy in the Great Lakes region of Africa from which it is yet to recover. The invasion and virtual partitioning of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is perhaps one of the more dramatic outcomes of the phase of complex instability that has wracked that part of the continent. But it is also true that, in many respects, all the issues which have been joined in the Great Lakes conflict also speak to the larger political questions that have confronted Africa with a greater intensity than ever before in the period since the beginning of the 1990s. These questions, inter alia, centre around citizenship and citizenship rights; representation and participation; the state and the governance of the public arena; and the organisation of socio-economic development. They are the same questions that have been posed beyond the Great Lakes in the parts of Eastern and West Africa where conflicts have broken out, intensified or seemed intractable; they are also at the heart of the political debate in countries where various latent challenges to the post-independence nation-state project are taking place. The problems are compounded by deepening youth disaffection, diminished state capacity, the expanded boundaries of poverty and impoverishment, the continued adherence, under new guises, to orthodox, ideologically-driven macro-economic policies that simply prolong the maladjustment of African economies, and the heavy toll which the HIV/AIDS pandemic is taking in all spheres of life. In the face of these problems, members of the CODESRIA community must be at the forefront of original thinking that could provide workable frames for overcoming the difficulties that have arisen and establishing stable democratic systems for the development of Africa.

With regard to the terrain of higher education, the crises of funding and mission which set in as the 1970s wore on generally continues unabated although the World Bank may have modified its earlier position effectively calling for the abolition of the university. Where improvements have occurred, these have generally been as a result of the massive infusion of external (donor) funding. The question of the financial viability of the higher education system is, therefore, one which is still posed whether in the short or long-term. The massive expansion of student in-take in the face of an equally massive brain drain involving qualified and/or experienced staff and in the absence of a commensurate level of investment in infrastructure has meant that the public university has been put under greater pressure than it has ever known in its history. Issues of intellectual viability therefore arise also, feeding into the financial-governance ones to produce an overall picture that is still unsettling. Unable or outrightly refusing to invest in the public university, the credibility of governmental pressures for university governance reform has simply rang hollow in many countries even where there is consensus that reform needs to be undertaken. At the same time, private universities are mushrooming across the continent, many set up by Christian missionaries, others as a business proposition, a few others on a secular foundation but all posing the question of the university as a public good. The pressure on the public university has been exacerbated further by the growing trade in educational services that is developing within the ambit of the World Trade Organisation's General Agreements on Trade in Services (GATS). CODESRIA's primary constituency remains the African university and the scholars who are active within it; a key challenge for the future work plan of the Council must consist, therefore, of promoting the ideal of the university as a site of knowledge production that is anchored excellence, freedom of thought, and, ultimately, the goal of developing knowledge societies relevant to the achievement of a full, fulfilling and rounded livelihood by Africans.

Looking ahead to a future that is bright

As we enjoy the 30th anniversary celebrations and look beyond 2003 to the next anniversary landmark, out task will include a reflection on how to rise to the challenges of the future, including how to do so in a manner that will both give credit to the vision of the founders of the Council and pride to the future generations of African scholars. If for the detached Africanist, these challenges are met with a subjective, voluntaristic inclination either to choose to be "Afro-optimist" or "Afro-pessimist" according to changing personal moods, the policy whims of the new imperialism or the shifting fortunes of "area studies" in big power post-Cold War policy-making, for us in the CODESRIA community, the issues at stake cannot be framed in such simplistic terms. For, on the basis of our fundamental faith in the Africa and its peoples, our task will always consist of producing knowledge which carries transformatory meaning and benefits for the peoples of the continent. That was the most important consideration which fired the founders of the Council and, as noted in 1998 by Akilagpa Sawyerr in his address to the 9th General Assembly, they went about its realisation with the zeal of self-sacrificing visionaries; it is a consideration that remains impeccable thirty years on. We can pay the architects of the CODESRIA ideal no greater tribute than to rededicate ourselves to this most basic mission of the Council, doing so with the passion, rigour, dignity, integrity, openness and pride that is the African genius.

It is in this spirit of openness and integrity that this occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Council should also serve as an opportunity for some self-introspection and sober reflection. For while there is no doubt whatsoever that we have, as a community, achieved a great deal of which we can be fully satisfied, there are also significant aspects of our institutional experience and context which we need to remind ourselves about and face up to. I site a few of these here for our collective attention and consideration. First in this regard, is the Council's overall programme management which is in constant need of improvement in order both to be responsive to the needs of the community and effective in realising set objectives in a timely manner that is not compromising on quality. This is not an issue which is given and slippages when do they occur, as they have sometimes done, can be costly. Second, we need to be conscious today more than ever before of the fact that the community of scholars has grown in size, interests and diversity. In tandem with its growth, the community has also become more demanding of service at the highest level. For the Executive Committee and the Secretariat, what this means, among other things, is that it will no longer do simply to project commitment; rather, commitment will have to be matched with professionalism. Third, the material conditions under which scholarship is taking place remain difficult for the vast majority of African scholars and, in the context of the growth of a commercially-oriented or missionary-based system of private higher education, the emerging trade in educational services and the boom in the consultancy industry, a basis exists for the expression of serious concerns about the future of independent research on the continent. In this connection, members of the CODESRIA community would need to address themselves more and more to the challenges of creatively retrieving and preserving the integrity, professionalism and public purpose of the entire higher education system. In this struggle, three new important initiatives which the Council has taken alone or in collaboration with others will play a critical role. These initiatives are the *Journal of Higher Education in Africa,* the *Africa Review of Books,* and the Critical Encyclopaedia of African Social Sciences.

Furthermore, for all the attention which we have invested in the promotion of academic freedom, the struggle for the enthronement of respect for the liberty of the scholar remains an unfinished business; in fact, it has become even more complicated in certain respects. This is so in spite of the political reforms which have taken place in African countries in recent years, throwing up new democratic experiments which ordinarily could have been expected to be more accommodating of the liberty of the researcher. In addition to the state as a continuing source of attack on academic freedom, there are structures and processes within the academy itself which undermine scholarly independence and liberty. Among these structures and processes are: the increased cases of student campus cults that unleash pre-meditated and organised violence on teachers and fellow students alike in a flagrant attack on efforts at upholding standards, professionalism and integrity; an increasingly repressive university governance system that brooks no opposition or dissent at a time when the quest for the reform of the higher education system is on the high burner; a powerful donor-consultancy complex that has become ever more interventionist in seeking to set the research agenda and micro-manage the entire research process; a generally more pliant crop of scholars, who in the face of the precarious material conditions of the university professor, stand ready to dance to the tune of the highest bidder – whoever that bidder may be; private universities that go beyond the broad structuring of the curriculum to define the minute details of the content of what lecturers are permitted to teach; a campus hierarchical and environmental context which continues to be disadvantageous to female scholars, gender studies and younger researchers; and an overall institutional framework that is susceptible to the weaving of internal and external patron-clientelist relations in the knowledge production process. Clearly, as a community, we cannot afford to rest on our oars but must redouble our efforts personally and collectively for the protection and advancement of academic freedom in the years ahead.

If CODESRIA has been an important research catalyst over the last thirty years, playing a major role in the identification of new terrains – and it is the case that the Council has been widely acknowledged for the perceptiveness it has shown in delineating research themes – it is also true that there are many areas that remain either unexplored, insufficiently explored or in dire need of the application of social science approaches. The challenge which is posed here is clear enough and fortunately, the Council has an established history of a capacity for adaptation, flexibility and innovation to rise to the demands of any era. In the years ahead, we will need to muster that capacity afresh in order to explore new grounds, experiment with new methodological approaches, construct new conceptual tools, extend our interest in studying Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America, and incorporate the disciplines, issues, themes and communities that have so far been relatively marginal to our concerns over the last 30 years. In doing so, we will be living up to and, simultaneously, updating our responses to the demands of our Charter to promote the production of a body of knowledge that is holistic and organic to the context within which we work. Not neglecting to be thoroughly grounded in the history, philosophy and methodology of our primary disciplines, we will be required to intensify our investment in multidisciplinary work which involves an engagement with the other disciplines of the Social Sciences and the Humanities, and an intensified dialogue with the natural sciences. Tomorrow's African social research cannot content itself any longer with simply being "case study" based; it must graduate to a point where the empirical and theoretical groundings we have achieved can be translated into the production of national, regional, continental and global comparative studies that yield new, original insights. In this quest, we can refer to the life and example of some of the very best that our community has produced – our Ifi Amadiumes, Samir Amins, Paulin Hountondjis, Joseph Ki-Zerbos Archie Mafejes, Thandika Mkandawires, Mahmood Mamdanis, Ali Mazruis, Issa Shivjis, Ngugi wa Thiong'os, to cite just a few names – to draw inspiration. We look forward to welcoming many more participants in the new programmatic activities of the Council designed to promote comparative research and multidisciplinary dialogue.

Today, in 2003, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of our founding, our institution's annual budget stands at about USD8 million. Viewed in relation to the early years when the Council started out with less than USD100,000 to its credit, we have certainly come a long way. CODESRIA today has never been bigger and better endowed at any time in its history than it is today. But this success raises a number of other issues, not least among them the challenge of constantly improving and updating financial management procedures and practices of the Council

and the challenge, which has now become very urgent, of addressing our minds to the construction of the financial autonomy of the organisation. As it pertains to the former, the issues which are involved are fairly well-known as they were brought strongly to the fore by the mismanagement that characterised the period 1997 – 2000 and which resulted in a cumulative deficit that nearly brought the Council to its knees. That experience was both symptomatic and symbolic of one of the more disheartening moments in the recent history of the Council. It is fortunate that the institution was able to summon the internal energy and courage necessary to redress the situation without waiting to be prompted by the funders or anybody else. But it is also an experience that must not be allowed to repeat itself. In this connection, the professionalisation of financial management and the internal administration of the Council which was already begun will need to be carried further with dedication and determination. However, this process must also be done in a manner which ensures that the administrative logic does not overwhelm the scientific mission of the Council: better internal financial and administrative governance should at all times be oriented in the service of the programme development and delivery capacities of the Council. The community, through the General Assembly and the Executive Committee, already takes an active part in exacting accountability from the Secretariat. A redoubling of efforts in this direction can only prove healthy for the Council and this can be done without the micro-management of the Secretariat.

Regarding the challenge of building the financial autonomy of the Council, CODESRIA has been fortunate to have a core of institutional partners and funders many of which have stood by the organisation through thick and thin, and in several cases have consciously taken a long haul view of things. On this occasion of the 30th anniversary grand finale conference and celebration, I would like, on behalf of the General Assembly, the Executive Community, the Secretariat and all those who have participated in one form or the other in CODESRIA programmes, to thank these partners for their support and forbearance. In particular, I would like to single out for mention, the generous support offered by Sida/SAREC, NORAD, DANIDA, IDRC, CIDA, the United Nations family of organisations, various Dutch institutions, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, the Oxfam family of organisations, CLACSO, and, above all, the government and people of Senegal, our host country. All of these institutional, governmental, intergovernmental and funding partners have been enlightened enough to understand the importance of the integrity and autonomy of the research process and have either consciously kept a respectable distance or backed off when told that such a distance is necessary for a fruitful engagement with CODESRIA. In this sense, they are themselves visionaries who share in the CODESRIA heritage and for which we salute them. But their vision is one which must not blind the community of scholars to the importance of building an autonomous financial base for the Council. Defining strategies for grounding and diversifying the financial base of the Council so that it can be autonomous of some of the vicissitudes of the funding world and free of its financial fragilities must rank as one of the most urgent tasks of the membership. In this connection, the launching of a CODESRIA endowment fund which will take place in the course of 2004 will begin with a direct appeal to the membership to contribute to the first phase of the building of the fund.

As we celebrate 30 years of the existence of the Council, I see a future that is beautiful and bright not just for CODESRIA but also for Africa. It is a future in which, united behind a common purpose, we are all equal inheritors of a rich legacy on which the foundations of our democratic tomorrow will stand solid. Let us, therefore, celebrate this day conscious that the festival of ideas, debate, and cultural events that the Secretariat has put together for the 30th anniversary grand finale conference is but the first dance step we will be taking to that glorious dawn.

New CODESRIA Titles

COMMENT PEUT ON ETRE OPPOSANT EN AFRIQUE: POLITIQUE PARLEMENTAIRE ET POLITIQUE AUTORITAIRE

Sous la direction de Luc Sindjoun

BASOTHO AND THE MINES: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF LABOUR MIGRANCY IN LESOTHO AND SOUTH AFRICA

By Eddy Maloka