

Editorial

On CODESRIA and the African Public Sphere

December 2008 will go down in history as a month of triple significance in the life of CODESRIA: First, as the month of the Council's 12th General Assembly; second, as the month when the Council celebrated its 35th anniversary; and third, as the month marking a smooth and orderly transition between an incoming and an outgoing Executive Secretary.

From 7- 11 December, Yaounde, Cameroon, played host to over 400 participants, drawn from within and without Africa, and comprising scholars, students, donors, officials of NGOs and policymakers, to make presentations, discuss and debate around the theme 'Governing the Public Sphere in Africa'. Also visibly present at the occasion were 65 institutional partners and the deans of faculties of over 30 African universities. The choice of the General Assembly theme demonstrates not only CODESRIA's commitment to promoting critical scholarship of relevance to governance on the continent, but also the Council's mission of spearheading social research shaped and projected by an African value-added in theory and practice. Much too often, discussions of the African public sphere have tended to transpose, rather than critically engage with Eurocentric indicators *à la Jurgen Habermas*, thus failing to capture the myriad ways in which African creativity, experiences and processes have enriched the idea of the public sphere.

The General Assembly conference was thus a singular opportunity to discuss and debate competing and complementary understandings of the public sphere, drawing heavily on how Africans have, through their scholarship, literary and philosophical works theorized the public sphere. With a focus on various phenomena and aspects of social communication that ranged from rumour to political participation, through popular culture, virtual publics and public policy, *inter alia*, the presentations and discussions showed that some of Jurgen Habermas' ideas are relevant to the African context and some are not. State imposition of limits to public sphere and public space, particularly in politics, results in imaginative popular ways – using metaphor, songs, rumours, humour, irony, satire and derision to broaden and articulate political views. African writers have employed their creative literary abilities using symbolism and representation to deal with social, political and religious issues of the public sphere. While religion is said to belong to the private sphere or the sphere in-between, the religious establishment has great influence in Africa to the extent that it could draw religion in the public sphere. Public sphere could broaden from below through mobilization and pressure, especially through ICT, on those in power to give more room for it to operate for the public good.

The papers presented evidenced the wide employment of the concept of public sphere to capture the multiplicity of shared, deliberative, interlocking and contested spaces and structures that characterise the African society. They further underlined the historical specificity of the African public sphere, its vari-

ous dimensions, contradictions and transformation. Most importantly, they reinforced the appropriateness of CODESRIA's emphasis on the marshalling of multi-disciplinary insights, as the key to rescuing the study of Africa from faulty analogies drawn from a narrow reading of the history of Europe and the United States. The innovative work presented showed that much has been done, and continues to be done, by Africans to build concepts, theories and methods that capture the general and specific attributes of the African public sphere as it has evolved over time.

Through the presentations and discussions, participants had occasion to revisit various debates on democracy and development, and especially as these relate to the question of citizenship in Africa and globally. The need for a state that is both democratic and developmental, as the best guarantor of citizenship and its entitlements, has always been at the heart of CODESRIA's critical distance vis-à-vis the neo-liberal market philosophy and assumptions. The need for a judicious balance between individual agency and collective aspirations, and between the state and the market (for long underplayed by market fundamentalism) is now back on the agenda, even at the centre of neo-liberalism where the current global financial crisis has forced the governments of the United States and Europe to seek a greater regulatory role and involvement for the state beyond merely guaranteeing a conducive environment for greed as creed. CODESRIA's achievements in critical scholarship notwithstanding, the need for CODESRIA to continue research on the political experiences of African countries, in relation to the public sphere, cannot be over-emphasised. Equally, CODESRIA must not relent in challenging the marginalisation of African and other non-western scholarship in Africa and globally, and in daring the African social research community to do research and project scholarship that questions prevalent afro-pessimism beyond rhetoric. While it is critical for us to marry scientific enquiry with social and political action, the case for Africa's contribution to global knowledge production and consumption is best made by quality science.

CODESRIA's mission has been, and still remains, to challenge a global disequilibrium in knowledge production and consumption where it is commonplace for Africa to occupy the margins even in matters that are African. Its call for a new politics in this regard, one that privileges the African value-added in theory and practice was central to Adebayo Olukoshi's eight years of stewardship as the Executive Secretary of the Council. Adebayo Olukoshi is largely credited with turning CODESRIA around from the serious financial, administrative and reputation crises in which he found the Council when he took over as Executive Secretary in February 2001. His contributions ranged from his steering it from the serious crises he found it in to a vibrant, strong and multi-generational institution, to reactivating partnerships across the Global South and ensuring that the Council

occupies its rightful place in international scholarly organisations such as the International Social Science Council. The General Assembly acknowledged his unique leadership qualities and his initiatives in institution building, which were manifested in maintaining a strong, dynamic and united secretariat; integrating young researchers into CODESRIA's programmes, activities and membership, and establishing links between the different generations of African scholars. These clearly marked him out as an unparalleled and remarkable Pan-Africanist whose vision, thoughts, deeds, public relations and solid achievements spoke for themselves.

In his farewell address titled 'Thus Far We Have Come', Adebayo Olukoshi explained how his childhood and background had prepared him for the job of CODESRIA's Executive Secretary. If he had successfully steered the ship of the Council for eight challenging years, it was largely thanks to the socio-political circumstances in which he had grown, studied, acted in student movements, lived and worked. Notable among these was the radically Pan-African Ahmadu Bello University where he did his undergraduate studies, its Pan-Africanist staff and the student movements in which he engaged repressive forces. Others included his activism during his student days in Britain and the persistent, endemic insecurity from the incessant and notorious coups in Nigeria that precluded free and independent intellectual work. Running a programme on the Social and Political Contexts of Structural Adjustment as a Senior Fellow of the Nordic Africa Institute in Sweden, and being the director of the Africa Programme of the South Centre in Geneva also turned out to be valuable experiences. These were instrumental to the development of his Pan-Africanist vision, which proved vital when he became the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA. Turning CODESRIA around has included raising the level of resilience and inclusiveness of the Council; that has witnessed greater respect for CODESRIA Charter's commitment to fair and balanced representation along gender, regional, linguistic, disciplinary and generational lines.

If CODESRIA has come thus far, it is also thanks to the hard work and sacrifices of hundreds of people, who, over the years, worked tirelessly to set it up, nurture, protect and promote it in many different ways. Olukoshi was the fifth executive secretary of CODESRIA, after Samir Amin, Abdallah Bujra, Thandika Mkandawire, and Achille Mbembe. He worked with executive committees led by Mahmood Mamdani, Zenebewerke Tadesse, and Teresa Cruz e Silva, and the extremely dedicated staff of the CODESRIA Secretariat. Many other great African scholars have worked hard towards making CODESRIA what it has become. They include Claude Ake, Archie Mafeje, Joseph Ki-Zerbo, CSL Chachage, Haroub Othman, Memel Fote, Guy Mhone, Aron Gana, Semou Pathe Gueye and Tajudeen AbdulRaheem, all of late, and many other giants of the African social research community. Among those who are still fighting the cause of science and of Africa are people like Jacques Kazadi, Amady Aly Dieng, Taladidia Thiombiano, Akilagpa Sawyerr, Bernard Founou, Maktarr Diouf, Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, Amina Mama, Ayesha Imam, Wamba Dia Wamba, Tade Aina, Mamadou Diouf, Fatou Sow, Carlos Lopez, Momar Coumba Diop, Boubacarr Barry, Abdoulaye Bathily, Maréma Touré, Paul Tiyanbe Zeleza, Kwesi Prah, Bernard Magubane, Iba Der Thiam and Eboe Hutchful. These are just indicative. The list is long.

It is also important to acknowledge the key roles that CODESRIA's many friends have played in the recent history of the Council. , Among those whose names must be mentioned are:

Berit Olsson (former director of Sida/SAREC), Lennart Wohlgemuth (former director of the Nordic Africa Institute, NAI), Bjorn Beckman (Stockholm University), Reydon Sandvold (NORAD), Akwasi Aidoo (TrustAfrica), Joyce Moock (formerly of Rockefeller Foundation), Jomo Kwame Sundaram (UN DESA & the University of Malaysia), Leo de Haan (African Studies Centre, Leiden), the late Geerti Hessling (African Studies Centre, Leiden), Carin Norberg (Director of NAI), Katri Pohjolainen Yap (Sida/SAREC), Tekalign Godana (Sida/SAREC), Carl Gustav Gutberg (Enst & Young, Stockholm), Nana Tanko (OSIWA), Hari Singh (Asian Political and International Studies Association), Atilio Boron (CLACSO), Richard Joseph (Northwestern University), and Emir Sader (CLACSO).

The years ahead will be marked by 'Continuity', and 'Change'. CODESRIA's main mandate is to promote high quality social science research in Africa. The creative interpretation of this mandate led the Council to prioritise basic research, defend and promote academic freedom and, more generally, the independence of thought, provide publishing outlets, disseminate the results of research, and participate in the search for appropriate ways of addressing the major challenges facing Africa. In fulfilling that mandate, CODESRIA will continue to seek to work in harmony with, and complement the work of African universities, and the diverse range of knowledge producing institutions on the continent. Existing programmes will be improved and new ones developed in order to continue to address the challenges and concerns of the different generations of scholars.

The Council also needs to preserve and strengthen the traditions of openness, transparency, accountability, and integrity in administrative and scholarly work, and as well as heighten the degree of professionalism of staff.

The broad intellectual agenda of the Council for the next three years has already been laid out in the Strategic Plan for 2007-2011, under the umbrella theme: *"Re-thinking development and Reviving Development Thinking in Africa"*. The major challenge facing Africa, CODESRIA and the social sciences in Africa is the challenge of autonomy. African scholarship is competitive globally, and CODESRIA is proud to have contributed to the growing number of global scholars emanating from our community. However, there is always need to do more and better; we must create the conditions for more Samir Amins, and Mahmood Mamdanis, and Ali El-Kenzs, Amina Mamas, Ifi Amadiumes and Thandika Mkandawires to emerge and excel.

We need to reflect on the global crisis and the ongoing transformations at the global, regional and national levels. We need to reflect as well as on the economic and governance crises and widespread violence in Africa, and explore ways of re-inventing social bonds, as we seek to build an Africa of emancipated, fulfilled and respected citizens. This means researching issues such as the public sphere and its structural transformation, citizenship, regional integration and other critical issues of scholarly and policy relevance. We should encourage both the conduct of extensive field work and longitudinal studies, and theory building.

In this age of globalisation, African scholars ought to be studying other regions of the world, and the experiences of other countries and peoples outside of Africa, much more than we currently do. We know very little about Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the industrialized countries. We ought to know the Scandinavian experience better, given our partnership in the interest of knowledge production in and on Africa. Therefore we must develop research programmes, and encourage the opening of research centres specializing in the study of the other regions of the world; in the globalised world we live in, we shouldn't expect others to tell us what we need to know about the world around us in order to promote the interest and welfare of Africa. Part of the work we ought to be doing will also have to include prospective thinking.

We should seek to enhance not only the visibility of African research, but also the legitimacy of African scholarly voices: we often say that we were right in our all round critique of structural adjustment, decades before the World Bank came round to admit that SAP was a failure, and to underscore the importance of politics and governance, but nobody bothered to listen to what African scholars had to say about those issues, or read their works. Part of the explanation lies in the unequal global power relations that Africa is trapped in. The transformation of those relations has been a key concern for our community that the Council must continue to address.

The tasks that lie ahead also include the need to increase the membership of CODESRIA; there is room for both the institutional and the individual membership to expand far beyond what it currently is.

Last, but not least, as we celebrate the 35th anniversary of CODESRIA we should also remember that the times ahead are full of challenges. We are yet to understand the full implications of the recent global financial crisis for Africa, and for research funding in Africa. There are also many changes in the world of donors. The need to secure the funding base of the Council is therefore perhaps more pressing today than it has ever been. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the 12th General Assembly endorsed the Board of Trustees of the CODESRIA Endowment Fund, with Thandika Mkandawire as the Chair. Over the coming years, a vigorous fundraising campaign will be launched to consolidate the Fund.

These were some of the tasks ahead for the Council outlined by the new CODESRIA President, Professor Sam Moyo. Some of these tasks are from the General Assembly, such as the need for

improving communication and other systems, consolidating and streamlining existing programmes, thinking about new initiatives and strategic plans, involving and broadening members' participation, interpreting goings-on in Africa and mapping out where the future. The President decried how African countries had not been living on the big issues. Other tasks of the Executive Committee would, according to him, involve ensuring sustainability through the Endowment Fund and continuity of CODESRIA activities, allocation of resources, mobilisation of researchers and guaranteeing an accountable CODESRIA financially, administratively and intellectually. He reaffirmed before the General Assembly that the incoming Executive Committee and the new Executive Secretary are both very energetic and highly committed to serve, promote and protect CODESRIA.

New Executive Committee

- **Professor Sam Moyo** (President)
(African Institute of Agrarian Studies, Harare, Zimbabwe)
- **Professor Fatima Harrak** (Vice-President) -
(Institut des Etudes Africaines, Rabat, Morocco)
- **Dr. Shahida El Baz**
(Independent Consultant, Giza, Egypt)
- **Professor Kofi Anyidoho** -
(University of Ghana Legon, Accra, Ghana)
- **Professor Idrissa Kimba**
(University Abou Moumouni, Niamey, Niger)
- **Dr. Gerard Tchouassi**
(University of Yaounde II, Yaoundé, Cameroun)
- **Professor Noel Obotela Rachidi**
(Université de Kinshasa – Republic Democracy of Congo)
- **Dr Onalenna Selolwane**
(University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana)
- **Dr. Godwin Murunga**
(Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya)
- **Professor FEMK Senkoro**
(University of Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania)
- **Dr. Ebrima Sall,**
Executive Secretary

Ebrima Sall
Executive Secretary

Francis B. Nyamnjoh
Head of Publications



Family photo of New Executive Committee



New President of CODESRIA



New Executive Secretary

Farewell Message to Adebayo Olukoshi and a Word of Welcome to Ebrima Sall

When a house-builder has the task to construct a well-built house, he knows that the starting point is the foundation, which should be firm enough to withstand the full weight of the walls and the ceiling that such a building is supposed to support.

A historian, a sociologist or any other social scientist can begin his case study analysis by the present, go to the past and return to the present to state his/her thesis, or simply respect the chronological order - starting from the past to the present - depending on his/her research design and the way he/she would like to state or defend his/her main thesis.

However, a farewell message dedicated to a colleague, that is also a friend and with whom we shared joys and difficulties - although being an analysis or an evaluation of his work but at the same time being also a way to express our feelings such as friendship and gratitude - seems to me more difficult to express in written or spoken words. Where to place the starting point or what to say when words are not always good enough to express sentiments, and sometimes are even less strong than a gesture or even a simple smile?

As Habermas said when he was invited to speak about his biographical roots and motifs to his thought¹, "the written form disguises the stigma of the spoken". In the impossibility to be physically present today in this ceremony that celebrates Adebayo Olukoshi, the outgoing Executive Secretary of CODESRIA known fondly as 'Bayo', I will use this advantage and the recourse to the written word to express myself without compulsion and the 'inquisitive' vigilance of the public.

During the 12th General Assembly held in Kampala, Mohamood Mamdani, directing his words to Bayo's work as Executive Secretary, even if he used other words than mine, spoke of the Executive Secretary as being the 'soul' of CODESRIA, without of course ignoring the role of the organs of CODESRIA. In other words, he runs the day-to-day af-

Teresa Cruz e Silva,
President of CODESRIA
(2005-2008)

fairs of the institution and not only negotiates but above all guarantees the 'wellbeing' of the Council.

Adebayo Olukoshi assumed the leadership of the Executive Secretariat of CODESRIA in February 2000 under a situation of crisis, and leaves CODESRIA on March 31st 2009 in a stable situation. The crises that affected CODESRIA during his first mandate as Executive Secretary, was witnessed by some of the invitees and CODESRIA staff present in this ceremony, such as the current President Professor Sam Moyo - who happened to be the Vice-President of the Council when Bayo was appointed Executive Secretary, and Dr Ebrima Sall, who takes over from Bayo as the new Executive Secretary. Under Adebayo Olukoshi's mandate - and thanks to his ability, hard work and special sense of diplomacy to manage public relations with the donor community - the Council overcame a difficult financial situation and re-established the confidence of our partners, while maintaining at the same time the independence vital for its mission and role as pan-African facilitator of knowledge production by social researchers. For the very first time in the history of CODESRIA, an Executive Secretary finishes his mandate with no sign of crisis. We owe this stability to an enormous number of committed people, but above all we owe it in particular to the outstanding commitment of Adebayo Olukoshi, Executive Secretary of CODESRIA for the past 8 years.

In the course of his mandate, Bayo worked with three different Presidents and Vice-Presidents, and made a short transition to the fourth Presidency, meaning certainly also three to nearly four different characters, and different experiences and ways of thinking and working. Once again, Bayo had the ability to shift amongst the three to nearly four forms of

leadership and patiently, to deal with members of the Executive Committees, with maturity and wisdom. During Bayo's mandate all members witnessed the growth of the Executive Secretariat, in numbers, quality, gender, age and regional inclusiveness.

The membership of CODESRIA means a commitment with the principles of the CODESRIA Charter, and a commitment to the African academic community. To be a senior staff of CODESRIA means all the above-mentioned obligations, plus a leadership profile, added by the personal characteristics each one of us uses to work, communicate and build a team. More than commitment and leadership capacities, the post of Executive Secretary means also and above all, should involve a strong dedication, loyalty and a high sense of responsibility.

As Executive Secretary, Bayo also used his easy way to communicate and his human sensibilities, flavoured with a strong proportion of passion and commitment, to direct the Council's destiny. Let me borrow from his own words summing up his trajectory within CODESRIA, to say Bayo is a 'child of CODESRIA', whose dedication has generated and propelled his passion to contribute his modest best to the edification of CODESRIA. I can still hear Bayo's voice, in the course of our working closely together over the thick and thin of the past six years, reaffirming something similar to the following words: 'People can hurt me, touching some points of my professional life. It's not easy to accept and I will do something to revert the situation. But do not touch CODESRIA! Regarding this point, I can be very hard and implacable to defend the institution!!!'

Bayo is also a man, and a human being. All of us had a chance, more than once, to witness his human sensibility to approach members of his staff with a familiar problem, or facing any kind of difficult situation in his/her private life. All of us had also many opportunities to witness his human face, particularly in special occasions where we had to share joys or

moments of affliction and loss of members that are by themselves the history of CODESRIA. And all of us certainly experienced the way he seduced us with his smile while persuading us to give a bit more of ourselves, or simply to calm us at difficult moments, or transmitting a sense of confidence.

It is clearly not my intention to undertake an assessment of Bayo's work. This occasion is reserved for paying tribute and expressing my gratitude to what he has achieved for CODESRIA. Even then, I cannot avoid underlining how difficult it is to measure Bayo's qualities in words or even numbers, due to the incalculable value of his work and dedication to the growth of the Council and the African research community.

I served the Executive Committee of CODESRIA during six consecutive years, three of them in the Presidency, while Bayo was the Executive Secretary. I want to thank you Bayo, not only for your outstanding commitment during this period, but also for your advice, support and friendship, as well as for the way we walked side by side in the interest of CODESRIA. As your 'compagnons de route', I am proud of the understanding we built together, to overcome the daily challenges of being in charge of the destiny of CODESRIA.

Dear Bayo, even when the 'written form disguises the stigma of the spoken' and allow 'the better argument to win the day', to quote Habermas once more (as the written word is clearly always short and limited to express sentiments such as friendship), let's just say as many times as we can, 'Thank you very much indeed, Bayo'.

Now permit me to turn my attention to Huseina, your dear wife and mother of your beautiful daughter and lovely son.

Huseina, I also have a word of thanks for you, for the understanding and support you gave Bayo during his eight long years of total commitment as Executive Secretary of CODESRIA. Words are all we've got, so allow me to say: Many thanks for the many hours where you had to play the role of mother and father, while your husband was away from the family intimacy you and your children provide, working for CODESRIA. My gratitude goes also to your two children. And with these simple words, full with friendship, allow me to send you and your children, my sisterly embrace and the best of wishes.

To finish, I would like to address a short message to Ebrima Sall.

In doing so, I would like to say the problem one faces in saying farewell is similar to that which you face when you have to welcome a colleague that is also a friend,

especially one who comes from within the ranks of (CODESRIA), and has shared with you and colleagues over the years the day-to-day mission of managing the affairs of CODESRIA, an institution he knows better than most of us here present.

During the last six years I spent as an Executive Committee member, I had a chance to know Ebrima better, whom I met for the first time, if I'm not wrong, during the 90's. I have to pay my respect to his qualities, particularly his commitment, professional honesty, and profound loyalty to CODESRIA. Ebrima is also to me one of the most important pieces of the memory of the institution during the last ten years. Above all, Ebrima is a friend for whom I owe my esteem. His profile and qualities gave all of us a vote of confidence in his leadership of the CODESRIA secretariat as the next Executive Secretary. Ebrima, let me welcome you as Executive Secretary of CODESRIA and wish you abundant success in your new position. You can count on my total support to your work, anytime!

Although this is your day, Bayo, my fraternal embrace goes for both of you, Bayo and Ebrima

Notes

1. Jur gen Habermas Public Space and Political Public Sphere-the biographical roots of two motifs in my thought, Commemorative Lecture, Kyoto Nov 11, 2004.



Africa Development (ISSN 0850 3907) is the quarterly bilingual journal of CODESRIA published since 1976. It is a social science journal whose major focus is on issues which are central to the development of society. Its principal objective is to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas among African scholars from a variety of intellectual persuasions and various disciplines. The journal also encourages other contributors

working on Africa or those undertaking comparative analysis of developing world issues.

Africa Development welcomes contributions which cut across disciplinary boundaries. Articles with a narrow focus and incomprehensible to people outside their discipline are unlikely to be accepted.

The journal is abstracted in the following indexes: *International Bibliography of Social Sciences*, *International African Bibliography*; *African Studies Abstracts*, *Abstracts on Rural Development in the Tropics*; *Documentation en Afrique*; *A Current Bibliography on African Affairs*.

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Acceptance Statement

I would like once more to thank all those represented at the 12th General Assembly of CODESRIA held in Yaounde, for placing the confidence in me by electing me the new President of CODESRIA for the coming three years. Having been involved with CODESRIA over the last 30 years I am extremely honoured to be able to serve CODESRIA in its support to the various generations of African scholarship in the social sciences. I will always remember that it was through the CODESRIA that some of us were first able to publish an article, under the mentorship of its then leadership, and drawing inspiration from the vitality of the emerging and growing community of African scholarship. I am gratified that many of our senior scholars are here to witness the broader base of younger scholarship that has evolved from their vision of establishing CODESRIA.

We are proud that CODESRIA has sustained itself over the decades, through successive executive leaderships. In particular, I want to reiterate my personal gratitude, as well on behalf of the General Assembly, to the out-going Executive Secretary, Prof. Adebayo Olukushi for his sterling work and dedication to CODESRIA, over the last eight years. His was a complex challenge, at times highly conflicted, of managing the most recent leadership and organisational transition that CODESRIA has undergone. For, it was not too long ago that the institution faced the threat of division and loss of direction or even collapse!! We recognise his efforts towards resuscitating the CODESRIA Secretariat's tireless service to African scholars whose vision remains to sustain a flourishing social science intellectual community, and to develop effective systems of promoting knowledge production and dissemination on the continent.

I wish also to congratulate the other 9 scholars who were elected, from Africa's 5 regions, to the present Executive Committee of CODESRIA. We thank them all for accepting the onerous but honourable task of serving the social science community for next 3 years. Together, the new Executive Committee is committed to fulfil their primary responsibility of overseeing the effective implementation of CODESRIA programmes within the frame-

Sam Moyo
Incomming President of CODESRIA
(December 2008–)

work of the CODESRIA Charter, policies and procedures. Indeed, it has been emphasized here that we will need to strengthen the accountability of CODESRIA, not only in terms of the use of its resources, but also in terms of improving its inclusiveness, reporting to and communication with the membership, as well as by mobilising wider participation in a broader range of programmes. Fortunately, this specific task, as pronounced here by participants at this General Assembly, of consolidating the new de-established governance system, while refining and streamlining the scope and quality of the planned programmes has been underway for a few years.

It will however be important in pursuing this task to adapt to the emerging dynamic context of change. First, there is growing interest in the work of and knowledge produced through CODESRIA by a broader base of African scholars and civil society activists, as well as by some governments and Pan Africa institutions. Second, there is greater attention being paid to the social science research and publications emerging from Africa, among scholars and analysts outside of Africa, particularly in the 'west', and more recently in the 'south' and 'east'. These tendencies place greater demands on CODESRIA to promote the capacity of African scholars not only to meet by the adequate (quantitatively and qualitatively) needs of these constituencies, within a focus and direction led by the African scholarship, but also to consolidate the critical African perspectives, within the wider hegemonic world of knowledge production.

Third, the material and social circumstances which we live in have in the last few years been changing dramatically. The unfolding financial and economic crises, following on the back of the earlier food and energy crises, within the context of relentless wars and conflict, are rapidly undermining the social and political conditions of Africa's growing poor. Indeed, the structural changes and the

reconfiguration of state and international poor relations which are underway, are so significant that the very premises of knowledge making and the nature of knowledge required by African societies and the rest of the world, have a *per force* to be adapted. This will require that CODESRIA revisits most of the dominant conceptual frameworks and epistemological perspectives, as well as the phenomena or issues, that it has focused on over the last 15 years, and lead the production of alternative knowledge. Thus, as we redefine and streamline the existing intellectual agenda and programmes, CODESRIA needs to innovate.

Therefore, the second major task of the Executive Committee and Executive Secretariat is to design new programmes that can consolidate CODESRIA's position within the social science community and in society. Various speakers at the 12th General Assembly suggested a range of initiatives which CODESRIA could pursue in response to the above changing context, and create the basis for future work. One is that CODESRIA may need to ensure that African scholars are at the centre of articulating the nature of the current world economic crisis and its configuration in Africa and, lead the intellectual redefinition and of the developmental agenda and social adaptations required to withstand the crisis, in order to sustainably reproduce African society in the world context. Related to this, CODESRIA may need to more innovatively address the perennial specific socio-economic problems which affect Africa. A case in point is the need to resolve Africa's agrarian questions, *vis-à-vis* various models of agrarian change, which have recently been placed on the agenda by external actors. In particular, the African food issue, within the fragile context of a deficient world food production, trade and energy system, and the threat of climate change, requires our attention, as do other specific issues.

Furthermore, it has been argued here that African social scientists will need to create adequate fora through which to lead the debates a variety of these 'ground' themes. Another pressing issue for instance is promoting an understanding of the nature and sources of the con-

flicts faced by the continent, as well as the strategies required to manage these. The idea of regional integration, including the experiences of Pan Africanism and sub-regional economic cooperation, as vehicles for moving the continent out of poverty and under-development, as well to influence politics at the world stage, also need to be thoroughly re-examined by scholars and debated in position.

CODESRIA on the one hand faces the challenges of facilitating and grooming young social science scholars and of nurturing change within the academe, while promoting the rebuilding of the appropriate institutions responsible for university training and basic research. On the other hand, CODESRIA needs to mobilise the whole range of scholars (from the first to the latest generations) to engage at the world stage in debates on the major social and political issues facing the continent. This requires promoting more rigorous research and the more effective

organisation of the sound knowledge which is being accumulated on and about the continent.

A critical dimension of such innovation will be to find more effective and flexible tools, which can be used to attract and mobilise a wider range of middle to senior African scholars on the continent, as well as abroad, to play a more meaningful role in the execution of CODESRIA's wider mission. All of this will mean deepening the CODESRIA membership, reforming or refining existing tools and widening the instruments used to implement the programmes.

In addition the Executive Committee and membership of CODESRIA will need to intensify their support to the Secretariat's efforts to create a stronger basis for the institutions financial and organisational sustainability. This will include strengthening the Endowment or Development Fund of CODESRIA on the one hand. On

the other hand it requires serious efforts to re-invigorate CODESRIA's relationships with relevant African institutions, particularly through initiatives which contribute to promoting the rebuilding of the capacities of African universities and related research initiatives. Altogether, the consolidation of CODESRIA as an institution is necessary not only to ensure its continued relevance and sustainability, but also to engender the creation of strong and independent African voice.

In conclusion, I wish to commend CODESRIA's search process for its appointment of Dr Ebrima Sall as the incoming Executive Secretary. I can not think of a more suitable person for this job, in terms of commitment, diligence and dedication to the ideals of CODESRIA. As a deep repository of the CODESRIA experience and institutional memory the efforts of the Executive Committee in support of the Secretariat can be expected to be less daunting.

Governing the African Public Sphere: A Synthesis of Scientific Sessions¹ of the 12th CODESRIA General Assembly

The 12th General Assembly (third in the new millennium, after Kampala, 2003 and Maputo, 2005) of the Council for the Development of Social Sciences in Africa (CODESRIA) was held in Yaoundé, Cameroun between 7th and 11th December, 2008 under the theme *Governing the African Public Sphere*. CODESRIA's General Assembly has the established reputation of being the largest and most respected meeting of researchers and experts in the social sciences in Africa and the Diaspora. The 12th General Assembly was unique in a number of ways: it had in attendance the largest number of the Council's institutional partners.² It also was a display of the commitment of the Council to multi-disciplinary research, as 40 percent of the papers presented were from the humanities. More importantly, the 12th General Assembly served as the occasion for the completion of the transition in the leadership of the Council's secretariat - from the outgoing Executive Secretary, Professor Adebayo

Abdon Sofounou &
Omobolaji O. Olarinmoye
CODESRIA

Olukoshi, to the incoming Executive Secretary, Dr Ebrima Sall.

The choice of the theme, *Governing the African Public Sphere*, as pointed out by the outgoing Executive Secretary, was motivated by the strong conviction of the Executive Committee of CODESRIA that 'for Africa to have hope, it was necessary to interrogate the concept of the public sphere with its various spaces, which have implications for good governance'. The scientific proceedings of the General Assembly took place in plenary and parallel sessions. The 7 plenary sessions³ were forums for communal (multi-disciplinary) reflection on the theoretical foundations of the key aspects of the theme of the General Assembly which were further elaborated and debated under differ-

ent sub-themes during the parallel sessions.⁴

Plenary Sessions of the Public Sphere, Governance and Democratisation⁵

How does one construct a democratic public sphere in Africa when all the rules of the democratic game are continually grossly violated? How does one reinforce democracy in Africa beyond the holding of elections, and how can African societies achieve development? What is the utility and pertinence of the public sphere? The application of the theory of Habermas to questions of corruption, identity and public administration has its limits as shown by the Nigerian and South African cases. The habermasian conception of the public sphere, due to its exclusive nature which does not take into consideration certain realities like traditional rulership, the ancestors and religion, and so constitutes a limitation to the advancement of theorisation of Afri-

can reality. An understanding of the public space therefore demands an analysis that is anti-hegemonic in nature, that will take into account - within the context of wider public debate - the role of institutions like a strong civil society and activist non-governmental organisations in ensuring public debate about and in the public sphere.

Governance and Governability (Leopold Sedar Senghor Lecture)⁶

The Guest Speaker, Prof El-Kenz anchored his discussion of governance and governability on a critique of the habermasian conception of the public sphere and an examination of the role of communications in human organisations. For the Senghor lecturer, the public sphere is the space where different dynamics play out. It is therefore not the state whose dynamics are distinct from that of public sphere and which has a different implication for the issues of governance and governability. Concerning the public sphere, it was important to emphasise the fact that every society had a different dynamic. Furthermore, the public sphere can be found in various areas of human interaction in society, a situation that the term 'sphere' cannot adequately capture, as it refers to something that is physical. The public sphere, as the arena where different dynamics are played out, underlies the importance of communication in public governance and the importance of the public sphere for ensuring good governance. The lecturer argued that the stability of the Senegalese state can be traced to the harmony that existed in the public sphere, where the freedom of expression allowed the Muslim brotherhoods have ensured religious and political harmony that has become the characteristic of the Senegalese governance regime. The points raised by Prof El-Kenz on the nature of the public sphere and the importance of communications were to be reiterated by most paper presenters throughout the course of the General Assembly.

The Special Guest Lecture: The Popular Arts and Culture in the Texture of the Public Sphere in Africa⁷

The importance of communication in public governance was underscored by the special guest lecturer, Tsitsi Dangarembga, who argued that the promise of the public sphere as facilitator of

free expression of views and as the site for debate on issues of common interest can only be realised if its creation is anchored on African culture, group solidarity, family values, popular culture and cultural identity. In other words, Africa can succeed in establishing its own proper democratic culture only if the answers to questions such as what is Democracy, what type of Democracy is been referred to: that defined by the West or by Africans?. Who owns Democracy? are located in African cultural values, and not the capitalist based values of the West.

Intellectuals and the Public Sphere⁸

As should be expected of a gathering of academics, the debate session on The Intellectuals and the Public Sphere received special attention. The key result of the presentations and debate was that, in the light of an African public sphere subjugated by the state, the University appears to be an essential agency for the realization of the national project. But in the light of the anti-democratic comportment of academics in positions of power, the ability of academics and universities in Africa to be defenders of public interest was very much in doubt.

Identity Discourse and Xenophobic Reaction in the Public Sphere⁹

Papers on the theme Identity Discourse and Xenophobic Reaction in the Public Sphere sought to establish the intimate relationship between violence and immigration and public discourse in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Discussions centred on the suitability of the concept of xenophobia in a situation where the different actors involved in a conflict are of the same race. For some, negrophobia (rather than xenophobia) best described the South African case while xenophobia (rather than nativism) was more appropriate for the Zimbabwe situation because it involved two different races. To view the Zimbabwe situation through the prism of nativism would mean mistaking anti-colonialism for nationalism. So, what is the relationship between Nativism and Democracy?

The Cheikh Anta Diop Lecture: Public Sphere in Latin America¹⁰

In the light of criticism of the insensitivity of the Habermas concept of the public sphere to the reality of African and devel-

oping societies' politico-social and economic realities, of Atilo Boron's presentation provided the opportunity to examine the concept of the public sphere from a South-South perspective. For Boron, the picture presented by the public sphere in Latin America is a deceptive one as, despite seemingly free and fair elections, democratic governance is still not assured, since the people are not the real sources of power in Latin America. In other words, the public sphere is not owned by the people as it is dominated by powerful economic agents, the Trans-national Economic Corporations (TNC) which control the state executive. The anti-democratic nature of the public sphere in Latin America is linked to the fact that democracy in Latin America was not internally generated, did not arise from demands from the public sphere, but arrived as part of the neo-liberal Structural Adjustment programmes that transformed citizens' rights (education, free health, etc.) into commodities.

The Claude Ake Lecture: The Public, the Private and the Social Role of Higher Education Institutions in Africa¹¹

The importance accorded the role of intellectuals in the governing of the African public sphere was further emphasised by the Claude Ake lecturer - NAME - who focused her attention on the identification of the key factors that have structured and conditioned the role of the intellectual and universities in the African public sphere.. For her, the essential questions were: Are African universities sufficiently prepared to engage the challenges facing the continent? Are academics capable of establishing and sustaining a democratic governance of the public sphere? How can the legitimacy of the state in Africa lost, in the wake of the successive political crises and upheaval the African continent has known in the last two decades, be restored? The conclusion is that, in the light of the debatable legitimacy of the public university in Africa, induced by the SAP programme and the transformation of the academic into a consultant for international organisations, the intellectual in Africa is poorly equipped to engage in the rigorous research and debate necessary for the erection and entrenchment of a democratic public sphere in Africa.

Governing the Public Realm for State and Nation-Building¹²

One of the principal preoccupations of the post-colonial state in Africa is nation-building. It is also one that has proved most difficult to achieve despite concerted efforts by the state through programmes like Federal Character in Nigeria, 'Week of National Forecast' in Kenya, and the issuing of stamps. The failure of nation-building can be traced to the political manipulations of ethnic identity and the over centralisation of access to political and economic resources of the state. The public sphere is presented as the most effective agent of nation-building, given the fact that it is an arena for debate and contestation, the very processes necessary for the reconciliation of particularistic interests and generation of democratic ethos that underpin nation-building.

Parallel Sessions

The Media in the African Public Sphere¹³

Of key interest to the papers on the Media in the African Public Space was the issue of liberty of expression. The papers all agreed that the media was simultaneously the source of hope and despair for Africans; and that for a true African public sphere to emerge, a re-definition of the role of the media that took into consideration the social and cultural realities of the peoples of Africa had to be undertaken. Such re-definition also had to engage primarily with the extremely precarious nature of press freedom in Africa. The multiplicity of the press, it was noted, does not mean or translate into press freedom, nor was democracy. What mattered was the content of media and the uses to which such was deployed. Similarly, the question of press freedom required an interrogation of the nature, content and limits of press freedom. Does the press have the right to cover all facets of the lives of public officials (their state of health, property, family life, sexual preferences, etc). Is the public official entitled to a private life? Is Africa ready to assume the full responsibilities and implications of total press freedom? Is the press capable of self-regulation? Can self-regulation be envisaged in Africa?

Artistic Expressions, Orature and Culture in the Texture of the Public Sphere¹⁴

Following TSITSI Dangaremba, the papers in the panels on Artistic Expressions, Orature and Culture in the Texture of the Public Sphere underscored the role of culture in accessing the public sphere in Africa, as a determinant of legitimacy and power and as a critique of hierarchies of power and political authorities in the public sphere. They all draw attention to the need to pay greater attention to the politics-culture link as a means of understanding the dynamics of the public sphere in Africa. In the debates that followed the paper presentations, two points were emphasised: (a) The importance of the various forms of African cultural patterns as mechanisms for reclaiming or re-conquering the public sphere; and (b) The richness of the various forms of African literature, including local languages, and the need for some Pan-African policy action to preserve and protect them.

Engendering the African Public Sphere¹⁵

The diverse forms of women's engagement with power and authority in the public sphere in Africa are reflected in the presentations on the theme Engendering the African Public Sphere. Through studies that focused on the politics of gender equality in the Congo, female literature, female identity mobilisation, female social networking via the internet and dance/performance, panelists posited that while the African public sphere was for women a place for demanding rights, negotiating gender equality, consciousness raising and participation, communication, contestation of Masculinity/Patriarchy, the formal public sphere remained the most inaccessible for women to traverse, their dominant population strength notwithstanding. Factors accounting for low access of women to the political arena were identified to include education, marriage, patriarchy and the capitalist burst and boom syndrome. In situations where getting into politics does not and cannot change the status-quo, women are to exploit networking opportunities provided by traditional forums and institutions, such as the Igbo August meetings, and expropriate the mobilisation potentials of the current ICT revolution and the arts. They must also be sensitive to, and seize the spaces and opportunities created by

incongruence in public policies, such as those created by the existence of a secular constitution in a state that is 98% Muslim. A major gap identified in the discussions was the equation, in all the papers, of gender with Women.

Religions and Religiosities in the African Public Sphere¹⁶

In the light of the key role of religion in African post-colonial politics and civil society, the exploration of the place of religion in the administration of the public sphere was a 'must' for the General Assembly. In examining the interface between religion and the public sphere, the ambiguity in the definition and use of the public sphere as well as state regulation of the public sphere, papers delivered identified the importance of religion and its capacity to set the moral tone of public discourse. Such a capacity is also recognised as a critical resource by political actors (including religious leaders who engage in a vigorous struggle to control religious public spaces and symbols). Control of the religious public sphere is thus a means of acquiring control of the state. Hence, the capacity to set the moral tone of public discourse does not necessarily make religion a guarantor of public order, nor is it a mechanism for democratic governance of the African public sphere.

The Sacred, the Sacrilegious and the Public Sphere¹⁷

Since the importance of the sacred in African public space is located in its capacity to set the moral tone of public discourse, to confer moral value on interactions in the public space; then the management of sacred space becomes an important means of conferring value on interactions within the African public sphere, and hence a crucial component of socio-political dynamics of the public sphere in Africa. So, who has the right to control the management of sacred public space and determine its use: the state or the various cultural communities, experts or individuals? Presentations on the Sacred, the Sacrilegious and the Public Sphere showed that, in present day Africa, the management of sacred public space no longer responded to, nor catered for the moral needs and memory of the African peoples, but responded more to the demands of capitalist accumulation as dictated by globalisation, a situation vastly encouraged by the non-deliberative nature of the African public sphere.

Theorising the African Public Sphere¹⁸

The overwhelming and coercive domination of the public space in Africa has resulted in imaginative popular ways, using metaphor, songs and rumours to broaden and articulate political views, as reflected in the ways African writers have employed their creative literary abilities to deal with social, political and religious issues of the public sphere. Thus, a focus on popular culture addresses some of the critiques associated with the concept of the public sphere. In other words, analysis of the public sphere must encompass the political, the philosophical rumours, popular culture and virtual publics. The various uses of signs and symbols have the unique and desirable quality of enhancing the capacity of the public sphere to act as the foundation for a universal consciousness against oppression and exploitation that transcends boundaries.

The Public Sphere as a Site for Negotiating Citizenship¹⁹

The violence that has accompanied elections in African states in the last couple of years shows clearly that elections are not the key to the construction of the much expected democratic public sphere in Africa. The discussion on the public sphere as place for the negotiation of citizenship in Africa therefore focused on questions of citizenship, political participation, human rights and elections. What determines the discourse of citizenship in the public sphere, and what is the relationship between the rights and responsibilities of the citizen? Civic education is seen as being of premier importance in the process of citizenship negotiation. For civic education to be effective, it must not be seen as a privilege but as a right of the citizen. As the case of Zimbabwe shows, the question of the guarantee of citizenship rights and liberties is also a crucial determinant of the existence of the public sphere.

Institutions of the African Public Sphere²⁰

The significance of institutions is located in their role as channels of communication, as regulators of social intercourse and as sites of debate and exchange of information essential for overcoming isolation and vulnerability. Institutions are thus veritable public spheres, as they permit a form of participation for citizens in issues that affect their daily lives. In-

stitutions represent places where people can enrich their experiences and understanding in ways most conducive for achieving collective good. Institutions, as sites for the elaboration of public interest, are thus essential for overcoming the severe alienation of most Africans from the sphere of public authority in Africa and for ensuring the democratic governance of the polity. Unfortunately, the reality is that in Africa, institutions at all levels are certainly not up to the task of acting as the mobilisers and managers of state and society relations; and there is a need for this, given the importance of institutions for the democratic governance of the state in Africa and for a critical analysis of the reasons for such failures.

Languages and Linguistics in the African Public Sphere²¹

Discussions on the theme Language and Linguistics in the African Public Sphere centred on the question of how the linguistic plurality that characterises African public space can become an agent of development in Africa. The answer lies in a consummate grasp of the diversity, mobility and complementarity of language forms in Africa. In other words, for their development potentials to be realised, African languages must be seen as a factor that encourages cohesion and not conflict. The failure of most development interventions can partly be located in the non-recognition of the necessity to define and implement development programmes interventions in the languages of African beneficiaries. Lack of attention to local languages reflects an ignorance of the role language plays in the creation of social solidarity and security; as the public sphere results not only from the exchange of goods and services, but also from the exchange of signs and symbols that contribute to the creation of network of familiarity that extends beyond national borders

Spaces, Sites and Processes of the Public Sphere

The debate on the Spaces, Sites and Processes of the Public Sphere reaffirmed the multiple nature of the African public sphere as forums for egalitarian political participation (Forum Social Marocain). As promoted by the Habermas concept, the public sphere exists side by side with African lineage systems, such as traditional chiefdoms, where participation in political debate is a privilege restricted to a few

and is determined by age and sex. In such a situation, how can a connection be achieved between tradition and modernity at the level of political deliberation and participation in African public space. A position which consists of relegating the modes of public consultation and political participation in African traditional chiefdoms to the level of barbarism can only lead to a theoretical impasse which only a recognition that the traditional public sphere has similarities with the bourgeoisie public sphere described by Habermas, but different from it by the fact that the notables act in the interest of all members of the chiefdom. So, in the African case, it is essential to talk of multiple public spaces and not of one public space, in order to put in context the internal dynamics of African popular culture that produces sub-cultural public spheres that are sites for the emergence of a deliberative democracy.

The Emergence of Virtual Publics in the African World²²

As a form of protection against the manipulation of information, the appropriation of the internet has become a must for Africans. As a matter of fact, the use of the internet as site for deliberative democracy can be traced to the manipulation of traditional news media, such as radio and television, by the politically and economically powerful. Deliberative democracy and cyber-democracy thus appear to be rational responses to fraudulent electoral processes where the choices of the electors are not respected. The virtual public and, by extension, on-line activism, has undergone further consolidation with the on-line presence of traditional mass media. The internet offers, therefore, an ideal context for free expression of views and cyber-democracy. Despite the importance of the virtual public, queries about the credibility of the information placed online demand that the regulation of the virtual public be treated with the urgency it demands. Similarly, is the virtual public truly a well founded public sphere? In practice, the virtual public is not inclusive, given the restriction in access to internet imposed by state control or economic limitations. Cyber-democracy is, therefore, democracy for the elite. To be useful as a tool for governance in Africa, the virtual public sphere must become inclusive within a context of illiteracy and poverty.

Economics of the Public Sphere²³

The Economics of the Public Sphere in Africa raises essentially the question of governance and the possible alternatives for achieving good governance in Africa. The public sphere is presented as a place where transparency is of fundamental importance for the protection of public interest. Briefly put, the public sphere makes possible the debate on transparency in state governance. It is a site for the reinforcement of societal stability. The analysis presented showed clearly the dimensions of public sphere and their implication in the governance of economic issues. Some alternatives such as the 'informal economy' and 'l'économie solidaire' were suggested as solution to the problems associated with the neo-liberal governance of the economy of the public sphere because they encouraged the creation of an 'espace public de proximité'; that is, a public space that encourages debate, collective decision-making that combats the exclusion that characterise the management of the economy of the public sphere under neo-liberalism.

Conflict and Violence in the African Public Sphere²⁴

The contributions made on the theme of conflict and violence in the Africa public sphere highlighted the importance of the question of natural resources and their management in the analysis of conflict and violence in Africa. Do countries like Nigeria or South Africa have a national policy for resource distribution amongst its components? Who profits from the exploitation of natural resources? Do government institutions have a constitutional obligation to account for their utilisation of public resources? How does the policy of decentralisation work in African states? It is sufficient to examine the existing situations on ground in Africa to know that what exist in African states is a politics of pillage. A politics of pillage does not in any way favour social cohesion. On the contrary, it stimulates, as the situation in the Niger-delta of Nigeria clearly shows, a resistance of the people to hegemonic exploitation. In African societies, in the face of oppressive authorities engaged in a politics of pillage, violence becomes the preferred means of State-society communication. The management of conflict requires the active intervention and implication of civil society organisations and religious institutions for the promo-

tion of a language of equality as alternative to the politics of pillage of public resources and the violence it engenders in the African public sphere.

Democratising the African Public Sphere²⁵

The possibility of democratising the public space in Africa was a point of discussion and debate through out the General Assembly. Essentially, democracy in Africa is a work in progress, still under construction as expressed in its current dominant form of negative freedom - freedom that is recognised but not open to full utilisation because of certain constraints and barriers - and in the fact that it only became prominent in the public sphere as from the 1980s. To be successful, ownership of the democratisation process by Africans is a must; hence, popular mobilisation is the key to deepening democracy in Africa, as democracy cannot be externally imposed through conditionalities proposed by international organisations and funders. In other words, the process of democratisation must be owned by the people and be culture and history sensitive in order to be successful.

The End Note²⁶

The presenter of the End Note Abdoulaye Bathily, began with an exploration of a number of issues, such as development failures in Africa, issues of succession to political office, privatization of the state, personalization of the state, military rule and breakdown of collective leadership. For him, these issues in African politics have structured the current trends observed in the presidential system of governance in Africa. Using the example of the Convention Peoples Party of Ghana, the lecturer traced the trajectory of the antecedents of the current violent and venal form of presidentialism in Africa and identified its characteristics, namely: a very powerful President with few checks and balances over the limits of his/her actions; a judiciary that has become an instrument of the President and not a check; a President who is the source of material enrichment - distributing economic largesse and political appointments; a President who is an adept constitutional manipulator; First Ladies who have become institutions of the state, even where the constitution does not recognize the office. The result of a presidential system displaying the above characteristics is a

state transformed into a monarchy, one in which succession ensures that family members retain high government positions through stage-managed elections that are held only to confirm the person in power.

For the lecturer, the most serious danger to democratization and the future of Africa was foreign domination. According to him, Africa has to be her own actor, with her own agenda and not just a subject of history. He warned that there is a subtle and silent new Berlin Conference going on about how to get a piece of Africa. He noted that more African Heads of State attend more global summits than the African Union (AU) Summit, and that this is a sign of acute dependency. In concluding, the keynote speaker noted that though it is important to gather and discuss the African public sphere, CODESRIA's founding fathers have also called attention to the need for Africans to change their own history. Thus, African intellectuals should not allow the present course of events to continue, because if they do, Africa will remain a prey of foreign domination and its peoples will continue to be poor. In conclusion, Prof Bathily observed that the 12th General Assembly was taking place at a particularly important period that can enable everyone to marry vigorous scientific research with the goal of liberation.

Conclusion

In choosing the theme 'Governing the African Public Sphere for the 12th General Meeting of CODESRIA, the Executive Committee of CODESRIA 'believed that for Africa to have hope, it was necessary to interrogate the concept of the public sphere with its various spaces, which have implications for good governance'. From the various panels and sessions above, it can be concluded that the goals set by the Executive Committee of CODESRIA for the 12th General Assembly have been achieved through the rich and exciting papers presented and the debates they have engendered. The papers presented have shown the wide employment of the concept of public sphere to capture the multiplicity of shared, deliberative, interlocking and contested spaces and structures that characterise the African society. Furthermore, the papers and debates have underscored the historical specificity of the African public

sphere, its various dimensions, contradiction and its work-in-progress nature.

Most importantly, they have reinforced the appropriateness of CODESRIA's emphasis on the need to conjugating multi-disciplinary insights as the key to rescuing the study of Africa from faulty analogies drawn from a unilineal reading of the history of Europe and the United States. The innovativeness of works presented at the General Assembly showed that much has been done, and would continue to be done, by Africans to build concepts, theories and methods that capture the general and specific attributes of the African public sphere. In all, the 12th CODESRIA General Assembly has confirmed the position of CODESRIA as the foremost Pan-African network of scholars committed to socially-engaging scholarship.

Notes

1. Synthesis of the different scientific reports submitted by the following colleagues: Murindwa Rutanga, Addo Mahamane, Edewor Dennis, Alex Ratebaye Tordeta, Khalid Ali El-Amin, Susan Y. Awason, Margaret Ayike, Herman Touo, Sylvie Mpon-Tiek, Osita Agbu, Therese Azeng.
2. Human Sciences Research Council, HSRC The Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO); African Studies Centre (ASC); University of South Africa (UNISA); African-Arab Research Centre; Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden; SIDA/SAREC; Stockholm, Sweden, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and European Association of Development Institutes.
3. Of the Public Sphere, Governance and Democratisation The 12th General Assembly Léopold Sédar Senghor: Lecture Ali EL KENZ, *Gouvernance et Gouvernabilité*; 12th General Assembly Special Guest Lecture: Tsitsi Dangaremba, *The Popular Arts and Culture in the Texture of the Public Sphere in Africa*; Intellectuals and the Public Sphere; The 12th General Assembly Cheikh Anta Diop Lecture; Atilo Boron: The Public Sphere in Latin America; Identity Discourses and Xenophobic Reaction in the Public Sphere, The 12th General Assembly Claude Ake Lecture (Teresa CRUZ E SILVA, *The Public, the Private and the Social Role of Higher Education Institutions in Africa*).
4. Governing the Public Realm for State- and Nation-Building (4 sessions); The Media in the African Public Sphere (4 sessions); Artistic Expressions, Orature and Culture in the Texture of the Public Sphere (4 sessions); Engendering the African Public Sphere (3 Sessions); Religions and Religiosities in the African Public Sphere (3 sessions); Theorising the African Public Sphere (2 sessions); The Public Sphere as a Site for Negotiating Citizenship (2 sessions); Institutions of the African Public Sphere; Languages and Linguistics of the Public Sphere; Spaces, Sites and Processes of the Public Sphere; The Emergence of Virtual Publics in the African World; Economics of the Public Sphere; Conflict and Violence in the African Public Sphere; Democratising the African Public Sphere; The Sacred, the Sacrilegious and the Public Sphere.
5. Chair: Teresa Cruz Silva, Discussant: Nyamnjoh Francis Rapporteur: Murindwa RUTANGA & Addo Mahamane.
6. El Kenz, Ali Gouvernance et gouvernabilité, Léopold Sedar Senghor Lecture, 2009.
7. Tsitsi Dangaremba, Chair: Fatima Harrack, Rapporteur: Sylvie Mpon Tiek.
8. Chair: Thandika Mkandawira, Discussant: Adam Habib, Rapporteur: Herman Touo & Mahamane Addo.
9. Chair: Samir Amin, Discussant: Jimi Adesina, Rapporteur: Osita Agbu.
10. Chair: Selolware Onalenna, Discussant: Adam Habib, Rapporteur: Khalid Ali-El-Amin.
11. Teresa Cruz E Silva « Le public et le privé: le rôle social des institutions d'enseignement supérieur en Afrique » (Claude Ake Lecture).
12. Georges Nzongola- Ntalaja, Rapporteur: Osita Agbu.
13. **Panel I:** Chair: Noel Obotela Rashidi, Discussant: Labana A.A., Rapporteur: Therese Azeng. **Panel II** Chair: Carin Norberg, Discussant: Charles Ukeje, Rapporteur: Therese Azeng. **Panel III** Chair: Said Adejumbi, Discussant: Richard Akum, Rapporteur: Murindwa Rutanga. (Panel IV) Chair: Matlou Matloteng, Discussant: Firoze Manji, Rapporteur: Therese Azeng.
14. **Panel 1:** Kofi Anyidoho; Session Discussant: Pinkie Mekgwe; Session Rapporteur: Dennis Onome Edewor. **Panel II:** chair: Bahru Zewde; Discussant: Firoze Manji; Rapporteur: Susana Awason. **Panel III:** Session Chair: Leo De Haan; session Discussant: Godwin Murunga; session Rapporteur: Khalid Ali El Amin.
15. **Panel I:** Session Chair, Onalenna Selolwane, Discussant: Antonia Simbine; Rapporteur: Susanna Awason; **Panel II:** Session chair: Odile Faye; Discussant: Atilo Boron; Rapporteur: Susana Awason **Panel III:** session chair: Joe Oloka-onyango; discussant: Terezhina Silva; Rapporteur: Susana Awason.
16. **Panel I:** Session chair: Abdelghani Abouhani : Discussant : Ayodeji Olukoju ; Rapporteur : Margaret Ayike; **Panel II:** Session Chair : Thobeka Mda ; Discussant : Ratebaye Tordeka; Rapporteur: Margaret Ayike; **Panel III:**
17. Session chair : Sam Moyo ; Discussant : Francis Nyamnjoh ; Rapporteur: Murindwa Rutanga.
18. **Panel I:** Session chair: Zenebeworke Tadesse; session discussant: Sylvie Mpon-tiek; session Rapporteur: Khalid Ali El Amin; **Panel II:** Session chair: Nouria Remaoun; Discussant: Omano Edigheji; Rapporteur: Osita Agbu.
19. **Panel I** Chair: Khalid EL-Amin, Discussant: Ebrima SALL, Rapporteur: Tordeka Ratebaye. **Panel II** Chair: Lennart Wohlgemuth, Discussant: Bhekinkosi Moyo, Rapporteur: Sylvie Mpon-Tiek
20. Chair: Claudio Alves Furtado, Discussant: Amady Ali Dieng, Rapporteur: Addo Mahamane.
21. Chair: Catherine Kitetu, Discussant: Willy Bongo-Passi, Rapporteur: Tordeka Ratebaye
22. Chair: Fatima Harrack, Discussant: Murindwa Rutanga, Rapporteur: Herman Touo
23. Chair: Jacques K. Nduba Wa Dile, Discussant: Osita AGBU, Rapporteur: Sylvie Mpon-Tiek
24. Discussant: Catherine Newbury, Rapporteur: Tordeka Ratebaye
25. Chair : Shadida El-Baz ; Session Discussant : Laroussi Amri ; Rapporteur : Dennis Edewor
26. Abdoulaye Bathily « Le Président dans les régimes politiques africains: l'autocratie et ses conséquences sur la gestion des politiques publiques ».

Popular Culture, Subaltern Agency, and People's Power: *The 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections and Democracy in Sierra Leone*

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. – Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*

After having been in office for more than a decade during which – never mind what they say – we have provided this country with an example of good government, the SLPP is not afraid to go into opposition because it is confident of setting another example for history. But any decision about the future of the party has to be determined on the election results; and unless the results say otherwise, we are not going to be pushed out of office by political hysteria. – *Unity*, March 20, 1967

Oral tradition, laced with some superstition, has it that the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) encounters disaster in years ending with *sevens*: 1957, 1967, 1977, 1997 and now 2007. The split that initially paved the way for the emergence of the People's National Party (PNP) and, subsequently the All People's Congress (APC), occurred in 1957; the APC defeated the SLPP in a close, some say controversial, election in 1967; 1977 was a lost opportunity for the SLPP to regain power; and in 1997 the SLPP was booted out of power, twelve months after it emerged from the political wilderness of the one-party era. Is this superstition or just mere coincidence? The oral tradition on which this recurring 'seven' is anchored is popular amongst those familiar with the political history of Sierra Leone. It is now arguably part of the national myth through which institutions are made and remade.

If you believe in numbers as silent but not so silent symbols or texts that reveal the hidden meaning of things, you might want to check out President Ernest Bai Koroma's cell number: 603067! This can be subjected to multiple readings. But in line with the superstition inherent in the

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above oral narrative, I offer a reading that engages the significance of the numbers: 60 – 30 – 67. The first two digits in Koroma's number, 60, represent the birth date of the APC; the second two digits, 30, reference the thirty odd years between the 'No college No school' demonstration led by the current Minister of Tourism and Culture, Hindolo Trye and the 2007 elections. And the last two digits in Koroma's phone number – 67 – capture the centrality of '67 in the making and re-making of the APC: the first opposition party in Africa to unseat an incumbent! These numbers are revealing in their own right even though they tell us nothing about Koroma's leadership qualities or the reason why the APC did what they did forty years ago: unseat an incumbent in a free and fair election! Yet they constitute fragments in the narrative of change, the relevance of historical memory in our understanding of elections in contemporary Sierra Leone and Africa, and the contemporary power of popular culture.

Two years ago a founding member of the ruling SLPP passed away in distant America. The family then decided to bring the remains home for burial. But there was something inordinately odd about the corpse: the mortal remains of this founding member plus the coffin and everything inside were decked in green, green, and green: the party colour of the SLPP. The officiating Bishop, a man not known for speaking truth to power, was compelled to ask: Are we interring the SLPP?

Both Solomon Berewa, the SLPP candidate, and Ernest Koroma, the APC candidate, laboured immensely under the heavy burden of the past. Berewa struggled gallantly against a replay of 1967; Koroma fought doggedly to reproduce that glorious moment in the history of the APC: defeating an incumbent in post-colonial Africa. Berewa made history: the first

presidential candidate to visit all the nooks and corners of Sierra Leone; Koroma choreographed his campaign strategy methodically by deepening Congress's strength in areas where it traditionally held sway. Where Berewa naively predicted a 'massive victory' totally out of sync with the popular mood; Koroma cautiously and pragmatically forecast a close fight ending in victory for Congress. What were these predictions based on? What was the historical possibility(ies) of a rerun of 1967? How/why was the APC able to surpass their performance in 1967 when they were arguably in a weaker position after the 2002 elections than they were after the 1962 elections?

It took the new APC six years to win an election; the old APC seven years to capture power. The old APC existed and operated in the context of the Cold War that spawned one-party dictatorships and the extreme centralization of politics; and the party reproduced all the pitfalls of that era. Today however the context is fundamentally different. And the new APC has demonstrated its 'newness' by winning a free and fair election. Will they reproduce or adhere to the current market dogma by accepting neo-liberalism uncritically plus idle talk about democracy and development amidst mass poverty and infectious globalization? This is the monumental challenge facing the APC leadership. It is how they confront this challenge that will determine their success or failure.

The dénouement to the 2007 elections had all the hallmarks of the 1967 general elections: an opposition party firmly ensconced in the capital city; widespread corruption by politicians and civil servants at all levels; unhealthy cracks within the ruling party; and a restive populace yearning for total change. Yet it was markedly different from 1967: the heightening consciousness of the popular masses (illiterates?); the vigilance and infectious passion that has enveloped political practice (active citizenship?); and the emergence and dominance of a conscious and oppositional youth culture that straddles the global/local in interpreting quotidian

experience. Put differently, politics in contemporary Sierra is youth culture writ large: the revelry, the mass rallies, yes the campaign carnival, and the costume, are all performances/representations yanked from oppositional youth culture. It is to the hegemony of this culture that we must turn if we are to unlock the mystery of the 2007 elections!

If the APC opposition in the post-2002 parliament was relatively quiet or ineffective as some have charged, it was not because Koroma is an inept leader. The overwhelming desire for peace and stability after a brutal civil war – an erroneous claim put forward by the SLPP – was read and understood in an undemocratic manner: opposition politics was unhelpful and should be discountenanced. From this perspective whatever the formal opposition did or said in parliament was inconsequential. In the interim the SLPP seemingly waxed stronger, inviting and attracting opportunists of all shades in the name of post-war national reconstruction. Serving the nation was the language employed by this disparate group of arrogant mediocrities and intellectual fraudsters. And they were so busy reconstructing the nation that they failed to grasp the meaning of the APC victory in the 2004 local elections in Freetown, arguing without any sense of history, that they had the support of the majority of Sierra Leoneans because they controlled the local councils in the hinterland.

This arrogance of power, or better still the power of arrogance, proved fatal: the SLPP started worshipping numbers, and more numbers, and ignored the popular voice: the voice of the angry citizenry! And this popular voice, accessible in the form of incendiary lyrics and militant advocacy, reverberated throughout the land in the form of popular music. The air waves and the boom box were the respective sites, the people's court, so to speak, wherein the ruling elite were arraigned, indicted and pilloried. And the indictment was an everyday affair strung to a new youth identity: vibrant, oppositional and counter-hegemonic. The discursive register in these incendiary lyrics was anchored in quotidian existence/everyday life: they were a populist indictment of the *De System*. For they were not only confrontational – speaking truth to power in the classical and existential sense – they were also about social citizenship and the right of the common people.

The campaign for change preceding the 2007 elections was inaugurated and conducted by an informal opposition: the musical artists. The subversive and confrontational lyrics inaugurated a national conversation — there is no intellectual or national conversation in contemporary Sierra Leone – on positive change and a new meaning of citizenship that was hard to ignore or subvert. The vibes of oppositional youth culture were keyed to a reinterpretation of social and active citizenship unprecedented in the history of Sierra Leone. But the SLPP misread this language of protest, partly because of arrogance; mocked the struggling artists; and dismissed their claims for full citizenship. The APC and the opposition listened to the message from below; fine tuned their strategy, and launched a national conversation on the necessity for change. The former was dismissive and exclusionary; the latter sympathetic and inclusionary.

The popular quip from below – ‘nar yu Papa get yah’¹ – is really about citizenship; the right to belong to a particular place. It is a fundamental political question as much as it is a defiant protestation of the right of citizens to demand answers about the direction and nature of the nation-state. When the musicians issued the call for an ‘Injectment’ (ejection) notice, the SLPP arrogantly reminded them that tenants have no right in law to eject their landlord. The power-drunk SLPP apparatchiks and their rag-tag followers could not accept the foundational liberal principle that the government is the tenant and that the governed are the landlord. The notice then was the last resort in the arsenal of the substantive landlord to reclaim the common weal. This is the verdict of 2007. In the context of a major demographic shift – 67 percent of the electorate are between 15-37 – wherein youth are the major producers and consumers of popular culture, their collective voice could only be ignored at one's peril.

It was the SLPP's fixation with numbers – politics is about numbers their numerous supporters angrily protested – that killed the *Bombah*². When the SLPP painted the city green during their final rally in Freetown it was obvious that the masses were having a field day: wining and dining with the powerful only because they wanted their votes! Consumed in their ignorant arrogance, they failed to detect that the masses had devised multiple strat-

egies to subvert their hegemony. More than 50 percent of those who thronged to the SLPP rally in colourful green T-shirts voted for the opposition. They were paid to do so (the EU monitors noted this in their report); but they reasoned, rather defiantly, that it was ‘their’ money!

Unable to confront their oppressors head on, subalterns have historically employed alternative modes of concealing their innermost feelings from their tormentors. Harassed and victimized, they resorted to what they ingeniously dubbed ‘Water Melon Politics’: green (SLPP party colour) in the outside; red (APC party colour) on the inside. This subterfuge, this code-switching, was central to their collective political strategy. And on polling day they continued their infra-politics from below by urging their compatriots to vote for Celltel (now Zain) – the mobile phone company with the widest coverage in Sierra Leone – reminding them that Datatel, a bankrupt mobile phone company used as a code name for the SLPP, was out of business.

Thus when Berewa told the BBC three days before the elections that he would ‘win and win massively’ the people smiled, dashed to their respective hideouts, just to make sure their voter ID cards were safe. Their new found weapon, the ballot paper, was used massively against the *bombah*! It was numbers that eventually killed the *bombah*!

This is a wake up call for the political class and it comes with an unambiguous message: it is the people that are the ultimate arbiter of your performance not your state-controlled media or any over-zealous civil servant. The lesson of 2007 is clear for all to see: any government that fails to measure up to popular perceptions will be voted out of power. The spurious claim that the SLPP delivered was answered by the people in a resounding negative. Touting a seven percent growth rate – allegedly the highest in West Africa – does not translate to affordable housing, a living wage, good roads, pipe-borne water, quality education, and a guaranteed future for their children. Who better to judge the SLPP's claim than the people to whom they claimed to have delivered? Sixty percent of those who voted jettisoned that claim irrespective of whether they made the right or wrong choice. This is arguably the beginning of the end of a kind of politics that have wreaked havoc in post-colonial Africa.

Thus 2007 is a rejection of President Kabbah's policies; and a rejection of the neo-liberal dogma that it is threatening to drown the poorest of the poor. This should serve as a singular lesson to the chame-

leon political class: deliver what you promised or get booted out of power.

Notes

1. Does it belong to your father? Is it your father's property? This was the popular re-

frain on the eve of the elections that questioned the ruling SLPP's claim to hold on to power at all cost.

2. The SLPP presidential candidate was called Solo the *Bombah* because he supposedly had and controlled enormous resources.

The Kenya General Elections: Troubling Political Propaganda in an Intellectual Garb

Introduction

The Kenya general election held on 27 December 2007 generated intense discussions and debate within the country and abroad. The debates predictably focused on the electioneering process and the outcome of the contested presidential race. All independent election observers judged the tallying of the presidential votes flawed and cast doubts on the declaration of Emilio Stanley Mwai Kibaki and the Party of National Unity (PNU) as winners over Raila Odinga and the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). Foreign observer teams such as the European Union (EU) ruled that the elections did not meet international standards of a free and fair election while local observers concluded that considering what happened at the national election tallying centre at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre, 'it is impossible to know who won the elections'.¹ Further, the chairman of the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) Mr Samuel Kivuitu has repeatedly appeared on national television casting doubts on the fairness of the tallying process.²

In spite of this rare consensus among election observers, several analyses of varying levels of quality and credibility continue to surface that laud the alleged PNU victory and counsel ODM to seek redress in court. This brief article is a critique of one study issued through a locally based non-governmental organization in Nairobi. My aim is three-fold. First I put the particular study in question in context by highlighting the silences it fosters in order to make its decidedly partisan argument. Second, it cautions unsuspecting readers, especially those not fully versed in the fractious nature of Kenyan politics and its recent closely contested presidential race,

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against any such one-sided re-telling of the story. Finally, in highlighting the specific context of crisis of radicalism in Kenya that allows politicians and analysts to keep an inconsistent record on an issue that calls for principled consistency, I argue for holding African intellectuals accountable. It should be clear that it is no longer acceptable to get away with deliberately skewed research especially when the issues involved are literally a matter of life and death.

The notion of radicalism is employed on the basis of a simple distinction between right and left ideology. In a Marxist sense, the notion of radicalism is reactive in the sense that it is an ideology informed by a desire to alter capitalism's greatest misdemeanour – inequality in control of the means of production and in the distribution of resources and wealth. It is therefore based on a set of ideas and political practices that are socialist in orientation, ideas that focus serious attention on and aim to be accountable 'to the imagination, aspirations, and interests of ordinary people'.³ The focus is on activists and intellectuals of the (radical) left understood as 'political groupings identified with Marxist political ideas, and espousing political programmes associated with socialist economic programmes'.⁴ Freedom and inequality are at the centre of the Kenyan crisis since it is widely perceived that respective regimes have fostered inequality and trampled on people's freedoms.⁵ Those intellectuals and political activists opposing these regimes have positioned themselves not only as pro-

gressive but also pro-people and they base their decision on some radical credit, the fact that they are, to quote Amina Mama again, 'socially and politically responsible in more than a neutral or liberal sense'. But their consistency in pushing a radical agenda remains in question.

The Iconic Weight of a Policy Brief?

Studies of varying levels of intellectual quality and credibility on the pre- and post-election developments in Kenya have been issued lately. Of these, none has come with the supposed weight of an author as that by one, Peter Mwangi Kagwanja. Formerly of International Crisis Group, Kagwanja was director in the Democracy and Governance research programme at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in South Africa when he wrote the Brief. According the HSRC web page then, 'he [led] research and analysis on policy and intellectual issues relating to peace, security, conflict and governance in Africa'.⁶ He is also the founder and president of the Nairobi-based API. His academic credentials provide something of iconic weight that should add value to the idea of a Policy Brief, which is what the document he authored titled 'Breaking Kenya's Impasse: Chaos or Courts', purported to be.⁷

The Brief is based on six months of research. The author highlights the context of the electoral campaigns, the design by ODM to win the elections through a 'tribal' strategy coupled by the threat of violence in the event that it lost the elections. He grudgingly acknowledges the ODM's ability to galvanize votes across the country but suggests that this was done, in large part, by mobilising international and local support, by demonising a 'civilised' Kibaki through staying on top

of things using a well-oiled media propaganda led by a 'discredited' American campaign consultant, Dick Morris. Kagwanja portrays ODM as the aggressor, concluding that they, much more than PNU, rigged the election results. He tabulates suspicious results of the presidential poll that his source, the *Daily Nation*, had already retracted to 'confirm' the argument. He then recommends that ODM should seek redress in court.

What is interesting is that Kagwanja's argument and the recommendations he makes are consonant with arguments and recommendations of PNU. This is not surprising because he served as an adviser and strategist in the PNU campaign during the period in which he also supposedly undertook his research, wrote newspaper articles on behalf of PNU, and appeared on television talk shows where he was represented as such in the introductions.⁸ That he does not disclose this information in his brief should by itself be an early red flag to any one seeking a credible opinion.

The Brief is however badly-crafted and a hardly disguised anti-ODM propaganda piece couched in language that reveals more by what it insinuates or fails to say than what it actually says. It is based on half truths, innuendo and a number of factual errors, and has the potential to embarrass board members of the API, many of whom are solid scholars with consistent pro-democracy records. The silences cited below illustrate the half-truths. Above all, the document is a mockery of the idea of a Policy Brief and should not at any rate hoodwink the international community that it aims to inform. Fortunately, its first reading in the UK was in a forum generally frequented by Kenyanists who have written their own versions of the post-election situation that contrast markedly with Kagwanja's vain and ahistorical defence of the status quo.⁹

Ultimately, it should be easy to see through the embarrassing effort Kagwanja makes to defend what observers documented as Kibaki's illegitimate usurpation of the presidency. It would have been expected that as a director of a democracy and governance programme, he would have made greater effort to see beyond the ethnic blinkers that cloud him from taking a panoramic view, if for no other reason, then for the sake of maintaining the integrity of the research programme and domain he then directed. But he made

three major moves in his piece that are flatly designed to defend PNU to the hilt and embarrass the very idea of democracy and governance he researches. The first is a contrast he drew between ODM and PNU as political outfits respectively operating from an 'ethnic' as opposed to 'civic' logic. The second is the calculated attempt to bring in the politics of ethnicity in order to delegitimize ODM's claims against election rigging and, finally, his closing argument that the only way out of the engulfing crisis in Kenya is for ODM to seek redress regarding election rigging in court. Let us discuss each in turn.

The Ethnic Versus the Civic

Kagwanja's Brief is conceptualised around a distinction between the ethnic and civil logics of Kenyan electioneering and election politics. Using this logic, he tries to paint the ODM camp as a primordial movement engaged in an 'ethnic assault on the civic Nation' that Kibaki has ably governed. This dichotomy between the ethnic and the civic is not innocent. It is designed to speak to a specific audience that understands this old and sterile ethnographic perception of Africa. The context and dangers of such ethnographic language have been discussed with intellectual dexterity by scholars like Peter Ekeh and Mahmood Mamdani.¹⁰ In this case, however, Kagwanja draws the distinction not simply to give the moral high ground to Kibaki, but also to foist a very problematic unilinear argument in which the modern is identified with Kibaki and the traditional with ODM, with the spectre of violence linked to the latter. The threat of ODM's leadership, it is implied, rests in their potential to re-traditionalise society by creating disorder.¹¹

The overall aim of this association of ODM with an ethnic logic is to account for the post-election violence in Kenya; the assumption being that there is a causal relationship between the ethnic and violence. The image of tribal bestiality and brutality of the *Heart of Darkness* genre is implied here. In strategic places, Kagwanja throws in notions like 'pre-modern chaos', 'tribal militia', etc., to produce the desired ghastly effect in the western audience that he seems eager to address. He perceives all the violence in pre-and post-election Kenya as emanating from ODM and directed against a defenceless, innocent and 'civil' PNU; a coalition that is not only multi-ethnic in Kagwanja's rather skewed narrative but

one whose moral probity he elevates beyond reproach. For instance, he argues that the ODM presidential candidate Raila Odinga used metaphors of war and, notwithstanding the fact that Kagwanja is intentionally quoting this out of context, concludes that post-election violence owes everything to the ODM's premeditated metaphors of war.

In making these arguments, Kagwanja leaves out several key points that might complicate his argument and contradict his conclusion. It does not matter to him that six of Kenya's eight provinces voted ODM; that of the remaining two, Kibaki only won one convincingly, his Kikuyu dominated Central Province home base. That even the cosmopolitan Nairobi largely voted ODM are details Kagwanja considers too irrelevant to be discussed since they contradict the ethnic logic of his argument. Kagwanja emphasises that Raila Odinga is ethnic Luo but ignores the analytical implications of his choice to consistently vie for and win a parliamentary seat in a cosmopolitan constituency in contrast to Kibaki (an ethnic Kikuyu) who moved from a cosmopolitan constituency to one in the ancestral homelands of his ethnic community. It does not also matter to Kagwanja that close to 80 percent of Kibaki's cabinet lost in the election and that close to half of PNU members of parliament come from the Mt. Kenya Region, Kibaki's home region. The point here is not to present contrasting examples to invalidate Kagwanja's set of examples but to wonder aloud whether these facts can sufficiently nuance the interpretation in such a way that the idea of a Policy Brief becomes more meaningful instead of remaining a simple polemic against ODM, Raila Odinga and the so-called Kalenjin mafia (see the next section for details).

Equally unimportant to Kagwanja is that ODM and its ally, NARC, won more seats in parliament than all the other parties combined (at least before the mysterious death of two of the ODM members of parliament). Finally, that all election observers agree that Kibaki's win could only be a product of a massively flawed election and that PNU and its affiliates have seen the election as credible does not mean much for this Policy Brief. All respectable civil society organizations in Kenya called the election into question including the Kenya Human Rights Commission where Kagwanja was once an associate re-

searcher, Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, Mars Group Kenya, and the Centre for Democracy and Governance, Law Society of Kenya. Credible observers like the EU are all bundled up into a perceived conspiracy to misinform and favour ODM.

Kagwanja argues that because the EU 'entered the scene too late' they were unable to 'grasp the intricate processes of electoral flaws that characterized Kenya's protractedly and heavily mined electoral field'. This is not withstanding the fact that the EU has been a development partner of Kenya for long and has representatives in the country. He ignores the fact that the above-named local organizations were present throughout electioneering. Since they do not fit this conspiracy theory and contradict his argument regarding late entrance on the scene, Kagwanja does not mention them. Instead, he accuses the EU of a 'one-sided perspective' that might have contributed to 'the almost nihilistic tendency to stoke rather than prevent fires arising from disputed elections in Africa'.¹² That the chairman of ECK is on record on Kenyan television repeatedly admitting that he did 'not know whether Kibaki won the elections',¹³ is hardly convincing to Kagwanja. For him, all this can be explained through some conspiracy theorising in which only ODM is guilty of crimes against PNU.

Raila and Kalenjin Mafia

Kagwanja drums up the bogey of an 'ethnic mafia' to puncture ODM's appearance of a multi-ethnic movement and hopes to clinch the argument by re-introducing Moi (an ethnic Kalenjin and a discredited immediate former president of Kenya) as a factor that explains the post-election violence that has engulfed the Rift Valley Province that is populated predominantly by the Kalenjin-speaking people. There is no doubt that the Moi factor is important but Kagwanja only partially highlights its forms of expression in the 2007 elections, making sure that anything that would reveal Kibaki/PNU's culpability does not appear in the narrative.¹⁴ The Kalenjin mafia refers to the group of ethnically Kalenjin politicians who dominated the political scene in Kenya during Moi's presidency. Most of these politicians joined Raila Odinga in the 2007 elections even though Moi endorsed and actively joined Kibaki's campaign in the province, chastising and ridiculing ODM.

For Kibaki's campaign, there was no greater political catch than having Moi as their man in the Kalenjin-dominated Rift Valley.

Kagwanja's main strategy with respect to Raila Odinga and the Kalenjin was two-fold. First was to demonise those around Raila Odinga in ODM as discredited and corrupted Kalenjin politicians, as people with a bad history of the Moi era. Since it might contradict things for him to acknowledge Moi's role in the Kibaki campaign, Kagwanja opts not to mention it. Second is to paint Raila Odinga himself as wedded to a violent political ethos associated with the ethnic Luo by sections of Kenyan political talk. This two-pronged attack is intended to eliminate any doubts that Raila Odinga and ODM can have a legitimate claim to power since both the Kalenjin and the Luo who populate the ODM have a bad and violent history. Suffice it to note that this was an argument that was avidly employed in the PNU campaigns and was regularly coupled with the ethnocentric idea that an uncircumcised Luo person cannot lead Kenyans.¹⁵ However, both arguments failed to convince voters in most of Kenya and often boomeranged against its authors.

Kagwanja acknowledges Raila's success in putting together a multi-ethnic coalition for his election campaign but proceeds to deride this achievement as 'a publicity stunt'. He grudgingly acknowledges ODM's success in galvanizing voters in the whole country but re-interprets it simply as 'a solid anti-Kikuyu plank'. A serious Policy Brief might have noted that as a political party, PNU was hurriedly cobbled together barely three months to voting day to give Kibaki's campaign a national outlook and its lack of success became apparent when critics pointed out its failure to garner support outside Kibaki's own stronghold. Instead, from the bag of history, Kagwanja suddenly discovers Moi, a sure option for writers who aim to divert attention away from Kibaki's failures in the last five years. For Kagwanja, Moism is at work in the political manoeuvrings that have influenced current developments in Kenya. He presents both Moi and Raila as sharing an 'obsessive anti-Kikuyu sentiment that has come to pervade Kenya's ethnic fabric'. Without mentioning that Moi actually supported Kibaki's re-election (a development that endorsed the perception of there being some commonality of interests between the families of the first

three presidents Kenyatta, Moi and Kibaki), Kagwanja then concludes: 'the motor driving the Pentagon's anti-Kikuyu alliance was the so-called "Rift Valley" or "Kalenjin mafias" consisting mainly of wealthy Nandi, Kipsigis and some Maasai elite who called the shots in the Moi regime'.¹⁶

There are very few politicians in Kenya today who have not brushed shoulders with Moi's KANU, whether Kalenjin or non-Kalenjin. The search for such politicians inevitably starts with Kibaki, Moi's vice-president from 1978 to 1988. Kibaki was part and parcel of the Moi authoritarian party machine. He only crossed over to the opposition after democratic forces had successfully extracted multiparty concessions from KANU. Indeed, Kibaki had derided opposition forces fighting for democracy as trying to cut down a mugumo tree using a razorblade! He was also part of the group that compromised opposition unity and destroyed the possibility of a grand alliance that would have destroyed KANU's re-election bid in 1992. Politicians of the same KANU ilk of different ethnic backgrounds are dotted in Kibaki's government, Raila's ODM and Kalonzo Musyoka's ODM-Kenya. True, there is the Kalenjin mafia in ODM. In ODM-Kenya, there is Kalonzo, Dr Julia Ojiambo and Moi's lawyer, Mutula Kilonzo. Apart from Kibaki in PNU and affiliate parties, there is another one of Moi's former vice-presidents, Professor George Saitoti, as well as Njenga Karume, and Noah Wekesa. It must be emphasized that affiliates of PNU like Uhuru Kenyatta also joined Kibaki with perhaps some of the most discredited Kalenjin mafia including Moi, his son Gideon Moi and Nicholas Biwott, Moi's well-known political confidant. In other words, pointing out the Kalenjin politicians in ODM without acknowledging the very presence of ex-KANU politicians in other political parties is one-sided and suspicious.

This Kalenjin mafia argument is illuminating not only because of what it says about ODM but also what it hides about PNU. Kagwanja hopes to show the world that the dreaded Kalenjin mafia of the Moi years is still a valid threat to innocent Kikuyu; that the Kikuyu are more sinned against by Kenyans than they sin and that the ghost of the Moi years still lurks in every trouble zone in Kenya than might be realized internationally. The first of these three observations has some credibility since there is now enough evidence

that the violence that rocked some parts of the Rift Valley comprised calculated moves to kill, maim and displace the Kikuyu. Indeed, this is confirmed by reports that illustrate the complicity of some Rift Valley politicians in the violence that rocked the province. But this is simply a description not an explanation of the violence or alleged anti-Kikuyuism. As David Anderson of Oxford University interjected elsewhere, to point to 'tribalism is [to provide] a description of the [unfolding] events, not an explanation'. While Kagwanja's Policy Brief remains at the level of innuendo when called upon to give an explanation to the developments in the Rift Valley, Anderson has called attention to the 'deeper history of past conflicts over land and economic resources'. It is in this history that one can locate the historical elements of injustice that may explain why people respond when a war cry is sounded. In other words, 'violence is not its own explanation', rather it becomes thinkable when there is an historical element of injustice.¹⁷

Kenya is constituted by more than two ethnic communities and Kagwanja does not have any conspiracy to propagate about the other non-Luo and non-Kalenjin regions of Kenya that voted ODM. Knowing how much the Western and Coast provinces can complicate and even challenge his argument, he intentionally refuses to bring in the Luyia of Western Province who largely voted ODM while the popularity of Raila Odinga in Coast Province is strategically related to the MoU Raila signed, with (note his choice of word here) 'militant Islamic political grouping to "protect" Muslims from harassment and abuses linked to the US-led war on terrorism'.¹⁸ This is in spite of the fact that even districts in Coast province that are predominantly non-Muslim such as Taita, voted overwhelmingly in favour of ODM at civic, parliamentary and presidential levels. As such, while Western Province is intentionally ignored because it can easily nuance, if not, challenge Kagwanja's 'Kalenjin mafia' conspiracy generalizations, the Coast issue is cavalierly designed to appeal to the conservative pro-Republican US sensibilities. These are the belligerent sensibilities responsible for the Bush 'war on terror', the very authors of such fundamentalist anti-Islamic sentiments that have aroused popular opposition against US aggression across the world. Opposition has been especially vigorous in the

US where George Bush's lame duck presidency was by the time of Kagwanja's writing very apparent to be a credible reference point for any PNU appeal for sympathy. The argument Kagwanja deploys, the choice of reference notions like 'political Islam', all feed into the half-truths, innuendo and factual errors contained in the Brief. Violent protests and clashes at the Kenya coast have complex historical origins. Political Islam has not occupied the central place that Kagwanja accords it in this disturbing Policy Brief.

The Courts

In other words, and this is his third move, Kagwanja's message to the international community is that they should not be surprised with the ongoing violence in Kenya. It is in Raila Odinga's DNA to be violent and his most influential support base, in particular the so-called corrupt Kalenjin elite, have always had something against the Kikuyu anyway. The anti-Kikuyuism of ODM, Kagwanja assumes, should be apparent from the inferences he highlights. It is not far-fetched, therefore, to conclude that Kagwanja's main line is to dismiss ODM's protests against election rigging by appealing to 'stick' (not stake) holders to see the primordial instincts that drive the ODM-authored violence as contrasted to the civic/civil nature of PNU's Kibaki.

Through this circuitous and unconvincing route, Kagwanja aims to endorse the Kenyan courts as ultimate arbiters of the disputed presidential election results, the same argument that diehard Kibaki supporters upheld. The place of the court system in Africa has an interesting history. Mamdani has shown through his study of the bifurcated colonial state that courts dispensed civil justice for 'citizens' as contrasted to the customary code used for 'natives'. The idea was to exalt the civic domain in the hierarchy of modernising institutions and highlight the unilinear path by which 'natives' would qualify for civic justice. Kagwanja borrows this logic and applies it not simply to contrast PNU with ODM but to exalt the former over the latter. The implied position is this: if ODM cannot go to the courts of law to seek redress, why would anyone expect them to provide civilised leadership?

Courts in Kenya have a terrible history with respect to dispensing justice, and 'judicial subservience' to the executive,

as Makau Mutua calls it, is not new to Kenyans. Courts have been complicit in many of the transgressions of the state against human rights activists. They were used to fight the pro-democracy advocates throughout the 1990s. Indeed, the height of Daniel arap Moi's authoritarianism was accompanied by his enlisting the courts to give judicial 'legitimacy' to his dictatorship. Periodic democrats like Gibson Kamau Kuria, Koigi wa Wamwere and the late Mirugi Kariuki suffered the brunt of this judicial injustice in 1987. Even those, like Martha Karua, who vociferously defended Kibaki re-election and called on ODM to go to court, have quit their ministerial position citing frustrations in relation to the much needed reforms within the judiciary. In election related cases, courts have been known to drag cases until an election cycle is complete. In contrast, in cases where Moi had a specific interest in changing a sitting member of parliament, cases were expedited through the court to ensure change. None other than Mwai Kibaki experienced this when he unsuccessfully disputed in court Moi's flawed electoral mandate in 1997.¹⁹ The action of the Chief Justice (CJ) Evans Gicheru following the flawed declaration of Kibaki as winner on 30 December 2007 have failed to allay fears of judicial complicity in Kibaki's usurpation of power. Not only was the CJ already at state house ready to swear in Kibaki before Mr Kivuitu arrived to deliver the certificate, his statements since then have cemented a perception of his hypocrisy in the ongoing crises in the country.²⁰

The argument in favour of the courts has been repeated with dizzying regularity by many analysts, most of whom like Mutula Kilonzo (Moi's lawyer) are too legalistic to be enlightening. This legalistic argument is pegged simply on the idea of preserving the rule of the law and does not consider the context of law. It avoids the issue of consistency in the application and legitimacy of law, a question that is central to the disputed elections. Issa Shivji has observed that 'a prerequisite of a constitutional government is that the constitution and the laws themselves are just, fair and equitable and therefore legitimate'. He further argues that 'consistency is the first condition for credibility'.²¹ Citing the case of South Africa, he correctly points out that if following the law was the binding condition for justice, then apartheid would still be with us since

the apartheid regime scrupulously followed the law.

Proponents of the rule of law, in contrast, argue that there are laid down rules regarding elections that prescribe what one ought to do in the event one feels aggrieved about electoral flaws. Even advocates of 'people power' like Mukoma wa Ngugi have found themselves trapped in this legalistic argument.²² Where else can one uncritically go for a cheap analogy than the US to cement the argument? Like Mukoma wa Ngugi, Kagwanja refers to the US Supreme court ruling of 2000 that 'resolved' the Florida contest and saw George Bush assume the presidency in the US. But as Mugambi Maina has correctly argued, Kenyan courts are themselves on trial. Any comparisons between the US and Kenyan courts, he concludes, amounts to 'a massively flawed and false analogy'.²³

In fact, the US analogy confirms how undemocratic courts can be. It confirms the fear of the undemocratic nature of courts as they are currently constituted in Kenya. Most people who have used the US case seemingly refuse to see that the Supreme Court ended up selecting George Bush as US president contrary to the popular vote that had given Al-Gore the win. One only needs to read Greg Palast to appreciate and understand that the US example confirms ODM's fears rather than bolster PNU's case. Palast shows that the Florida vote was manipulated and rigged to give Bush an unfair win over Al Gore, evidence that the courts did not deal with even though they remain in the public domain. In other words, the analogy is counter-productive to the argument favouring the court as these may well end up selecting Kibaki as president, contrary to the wishes of the Kenyans who voted.²⁴

A Crisis of Radicalism

It should therefore be obvious from the title of Kagwanja's Policy Brief that he perceives chaos to be the stuff of which ODM is made and the court where the civic Nation is safeguarded. His implied argument is that every 'civilised' person ought to know what, between civility (PNU) and chaos (ODM), should prevail as the solution to Kenya's crisis. This 'black or white' approach is simply a bad example of a Policy Brief that illustrates with remarkable clarity the broader crisis of intellectualism in Kenya. If the idea of a Policy Brief is to illuminate the many-

sidedness of issues while providing an enlightened roadmap through the dense forest, Kagwanja's piece is simply a shameful version.

The limitations of Kagwanja's Brief and its unstated political inclination reflect an older crisis of radical intellectualism in Kenyan politics that goes a long way back. In the early 1990s, for instance, Kagwanja was a young and avid contributor to local magazines and newspaper where he penned critical opinion pieces in the then *Nairobi Law Monthly* (NLM), *Society*, and the *Daily Nation*. In one piece, he even called his teachers 'Dishonest Scholars'. Some of his pieces challenged those scholars who supported KANU. The realities of academic politics being what they are, some may argue that the move was a trifle careless; however, at the time, he espoused an idea whose progressive message was widely shared. Kagwanja argued that intellectuals have a duty to stand by the truth, enlighten society by articulating knowledge that foster justice and fairness and maintain a principled and enlightened position in the face of corrupting power. At the time, Moi and KANU made for a discredited and corrupt regime and any support for the regime summarily earned one the tag of 'intellectuals on hire', a phrase Peter Anyang Nyong'o used to refer to those who supported KANU.

Indeed, the basis of 'unity' within the opposition and between it and civil society was any claim to being critical of the Moi government. At the time, the opposition forces galvanized wide and popular support that cut across religious, ethnic, class, generational and gender lines. It brought together luminaries in the struggle for democracy including actors within political and civil society. Some came from the church, from professional groups like the Law Society of Kenya, while others came from the university and the trade unions. Luminaries like Oginga Odinga, Martin Shikuku, Masinde Muliro, and Kenneth Matiba teamed up with so-called young Turks like Paul Muite, Mukhisa Kituyi, Gibson Kamau Kuria, Peter Anyang Nyong'o, Raila Odinga, Kivutha Kibwana, Koigi wa Wamwere, Gitobu Imanyara (publisher of NLM), Martha (Njoka) Karua, Kiraitu Murungi, and Wangari Mathai, while Willy Mutunga. Kibaki was at the time firmly in KANU. In the university were able scholars like the late Katama Mwangi and Apollo Njonjo

who played a leading role in opposition politics. Others like Korwa Adar and Kilemi Mwiria led the then unregistered University Academic Staff Union. It is worth asking what really united this amorphous group.

This question is germane for a number of reasons. Chief among these is that some turncoats within this group have, by design or by default, presented themselves as radicals seeking to alter Kenyan politics with a pro-people agenda. But with the advantage of hindsight, their claims are not borne out since many of these intellectuals, activists and politicians have shifted camps too regularly it is impossible to associate them with any consistent progressive position. Many are currently engaged in the project of undermining the prospects of democratic consolidation in Kenya. A few have authored the strategies enabling Kibaki to hold onto power while others are responsible for the failed initiative at constitutional review. The return of grand corruption of the Anglo-Leasing magnitude was hatched and safeguarded by some of these politicians who made their names as activist-intellectuals while those who continue to defend Kibaki's poor performance with respect to dealing with economic crimes acquired and perfected their political skills by criticising Moi.²⁵

The easier explanation for this lack of consistency in the democratic preoccupations of Kenyan politicians and intellectuals is to blame the factionalised nature of Kenyan politics. However, politics everywhere is factionalised to some degree. What is obvious is that these groups of politicians and intellectuals were united in their drive for 'democracy' by anything but a concrete social vision that transcended the divisive aspects embedded in all political processes and that would eschew the seductions of raw power. This lack of social vision was however compensated for by a commonality of grievances (ethnicized or personalised) against the Moi/KANU regime. The basis of their unity was therefore not sustainable beyond complaints against Moi. In his absence, the group had no unifying ideology to guarantee sustainable struggle for the common goal of democratic rule and development for Kenyans. Thus, most of these politicians and activist-intellectuals were driven by short term goals.

Consequently, the repeated break-up of the coalition of politicians and intellectu-

als opposing the undemocratic culture of the Moi/KANU wing should be seen as a reflection of this lack of commitment to an idea bigger than individuals, a lack that led to numerous inconsistencies in their affiliations. Today, it is difficult to come across a politician in Kenya who has not switched parties severally. It is equally difficult to name intellectuals and activists with a consistent pro-democracy record. Perhaps, the worst cases are lawyers who have become unquestioning and ardent supporters of the Kibaki regime who, only a few years ago won human rights awards for their fight for democracy. The few activists and intellectuals left to continue that struggle like Willy Mutunga, John Githongo, Njonjo Mue, Muthoni Wanyeki and Maina Kiai have been ridiculed in various ways for their consistency. Both Githongo and Kiai have been repeatedly branded 'traitors' to an ill-defined Kikuyu cause for refusing to uncritically support Kibaki who is considered as 'our' (Kikuyu) man in state house. It is assumed in certain quarters, that since Githongo and Kiai are Kikuyu, their role must be to support 'their' man.²⁶

This inconsistent mode of operation continues to cripple Kenyan politics in devastating ways. Pro-democracy credentials conferred during the Moi era have simply been turned into investments that some activists used to claim positions of influence in the post-Moi political dispensation. The result is that few Kenyans are sure which one among the self-appointed intellectual and civil society activists and leaders can sustain a committed struggle for democracy for long. With this reality, a perception has grown in which many Kenyans feel that forums within civil society are simply sites from where intellectuals and activists amass political credentials as an avenue to joining political society and proclaim their right to enjoy the fruits of their 'hard won' contribution to the struggle. Thus, when intellectuals become activists on their commitment to fight for freedoms of various kinds, the level of scepticism from the public is palpable. This is repeatedly confirmed when otherwise radical intellectuals jump ship and start consulting for those in power in complete contrast to what they professed before they started serving reactionary political interests. That intellectuals continue to offer such service shamelessly explains not only the low opinion the general populace has of them but also the numerous

instances when important initiatives of the democratisation project have aborted.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

There is a need for better analysis that is not captive to the momentary passions of the contending parties in the Kenyan political stalemate. If this piece appears as a defence of one side, it is because it was motivated to critique an overly biased report that cast itself as objective and in which the author does not explicitly acknowledge his role in the PNU campaign. The focus for better analysis must illuminate the myriad sources of conflict in the Kenyan society and how these feed into the post-election violence. The violence has to be described and explained not simply as capricious actions of unthinking hoodlums lazily following ODM's rallying cries to commit unprovoked murders but as consequences of inequalities and injustices embedded in Kenya's history. This violence only found a trigger in the flawed declaration of Kibaki as president of Kenya. There are minimum facts that are incontrovertible in the ongoing discussion and these cannot be denied. One of those facts is that the election tallying process was so flawed that we cannot tell who won and Kibaki's usurpation of the presidency is not backed up by popular will. Intellectuals, like Kagwanja, do not do Kenya any service to avoid these hard facts.

Notes

1. See Kenyans for Peace with Truth and Justice Press release titled 'Count Down to Deception: 30 Hours that Destroyed Kenya', dated 18 January 2008.
2. This includes an appearance on Showdown, an NTV discussion programme on Wednesday 13 February 2008 at which he cast serious doubt on the abilities of the ECK commissioners.
3. Amina Mama, 'Is it Ethical to Study Africa? Preliminary Thoughts on Scholarship and Freedom', *African Studies Review*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2007, p. 3.
4. Rok Ajulu, 'The Left and the Question of Democratic Transition in Kenya: A Reply to Mwakenya', *Review of African Political Economy*, 22, No. 64, p. 231.
5. See Society for International Development Reports entitled 'Pulling Apart: Facts and Figures on Inequality in Kenya', Nairobi: SID, 2004, and 'Reading on Inequality in Kenya: Sectoral Dynamics and Perspectives', Nairobi: SID, 2006.
6. See <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/Staff-1462.phtml>.
7. See Peter Mwangi Kagwanja, 'Breaking Kenya's Impasse: Chaos or Courts', *Africa Policy Brief*, No. 1, 2008 found at <http://africapi.org/temp.wadns.net/dnn/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx>.
8. See for instance, Kagwanja, 'Why ODM Cannot Walk the Talk on Fighting Corruption', *The Standard*, 13 December 2007, p. 14.
9. Some of these are contained in the special issue of the *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, Vol. 2. No. 2, July 2008, but a very early one was John Lonsdale's 'Kenya: Ethnicity, Tribe, and State' at http://www.opendemocracy.org/article/democracy_power/kenya_ethnicity_tribe_state.
10. See Peter P. Ekeh, 'Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 17, No. 1, 1975, and Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996.
11. This is an extension of a previous argument Kagwanja has made in relation to Mungiki. See his 'Power to Uhuru: Youth and Generational Politics in Kenya's 2002 Elections', *African Affairs*, 105/418, 2006, pp. 51-75. This argument is borrowed from the flawed analysis of Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz whose *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*, Oxford: International African Institute in association with James Currey; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999 and *Culture Troubles: Politics and the Interpretation of Meaning*, London: Hurst and Co. 2006, which has been effectively critiqued by Kate Meagher, 'Cultural Primordialism and the Post-Structuralist Imaginaire: Plus Ça Change...', *Africa*, Vol. 76, No. 2006, and Abdul Raufu Mustapha, 'Rethinking Africanist Political Science', in Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, ed., *The Study of Africa Vol. I: Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Encounters*, Dakar: CODESRIA, 2006, pp.187-202. For a critique of Kagwanja, see Godwin R. Murunga, 'Mungiki and the Re-traditionalisation of Society Argument: A Quest for Recognition?', *CODESRIA Bulletin*, Nos. 3&4, 2006, pp. 28-31.
12. All citations in this paragraph are from Kagwanja, 'Breaking Kenya's Impasse', p. 7.
13. See *The Standard*, 2 January 2008, p. 1.
14. For a slightly better though also very problematic rendering of this, see Wandia Njoya's

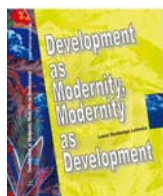
- 'Daniel arap Moi: An Essential Link between Kenya's Past and Painful Present', at www.zeleza.com.
15. Versions of the same argument were used to discredit the doyen of Kenya's opposition politics, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga. See Atieno-Odhiambo, 'Hegemonic Enterprises and Instrumentalities of Survival: Ethnicity and Democracy in Kenya', *African Studies*, 61, 2, 2002, pp. 243-244.
 16. Citations from Kagwanja, 'Breaking Kenya's Impasse', p. 5.
 17. Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001, raises and answers some of the questions of how certain forms of violence become thinkable. For the direct quotation, refer to Mamdani, 'Why Africans Fight', in *The East African*, 21-27 December 2008. The online version is found at <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/magazine/-/434746/504478/-/view/printVersion/-/fm2c1nz/-/index.html>.
 18. Kagwanja, 'Breaking Kenya's Impasse', p. 7.
 19. For details, see Makau Mutua, 'Justice under Siege: The Rule of Law and Judicial Subservience in Kenya', *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2001, pp. 96-118.
 20. For a commentary on the perceived hypocrisy of the CJ, see Pheroze Nowrejee, 'Was Remark by the CJ Hypocrisy or Attempt to Control?', *Daily Nation* 22 February 2008, p. 11.
 21. Issa G. Shivji, *Let the People Speak: Tanzania Down the Road to Neo-Liberalism*, Dakar: CODESRIA, 2006, pp. 53-54.
 22. See Mukoma wa Ngugi, 'Let us not find revolutionaries where there are none: A look at the Kenyan opposition party', found at <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/features/45291>.
 23. *The Standard*, 24 January 2008, p. 7.
 24. Greg Palast, *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy*, London: Pluto Press, 2002.
 25. Is it surprising that some of the luminaries are running ministries recently categorized among the most underperforming ones in Kibaki's first term? According to Constitution and Reform Education Consortium document titled 'Holding the Government Accountable: A Report on the Review of the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation, 2003-2007', p. 47, the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, of Labour and Internal Security, are the three most underperforming ministries in Kibaki's first term as president. Thanks to Mshai Mwangola for drawing my attention to this study.
 26. See John Githongo's discussion of this traitor accusation in *The Sunday Standard*, 16 December 2007, p. 2.

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DEVELOPMENT AS MODERNITY, MODERNITY AS DEVELOPMENT

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This book analyses the impact of the Western idea of 'modernity' on development and underdevelopment in Africa. It traces the genealogy of the Western idea of modernity from European Enlightenment concepts of the universal nature of human history and development, and shows how this idea was used to justify the Western exploitation and oppression of Africa. It argues that contemporary development, theory and practice is a continuation of the Enlightenment project and that Africa can only achieve real development by rejecting Western modernity and inventing its own forms of modernity.

The book is divided into four sections. The first section provides an outline of the theory of modernity in the Enlightenment project. In the second section, an attempt is made to trace the genealogy of the idea of development as modernity and how the African development process gets entangled with it. Here, its evolution is mapped through three periods: early modernity, capitalist modernity and late modernity. Zeroing in on the current era of late or hypermodernity, the book contests the idea that there is something new in globalisation and its neo-liberal development paradigm.

The third section turns to the complex but pertinent question of how, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Africa can transcend the impasse of modernity. The fourth and final section sums up the argument and points the way forward.

Cameroon: Gambling With Democracy

Introduction

The return to multiparty politics in Cameroon in 1990 was met with reluctance and resistance by the current regime. Triggered by the events of 26 May 1990, that led to the defiant launching of an opposition party (Social Democratic Front – SDF), multipartyism became institutionalized following the Law of Association of 19 December 1990 (Law No. 90/056). Since then, democratization in Cameroon has had to confront a legacy of political repression and social dilemmas inherent in the asymmetrical integration of the country into the global market-based economy.

Why? In September 2004, Christian Cardinal Tumi claimed that ‘the façade of democracy’ in Cameroon ‘exists more for creating a pleasing, external image than for promoting individual and collective liberties’. Rampant ‘(e)lectoral fraud’ is indicative of why democracy in Cameroon has continued to degenerate at an alarming rate. Elections, usually taken to be a hallmark of democracy, have become a tool for predatory authoritarian kleptocrats seeking to legitimate their rule. It is not gratuitous that former *BBC Focus on Africa* editor Robin White gave his impressions of Cameroon, a country divided by language and culture thus: ‘Cameroon is one of the most beautiful countries in the world. Its politics are less pretty’.¹

Why such a wild contrast between the beauty of Cameroon and its ‘less pretty’ politics? The goals of *multiparty democracy* still elude Cameroonians and within the present political context of unbridled predatory demagoguery, multipartyism remains a façade and charade, promising much but delivering nothing. President Biya’s gamble with *democratie avancée* (advanced democracy) and *democratie apaisée* (mollified democracy) explains the vacuity of his commitment. He yielded to democratic pressures in the early 1990s more out of convenience than of conviction. In his political book *Communal Liberalism*, he had manifested his apprehension for multipartyism as stated thus:

The present phase of the history of Cameroon does not permit the insti-

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USA

tution of a multiparty system. Our Party (Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement — CPDM) is therefore, responsible for the reduction of the existing ethno-cultural divisions in order to promote national integration... (Biya 1987: 127).

Biya has systematically undermined all remnants of Cameroon’s legal and political institutions to perpetuate his clinging personal rule: amputated the legislative and judiciary branches of government and totally ignored inputs from opposition parties and civil society and coopted and criminalized traditional authority, where at least 55 percent of the population lives in rural areas under the influence of powerful *chiefs* and *lamida*. Indeed, the ideological vitality that energized and united local opposition forces in the early 1990s has been ambushed and smashed by the criminalized Biya state.

One question increasingly asked in Cameroon nowadays is whether Biya’s gamble with *democratie avancée* and *democratie apaisée* is working. Are Cameroonians able to hold their government accountable for delivering the services that are important to its citizens? This question is asked against a background of increasing poverty, growing income inequality and the devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, all of which have generally eroded the quality of people’s lives. The argument of this paper therefore is that the problems of democracy and political stability in Cameroon are intractably rooted in the citizens’ view of their roles within the political system, their relationship to the state and the various contradictions between traditional and modern social, economic and cultural institutions. Hence, rather than solve the problems of democratic conflicts, the state system continues to impede efforts at democratization.

What is fascinating about the controversy over the typologies and semantics of what should properly be called a ‘de-

mocracy’ is that the controversy exists at all given that there is not even a single example of a large-scale ‘true democracy’ (Dahl, 1989) in the world. The extraordinary determination to make room in the political lexicon and problem definition for systems with (so far unattained) large-scale citizen participation is a testimonial to some deep yearning to realize not just the figurative but the literal meaning of democracy defined as ‘government by the people’. Moreover, scholars worldwide increasingly see more participation as the *only* antidote to ‘system creep’ toward despotism and the only independent check on governments, corporations, state apparatus, and other wielders of power.

State Closure of Democratic Space in Cameroon

A liberal democracy requires three things: a system of representative government; a framework of liberal political norms and values; and social and institutional pluralism. Hypothetical support for representative government, without tangible support for liberal political norms and values, and without the foundation of a pluralistic civil society, provides neither sufficient stimulus nor staying power for democracy to take root. All these institutions and processes must be mediated by the state.

But, historically, the State in Cameroon is not ‘the people’; it is not ‘the human family’ getting together to decide mutual problems; it is not a lodge meeting or country club. What, then, is it? Briefly, the State in Cameroon is that organization which attempts to maintain a monopoly of the use of force and violence in the territory; in particular, it is the only organization in society that obtains its revenue not by voluntary contribution or payment for services rendered but by brute force. The State obtains its revenue by the use of compulsion; that is, by the use and the threat of the jailhouse and the (gendarme/police) bayonet.²

Having used force and violence to obtain its revenue, the Cameroon State goes ahead to regulate and dictate the other actions of individual subjects, including the closure of democratic space for which

the populace yearns. As Mbatia (2004) noted, those who thought that the October 11, 2004 presidential elections in Cameroon were an opportunity to show the rest of the world that significant progress had been made in the democratization process, the deception was simply enormous. For those who bothered to register and were fortunate to have cards, the whole exercise was simply not worth the trouble. The state apparatus was used as a marauding bandit giving Biya cronies chance to rig the polls to consolidate their 'political means' to wealth. The election-rigging strategies include the use of ambulant voters, bribing voters as well as polling officers and agents, stuffing ballot boxes, beating and chasing away opposition agents from polling stations, complicated electoral laws designed to facilitate rigging, inflation of voters' lists, 'theft' of voters' cards from DoS's offices, allowing minors to vote, permitting multiple voting by CPDM loyalists, announcing 'cooked-up' results as trends, intimidation and brutalization of opposition militants at polling stations, and name them.

George Ngwane (2007) laments what I may call 'gunboat democracy' that has divided most of Africa into two societies – the state society that is full of greed and the civil society that is boiling with grievance. While the state society reinforces its bonds of graft through smokescreen solidarity and prebendalism, the civil society weakens its stance through the pursuit of individualistic crumbs. In the case of Cameroon he warns that the recent solidarity by more than 700 pauperized labourers of the Cameroon Tea Estate who used their battered bodies as the last defence line of collective survival is testimony that the civil society might be docile but not dull.

In fact, the State in Cameroon, in the words of Oppenheimer, is the 'organization of the political means'; it is the systematization of the predatory process over a given territory.³ The use of the state to close democratic space in Cameroon is borne out by Mbatia's illustration that at the legislative elections of 1997, 2002 and 2007 certain irregularities worked to drastically reduce the opposition representation in parliament. The ruling CPDM party emerged with a crushing majority of 153 seats in a 180-man Assembly, which enabled it to stifle any moves by the opposition to push through any meaningful reforms. Persistent calls by the opposi-

tion SDF for the creation of an independent electoral commission have been gambled away with a wave of the hand. It took a radical move of SDF MPs participating in a march to the Presidency for the government to allow for the creation of a National Elections Observatory (NEO), a body stripped of all meaningful powers. This NEO was later replaced by another electoral commission (ELECAM) — another CPDM election-fraud instrument.

Several years after the initial lurch of Cameroon toward multi-party democracy, during the 1996 municipal elections, virtually all the major towns in the country elected opposition candidates, and in a turn of events that many considered bizarre for a supposed democracy, the Head of State and Chairman of the ruling party appointed members of his own party who were destroyed at the polls, to exercise administrative control over the municipal councils won by the opposition. Vigorous protest marches against this only led to bloodshed, arrest and torture of opposition militants. The government delegates chosen from the ruling party still hold executive power and control the management of municipal councils won by the opposition, especially in the large urban centres (Monga, 1997: 146-169).

If balloting were all that democracy required, Cameroon might be considered democratic. But there are regimes which use the façade of electoral timetables to secure international approval, advance their diplomacy, and manipulate international lending organizations. This form of democracy is on the march in Cameroon where ballots are cast and counted, yet it is secrecy, fraud, repression and kleptocracy that strengthen the regime's grip on power. Even census figures are hidden from the public. In the case of the 2004 presidential election in Cameroon, Mila Assoute, a 'modernist' CPDM member, disclosed to *The Herald* of October 6, 2004, that even with transparent ballot boxes, the CPDM had already rigged 1.5 million votes of the 4.6 million registered voters.

Edmond Kamguia in *Le Messager* of Thursday April 9, 2009, questions why the census figures had not been released since 2005. The simple answer is that the election results that the Biya regime has been releasing from the provinces or regions do not match population figures. A lot of gerrymandering has taken place especially in Biya's ethnic Centre and

South provinces. There are more representatives from these provinces in parliament than there should be. And more resources are apportioned to these areas disproportionately than other parts of the country.

Democratic Deficits within Cameroon's Civil Society

Concern with the nature and characteristics of civil society in Cameroon has increased, in line with the growing tendency towards democratization, even the brand Nyamnjoh (2002) describes as 'cosmetic democracy'. It has been widely assumed that the successful institutionalization of a constitutional democratic regime is dependent on the existence and development of civil society, or that the existence of certain such nuclei is a prerequisite for the democratization of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. Such an assumption, the validity of which, of course, must be critically assessed, demands a more thorough examination of the concept of civil society, or rather, of the reality which this concept purports to describe and its bearing on democracy and on the possible institutionalization of constitutional democratic regimes. The most common definition of civil society found in the literature emphasizes the existence of a relatively wide range of social sectors — such as family, segments and groups, voluntary associations and the like — which are independent of the State, or autonomous with respect to the State.⁴

In Cameroon there is a plethora of features of civil society impeding democratization like the systematic closure of space for representation and accountability present in even the most idealistic and widely supported social movements. Forje (2008) is correct in asserting that the Cameroon State was viewed as an instrument of exploitation, pre-empting popular or individual initiative and revolt as well as fanning discriminative politics of ethnic confrontation and economic chaos. Thus civil society in Cameroon remained passive or captive and weak from 1 September 1966 to 26 May 1990. Political parties and civic associations were co-opted or coerced into a single-party structure — The Cameroon Nation Union (CNU) later transformed into Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) until the launching of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) on 26 May 1990. The gunning down of unarmed civilians by the military was indicative of

state resistance towards changing the existing political status quo of violent predatory autocracy. In broader terms, civic 'democratic deficits' include unclear representation, unaccountable leadership, and lack of autonomy from the state, political parties, or international forces.

Representation: Whom and what do civic organizations represent in Cameroon? Civil society's constituents depend on 'political entrepreneurs', social leaders, or outside allies to represent them. States, firms, and international organizations sometimes develop protocols to determine whether certain civic organizations are representative, such as certifying union elections. More often, however, recognition is based on the policy maker's political goals rather than on a systematic evaluation of how well a given organization represents its constituency. Generally civic society in a democracy requires organizations interested in public affairs. In Cameroon, there exists no genuine political institutional framework that articulates popular aspirations, let alone celebrating personal competence. Rather, mediocrity is ordained. Both the pauperization as well as the ethnic *divide and rule* policy of the Biya state has prompted Cameroonians to adopt a cynical and distrustful attitude towards politics and the state.

The highly militarized Biya state also creates and funds ethnic (Nkwiri and Nyamnjoh, 1997) faithfuls to neutralize feuding cash-strapped opposition parties and other civil society organizations. Thus, the way civil society is constructed has an influence on which social issues and identities are seen as public and political. An interesting analysis is given by Bayart (1993) in what he terms 'the politics of the belly'. Pointing out the issue of *divide and rule* and rewarding ethnic faithfuls, *Le Messager* newspaper (16 March 1992) pointed out that a sentiment of disappointment gradually replaced that of hope as it dawned on Cameroonians that qualification, competence and merit was the preserve of the President's tribesmen. Slowly, but surely, they started taking over all strategic appointments once held by people of different tribal horizons. In an expansive and greatly populated divisions like Noun, disappointment soon made way for bitterness as the division was suddenly taken over by the Betis — DO, five DOs, three *chefs* (police officers), medical officers, chief magistrates, prison superintendents, etc. The deep

agenda-setting power of civil society in this regard is manifest when even external democratisers tend to ask why there are so few women in trade unions instead of asking why there are no public associations for women whose labour is 'privatized', such as maids or prostitutes.⁵

Outside assistance may be deficient since it could have the effect of making civil society less representative by creating a gap between groups that receive assistance and those that do not. As a result of these disparities, there are differences in levels of organization, mobilization, and even identity among entire social sectors. For instance, a civil society workshop in Cameroon took place in Yaoundé on 31 May 2007. It was hosted by COSADER (*Collectif des ONG pour la Sécurité Alimentaire et le Développement Rural*) and initiated by the Cameroon civil society platform *Jeudi de Cotonou*. The participating organizations represented different groups and themes of civil society: youth, environment, governance/human rights, food security/sovereignty, religious faiths, unions, academia and education, health/HIV, culture, monitoring of public policies, and debt. At the end of the day COSADER only demonstrated that it had been a talking drum of the Biya regime through its undercover ethnic representatives.

Accountability: If the representativeness of civil society is sometimes open to question, the accountability of its leaders is also problematic. Social movements, NGOs, and religious and ethnic groups are especially prone to personalistic leadership. This is more than just the result of the 'iron law of oligarchy' — it also reflects the small size of these organizations, the power of charismatic leadership, and the limited leadership pool. The requisites of mobilization tend to concentrate leadership quickly, especially in less developed democratizing countries, where skills and availability are scarce.⁶ Civic leaders who emerge in the struggle against authoritarian rule are often less than democratic in the way they act within their own organizations; their moral certainty, persistence, resolve, and discretion necessary for survival as dissidents are not conducive to open, pragmatic, and fluid consensus-building (Tetchiada, 2006).

Worse still, personalism in Cameroon makes civic groups more vulnerable to state attack (by discrediting their leaders) and more susceptible to corruption,

cooptation, and partisanship. Corruption is also a problem in civil societies. President Paul Biya's government launched the anti-corruption drive on January 18, 2006, two weeks after sacking two magistrates accused of graft — the first such move in Biya's 23 years in power. The wave of anti-corruption fervour began as the Cameroon leader rang in the New Year denouncing the scourge and vowing to do away with it (Yaoundé, January 27, 2006 (*IRIN*)). Public funds are embezzled, like in the case of Ondo Ndong (former General Manager of the Council Fund), and disbursed in huge chunks to the President's wife's for her Anti-HIV/AIDS civil society organization, paying election rigging agents, and sponsoring activities of Biya's political machine, the CPDM (Fitzgerald and Swann, 2008).

Autonomy: Civic organizations are coopted by their targets, thereby curtailing their capacity for contestation, interest articulation, or even mobilization by the Cameroon state. For the Biya regime, neutralizing is the characteristic response to challenges from civil society. Cameroon's trumpeted 'political stability' has been artificially based on the suppression of political participation that lacks both a rights-respecting society and a rights-protecting regime; yet, it is formally considered a multiparty democracy. Lack of a rights-respecting society and a rights-protecting regime not only undermines the prospects for democratic consolidation, but also heightens the potential for future violence and chaos. For example, the *Fon* of Bali, Northwest Province ordered the killing of three men from the semi-nomadic pastoral *Mbororo* community over a dispute regarding stolen cattle. An official investigation was launched and an arrest warrant issued against the *Fon*, but he was not arrested, nor was any further action taken (see *US Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2000*).

In another case, the *Lamido* of Gashiga village in Demra, North Province, reportedly forced his inhabitants to vote for the CPDM on 12 October (See 'Forceful Voting', *The Herald*, (Cameroon), 20-21 October 1997, 5). The *Fon* of Bafut, Abumbi II is another example of a traditional ruler who 'advised' his people to vote CPDM, because 'such a vote will attract enormous development in our area and I want to congratulate all those who came out to exercise their civic rights' (See also 'Bafut *Fon* Calls for Peaceful Coexistence Be-

tween CPDM and Opposition', *The Herald*, 27-28 October 1997, 2). Civic groups and traditional rulers that lack internal democracy are the most vulnerable to cooptation, since capture is most likely when leadership is personalistic and unaccountable. As with organizational hypertrophy, cooptation hinders representation most when the group's goals include contestation, and least when they centre on the provision of services.

Dependency: Two things deny civil society in Cameroon from seeking occupation of political space: (a) the lack of crucial resources as finance and an environment conducive to civic activity; and, (b) the administrative and political harassment of civil society organizations that are interested in politics. Ewumbue-Monono (2006) points out that 'when a political party is criticizing the Government, it is seen as constructive, but when such criticism comes from the civil society it is seen as subversive'.

A good example was the July 1991 banning of six civil society organizations for promoting the *Villes Mortes* (Ghost Towns) and support calls for a Sovereign National Conference. No political party suffered a similar fate for the same crimes. In effect, over 70 percent of the registered political parties in Cameroon are nothing short of civil society organizations in their scope of activities and objectives, but dressed in party uniforms. Many civil society organizations aimed at empowering vulnerable groups like the youth, women, children and the handicapped, the elderly, and workers have been registered as political parties, which explains the high number of parties (207) in the country (ibid. p. 137).

The Biya regime crafted Cameroon's multiparty Law No. 90/56 of 19 December 1990 with an eye on opposition party multiplication, fragmentation and weakening as a means to perpetuate the CPDM's tight grip on power. Exemplified by the 207 political parties in Cameroon as of 1 June 2007, Nyamnjoh (2005: 113) argues that the multiplicity of parties, most of which had no existence outside the personality of their founders, can be explained partly by the government's interest in dissipating real democratic opposition. In fact, many of the political parties created during the early years of Cameroon's multiparty experience (1991-1992) were mainly CPDM moles responsible for infiltrating opposition groupings such as the Na-

tional Coordination of Opposition Parties (NCOPA), or passing off as the 'responsible opposition' constantly challenging the 'radical and irrational' policies of the 'hard-line opposition'. Virtually all of these parties eventually joined what became known as the 'Majorité présidentielle'. For example, Dakole Daisalla's Movement for the Defence of the Republic (MDR), which teamed up with Biya in 1992 to give the latter a parliamentary majority in 1992, was in fact created by the regime.

Elections without Democracy

The idea of democracy has become so closely identified with elections in Cameroon that we are in danger of forgetting that the modern history of representative elections is a tale of authoritarian manipulations as much as it is a saga of democratic triumphs. Historically, elections have been an instrument of authoritarian control as well as a means of democratic governance. In the case of Cameroon, Professor Asonganyi, former Social Democratic Front (SDF) Scribe and now independent thinker, in an interview granted *Pan African Visions* (www.panafricanvisions.com), observed with indignation that with the 'pre-election manipulations by the regime and the seeming helplessness of the opposition parties, there is no doubt that the CPDM is set to dominate parliament with some 160 of the 180 seats, come July 22!' From voters' registration, to multiple voters, to falsification of results, etc., the ruling party and its field agents who are the Divisional Officers, there was no end in sight to the fraud. To CPDM sycophants, President Biya or *Le Meilleur Choix* (The Best Choice) slogan was deformed to *Le Seul Choix* (The Only Choice) by those likely to lose in case of Biya's defeat.

Prior to the June 2002 elections, the repressive electoral environment had provoked calls for an independent electoral commission, which does not seem to have prompted more than a cosmetic response from President Biya and the CPDM, both intent on recycling themselves through the sterile pursuit of a semblance of multiparty democracy. In October 2000, Cardinal Tumi had added his voice to popular calls for an independent electoral commission, in an interview with *Jeune Afrique Economie* (no. 317, October 2-15, 2000), in which he was very critical of the government. The MINAT, Ferdinand Koungou Edima, fired back in a lengthy press release, accusing the Cardinal of:

lying, anti-patriotism, wanting to stand for presidential elections, violating the principle of the separation of the state and church, having little respect for those who govern, questioning the organization of elections in Cameroon, attempting to insidiously turn Cameroonians and the international community away from the huge efforts and sacrifices made by the government to bail out Cameroon from the economic crisis and insecurity, not being humble, and being tribalistic.

Election rigging has become a cultural trait in Cameroon. For example, over 232 national and international observers were deployed to about 20,600 polling stations to oversee the 11 October 2004 elections. Many electoral irregularities were witnessed, including multiple voting by loyalists, opposition voters who were refused the right to vote because their names were not on the electoral list, insufficient ballots and the poor quality of the ink used to identify people who had already voted (*Country Reports 2004*, 28 February 2005, Sec. 3; *Keesing's* October 2004, 46242; AFP 16 October 2004; *Africa Research Bulletin*, 31 October 2004, 15948). Speaking on behalf of the Commonwealth, Joe Clark, former prime minister of Canada and leader of the observer group, stated that the 11 October 2004 elections were poorly managed and 'lacked credibility' (AFP 16 October 2004; see also *Country Reports 2004*, 28 February 2005, Sec. 3; *Africa Research Bulletin*, 31 December 2004, 16019).

The USA Embassy, British and Canadian High Commissions as well as the head of the European Union in Yaoundé deemed it 'inconceivable to accept what they described as abuse of basic democratic principles and the rights of the citizens to an acceptable independent elections structure'. They noted their objection to ELECAM was not only 'because of the violation of Section 8(2) of Law No. 2006/011 of 29 December 2006 creating Elections Cameroon, but also because of apparent surreptitious complicity of the government to stifle true democracy in Cameroon by creating confusion in the definition of roles played by the different components of ELECAM'. Section 8(2) of the Law creating the electoral board states that 'Members of ELECAM electoral board shall be designated from the midst of independent personalities of Cameroonian nationality, reputed for their stature, moral uprightness, intellectual honesty, patriotism, political neutrality

and impartiality'. The appointment of principally well-known CPDM party bigwigs violates in spirit and letter the fundamental aspects of neutrality and impartiality (Ngalame, 2009).

It is difficult to envisage a free and fair election under ELECAM, given the CPDM's perennial control of the state's election rigging machinery, and the fact that its members are appointed by presidential decree — 11 of the 12 are too close to his Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, or CPDM, or have previously been appointed to public office by the ruling party. As expected, the confusion, drama, violence and controversy of the elections yielded a landslide victory of 149 of a total of 180 seats in the parliament for the CPDM, reducing every other party to a dying regional flicker, and imposing the CPDM as the only national party. In 2007, the CPDM arrogated 153 of the 180 seats in the legislative elections to itself, a virtual return to the single-party state.

Furthermore, six of the 70 articles that make up Cameroon's Constitution were modified on 10 April 2008, by a vote of 157 in the 180-member legislature. The amendments introduced three major changes to the Constitution: the two-term limit enshrined in the 1996 Constitution has been removed and Biya, who has ruled Cameroon since November 1982 and whose second seven-year term is scheduled to end in 2011, is eligible to run for office indefinitely. The president now cannot be prosecuted for any act performed in the exercise of his duties. And finally, with regard to presidential succession, if the president is unable to perform his duties or the office otherwise becomes vacant, the president of the Senate will serve as interim president of the republic and elections will be organized within 40 to 120 days. It is noteworthy that there is no Senate in Cameroon. CPDM chief whip Jean Bernard Ndongo Essomba said the bill, which also reduces presidential terms from seven to five years, 'will enhance democracy, maintain political stability, national unity and territorial integrity' of Cameroon. This is a real 'constitutional' coup d'état decried by Ngwana (2009).

President Biya claims that limiting his current constitutional term of office 'imposes a limitation of the people's will, a limitation which is out of tune with the very idea of democratic choice'. Over the years, he has elevated feigned disinterest into

an art form in order to create the illusion that his stay in power is dictated, and even imposed upon him, by 'the will of the people'. As part of a well-orchestrated plan to set the constitutional amendment plan in motion, he has manipulated his sycophants to pour out 'motions of support' for his 'President-for-Life' ambitions. A flurry of 'motions of support', Church prayers, rallies and meetings by CPDM cronies had been calling for a constitutional amendment scrapping term limits. And, in typical style President Biya has again 'caved in' to the demands of 'the people'. The President is now the principal actor in a 'normal' process which has, without doubt, culminated in a constitutional revision that virtually makes him 'President-for-Life'.

Conclusion

Moves towards greater political liberalization in Cameroon since 1990 do not necessarily constitute evidence of successful democratization. Rather, the democratization is flawed. The focus on elections to the exclusion of other essential features of a properly functioning democracy has vitiated much analysis of the 'democratic transition' in the country. By examining in turn the roots, meaning and limits of democratization in Cameroon, we have shown that a focus on accountability rather than on democracy per se would be more appropriate. Several variables as the deeply flawed, ethnically-based, make-believe democracy, Biya's own troubled personality, and finally, the security apparatus's backing, combine to seal Biya's fate in his democracy rhetoric. Is fighting for democracy in Cameroon like catching water in a sieve? This author answers, No!

What is to be done? The answer to this classic question may look like pie in the sky. But people cannot stand idly and look at the crushing of democratic forces in Cameroon by its bandit state, in the hands of an incurably vampiric regime, with indifference. First, people must relentlessly pursue a settlement of the feuding class/ethnic/regional conflicts on the basis of the only broadly viable solution: the permanent coexistence and mutual recognition of identities to avoid militarized domination, pauperization, and exclusion. Only the settlement of this conflict can strip Cameroon's predatory dictatorship of political cover for their abuses and free Cameroon societies to focus on the real sources of their misery and frustration.

Second, there is a need to open up the closed societies of Cameroon by promoting exchanges of all kinds with others. The current Cameroon dictatorship is a house of cards resting on a tissue of mediated lies. Its people, the most physically and intellectually isolated and totally brutalized of any in the world today, do not have the opportunity to master the clue as to how the rest of the democratic world lives. Once they find out, the regime will be forced to crumble, or else change very rapidly toward democratization.

Third, donor nations need a new deal in foreign aid and debt relief. Even with the new standards and pressures on dictatorships, the resources to sustain this system have largely continued to flow from foreign circles and International Financial Institutions. Part of this has simply been inertia and the utterly perverse structural logic of aid agencies and especially the World Bank, whose officials are given portfolios of money to lend and projects to initiate with the understanding that their careers will suffer if they do not push the money out the door. Part of it has been fear that if these institutions lean too heavily on weak, oppressive, rotten states like Cameroon, they will collapse altogether into new humanitarian emergencies. Instead, they dawdle and fund the Cameroon dictatorship while the country disintegrates more slowly and millions of its people live shorter, nastier, more brutish lives because of abusive governance.

Finally, the state itself has to be *restructured* with traditional leaders and so-called elites held suspect as they are traditional enemies of democracy. The despotic colonial, the Ahidjo authoritarian postcolonial, and the Biya kleptocratic state cannot play a popular democratic and developmental role. Its limits have been reached. The reformed state must have its roots in the people and must seek legitimacy from the people. It must seek a new social consensus and build its legitimacy not only on the ambiguous economic terrain — development — but also on the political and legal terrain of good governance. In other words, the restructured state and political system must be thoroughly reconstructed at the same time as an economy devastated by economic crimes such as institutionalized embezzlement, money laundering, pillage, exploitation, etc., following decades of colossal misrule. This scenario compels democratic dialogue to stop the volcano from erupting.

Notes

1. BBC 'Focus on Africa', Wednesday, 7 January, 2004, 10:19 GMT.
2. Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1942), p. 198.
3. Franz Oppenheimer, *The State* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1926) pp. 24–27.
4. For greater detail, see S.N. Eisenstadt (ed.), *Democracy, and Modernity*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992.
5. Public associations for prostitutes already exist in the Philippines, Uruguay, and Brazil. Such groups address political issues such as police harassment, domestic violence, access to health care, and women's employment alternatives.
6. Jonathan Fox and Luis Hernandez, 'Offsetting the Iron Law of Oligarchy: The Ebb and Flow of Leadership Accountability in a Regional Peasant Organization', *Grassroots Development* 13:2 (1989): 8-15.

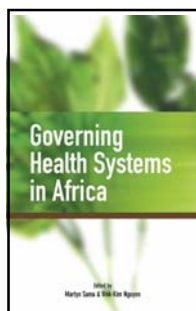
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Governing Health Systems in Africa

Edited by Martyn Sama & Vinh-Kim Nguyen

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Drawing on various disciplinary perspectives, this book re-focuses the debate on what makes a good health system, with a view to clarifying the uses of social science research in thinking about health care issues in Africa. The explosion of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the persistence of malaria as a major killer, and the resurgence of diseases like tuberculosis which were previously under control, have brought about changes in the health system, with implications for its governance, especially in view of the diminished capacity of the public health facilities to cope with a complex range of expanded needs.

Government responsibilities and objectives in the health sector have been redefined, with private sector entities (both for profit and not-for profit) playing an increasingly visible role in health care provision. The reasons for collaborative patterns vary, but chronic under-funding of publicly financed health services is often an important factor. Processes of decentralisation and health sector reforms have had mixed effects on health care system performance; while private health insurance markets and private clinics are pointers to a growing stratification of the health market, in line with the intensified income and social differentiation that has occurred over the last two decades. These developments call for health sector reforms.

Sovereignty, the Ballot and Democratisation: Interrogating Zimbabwe's Political and Electoral Processes in the First Years of the Twenty-first Century

Introduction

On Tuesday 22 July, 2008 the world woke up to the news that three Zimbabwean political parties, which won parliamentary representation in a plebiscite held on 29 March 2008, had signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) committing themselves 'to a dialogue with each other with a view to creating a genuine, viable, permanent and sustainable solution to the Zimbabwean situation...'¹ Dedicated students and followers of Zimbabwean politics would have noticed a more than telling paragraph in the MOU's preamble, which spoke to the signatories' concern about the 'recent challenges' facing the nation of Zimbabwe and the 'multiple threats' to the well-being of the people of Zimbabwe.

Signed on 21 July, 2008 under the facilitation of South African president Thabo Mbeki,² there were as many reactions to the episode as there are individuals. To some, the signing of the MOU was 'historic', (*The Herald*, 2008) marking a new era in the Zimbabwean political dispensation in which dialogue between political rivals would play a critical role in addressing the enduring presence of a variety of political, economic and social problems. For some it was 'historic', coming as it did almost four months after the country had held harmonized presidential, parliamentary and local government elections. A popular joke was doing the rounds in the Zimbabwean capital of Harare that it was not only the Beijing Olympics of 2008 in which people were witness to 'history in the making'.³ It took the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission a month to announce the results of the March 2008 presidential election. There was a one-man presidential run-off election in June and four months after parliamentary elections, parliamentarians had not been sworn in. Further, the country did not have a duly constituted cabinet. In view of the foregoing, there was a sense that Zimbabwe was carving its own piece of history in terms of electoral processes and politics. Yet others would claim that the signing was no more than a concluding chapter to a narrative, which goes

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back further in time when you consider that attempts at talks between parties to the MOU go as far back as 2005.

This paper is by no means an attempt at interrogating the basic tenets of the MOU or an analysis of its broad implications. Reference is made here to the MOU because the paper contends that engaging the events leading to the signing of the MOU and events thereafter expands our circle of understanding the evolving political situation in Zimbabwe.

The MOU makes reference to 'challenges' and 'threats' confronting Zimbabwe. What are these challenges and threats confronting Zimbabwe today? How are these challenges framed by the various political actors in Zimbabwe? More importantly, how do the different interpretations play out in the country's electoral processes and its attempt at democratisation? What are the 'multiple threats' confronting the well being of the Zimbabwean citizenry? What textures the characterisation of these threats? Who is identifying the so-called threats? To what extent has the general population been part to the characterisation of the threats supposedly confronting the country? Opinions are divided on these issues. The answers depend, largely, on what one means by 'challenge' or 'threat'. The answers also depend on which side of the political spectrum one is, given that Zimbabwe has been highly polarised ever since the electoral successes of the opposition in urban areas.

If we restrict ourselves to the 'challenge' as 'economic', some would trace its roots back to the decade of the 1990s, which generally saw a decline in economic growth and a persistence of the structural problems of high poverty and inequality. Others would claim that the fast-track land reform exercise of 2000-2002 destroyed

commercial agriculture and kick-started severe macroeconomic instability and changeable supplies of food and essential commodities. Yet others would claim that the withdrawal of international support and general isolation by leading European countries are at the centre of the challenges facing Zimbabwe. If we confine ourselves to the challenge as 'political', some would once again trace its roots back to land reform, which supposedly hurt American and British interests to the extent that they have tried to effect a regime change. Others would argue that the challenge stems from a political system that is out of sync with the demands of the twenty-first century, yet others would argue that it is a simple case of poor governance. Nor can these ambiguities be avoided when it comes to unravelling of what has been obtaining in Zimbabwe's political processes since 2000. These ambiguities are also at the heart of an analysis of citizen participation in political processes in post-independent Africa.

It is the contention of this paper that at the centre of Zimbabwe's political, and by extension economic, predicament is a divergence in opinion as to the nature, form and content of the 'challenges' and 'threats' confronting the country. There is a contestation in terms of what constitutes the Zimbabwean 'situation' and the forces that have textured this situation. This paper makes an attempt to analyse the context and content of this contestation and how this has impacted on the electoral processes in Zimbabwe since 2000. The paper also attempts to situate the Zimbabwean 'situation' within the broad debate about democratization and electoral processes in twenty-first century Africa.

The context and content of the Zimbabwe crisis after 2000

In dealing with the evolving political situation in Zimbabwe, the paper makes reference to the context, taken here to denote the setting within which political events and processes have unfolded since 2000 and the content, taken to de-

note the message various political actors (national, regional and international) have put across to the nation. I argue that Zimbabwe finds herself in a deep political divide, which divide has had a profound effect on post-2000 electoral processes and attempts at democratisation in the country.

This divide has been at various levels and has manifested itself in different guises. There is the enduring presence of a deep ideological chasm between the two main political parties in Zimbabwe; the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front) or ZANU (PF) led by President Robert Mugabe and the main faction of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by Morgan Tsvangirai.⁴ On the one hand, ZANU (PF), Zimbabwe's ruling party since 1980, has framed the Zimbabwean 'challenge' and 'threat' as rooted in two contentious issues:

- (i) The threat of western imperialism in general and British imperialism in particular;
- (ii) The land issue.

In the eyes of the ruling party, there is what appears to be a grand plan by western industrial powers to immobilise all former liberation movements in Africa and replace them with compliant, pro-western movements or alliances. ZANU (PF) firmly believes that white capitalist interests, led by Britain, have been at the forefront of regime change attempts in Zimbabwe. These attempts have been made through the MDC, which is seen as nothing more than a surrogate of the West. This point is exemplified in the tone and language employed by the ZANU (PF) election strategists in the build up to the June 27, 2008 Presidential Run-Off election. ZANU (PF) produced a campaign brochure entitled *100 Reasons to Vote ZANU (PF) and President R.G. Mugabe* in which the MDC's surrogacy was repeatedly emphasised. For example, part of 'Reason 2' to vote for President Mugabe read:

... one would be misled into believing that ZANU (PF) has become unpopular and President Mugabe unelectable while Morgan Tsvangirai and his foreign-funded and foreign-driven MDC... (2008: 1)

Part of 'Reason 3' to vote for President Mugabe read:

The fact that a presidential election run-off will be held on June 27 means that there is absolutely no truth to the claims of the pundits and detractors about the alleged popularity of Tsvangirai and his anti-Zimbabwean MDC (2008: 3).

The foregoing has shaped and informed ZANU (PF)'s perception of the MDC, its leaders and its agenda. Ever since the MDC was formed in 1999, ZANU (PF) has time and again branded the party as a creation of foreign interests serving the narrow interests of white Zimbabwean commercial farmers and those of Western industrial powers. The MDC has been regarded as 'anti-Zimbabwe', lacking national interest and bereft of ideas beyond the removal of ZANU (PF) from power. Notwithstanding the fact that the MDC obtained 57 out of 120 contested parliamentary seats in 2000, 43 in 2005 and that Morgan Tsvangirai received more than one million votes in the 2002 presidential election, and came just short of an absolute majority in the March 2008 elections, the MDC and the person of Morgan Tsvangirai are not seen as *bona fide* political actors in the country's political milieu. ZANU (PF) maintains that 'Zimbabwe will never be a colony again'.

It is interesting to note that during the 2002 presidential election, President Mugabe made references to the then British Prime Minister Tony Blair far more than he did to his opponent Morgan Tsvangirai. On the occasion of the country's silver jubilee-25 years of independence, in April 2005, the president in a televised interview to the nation said that as far as he was concerned, his opponent was Tony Blair and not Morgan Tsvangirai.

ZANU (PF) contends that the current impasse in the relations between the country and western countries has its roots in the fast-track land reform exercise, which started in 2000. An ambitious programme, the fast track land reform exercise sought to address severe land ownership imbalances between white and black Zimbabweans. In 1980 6000 white farmers retained 39 percent of land, the equivalent of 15.5 million hectares of prime agro-ecological farmland while black households remained confined to 41.4 percent or 16.4 million hectares of marginal land (Moyo 2004). At the end of the fast track reform exercise in 2002, an estimated 300,000 smallholder farmers had

been provided land ranging between five and ten hectares (Sachikonye 2003:3).⁵ Land was also set aside for 51,000 black commercial farmers. If we put these figures together, we have a total of 11.5 million hectares of land changing hands within two and half years (ibid). It is this transfer of land, which for ZANU (PF), is at the heart of the 'challenge' and 'threats' that Zimbabwe is grappling with.

It seems safe to state that the MDC's response to ZANU (PF)'s nationalistic posturing has been at best muted. Whilst ZANU (PF) has framed Zimbabwe's challenges and threats as wholly foreign-derived, the MDC maintains that the 'challenge' and 'threats' facing Zimbabwe can be found closer to home because they derive from a failure of leadership. Where ZANU (PF) sees a *real* imperialist threat, the MDC sees an *imagined* threat. Where ZANU (PF) sees a Western puppet in the MDC, the MDC sees in ZANU (PF) a political party that cannot face the changes in values and organization demanded of it by a twenty-first century political and economic system (see MDC Policy document of 2007). Interestingly, the MDC occasionally makes reference to an imperialist threat as well. According to the MDC, it is ZANU (PF), through years of poor economic management and the creation of a toxic political environment, which has rendered the country vulnerable to foreign manoeuvring and, or intercession.

The MDC points to the accelerated deterioration in the socioeconomic situation of Zimbabwe, severe macroeconomic instability marked by world record inflation rates which stood at over 11million percent as of August 2008 (CSO, 2008), low foreign exchange reserves, an uncertain food security situation, high build up in domestic debt, a decline in savings and investment, and unemployment levels estimated at 80 percent (Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions 2008). The MDC points to an overriding environment punctuated by worsening economic contraction, failing and overloaded health and education delivery systems, poverty, brain drain and the attrition of HIV and AIDS. In other words, what you have in Zimbabwe is a 'humanitarian' crisis whose genesis can be found in the failing leadership of ZANU (PF) and President Mugabe. It does appear as if the MDC has been bested on the issue of land by ZANU (PF). The MDC has, largely, been reactive to the shortcomings of ZANU

(PF)'s policy. But certain concerns have been raised to illustrate the party's argument that the 'threat' the country faces is that of lack of leadership. For example, the MDC has asked:

(i) Why was land reform 'fast-tracked' without careful planning? The MDC is always very quick – as indeed are western governments – to tell the electorate that the fast-track land reform exercise coincided with reduced food production and a reduction in foreign currency earning.

(ii) In addressing the historical imbalances in terms of landholding, did the government strike the right balance between the needs of the present population and the needs of future generations?

(iii) If land reform has been a success, why did the Presidential Land Commission, referred to as the Utete Land Review Commission, unearth multiple farm ownership, especially by senior ZANU (PF) politicians and business people aligned to ZANU (PF)?

For the MDC, the solution to the Zimbabwean crisis is change in government as seen in the party's *chinja maitiro* campaign slogan since 2000. *Chinja maitiro* is vernacular for 'change your ways'. The slogan was modified in 2005 to 'a new Zimbabwe, a new beginning', echoing the party's consistent belief in the urgent need for a makeover or transformation in the way the country is run. The modified slogan is premised on the assumption that Zimbabwe needs a complete break with the *status quo*, which is marked by a noxious political milieu. As far as the MDC is concerned, the country is under threat from despotism, corruption and a deficiency in democratic ideals.

Media and public security laws and the electoral process in Zimbabwe

What has been the broad consequence of the foregoing in terms of democratisation and electoral processes and politics in Zimbabwe in the period under review? Critics of ZANU (PF) point to legislation such as the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), enacted in 2002 and the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), also enacted in 2002 and amended in 2007, as evidence of the contraction in civil liberties and democratic space in recent years. AIPPA was enacted to oversee the operation of print

and electronic media in the country. The Act has been slated for its stringent conditionalities when it comes to the establishment or registration of private or independent media practitioners. Critics have argued that the legislation has left the general populace at the mercy of a partisan and unprofessional state media, which has openly supported ZANU (PF) and demonised the MDC and its supporters under the guise of 'guarding the country's independence'.

POSA was enacted to oversee a range of issues regarding public order and security. Political gatherings and meetings for example, require the sanction of the police before they can proceed. Should the police rule that the gathering might be a threat to public security; the meeting cannot legally go ahead. The MDC has consistently argued that this law has been turned into a political instrument by ZANU (PF) to undermine opposition voter outreach programmes. For ZANU (PF), such legislation is at the centre of the country's defence of its dominion. As far as ZANU (PF) is concerned, creating political space for such entities as the MDC is tantamount to weakening state institutions, thus making the country vulnerable to hostile foreign interests. For its part, the MDC supported the institution of 'targeted sanctions' against ZANU (PF) officials by the European Union because ZANU (PF) officials 'lack credibility'.

The rural-urban conundrum in Zimbabwean electoral politics

One discernible feature of post-2000 Zimbabwean politics is the rural-urban divide in terms of voting patterns. These voting patterns suggest a very strong rural support for ZANU (PF) and a very strong urban support for the MDC. In the 2000 parliamentary election for example, all but two of the MDC's 57 seats were from urban constituencies. In that same election, ZANU (PF) won only one urban constituency. In the 2005 parliamentary election, the same trend continued even though ZANU (PF) was to win a few urban constituencies following a constituency delimitation exercise, which resulted in some previously rural and urban constituencies being collapsed into one. In 2008, the trend of 2005 was reversed somewhat. The MDC-T made some significant inroads into the rural areas and ended up garnering 100 parliamentary seats to ZANU (PF)'s 99 and the MDC-M's 10. Of ZANU

(PF)'s 99 seats, only two are from urban constituencies.

It has been variously argued that ZANU (PF)'s agenda of land redistribution finds a ready audience among rural voters who feel the country is not independent as long as the colonial land imbalance persists. I would argue that such an agenda resonates with most black people in general and its acceptance is not in any way limited to the rural areas. Conversely, the MDC's agenda for change is said to resonate with urban voters. It has also been suggested that the MDC enjoys urban support because of its close links with the national federation of labour. It seems a synthetic explanation when one considers that the majority of Zimbabwean workers are not unionised. It could be that most urban residents still remember the time when Tsvangirai campaigned vigorously against the harmful effects of ESAP such as retrenchment, trade and labour liberalisation. There is a paucity of systematic, disaggregated data in terms of the voting trends across gender, class, ethnicity, rural, urban etc. In the absence of such an analysis, it is difficult to establish if the trends are actually permanent, semi-permanent or temporary. The 2005 and 2008 elections in particular do muddy the waters because of the upswings and downswings in support for the two parties.

Interestingly, neither of the two main political parties concedes it is unpopular in either the urban or rural areas. ZANU (PF) claims that it still enjoys substantial support in the urban areas and urban voters vote the opposition out of 'protest'. In this view, urban voters are seen as still loyal to ZANU (PF) in their hearts but vote the opposition as a sign of their dissatisfaction with 'certain' issues within the party. In the words of one senior ZANU (PF) official, MDC is a 'passing cloud'. The 'cloud' seems to be taking quite a while to pass though, because in the last eight years, not only has it not 'passed', but it does seem to have been getting darker and darker to the extent of threatening a huge thunderstorm. On its part, the MDC has consistently argued that it is a myth that ZANU (PF) enjoys overwhelming support in the rural areas. The MDC claims that it has as much support in the rural areas as it has in the urban areas but ZANU (PF) has always found it easier to either rig the rural vote or seal off the areas through violence or

militias. The MDC claims that a free and fair election would prove its claims. The MDC says that ZANU (PF) uses intimidation and violence in the rural areas because it is aware of its lack of support.

This voter configuration has also meant that there has been contestation over which party deserves to be called 'national' in terms of having support right across the country as opposed to regionally or ethnically determined support. The rural constituencies have therefore become a contested terrain in Zimbabwean electoral politics. In 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008 presidential run-off elections, the rural areas were declared as virtual no-go areas for opposition political parties. There was widespread intimidation and in places, physical violence. In one of his campaign speeches in the lead up to the 2002 presidential elections, President Mugabe particularly thanked rural voters for consistently voting his party. He contrasted the rural voters with the urban voters whom he said had lost focus of national ideals *nekunakirwa nezvhwitsi* (as a result of the sweet taste of candy).

The enduring contestation over the rural vote has meant that rural voters have been, for the better part of the last eight years, largely subjected to state propaganda, intimidation and violence in varying degrees. There has been intimidation and violence in the urban areas as well but it does not seem to have had as much effect as it has had in the rural areas where relative illiteracy, intimidation and violence have combined to erode civic rights. This has seen a reversal of the process of creating political space for the citizenry, which the government committed to, not only in the country's constitution but in international protocols as well. For instance, the government is bound by the Southern African Development Cooperation (SADC) Protocol on elections, which hold that elections have to be 'free and fair' in terms of affording all political players equal access to the public media as well as upholding the players' rights to free campaigning in any part of the country. There is also the matter of urban voters having the freedom to exercise their democratic right without being called names or being insulted. It is hard to think people experiencing the above scenarios can actively participate in a democracy.

Realignment of voting blocs in the post 2000 period

If we cast our eyes to the period from 2000, we discern some realignment of Zimbabwe's configuration of voting blocs. Zimbabwe has ten administrative provinces, namely, Bulawayo, Harare, Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Masvingo, Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South and Midlands. Bulawayo and Harare are urban areas. Prior to the 2000 parliamentary elections, ZANU (PF)'s support in Harare, Mashonaland, Manicaland and Masvingo provinces was fairly solid. ZANU (PF)'s support in the Mashonaland provinces has remained largely solid but support in the provinces of Harare, Manicaland and Masvingo in particular has been receding manifestly since 2000. The opposition MDC has tapped into this dissatisfaction by voters and, as results of the 2008 harmonised elections show, has made some very significant inroads into these provinces. It is doubtful that the growth in MDC support in Harare, Manicaland and Masvingo is wholly attributable to the organisational capability of the MDC itself. It seems safe to assume that it is partly down to ZANU (PF)'s internal politics and partly to the mobilisation efforts of the MDC.

For some time now, the issue of succession has been gathering momentum in ZANU (PF). Historically, ZANU (PF)'s support comes from the majority Shona ethnic group (comprising mostly of the Karanga, Manyika and Zezuru subgroups). The party's organisational structure has always striven to strike the right balance in terms of leadership positions between these three Shona subgroups. The expectation has been that since the current party leader (President Mugabe) is from the Zezuru subgroup, the next leader should come from either of the two remaining subgroups (Karanga and Manyika). When the then Vice President of the country and party, Simon Muzenda, died in 2004, the internecine battles related to ZANU (PF) succession politics became very intense and began to assume a regional/tribal dimension. Muzenda was from the Karanga subgroup, which, demographically, is the biggest among the Shona. He was subsequently replaced by a woman from the Zezuru subgroup under very controversial circumstances. The move was interpreted as furthering Zezuru hegemony

and fissures within the party along tribal lines widened.

The two Matabeleland and Bulawayo provinces have traditionally voted for the opposition. Apart from a brief period in the late 1980s and early 1990s when ZANU (PF) and PF ZAPU merged, these provinces have largely been inhospitable to ZANU (PF). Since 2000, these two provinces have consistently voted the opposition. There are persistent silences about the dissent in these provinces. In the 2008 harmonised elections, they largely voted for the smaller faction of the MDC, prompting analysts to ask what the issues were there. There has been a misconception that one corner of the country consistently stands out as not following the herd. The reality is that actually two corners of the country stand out. Along with Bulawayo and the two Matabeleland provinces, Chipinge constituency in Manicaland province has also consistently voted for the opposition. However, it is the Matabeleland question which has often captured the attention of observers. The simplistic explanation would be that voting is driven by tribal/ethnic disposition. Matabeleland is predominantly inhabited by the Ndebele ethnic group. After independence there were disturbances in those two provinces, which allegedly resulted in the death of about 20,000 people. The people of these two provinces also argue that their provinces are relatively underdeveloped because of their support for a rival political and military movement before and after independence.

Regardless of what the issues are, the Matabeleland provinces voted overwhelmingly for the MDC in the 2000, 2002 and 2005 elections. Critics were quick to point out that it was because a significant number of the MDC leadership came from these two provinces. At the time, the Vice President, Secretary General, Treasurer, Spokesperson and Director of Elections for the party were from Bulawayo, Matabeleland North and South provinces. After the 2005 split of the MDC, the smaller faction (MDC-M) became to be associated with tribal politics due to the composition of its leadership and membership. The party co-opted Arthur Mutambara (a Shona) as its leader, but this was largely seen as an attempt at political correctness. During the 2008 harmonised elections, voters' allegiance in Bulawayo, Matabeleland North and South was split between the mainstream

(MDC-T) and the smaller faction (MDC-M). MDC-M did well in the rural constituencies and MDC-T in the urban areas. It is hard to explain what textured these voting patterns, but it is clear that allegiances were re-aligned. The results however, confirmed the general perception people had about MDC-M: that it was a regional party with no support outside rural Matabeleland.

This by no means makes the people from these provinces tribalists. The same can also be said of the Shona people who have consistently voted ZANU (PF). It is a common enough phenomenon where regionalism is a key feature of voting. What has been difficult to comprehend is the choice of MDC-M over MDC-T in rural Matabeleland. MDC-M did not have a presidential candidate. It is not clear what difference in policy there is with MDC-T. The difference between them seems to be more of personalities than ideological. It does not tell us why the voters went with MDC-M but I think it tells us a lot about MDC-T and the apparent deficiencies in its organizational capacity. They lost seats that they comfortably won in 2005 to a party whose entire leadership lost in parliamentary elections. They lost to a party that has no recognizable structures, leaving me with the conclusion that MDC-M did not win those seats. Rather, the MDC-T lost them.

In concluding this section, the association between ethnicity and politics is never as straightforward as we often try to make it. There are many variables, which are not at all related to ethnicity or succession, which account for ZANU (PF)'s reduced support among its former strongholds. It is the contention of this paper that party succession politics and the perceived Zesuru supremacy have alienated ZANU (PF) from some of its former strongholds. Some of them have since found a home in the MDC. There are still some organisational deficiencies within MDC-T, which have militated against the party tapping into many disgruntled voters to the extent that these deficiencies might have cost them the presidency in the March 2008 election.

Liberation war veterans

Zimbabwe's evolving political and electoral situation would not be complete without reference being made to the increasingly visible and influential role that has been played by liberation war veterans

since 2000 under the aegis of the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA). The ZNLWVA was formed as a welfare association for those who fought in Zimbabwe's liberation struggle for independence. In the first two decades of independence the war veterans played absolutely no role in mainstream politics. In fact, most of them remained on the fringes of the country's political and economic affairs. This was to change with the coming to leadership of the association of the late Chenjerai Hunzvi in the late 1990s. Hunzvi was to transform the veterans from being an invisible to a vocal, militant and, by all accounts, reviled segment of ZANU (PF).

Hunzvi's crowning moment was to come in the lead up to the June 2000 parliamentary elections when he spearheaded the invasion of white commercial farms by the war veterans, war collaborators and some supporters of the ruling party. Commercial farm workers were particularly targeted for their alleged role in the government losing a constitutional referendum in February of the same year. A campaign that was ostensibly meant to empower blacks culminated in some unprecedented black-on-black electoral violence in post-independent Zimbabwe. Hundreds of farm workers were subsequently displaced and disenfranchised from the 2000 election. The authorities remained indifferent. There was a sense that most of the farm workers were of foreign origin and were supposed to go back to their countries. Statistics however, showed that the majority of commercial farm workers were Zimbabwean (Rutherford 2008, Sachikonye 2003). Rutherford in particular notes the uneasy fit of commercial farm workers within the political and economic development of postcolonial Zimbabwe, reduced by a nationalist liberation war binary of exploitation/abuse by racist white settlers.

Since 2000, the liberation war veterans have been an integral part of the ZANU (PF) electoral machinery. They helped set up military-style, political 're-education' (read intimidation, partisan rhetoric etc.) camps for the 2000, 2002 and 2008 presidential run-off elections. The camps were set up so that alleged 'sell-outs' or 'reactionaries' (read opposition supporters) could be sent for 'political re-education' (read beatings, insults, sometimes rape etc.). There are well documented cases of

torture and rape at these camps. However, not every war veteran has participated in violence and not every liberation war veteran is a member of the ZNLWA. Further, not everything that these elements were doing was sanctioned by the state or by ZANU (PF). There are documented arrests of people who were engaged in political violence, suggesting the work of renegades. It is fair however, to ask why these elements are never arrested during and not after the event. Arresting them after the event creates an impression that the violence is state-sanctioned. What is clear is that there is a militant and radical element within ZNLWA that has shaped and informed the association's activities in the last eight or so years.

The MDC's image problem

There have always been lingering concerns regarding what the MDC stands for beyond Robert Mugabe's removal from office. Legitimate concerns have been raised over whose feelings the MDC are trying to assure by focusing on the necessary yet narrow agenda of removing one person from office. The MDC was formed in September 1999 with very strong backing from the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU). At its formation, its interim president was Gibson Sibanda, the then President of the ZCTU. The interim Vice President was Morgan Tsvangirai, the then secretary general of the ZCTU. At its first congress, Tsvangirai was elected President and Sibanda Vice President. Other unionists were to take up key positions in the party structures. The MDC also had in its ranks lawyers and academics. In the end, it became a broad, loose alliance bringing on board associates with varied political, social and economic backgrounds.

Having touted itself as a mass movement, it emerged during the 2000 parliamentary elections that a great number of white commercial farmers were funding the MDC election campaign. This was to present the MDC with a problem. Queries were raised as to the true intention of the white commercial farmers. ZANU (PF) was quick to pounce on that and told the world that its view that the MDC was a front for white interests had been vindicated. The MDC argued that the participation by whites was an indication that the party was creating democratic space for every citizen of Zimbabwe.

In the 2000 parliamentary election, the MDC was to field a number of white candidates, four of whom made it to parliament. Conventionally, white Zimbabweans took a back seat in mainstream politics in post-independent Zimbabwe. The question is why white Zimbabweans adopted this apathetic approach to politics after independence only to suddenly find the inclination and drive to be active in 2000? It seems fair to assume that there was an unwritten *détente* between ZANU (PF) and the white establishment in the period after independence. In return for an apathetic approach to national politics, white Zimbabweans were guaranteed economic privileges that they enjoyed during the colonial period. After all, it is a political truism that 'rights' are not simply givens, but products of social and political creation and manipulation (see Morris 2006, Morgan 2004 and Wilson 1997). This was to change in 2000 when the commercial farmers decided not only to enter into active politics but to throw their lot behind the MDC. Analysing the nexus between race, class and politics in apartheid South Africa, Leo Kuper (1965) referred to an inner turmoil that white South Africans used to experience during the apartheid period. Kuper (*ibid.*) documents how white South Africans were suffering from a sense of alienation, thus finding themselves in an ambiguous situation where they lacked a political tradition. It maybe that white Zimbabweans began to feel that way, but the fact that they had no such feelings for 20 years takes away from the credibility of such an argument. The only reason left is that they began to feel economically threatened by land reform and found in the MDC a party that was prepared to guarantee them protection in return for funding.

It is remarkable that Morgan Tsvangirai is accused of being a front for white interests. In 1996, the ZCTU produced a position paper on a five-year economic recovery programme that the government had implemented in 1990. Titled 'Beyond ESAP: Framework for a long-term development strategy in Zimbabwe' (1996), the paper identified land and land reform as crucial to the economic progression of the country. As the face of the ZCTU, Morgan Tsvangirai was at the forefront of criticising the government for adopting a World Bank and IMF-funded economic programme. At the time, the government was saying that ESAP was home grown and Tsvangirai virtually went on a 'who home

grew ESAP?' campaign. It is remarkable that the MDC-T leader now finds himself being accused of lacking a nationalist orientation. What has fed this representation of him is that he does not talk about these issues as forcefully as he used to in his day as the Secretary General of the ZCTU. This has often been construed to mean that he is taking care not to hurt his support among economically powerful white people. There are legitimate concerns as to why Tsvangirai or the MDC do not highlight the land question to neutralise ZANU PF's monopoly on 'nationalist' claims. There is a school of thought which holds that the MDC lost many opportunities by attempting to be different from ZANU PF when they should have just come up with a workable alternative vision on land equity.

We have already seen that the MDC was joined and supported by commercial farmers and other white business people who previously controlled the economy. By virtue of their capital and social capital, they assumed a crucial role behind the scenes including giving MDC its first offices in a swanky party of Harare. One of the lasting images broadcast by the national broadcaster, ZTV, in 2000 was of a group of white commercial farmers signing checks and pledging support for the MDC at a meeting with Morgan Tsvangirai. The meeting was at the farm of one of the participants to the meeting. This was damaging for the MDC in two ways. First, the white commercial farmers' brazenness gave the world the impression that white commercial interests had taken charge of the party. Second, there was the dicey subject of employers (capital) joining forces with the working class (labour), especially at a time when their capital (land) was in the process of being seized. To observers, it was not clear how the MDC could manage essentially conflictual interests of poor blacks together with/against those of rich whites. These concerns become even more relevant when we cast our eyes back to the period 1995-1998 when the government listed 1500 commercial farms for redistribution and the same farmers negotiated for the farms not to be taken. They managed to reduce the number to 400 by 1998 (see Moyo 2000). These events raise questions about the intentions of such alliances.

To be fair to Tsvangirai and the MDC-T, there is a comprehensive MDC-T policy document entitled 'A New Zimbabwe, A

New Beginning' in which twelve pages are dedicated to the resolution of the land question, agrarian reform and agriculture. One wonders why it has been a big problem for the party to articulate its position on these critical issues. This has fed into the ZANU (PF) rhetoric that MDC politicians are opportunists advancing Britain's agenda of. Has the MDC become a victim of its loose membership? Some would say yes. Has the presence of white farmers created an image problem for the MDC? Absolutely. Not only have they created an image problem for the party; they seem to play a big role in setting the agenda as well. Is MDC a Western creation? Absolutely not. The MDC has been in four general elections between 2000 and 2008 and have done reasonably well. Branding it as 'British' is probably offensive to the party's supporters and by extension, millions of Zimbabweans. Looking at the March 2008 election results, only the MDC-T can claim to be a truly national party as it has parliamentary representation in each of the country's ten provinces. The smaller MDC's support is limited to two rural provinces and ZANU (PF)'s support is negligible in the urban areas. Questions linger as regards the ideological position of the party but to label it as a British creation is to ignore the facts on the ground, which show that for eight years, the party has grown to become a key player in Zimbabwean politics.

ZANU (PF), MDC and the democratic space

Both parties have had to deal with 'in-house' problems pertaining to their democratic ideals, which problems have also impacted on the country's electoral landscape. In 2002 President Mugabe said that he would consider stepping down in 2008. He encouraged members from his party to start discussing leadership renewal and succession. There was to be serious jostling for power within the party to the extent that the party's presidium perceived the jostling to be divisive and detrimental to the party. After a few months of debate, the succession issue was 'officially' closed on the grounds that it was harming the cohesiveness of the party. President Mugabe was to become the ZANU (PF) presidential candidate for 2008 on the back of serious divisions within his own party as members questioned the manner in which he had secured the nomination. The President admitted as much after the March 2008 election when he was address-

ing his party's central committee. He acknowledged that the party had gone into the election 'divided'.

The MDC was confronted with a major decision in 2005. Following the introduction of an upper house of parliament (Senate), there were sharp differences within the MDC leadership whether to participate in the senatorial elections or not. One group led by the President was of the view that propitious conditions for free and fair elections were lacking and the party should boycott the elections in protest. The other group led by the Secretary General was of the view that boycotting elections would give ZANU (PF) a free rein and it was better to participate and try to effect change from within. So sharp were the differences that the matter went to a vote in a national council meeting. Reports vary on what exactly ensued during the vote. Some reports say the pro-participation faction won by a single vote but the President unconstitutionally overturned the vote. Other reports say there was tie in the votes at which point the President cast his vote on the side of the anti-participation faction. Either way, the differences were so sharp that the factions formally parted ways. The faction led by the secretary general was to invite Professor Arthur Mutambara who was not in mainstream politics at the time to come and lead it.

In concluding this section, reference needs to be made to a phenomenon common in African political processes – the personal popularity of the party leader. Both President Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai enjoy immense personal popularity among their supporters to the extent that they are almost synonymous with the parties that they represent. It is safe to say that both have virtually carried their respective parties in the elections since 2000. ZANU (PF) has become very unpopular in most parts of the country but still gets some valuable votes because of President Mugabe. Most MDC parliamentarians are virtually small time political opportunists who have had their time in the sun on account of their leader's high name recognition. President Mugabe's popularity stems from his role in the country's liberation struggle, whereas Tsvangirai's derives from his late 1980s anti-corruption drive and his dissenting voice against ESAP in the 1990s. It is cause concern when this concept of a 'big' leader continues to be part of the

African political landscape. The implication is that focus is still on personalities rather than issues and, or party structures.

Civil society

The post-2000 era has also seen a proliferation of civic groups, which in my opinion have done little to bring about any meaningful change in Zimbabwe's political dispensation. Civil society in Zimbabwe fits the caricature portrayed in Håkan Thörn (2007)'s seminal piece on social movements. Often involving antagonistic relationships, the different movements have in common that their identities are defined in anti-establishment terms (ibid). In places, they have often made an attempt to constitute themselves into alternative political cultures. Results have been mixed. They have tried to create a context for articulating 'new' issues and 'identities' where such concepts as constitution making, governance, transparency, role of the media, electoral processes etc., are given central roles. It has been difficult to measure their level of success. Most of them have had to deal with internal problems of their own in terms of resource use and governance, a result of which has been that most have since lost credibility and have had no consequential involvement in the country's electoral processes and political dispensation.

It is interesting to note that most of the civic groups have elected to embrace narrow neoliberal definitions and discourses of 'democracy', human rights 'respect for property rights' etc., when most Zimbabweans are poor, lack decent housing and have no property to be respected. Clearly, political opportunism is in evidence here because no donor would support civil society anti-Mugabe campaigns if, say, they came out forcefully in support of land reform. Instead, civil societies have latched onto the simplistic notion of 'economic mismanagement', without really addressing the fundamental challenges facing the country like an equitable distribution of productive resources such as land and water.

Harmonised presidential, parliamentary and local government elections

Zimbabwe held its first ever harmonised elections on 29 March 2008. The messages for the parties remained the same. For ZANU (PF), Zimbabwe could 'never be a colony again'. For MDC-T, vote was

for a 'new Zimbabwe' and a 'new beginning'. The smaller faction of the MDC, after months of behind the scenes negotiations to rally behind a single candidate (Tsvangirai) finally decided to throw its weight behind the independent candidate Dr Simba Makoni whose campaign platform was to get Zimbabwe 'working again'.

The environment was as good as it could get. All parties and candidates had access to the public media. Campaigning was done freely in both the rural areas and urban areas. They were judged to be the most peaceful elections in post-independent Zimbabwe. MDC-T got 100 parliamentary seats, 25 Senatorial seats and 48 percent of the presidential vote. ZANU (PF) obtained 99 parliamentary seats, 30 senatorial seats and 43 percent of the presidential vote. The other MDC faction obtained ten parliamentary and five senatorial seats. Dr Makoni received eight percent of the presidential vote. For the first time in Zimbabwe's electoral history, an independent parliamentarian was able to retain his seat. The will of the people had been expressed. However, neither Tsvangirai nor Mugabe had amassed enough votes to be declared President.

The presidential run off

The presidential run-off election brought out the good and the bad in Zimbabwe's electoral processes. Holding the election demonstrated the government's commitment and respect for a constitutional requirement. The bad in the sense that ZANU (PF) introduced a completely new dimension to the electoral process and a message the country was not expecting to hear almost three decades after independence. President Mugabe's campaign team began campaigning on the platform that the 'gun was mightier than the pen' and that what the gun had brought, the pen could not take away. In keeping with the belief that Western powers wanted to effect a regime change in the country, the run off was framed as the last opportunity to defend the country's independence. Anyone and anything that was perceived to be standing in the way of this objective was to be crushed. In the words of Patrick Chinamasa, then acting Minister of Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, were Tsvangirai to win the presidential election run-off, it would have 'a destabilising effect on Zimbabwe' because MDC-T was 'anti Zimbabwe'.⁶

At a campaign rally in Zimbabwe's second largest city, President Mugabe said that even if people voted for the MDC-T, it would be a 'wasted vote' because power would not be handed over to 'puppets of the British'. There were specific threats that the country would go back to war in the event of MDC-T winning. In places, the President and other party officials would sound conciliatory saying at campaign rallies they would respect the result of the election. However, that conciliatory tone was always qualified by a rejoinder that they did not think that their own party would lose the elections so the question of accepting the outcome was academic.

The message from ZANU (PF) may have been contradictory in places but the environment was not. Campaign bases were set up in every corner of the country under the code name 'Operation *makavhotera papi* (Operation who did you vote for?). In Harare, there were various sub-operations under different code names. These ranged from 'Mugabe kuoffice, June 27' (Mugabe back in office come June 27) to M.A.D.Z.A, an acronym for *Mugabe Achatonga Dzamara Afa* (Mugabe will rule until he dies). There was violence, with the MDC-T claiming that over 60 of its members were killed by ZANU (PF) militias in the lead up to the run off election. The state denied these claims and argued that it was MDC supporters who were engaged in violent acts against ZANU (PF) supporters even though there are no documented cases of opposition supporters who were convicted of election-related violence. The opposition had no access to the sole public broadcaster, in clear violation of the country's electoral law. Once again, the rural areas were sealed off and were no go areas for the MDC. Five days before the holding of the run off election, MDC-T had a scheduled campaign rally disrupted by alleged ZANU (PF) supporters. There were violent scenes at the scheduled venue. It was at this point that Morgan Tsvangirai announced his withdrawal from the run off election. In his words, given what was going on, it was a 'sham election'⁷ with a predetermined outcome. The run-off was to take place all the same with President Mugabe as the sole candidate.

Government of National Unity (GNU)

The Government of National Unity is Zimbabwe's coalition government that was formed on 13 February 2009 following the inaugurations of Morgan Tsvangirai as Prime Minister and Thokozani Khuphe and Arthur Mutambara as Deputy Prime Ministers. It is a coalition organized among President Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front, Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change, and Mutambara's MDC, as agreed to during negotiations which took place following the signing of the MOU. These negotiations culminated in the signing of a Global Political Agreement (GPA) on 11 September 2008.

Following the GPA's signing, 'sticking points' for the implementation of the agreements in the fourth quarter 2008 were the allocation of Cabinet positions between the two MDC factions and ZANU (PF), particularly the key Ministries of Finance, Defence, Local Government, Information, Justice and Home Affairs. The negotiations stalled until late January 2009, when the MDC-T agreed to share the Ministry of Home Affairs with ZANU-PF on a rotating basis, as advised by the Southern African Development Community.

It is fair to say that opposition to the GNU was fierce from some quarters in both ZANU (PF) and MDC-T. MDC-M seems to have been the only enthusiastic partner to the GNU. However, the formation of the GNU gave President Mugabe the legitimacy that he lacked following the disputed elections in 2002 and the presidential run-off election in June 2008. The GNU put to rest ZANU (PF)'s previous assertion that Tsvangirai would never be in the corridors of power because he was a proxy for the British. President Mugabe acknowledged as much in a television interview with the national broadcaster (Zimbabwe Television) on the eve of independence celebrations in April 2009. He said that it was after the 2008 harmonised elections that it dawned on ZANU (PF) that 'people supported other parties' (some supporters of the MDC quipped, 'where have they been in the last ten years?'). Finally, the GNU gave a political lifeline to the leadership of the Mutambara group who had lost their parliamentary bids in the March 2008 elections. Mutambara did not run for the presidency but finds himself as one of

the country's deputy Prime Ministers due to what some have referred to as Mbeki's machinations to offset Tsvangirai's bargaining power.

Almost 30 years after a government of national unity was formed in 1980 to promote racial and ethnic co-existence in a postcolonial Zimbabwe, the country finds itself with yet another unity government. In 1980, the unity government was to be an instrument of post-colonial reconstruction, social redistribution and economic growth. Thirty years down the line, President Mugabe finds in the new GNU the resolution of the legitimacy issue that has hung over his head for a while now. Tsvangirai sees in the GNU the transition to ultimate MDC-T rule. Not much is known about what the GNU means to MDC-M beyond frustrating their erstwhile colleagues in MDC-T. The formation of the GNU seems to have enhanced MDC-M's reputation as a 'spoiler'. This view is especially strong among MDC-T supporters who feel that if MDC-M had not divided the vote in March 2008, their party would have won an outright majority in both the parliamentary and presidential elections.

The GNU itself mirrors the Zimbabwean electoral landscape of recent years. In the March 2008 harmonised elections, not a single party won an outright majority. ZANU (PF) and MDC-T emerged the big winners with ZANU (PF) solid in the rural areas. A significant number of rural and urban councils fell to MDC-T. Zimbabweans do see some good in both ZANU (PF) and MDC. It should not escape one's attention however, that Zimbabwe did not have a duly-constituted government for almost a year after the harmonised elections of March 2008. It puts into question the whole notion of electoral processes. There is no question that most ordinary Zimbabweans welcomed the signing of the GPA. What they did not welcome was the jockeying for positions that followed the GPA. There was a sense that political interests were taking precedence over the interests of ordinary citizens. The constitutional amendments that accompanied the formation of the GNU, commonly referred to as Amendment 19, were considered 'too personalised'. For example, it is specifically written in the constitutional amendment that the Office of Prime Minister 'shall be occupied by Morgan Tsvangirai'.

The formation of the GNU in Zimbabwe came against the backdrop of a comparable arrangement in Kenya where a disputed presidential election result culminated in the formation of a unity government. One wonders whether we are witnessing a new trend in African electoral processes where the outcome of elections is disputed, leading to governments of national unity. The Kenyan unity government, which preceded the Zimbabwean one, faces many challenges to the extent that the prognosis is far from reassuring. Parties to the Zimbabwean GNU concede that the government is transitional. The government's life span is variously put at two to five years. A new constitution is supposed to be in place 18-24 months after the inception of the GNU. This new constitution is supposed to form the basis for new elections. Interestingly, ZANU (PF) and MDC-T seem to be receptive to the idea of new elections once the new constitution is in place. MDC-M is pushing for a full term (five years) for the GNU. The value we can distil from that is that both ZANU (PF) and MDC-T are confident that they have the numbers to be competitive in a national election. MDC-M seems to be drifting and consensus seems to be building that the party has to find an identity or it will be history come the next election.

Conclusion

Zimbabwe is by no means the only African country grappling with political and economic challenges. As with most of Africa, the challenges have their roots in internal and external variables. An understanding of the evolving political situation in Zimbabwe requires an understanding of how the different political actors have framed the challenges confronting the country. In places, the challenges have been framed for political expediency. In places, the arguments are compelling. As this paper has tried to il-

lustrate, from the Zimbabwe case, we learn about the complexities associated with nation building in postcolonial Africa. Striking a balance between self-determination and sustainable prosperity has proved to be a big challenge.

Notes

1. 'Declaration of Commitment in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Zimbabwe African Union (Patriotic Front) and the two Movement for Democratic Change Formations'.
2. President Thabo Mbeki was appointed by members of the Southern African Development Cooperation (SADC) to facilitate the talks.
3. 'Witness history in the making' was the catchphrase for the Beijing Olympics.
4. In 2005, the MDC split into two formations. MDC-T led by Tsvangirai and MDC-M led by A. Mutambara.
5. The total number of beneficiaries under this scheme has been a subject of debate.
6. Minister Patrick Chinamasa addressing a press conference in Cape Town in April 2008.
7. Morgan Tsvangirai addressing a press conference in Harare, 21 June 2008.

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Farewell Messages to Professor Adebayo Olukoshi, Executive Secretary of CODESRIA (2000–2008) 31 March 2009

Mahmood Mamdani
President of CODESRIA
(1999-2002)

Bayo was asked to head CODESRIA in the midst of a deep institutional crisis. The record shows that Bayo successfully headed an internal reform of CODESRIA. His leadership confirmed and strengthened the character of CODESRIA as Africa's leading membership-driven intellectual organization in an era when more and more African organisations are driven by donors rather than members. It is fitting that this gathering salute Adebayo Olukoshi for his exemplary leadership at a critical juncture in our history.

Nouria Remaoun
CRASC, Oran, Algeria

Through these few words, the Executive Committee wants to pay a glowing tribute to Adebayo Olukoshi, the outgoing Executive Secretary of CODESRIA. This homage also goes to the team that worked under him, at his pace with self-abnegation and confidence.

Adebayo has been the man of the transition. A difficult transition which, were it not for his personality, might not have been achieved with such a success the scope and recognition of which we can measure today.

Adebayo has to be proud of his achievements and so are we.

He has been both a rescuer, a strengthening force and a builder over the 2001-2008 period. He has had to re-establish confidence and trust on two levels:

- 1- with donors,
- 2- with the members of CODESRIA and more particularly with the Executive Committee.

The qualities that Bayo demonstrated to achieve this transition have included:

- his commitment and passion for the Pan-African ideal,
- his professional management,

- his high sense of responsibility in relation to the historic mission devolved upon him.

CODESRIA has been able to find the desired answer in the man. His deep knowledge of the academic world in and outside Africa served him a great deal in his recovery, break off and continuity task, in the pursuit of CODESRIA's mission: serving the development of Africans and Africa.

As an Executive Committee, we duly appreciate this effort, that of someone who is charged with the mission of taking CODESRIA to new heights in Africa and elsewhere – an institution which is the pride of Africa. His action inside a team that he energised to serve this project arouses a dual feeling, one of admiration for both his intellectual capacity for formalisation and synthesis, but also fear for succumbing to the fascination.

He has been able, where it was absolutely necessary to bulldoze restore confidence, without which CODESRIA could not have survived institutionally.

Fortunately, his joviality, his sense of human relations and his sensitivity have mitigated to some extent what reason dictated him to do.

We are proud today to have assisted Adebayo, as an Executive Committee, proud of CODESRIA's leadership whose qualities of understanding, confidence and non-conflictual situations have been essential for the Executive Secretary to lead a successful mission.

I wish to thank all of Bayo's team to have been able to identify him as the man of the situation.

Lennart Wohlgenuth
University of Gothenburg,
Sweden

Dear Adebayo,

Now when your time at and with Codesria has come to a close, I wish to tell you how much I appreciate you and your tremendous work done for the research community of Africa, for Africa as a whole and for the world. From your earlier work and endeavours, we all had high expecta-

tions of what you might be able to do. Now, we can see that you have outdone all these expectations and much more – both as a scholar, a leader, an africanist and, perhaps most importantly, as a human being. I really hope that you also, in the future, will find a platform from which you will continue to contribute to Africa and mankind in the way you have done so far. With people like you, there is reason for optimism and hope for a better world in the future.

Adebayo, I hope always to remain your friend and brother.

Carin Norberg
Director of Nordic Africa Institute,
Sweden

Dear Adebayo,

On your last day as Executive Secretary to CODESRIA, we, at the Nordic Africa Institute, would like to pay tribute to one of our "sons", the elusive Prince, the much appreciated partner. Your period at the institute in the nineties was one of development and academic richness. In one of the many papers you wrote during this time, you put the question "Is there any basis for hope and optimism in the future of Africa?" Your answer then was yes, that the governments on the continent would have to contend with a more vigilant populace. It is my belief that it is people like yourself who have and will continue to contribute to this vigilance – through addressing the complicated questions and through being actively involved in the public debate. On behalf of all staff of the institute, I would like to wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Thandika Mkandawire
Geneva, Switzerland

To Bayo,

You have served the African social science community magnificently and with great dedication and sense of purpose. Under you, CODESRIA has attained unprecedented heights. I am confident that both your knowledge of CODESRIA and your intellectual capacity will remain available to us all.

I am proud and honoured to have been closely associated with you during all these years of hard work.

Carlos Lopes

UN Assistant Secretary General
UNITAR Executive Director
UN Staff College Director

The world is facing an exceptional moment. This is a sentence that has been repeated many times, in different historical moments and specific contexts. However, few will argue that what we are leaving is unprecedented, in many respects. One of today's most dramatic developments is the collapse of mainstream policy advice, so insistently offered to developing countries by the Washington Consensus experts. It is therefore reassuring to confirm that some of the high priests of alternative economics were right all along when they ferociously attacked the simplistic views of our continent. Our own Adebayo Olukoshi was perhaps a lonely voice in some quarters, but not so, within African scholars. He has rather been a respected leader, a prominent thinker, one that was pro-active in promoting alternatives that went far beyond the rebuttal of fashionable policy advice. He was capable of relating the unbundling of the latter with deep philosophical thinking. He writes beautifully, he is quick, and he is capable of explaining with convincing arguments the political economy behind our various crisis and challenges.

Adebayo was courageous in many respects as well. He took up the CODESRIA leadership challenge at a time when the organization was divided and lacked direction. He has succeeded in transforming CODESRIA. He introduced new themes and priorities, such as democracy, civil society, human rights, gender, identity and citizenship. This was not obvious. It was not easy either. But now they are part of the CODESRIA landscape.

Adebayo was also the promoter of the Lusophone initiative, the most serious attempt ever to integrate a rather marginal group of scholars into the organization. I remember the time, back in the early eighties, when I was almost the lone Lusophone voice participating in CODESRIA activities. The fact that one recent General Assembly took place in Maputo and one Lusophone, Teresa Cruz e Silva, became President of CODESRIA is a remarkable turn-around.

We have Adebayo to thank for this successful reach out.

Adebayo is generous. A respected colleague one looks for to exchange views and impressions in so many themes. He is rigorous, but without an inch of intellectual arrogance. This is remarkable and makes him one of the greatest. A Yoruba proverb says that the young cannot teach tradition to the old. Welcome to old Adebayo.

Jibrin Ibrahim

Centre for Democracy
and Development
Abuja, Nigeria

Dear Bayo,

Just a short message to say how proud we are of your achievements for African social science, not just because you are a leading African scholar with enormous research output, and not just because your scholarship has always promoted the interest of the African people, and not just because you have succeeded in revamping CODESRIA, but above all for your success in prioritising training and opportunities for young and female African social scientists. By so doing, you have planted the seeds for a greater tomorrow for African social science.

I thank you.

Elisio Macamo

University of Bayreuth,
Germany

Dear Ebrima, Dear Francis,

Thanks a lot for the invitation. Unfortunately, I'm checking my email in an internet cafe as I'm out of the office. I don't, therefore, have the right environment to compose a message that would be fitting. In any case, let me jot down a few lines to say how much of role model Bayo has been for me. I met him for the first at a conference in Portugal. This was in the nineties and my academic career was just starting. I think we sat on opposing sides of the substantive discussions and I remember him cautioning me against certain remarks I'd made that seemed to cast Africa in a somewhat bad light. At the time, I didn't quite understand him.

However, with growing involvement with CODESRIA and several conversations and debates in informal and formal contexts on all sorts of subjects, I realized

Bayo had spoken to me as a pan africanist. As an African academic abroad, Bayo's perspective and insistence on it became an inspiration for me. Bayo's commitment to Africa and to the social sciences made in Africa by Africans for Africans fascinates me as a person, but also stimulates me in my own work. I often find myself, when faced with statements on Africa, wondering what Bayo would have said before I even dare to formulate my own opinion. Whatever Bayo does next after his CODESRIA mandate, I really hope that he stays connected with the African social scientific community and continues to inspire many young scholars like I was in the nineties for the benefit of our dignity. I have learnt a lot from him and I'm very thankful to him for all the opportunities which he gave me to come back to Africa and feel at home. My membership of the scientific committee owes as much to his encouragement and vigorous campaigning as to his very noteworthy commitment to the integration of the African academic community. In this respect, I must mention the Lusophone initiative, his brain child, and an excellent vehicle for the reintegration of Portuguese speaking African scholars into the wider African community. In the unlikely event that young scholars do not react to Bayo's enthusiasm the same way I did, there is still, for those who are who are aesthetically minded, a very good chance that they come to appreciate his taste for colourful African shirts. I'm also already wearing them. I wish him all the best!

Best.

Samir AMIN

Forum du Tiers Monde,
Dakar

Dear Ebrima,

I deeply regret that I shall not be with you for the farewell ceremony.

Here follows my personal message to Bayo:

We would have liked to organise, even in the simplest way, a ceremony where we can publicly voice FTM/FMA joint leadership's satisfaction during your two terms of office as Executive Secretary and CODESRIA's helmsman. But this has not been possible because of our busy schedules on both sides. Nevertheless, we would like to put on record our heart-felt and friendly congratulations for the work that you have accomplished.

While it is obviously too early to make an assessment of these two terms, there is no doubt, however, that some important achievements have been made. CODESRIA has made progress in the implementation of its initial project of actively participating in an effort to construct/reconstruct an efficient African-Asian and tri-continental intelligentsia. Your determination to strengthen ties with the Third World Forum and the World Alternatives Forum has made it possible to associate an excellent Pan-African institution like CODESRIA to global and tri-continental events such as the World Social Forum in the early phase of its development.

The impact of your policy on the sub-regional location of the institute is becoming increasingly visible and widely appreciated. The publications catalogue has been enriched with the monographs that are required to lead the necessary and parallel reflection and debate on the causes behind the success of the imperialistic projects seeking to maintain our continent in a state of under-development and the left-wing alternatives. The project on providing CODESRIA with the self-financing bases which are founded on the contributions of its network members has made significant progress during your tenure. In summary, you have been able to salvage CODESRIA which was on the edge of a disaster when you were elected for the first time.

Warmest regards.

Mirjam de Bruijn
African Studies Council,
Leiden, the Netherland

Dear Bayo,

I remember the first time we met when we held a meeting at CODESRIA in Dakar, where we discussed the ASC-CODESRIA partnership. It was with Leo de Haan, our then new director. I had worked before with Gerti Hesseling who was very determined to get to know CODESRIA better and to get the ASC linked to your organisation. However, we were really struggling to get it into a formal relationship.

Your style of leadership opened the door for a partnership between CODESRIA and the ASC, for which we are very grateful. Discussions we had on partnership and relations between institutions in the North and in the South were very fruitful. I realised that we were at the end of the epoch

where the North sets agendas and where the South had to take what was available. You gave CODESRIA the independence it deserves as one of the largest social science networks in Africa.

I would like to stress that our collaboration after the meeting in Dakar in 2004 has been very fruitful. A special marking point in our relationship was the establishment of the Consortium for Development Partnership (CDP), which started with a meeting in the Netherlands, in the 'bush', Eerbeek. This meeting that was initiated by Richard Joseph from Northwestern University (PAS) and the Dutch Ministry of International Cooperation was very outstanding in that leadership of a northern institute was really challenged with the leadership of a southern institute, i.e. CODESRIA. The following years were not easy but CODESRIA played a decisive role in consolidating the consortium. Our shared ideas about this type of partnerships will now lead us into a co-leadership where the ASC is sub-contractor of CODESRIA. Of course, our collaboration had also its downs, but this is a logical consequence of the many obligations CODESRIA has taken up under your leadership and the many projects that you are leading. I am very much involved in the supervision of PhD-scholars in West and Central Africa and most of these scholars have been involved in CODESRIA activities. It shows how active CODESRIA has become in the education of African intellectual elites that are so necessary for the future of the continent.

Dear Adebayo, after these 8 years of leading CODESRIA, it is time to take a rest. You can look back at a very fruitful period also for the development of CODESRIA. We are happy that we have reached this intense collaboration with you and hope that the new executive secretary will continue in this atmosphere of collaboration. I wish you a time of retreat and reflection and after that, a beautiful career.

All the best and I hope we will engage in other joint activities in the future and see you soon.

Hari Singh
Asian Political and International
Studies Association (APISA)
Kualalampur, Malaysia

Apisa's Tribute To Bayo:

When Ebrima Sall of CODESRIA approached me to write a tribute to my friend

and colleague, Adebayo Olukoshi, I had no hesitation, notwithstanding the short notice given. If anything, I consider it an honour to be given such an opportunity to put into words my thoughts and feeling about Bayo – as he is affectionately known.

I first came to know Bayo in my capacity as the Executive Secretary of the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA). We were the pioneers of the Africa-Asia-Latin America Scholarly Collaborative Program, the difference being that Bayo was in the forefront of creating a counter-hegemonic South-South academic consciousness, whereas I was rather skeptical of such an approach. But it did not take long for Bayo's powers of persuasion, tact and patience to win me over to the Southern side, and where I have since remained with steadfast commitment. Together, and without de-emphasizing Bayo's leadership role, the South-South academic movement began to build bridges and engage the wider academic community, particularly in Europe, but also in Australasia and the Caribbean.

Although senior to Bayo in age, I was very much Bayo's junior when it came to matters of academic collaboration, organization, networking and funding; no doubt due to the years of experience tucked under his belt. But to attribute Bayo's success – especially during his tenure as the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA – mainly to experience, does not capture the essence of the man and actually underestimate other qualities that Bayo brought into that role. Bayo is a solid academic which few, if any, will dispute. Not only is he well read and published, but Bayo also impressed me with his intellectual sharpness, his meticulous organization of an argument, and his ability to convince others. As one of my colleagues in APISA observed: "Bayo could easily walk into a meeting room, be told what the topic is about, and deliver a lecture or engage others in a discussion on the subject in a very coherent, logical and structured manner".

These qualities, however, tend to divert the spotlight away from an equally important aspect of Bayo: his character. I have had the opportunity to observe, first hand, Bayo's ability to relate to others on the humane level. This may be just an involuntary reflex like paying for taxi fare to make sure that someone gets home safely. But the mark of Bayo's character

was especially evident from CODESRIA's 12th General Assembly: Bayo did not forget his comrades in arms and benefactors who no longer are in positions of authority. He accorded them respect and honoured them.

Are we to say that Bayo has no faults? While I'm sure he has, but then, who has none? The test of true friendship is to overlook the weaknesses in the other and dwell instead on the more positive points. On that note, to know Bayo is to respect him, and to treat him as a friend. Reciprocity is not the issue here.

Putting friendship aside and coming back to my role as the Executive Secretary of APISA, I will take this opportunity to thank Bayo for being there for APISA. Over the years, Bayo has given me sensible advice with regard to a variety of matters associated with running an academic organization, and which has been helpful in the overall development of APISA as an academic organization. The fact remains that organizations come and go, and APISA itself is not immune to the vicissitudes inherent in the funding community's priorities, and has been forced to adapt to more pragmatic realities. APISA's resilience and its track record aside, very few individuals are aware of the instrumental role that Bayo has played behind the scenes in committing CODESRIA to APISA's continued prosperity. To Bayo, APISA would like to say formally: "Thank you".

Let me end by citing Henry Thoreau who once said: "The language of friendship is not words but meanings". Although this message is crafted in words, hopefully, the meanings are clearly conveyed. APISA and I wish that these meanings will continue to bind us together as we wish Bayo the very best in his future endeavours.

Adam Habib
University of Johannesburg,
South Africa

Comrades & Colleagues,

When I was invited to write a few lines for Bayo's farewell, I jumped at the opportunity. Bayo is not only a great friend, but a fellow activist in the struggle for transformation - a struggle, not only nationally bound and not only confined to the African continent, but also directed at revolutionising the global academy. Bayo has been one of the great leaders in this struggle. In the last few years he, in partnership with a fantastic team, has re-

vitalised CODESRIA, one of the institutional bulwarks in this struggle for academic transformation. But he has also been a leader who has demonstrated magnanimity. When I led an HSRC delegation to CODESRIA a few years ago, we experienced unparalleled hospitality and comradesly solidarity from the Codesria team which enabled a true partnership to be developed between the two institutions. I experienced a similar attitude, a few years later, when I led a University of Johannesburg delegation to Dakar.

Bayo of course deserves a good rest in the next few weeks and months, given his arduous but exhilarating term as CODESRIA's Executive Secretary. But I urge him not to take too long a rest. After all, our struggle cannot let someone of his ability to be absent for too long.

Rest well my comrade, revitalize, but return soon, for our struggle for academic transformation continues.

Best.

Said Adejumo
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA),
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Bayo, Africa is Proud of You, Well Done and God Bless !

The stage was Dakar, the scene was the CODESRIA General Assembly and the year was 1998. The soul and future of CODESRIA were at stake. One of the foot soldiers of that battle was Adebayo Olukoshi, amongst both the old and young generation of CODESRIA activists. The battle was fierce, the struggle was total, but the forces of change and progress prevailed. It was at that moment that the struggle for the rebirth of CODESRIA, begun.

Bayo, you came to CODESRIA at a very dark moment in the history of the organization. The lights were almost out, the house was divided and Africa's social science research was in difficult times. As a committed Pan-Africanist, you took up the challenge to rebuild and rewrite CODESRIA's history and place the organization back on the world stage.

A few years down the line, you have achieved your aim. CODESRIA is back on its feet, much stronger than it was even in the old good times. Africa is proud of you.

In achieving your aim, I am sure you would have bruised several hands, offended

some friends and colleagues, and did some unconventional things. Success comes with some pains. I hope those friends will have a space in their hearts to forgive and forget, for you have made us all proud.

Bayo, as you move on in life, we shall record your role and contribution to Africa's social science and CODESRIA in gold! You came, you saw and you conquered! We wish you every success in life, for Africa is proud of you.

To Ebrima Sall, we wish you greater heights than Bayo achieved. For, to put it mildly, you are another illustrious son of both CODESRIA and Africa.

Jacques Tshibwabwa Kuditsini
University of Kinshasa, RDC,
Member of CODESRIA

Dearest BAYO,

At the end of your term of office as the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, allow me to express, from the bottom of my heart, all the respect and esteem that I have for you. It was during the preparatory sub-regional conference on the Council's 30th anniversary in 2003 in Douala that I had the chance to know you. Since then, my frequent participations in CODESRIA's activities have allowed me to be in a position where we have come across each other in different African capitals where CODESRIA often organises activities. In the course of time, we have come to establish friendship and fraternity ties beyond our intellectual relationship. This close relationship has enabled me to know you and to discover many of your qualities, especially that of an exceptional scholar with an unbelievable capacity to articulate the theoretical and empirical challenges of research. Soft, but with an unquestionable rigorous orientation, great and yet humble, your capacity to establish contacts and to reach out to the community of African researchers which you know so well, make you a genuine pan-Africanist, an emblematic figure who has been able to mobilise, throughout his successful tenure, researchers from different linguistic, geographic and generational backgrounds around the Council's programmes and activities. You are a worthy son of Africa in many respects: you are leaving behind you a robust CODESRIA which you have saved from wreckage and doom and elevated it

to the rank of a respectable, pan-African and world research institution which one can proudly associate with.

And thanks to you, dear Bayo, CODESRIA has become again a public space, a place for constructive confrontations and debates, a place for intergenerational and gender dialogue, a platform for the expression of intellectual pluralism, and in short, a tool for the democratisation of learning and knowledge. For the researchers of my generation who have known you, you are a model of humility, a knowledge icon, a scientist and a polymath, a unifier, someone who loves the work to be well done, almost a workaholic, a staunch advocate of gender studies and a first-class born leader.

How could one be reluctant to acknowledge your managerial skills, your high sense of responsibility, your sense of honour, duty and initiative, and your creative capacity, as evidenced by the great accomplishment that you are leaving behind you? Your name which is already engraved in the excellence and performance register, has gone down in the intellectual history of CODESRIA and Africa, it complements the list of pan-Africanist researchers of the generations before you: Samir Amin, Thandika Mkandawire, Guy Mhone, Archie Mafeje, Joseph Ki-zerbo, Mahmood Mamdani, Zenebeworke Tadesse, to mention only those. Allow me also to recall all the efforts that you made during your term of office in order to re-integrate the DRC into CODESRIA's activities. "As long as the DRC is absent from CODESRIA, I shall never be at rest", such has always been your concern whenever we met. Today, despite the many crises that the DRC is going through, its researchers are increasingly visible in the Council's activities. This visibility is largely the result of your impulse and "unrelenting effort".

Dear Bayo, I wish I had the talent, skill and eloquence which characterise you in this type of circumstances. Unfortunately, I am far from possessing these qualities to be able to duly judge a person like you and your action at the head of CODESRIA Executive Secretariat. Therefore, it would be wise for me to end here and to reiterate my unfailing friendship. I thank you for having rebuilt this institution which you are leaving in other equally expert and skilled hands.

Cordially.

Adigun Agbaje
University of Ibadan,
Ibadan, Nigeria

Dear Ebrima,

Many thanks for the privilege of being invited to chip in a word or two to mark the end of Bayo's term as Executive Secretary of our CODESRIA. Bayo's term as ES started at a point in time when the horizon for CODESRIA was very bleak. He leaves CODESRIA as a solid organization, Africa's respected voice and key player in the global community of Social Science and Humanities scholarship, with a very bright and secure future. He has transformed the Council from an organization unfortunately weakened by poor leadership just prior to his assuming duty to a very strong institution built on solid structures, processes and the best human capital that Africa could offer.

Bayo, we are all proud of your achievements, not only because of the excellence of your scholarship, of your person and of your governance skills, but also because in doing so much, you inspire those who refuse to believe that nothing good can come out of Africa, that, indeed, their faith is not in vain. As the CODESRIA door formally closes for you, I have no doubt that the next set of doors will lead you further up the path to higher responsibility for scholarship, pro-development practice, and human-centred policy for our peoples, our continent and our world. Thank you, my friend, my colleague and my brother.

Abdalla Bujra
DPMF
Nairobi, Kenya

Dear Ebrima and Francis,

Bayo deserves a great ceremony in honour of his great achievement. The Executive Secretary before your predecessor had begun to change towards the right, the ideological direction of CODESRIA, its intellectual constituency, its financial credibility and its integrity as a great Pan-African institution. Most of us had thought that CODESRIA had achieved stability and developmental direction which could not be changed. We were wrong. Within five years CODESRIA was in a shamble. Bayo became Executive Secretary at this point in CODESRIA's history. Under his steady leadership, and with the support of his colleagues both

in the Secretariat and the Executive Committee, he restored the direction and integrity of CODESRIA, greatly expanded its activities, re-established its stability and sustainability, and enhanced its reputation within the continent and internationally. We honour his great achievement. Let us also honour and recognise Bayo's personality - his modesty, his honesty, his sharp intellect, his sense of humour and his disarming behaviour towards all who encounter him.

Malika Benradi
AFARD Chairperson

Brother Adebayo,

Brother ADEBAYO, the man of all noble causes.

A committed researcher, you are deeply convinced of the desire for change.

Beyond research, training and creating numerous institutions, your overriding interrogations and concerns, have clearly remained the development of Africa, but over and above all the citizenship and dignity of African men and women.

Your permanent smile expresses the meaning that you confer on human relations.

Brother Olukoshi, whom fate has put across my path as Chair of AFARD, has marked my tenure from the very first day by his warm welcome, his listening capability and his encouragements.

AFARD, the leading pan-African feminist organisation was created within this prestigious institution known as CODESRIA which accompanied its initial steps into research and has always overseen its development and bloom.

I took the leadership of AFARD at a time when the organisation started to lose its breath, going through countless organisational and financial hardships in an extremely difficult regional and international environment. Like a sister beset by numerous difficulties, I sought guidance and support from my brother: CODESRIA and brother OLUKOSHI, the Executive Secretary, made it a personal affair and his priority.

Your guidance and availability, your mobilisation of CODESRIA's skills made of you a brother who can reach out and give when called upon for help by a sister ... a brother who is convinced of the women's solidarity and cause...

You supported AFARD in its uphill effort, you injected a new dynamism into its members. Your advice soon translated into the results that have materialised hope, ambition and the will to overcome all the difficulties and to keep up the fight.

This testimony will certainly not express all the gratitude and appreciation of AFARD towards Brother Adebayo who supported it, keeping the struggle and fight going in order to lead Africa into a better future.

This struggle torch, that lights up the African skies, will certainly continue to fly high and will always constitute Brother Olukoshi's top priority wherever he may be.

On behalf of all AFRAD members, I wish him full success in all his activities, a lot of happiness and long life.

Olive Shisana

Human Sciences Research Council,
South Africa

Bayo's intellectual depth makes him a distinguished African scholars who has dedicated a greater part of his working life thinking about what matters. His critical and sharp mind has rubbed on many of us who worked with him. The relationship we built between CODESRIA and the HSRC will grow because he planted a lot of seeds that will germinate long after his departure from CODESRIA.

Paschal Mihyo

OSSREA,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Dear Bayo,

This is definitely not one of the occasions most of us were looking forward to. But we are sure you have been looking forward to it yourself. You came, you restructured and reinstated CODESRIA. Bowing out when it is still at its best is exemplary. We shall miss you, not only for what you did in institution building in Africa, but mainly for what the situation would have been had you remained at CODESRIA. We are consoled by the fact that you leave behind a solid team of highly skilled and exceptionally motivated operators under the leadership of the person you have worked with at very close range. I personally have enjoyed working with you since my days at AAU and now at OSSREA. I can only assure you that, given the foundations we have built to-

gether, the future relations between CODESRIA and OSSREA will no longer be what they used to be! They will get stronger and warmer and grow as we go. All the best from me and from the Executive Committee and Secretariat of OSSREA.

Leo de Haan

African Studies Centre,
Leiden, the Netherland

Farewell and Appreciation Message

Dear Adebayo,

On behalf of the management and all other colleagues of the African Studies Centre Leiden, both research and library support staff, I sincerely thank you for the way in which you encouraged and reinforced the collaboration between CODESRIA and the ASC.

Ever since you headed a strong CODESRIA delegation to the ASC in 2004, we felt confident that our cooperation would be fruitful. Numerous interactions followed, such as feed back on each other's strategic agendas, research cooperation and library/e-publishing exchanges and conferences.

For the ASC this is an important step forward and we hope for CODESRIA, too. We will continue our close cooperation under the leadership of your successor.

Thank you again. Enjoy your sabbatical and hope to see you soon (in whatever capacity)

Souleymane Bachir Diagne

Columbia University,
New York, USA

Bayo, as I know him.

There is no doubt that Bayo Olukoshi has profoundly marked the recent and already rich history of CODESRIA. Our community was lucky enough to have found in him, at a time when our institution came under sharp criticism, a researcher of quality and a leader who has been able to embody immediately and throughout his two terms of office, the single thing that crystallises the force of CODESRIA: credibility.

The desire for credibility has topped the list of Bayo's concerns. As the Chair of CODESRIA's Scientific Council, and having worked closely with him in the preparations for our General Assemblies, in particular, I know he attaches so much value to the establishment of transparent

and efficient procedures for selecting the guest researchers who are expected to ensure the scientific success of these periodic meetings and to be representative of all African researchers.

It is with delight that one works with Bayo. The soft and friendly way in which he sought the collaboration of all is a model of leadership: this is because he was very demanding on himself and always generous in his effort and will to serve others. He relied on the best instincts of those he called upon to assist him in his mission. As he passes on to the new General Secretary the mission of leading an institution which today boasts the confidence that the community of African researchers place in its capacity to face up to future challenges, and convinced that he would be around and continue to put his experience and commitment at the service of the institution that I say to him "well done, my friend and thank you for all what I have learnt working by your side"

Jimi O. Adesina

Rhodes University,
Grahamstown, South Africa

A Tribute to Adebayo Olukoshi

The 12th General Assembly of the Council in Yaoundé must have looked bizarre and self-congratulatory for those unfamiliar with the state of the Council. In December 2000, two months before Adebayo Olukoshi took office as the Executive Secretary, whether in fact there was going to be a CODESRIA going forward was not guaranteed. A high point of the General Assembly was the session that marked the farewell address of Adebayo Olukoshi, and I had the privilege of giving a tribute on behalf of the Executive Committee. If 2000 marked the absolute low-point in the history of the Council, three presidents and executive committees, and one executive secretary later, CODESRIA, like the proverbial sphinx, rose out of the ashes.

More than any one person, the African social science community has Adebayo Olukoshi to thank for not only a recovery of a collective patrimony, but ensuring that we passed on the torch to a new team at the Executive Secretariat and the Executive Committee in full confidence of a guaranteed future. That this was done with absolute integrity, and true to the highest ideals of the Council, was particularly heart-warming.

No one person makes history alone; True. But each generation and community, village or nation has always needed its best and brightest in its most pressing hour of need. To possess enormous capacity for defending the patrimony of the community is one thing. To combine that with outstanding personal integrity, immense sense of history, brilliance and dedication in the process of rebuilding—these are indeed given to a select few in history. In this, we have been exceedingly blessed in the African social science community to have in Bayo someone who commands this rare combination.

For someone I knew for the better part of two decades before he became the Executive Secretary in 2001, I was constantly astonished at the extreme extent to which Bayo drove himself to ensure that the work of the Council was done and done to the highest degree of excellence that one can possibly expect of anyone. In his eight years as Executive Secretary, Bayo went not only beyond the call of duty, but often beyond the call of reason—putting his health and comfort on the line. Dedication, passionate defence of the integrity of the Council, and creatively leading the work of the Council were the consistent hallmarks of Bayo's tenure. His own immense sense of humility and service combined with outstanding personal probity and decency. For these and much more than one can put together in a very short tribute, we—all of us in the African social science community—owe Bayo a world of gratitude.

As much as we owe Bayo, we equally owe Hussaina, Iyamide and Akbar who shared their husband and father with the world and gave him the environment to serve with utmost dedication. This tribute is as much to them as it is to Bayo.

"Each generation" Fanon wrote, "must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfil it, or betray it." Of Bayo it will be said: out of the relative obscurity of the 1998 General Assembly, he with others discovered the mission of this generation; not only did he not betray the mission; he fulfilled it!

Fatima Harrak
Rabat, Morocco

Homage to Bayo Olukoshi

I came to know Adebayo Olukoshi during the Cairo sub-regional conference,

held in preparation for the celebrations of CODESRIA's 30th anniversary which debated the theme of: "Northern Africa and Panafricanism".

It was on this occasion that I discovered Bayo's pan-African passion and his determination to see CODESRIA achieve its ideal of unity and indivisibility of the continent, no matter what efforts it takes to overcome geographic, linguistic and gender barriers. Coming from the Institute of African Studies – a newly-established Moroccan multilingual Africanist research institution, sharing the same calling with CODESRIA – I was immediately impressed by Bayo's "unitarian" and "unifying" fervour from which he never departed.

This is how I was lucky and privileged enough to have somebody like Adebayo Olukoshi as my mentor within CODESRIA. It was by his side on the Scientific Committee and on many other committees, where I was invited to sit, that I learnt how to know and appreciate this great CODESRIA family.

What I admire and respect most in Bayo is not only his dynamism, his determination or the scope of his learning and knowledge of Africa and CODESRIA, but especially his subtleness, his ability and his alertness. And if I have to mention the features that have impressed me the most with this lively personality and for whom I have a lot of affection, three stand out clearly:

First, his extensive knowledge served by his prodigious memory, a fabulous physical resilience and an extraordinary gift – that of making the most complex ideas accessible in a simple and concise language.

Secondly, his allergy to all forms of status quo and mental lethargy. While assuming a firm leadership and working determinedly towards achieving the ideals of CODESRIA, Bayo never departed from his pen. His love for writing can only be matched by our own joy to read him.

The third feature is friendship. Bayo has all what it takes to maintain or make friends: communicative warmth, affective hypersensitivity, spontaneous sociability, unfailing generosity and curiosity about his fellow human. He has found this friendship with the CODESRIA family where my impression is that he has spent eight years of happiness.

Lastly, Bayo's laughter - odd remark or the slightest humour and there it goes! This warm and heartily laughter which cheered up our meetings and relaxed our minds after tough and sometimes protracted meetings, this laughter will continue to resonate in CODESRIA's halls!

Issa Shivji
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

For Bayo,

Affectionately, we know him as Bayo

Rarely could I say, pronounce Adebayo. CODESRIA he saved and served, our Bayo,

Pan-Africanism runs in the blood of Bayo.

Adebayo Olukoshi, with or without *uprofesa*,

will remain CODESRIA's Bayo.

Tunakutakia kila la heri, mpenzi wetu Bayo,

Umajumui wa Afrika uwe maisha na malengo, Bayo.

Zenebeworke Tadesse
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Bayo will be remembered as the Executive Secretary who saved the Council from the precipice and one who managed to take it to new heights. Among his numerous qualities, I will always remember his unstinting commitment to hard work, his sharp analytical mind and his sense of humor. He is a great asset to Africa. I wish him and his family the very best, as they embark on a new adventure.

Shahida El-Baz
Giza, Egypte

To my dear Bayo...see you soon..!

Dear friends, comrades and others,

Please forgive my confusion...! Although the end of Bayo's contract as CODESRIA's Executive Secretary was a known fact to all of us, announcing his actual departure came to me as a disturbing surprise, which makes it difficult to express my feelings as sober as one is supposed to be in such an occasion.

Bayo, to me, was always: a brilliant intellectual, an inexhaustible and dynamic leader, and a committed worrier for the liberation of Africa. More importantly, Bayo,

to me, was and always will be, a brother, a comrade and my virtual son-in-law..! It is within this context that I discovered Bayo's humane abilities for being extremely loyal, considerate, generous and highly supportive to Archie and me, as well as to African scholars and members of CODESRIA.

Under Bayo's leadership, CODESRIA was not only saved from being hijacked, but also became a knowledge powerhouse, a dynamic intellectual and political agent for African integration and development, and a safe home for African scholars of different generations.

While I am sure that Bayo is leaving CODESRIA in good and competent hands which will certainly keep the flame burning, I am sure that my dear Bayo will always be present with us in CODESRIA, our home..! Therefore, I shall not say farewell, I shall say : See you soon Bayo, and thanks for everything.

P.S. Dana joins me in all what I've written.

Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja
University of North Carolina,
Chapel Hill, USA

Hearty Congratulations and Best Wishes to Adebayo Olukoshi.

Dear Bayo,

I would like to join the chorus of congratulations and thank you for the outstanding work you did in reviving CODESRIA and re-establishing its preeminence as Africa's umbrella social science organization. During the more than 25 years in which I have known you, I have been greatly impressed by your intellect, the clarity with which you grasp Africa's realities, and your keen commitment to Pan-Africanism and the future of the continent and its peoples. I am certain that these personal and intellectual qualities will continue to guide you as you move on to new challenges.

Please accept my hearty congratulations for your accomplishments and best wishes for a bright future.

Ali El-Kenz
Université de Nantes,
France

A historian of ideas who would decide to work on post-colonial Africa would very quickly be confronted with this special

institution known as CODESRIA. It is different from universities which are national and have mostly an academic calling; it is also different from expert associations which, more often than not, work on programmes commissioned by foreign organisations and businesses. It is obviously an academic institution, though its knowledge is resolutely committed to the service of the continent, to freedom and development. It is integrated into a complex network of ties with foreign countries and is continually irrigated by this opening as it strives to control it in order to build its own scientific autonomy. Pan-African and committed is one way to describe this "collective intellectual" known as CODESRIA. But the position is a difficult one and requires both exceptional intelligence and will. A decade ago, CODESRIA was short of being swept away by the worst crisis of its history: beyond financing which kept shrinking and even academic freedom restrictions which constrained intellectual output, and in short, beyond anything finally external, the crisis especially hit the core of the institution, its politico-cognitive position. The proponents of disorder and chaos, individualism vs. holism, informalisation of social labour as a way of pulling out of poverty, etc. almost diverted it from the path it had painfully carved out over the past twenty years of its existence. It was then that I saw the new team of the Executive Secretariat, led by Adebayo Olukoshi, at work. I had known him as a young post-doctorate student in the 80s. When I met him this time, he was the young leader of this prestigious institution, yet on the "brink of collapse". It was an overwhelming task to put things back on the right track: first, restoring confidence with its researchers, its African and foreign partners and its donors while simultaneously reorganising the different administrative services and, last but not least, establishing diversified and autonomous scientific activity monitoring and evaluation structures for the scientific council, methodological and thematic workshops, workgroups, documentation and publication. The new architecture took form thanks to the admirable work carried out over several years. Today, CODESRIA has become again a committed "collective intellectual", but it has grown in stature and complexity and gained more pan-African and global recognition. We owe all this to Adebayo and his team which devoted

their youth to this reconstruction work, this sense of commitment in the noblest sense which they displayed and went even beyond.

Björn Beckman
Stockholm University,

An appreciation on the occasion of the changing of guards, with Adebayo Olukoshi going and Ebrima Sall coming as the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, on 31 March 2009.

I have been privileged to follow CODESRIA's development into the leading organisation for committed African scholarship, primarily from a Nigerian perspective, watching its remarkable progress together with colleagues at that end. Africa's public institutions, including its universities, are yet to liberate themselves from colonialism and new forms of foreign penetration. New local ruling classes are prone to manipulate these relations for private gains, but have failed miserably to provide social welfare and national development. Social progress depends heavily on the ability on forces on the ground to reform these institutions from inside and from below. CODESRIA is an outstanding example of such an alternative source of institution-building. However, even such achievements are under threat of being hijacked and submerged by factional divisions. This was the case when Adebayo Olukoshi took over in the year 2000 and his extraordinary contribution has been to ensure that the organisation has emerged even stronger and more committed from its temporary decline. Having been asked in 2007 to head an evaluation of the organisation by some of its funders, I can vouch for this impressive achievement. Of course, the quality of the whole Secretariat has been crucial. It is therefore also comforting to note that the able Head of the Research Department, Ebrima Sall, is now taking over as the Executive Director. We wish Ebrima the best of luck in continuing the good work. As for Bayo, I am convinced that he will keep up his commitment to Pan-Africanism and concerned African scholarship.

Long Live Codesria! Long Live Committed African Scholarship!

Carlos Cardoso
CODESRIA

On behalf of pan-African Colleagues at the CODESRIA Secretariat in Dakar

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

I have the honour and great pleasure to say, on behalf of the CODESRIA international staff, a few words on the occasion of the farewell ceremony organised in honour of the departing Executive Secretary, our colleague Adebayo Olukoshi. I must confess to you that this is no easy task at least for two reasons:

First of all, the moments of separation are always overloaded with emotions, as clearly expressed by a Cap-Verdian poet and singer who said:

Oi Partida, só bó podia séparanu!

Oh departure, you can but do us part !

Oi partida bó ê um dor profundo !

Oh departure, you make me suffer deep pain !

Séparaçon ê sufrimentu!

Separation is suffering !

Oi partida, bô ta leban,

Oh departure, you take me away from loved ones,

Bô ta torna trazem!

But fail not to bring me back someday !

We already had an advance taste of these difficult moments in Yaoundé and even here in Dakar. In Yaoundé, I said to some friends that you ought to have a strong heart and be in good shape to be able to bear the good and beautiful moments that we experienced during the General Assembly because they were so filled with emotions. I also admit that emotions are an integral part of life; and why not, of organisations as well.

CODESRIA and its Secretariat are well known for their working capacity, staff dedication to their mission and work. However, I am convinced that this dedication and work that we have accomplished would not have been done with the same dynamism and reached the same magnitude if they did not combine emotion with enthusiasm, on the one hand, and reason

and know-how, on the other. Didn't somebody say that *emotion* could create a change in state in the living world, something that is synonymous with *motion setting*?

Next, this is a difficult moment because it prompts us to express our attachment and the great work accomplished by one of the most eminent product of CODESRIA, someone who has always believed that it was possible to have great dreams while keeping one's eyes wide open and one's feet on the ground with a view to building things that would enhance the influence and image of our continent.

Dear Bayo !

During the past eight years, you have proven to us that it was possible to conciliate emotion, enthusiasm, the feeling of being part of a community with the spirit of sacrifice; in short, personal commitment with reason, logic, know-how and first and foremost with modern management to be able to carry out such a complex task as leading an organisation of intellectuals covering a whole continent and even beyond. If, in 2001, the philosophy on which the Council's activity programme rested was to send a strong signal to the community of intellectuals announcing the institutional reforms under way and also recalling that CODESRIA was the leading university interaction network in Africa; in 2009, as you are about to leave the Secretariat, the message can only be that the Council not only remains an excellent pan-African institution adapted to the essential needs and to the highest aspirations of African academics and scholars, and that it is also an institution that sufficiently innovates in carrying on its mission under the best conditions that can empower it to consolidate the historic achievements made by the social science and humanities research community and to look to breaking new grounds in knowledge.

I have no doubt that if you have been able to mobilise all these energies and know-how during your tenure, this is because even before becoming the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, you were fully aware of the greatness of the tasks devolved upon an organisation like ours. I remember your interventions in General Assemblies and other CODESRIA fora during the 80s, supported by those of other young CODESRIA activists such as Jimi Adesina, Sam Moyo, Ebrima Sall, Eric Asseka, Aisha Imam and many others. I

have been deeply marked by the relevance and strength of your arguments in your interventions which helped me to understand that CODESRIA was not simply made up of eminent personalities of the African scientific community such as Samir Amin, Joseph Kizerbo, Archie Mafeje, Issa Shivji, Claude Ake, Thandika Mkandawire, Wamba Dia Wamba, Okwudiba Nnoli, Emanuel Hansen, Abdoulaye Bathily, Mahmood Mamdani, Zene Tadesse, Teresa Cruz e Silva, Carlos Lopes and many others whom I am used to hearing; they have convinced me, in particular, of the usefulness and necessity for an organisation like CODESRIA on the continent.

When you became the Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, you inherited an organisation beset with numerous problems and on the brink of bankruptcy. This was a key period in the Council's history, a time when strategic reflection on past achievements, current challenges, opportunities and prospects was required. You have been able to set up and lead a team of women and men capable of facing up to the challenge of not only returning the situation to normal and most importantly taking CODESRIA to the level where it can today occupy an enviable position in the humanities research world, to the extent of turning it into one of the most outstanding organisations on this matter across the continent.

For all this, CODESRIA and the entire African research community are most grateful to you, Bayo.

We have always dreamt of it now we have achieved, it and we maintain our ambition to always fly high CODESRIA's flag !

Today, we can say that thanks to your decisive contribution and to the contributions made by all those who have worked by your side in the Secretariat and the social science research community, CODESRIA holds a decisive position in that it is one of the most famous pan-African networks of intellectuals reflecting on all aspects of social science research, whether on methodological or theoretical concerns and disciplinary prospects with a view to encouraging and maintaining a culture of debate within the higher education and research world in Africa.

It is true that our task is not simple and is far from being complete. There is still a long and thorny road to building the fu-

ture of CODESRIA such that as an organisation, it can live up to the challenges awaiting us and even imposed on us so to speak, by the new Millennium, by this unjust globalisation and by the aspirations of African Peoples.

What gives us courage, and this is one of the strengths of our organisation, is that all those who went through the Council, in one way or another, have drunk from the "CODESRIA water fountain", a sort of magic potion that turns our relationship with the organisation into an almost indissoluble one not to say an eternal one. In this spirit, we have no doubt and remain convinced that your passage at the Secretariat was just an administrative phase but your marriage with CODESRIA will last forever, as is the case of many other colleagues who happened to have served it.

Now that you are about to leave the Secretariat but not CODESRIA, we all wish you a safe journey to where destiny puts you next and wish you in advance safe journey back here in Dakar. As a Portuguese saying goes: "The good son always ends up returning to his parents' home". And with the poet, we repeat:

*Oi Partida, bó ta leban
Bó ta torna trazem*

Oh departure, you take me away from loved ones,

But fail not to bring me back someday !

Virginie Niang

On behalf of the CODESRIA
Secretariat Local Staff in Dakar

Distinguished Guests,

Allow me to address, on behalf of the local staff of CODESRIA, the Executive Secretary, Professor Adebayo Olukoshi who has managed the Council for the past eight years.

Mr. Executive Secretary, when you took office eight years ago, CODESRIA was facing a rather grim future. The institution was going through a deep crisis that threatened its very existence. You have been able to invert the trend by pooling the Council's core dedicated resources: its staff and members. Under your leadership, we moved from an institution on the brink of bankruptcy to a booming one by all accounts. This titanic task called for

the contribution of every one of us, and on top of all, your leadership.

This was no easy task for us and for you either; but I believe we share, you and us, the same love for CODESRIA and for its community. You have run the institution with easily applicable principles. As a member of CODESRIA, you knew what its community could expect from it. As the Executive Secretary, you made of it a tool designed for the integration of regions, languages, generations, genders, disciplines to the extent that it has now become our home-made label.

In a period of eight years, we have seen our institution grow in Africa and in the world. Our members are being recruited across all African sub-regions and the Diaspora. Through our activities and programmes, we can reach out to the academic communities who have had so far a marginal presence on our networks. Two years ago, we welcomed a programmatic and administrative evaluation of CODESRIA. This evaluation reinforced our position as the leading institution promoting social science research in Africa.

As CODESRIA's staff, with decades of experience in the service of CODESRIA for some of us, we can measure the progress that has been made so far. For some of us, you are the fifth Executive Secretary of CODESRIA we have worked with. We have followed the peregrination of the Council from the IDEP office building to our current headquarters. The past 35 years of CODESRIA are irremediably intertwined with our lives. We have walked along, side by side with the institution and we know where it comes from. But more importantly, we know where it is heading.

Some may think that it is not our role to thank you for your contribution to CODESRIA because like you, we are serving it. But we ought to thank you to have been the engine that has been pulling a team of people whose ultimate goal is to put their knowledge and energy into an exhilarating work like ours.

I wish you, on behalf of all my fellow local staff, good health and even more successes in your future undertakings. We have no doubt that we shall come across you again in the future, as previously, within the framework of CODESRIA's programmes and networks.

Thank you.

Kouassivi Abdon Sofonnou
CODESRIA

Needless to repeat your intrinsic value and qualities. You are known to be a hard worker, dynamic, rigorous, committed, humble, indefatigable....

I met Mr. Olukoshi during my first stay in CODESRIA in 2000-2001. He had just been appointed Executive Secretary then and his mission appeared to me as one of putting in place a Structural Adjustment programme. This was a period when the Council was going through a historic crisis which was both structural and financial in nature. The challenge was a sizeable one; the objective of the mission was worthy and salutary, but the work that needed to be done to achieve that goal has not been easy both for the Executive Secretary and staff. There have been frustrations, departures, bitterness and threats. This notwithstanding, the young Nigerian has remained undisturbed. Reform implementation required raising awareness, more dedication and on top of all, significant sacrifices.

Mr. Olukoshi, I know you to be very hostile and very allergic to the World Bank's options, but let me say this, you borrowed a lot from S.A.P in terms of management style and reform. I have been a victim of the first emergency measures in implementing your reform. As a research assistant to the Education & Finance Programme, my contract was not renewed. But surprisingly enough, three years later, it was still during your term in office that I was recruited again into the same Research programme. This is an evidence of the rigour with which you have led the necessary major reforms. Today, I spend most of my time supporting you within the framework of the implementation of the collaborative programme which you particularly value. I have learnt, during this close collaboration, to know you better, to take initiatives without waiting for you, to work under pressure, to face up to the demands of the financial partners and, to put it short, this collaboration was a new experience, a new school to me.

The time of separation is often a moving, disturbing, emotional moment. Be reassured that your mission has been a successful one and you can be proud of that and especially of your intellectual and managerial capacities. Before I conclude, I would like to express my sympathy and

esteem and reiterate my sincere gratitude for your contribution to the development of the Council. I wish you good luck in future and perhaps where you'll land next to perform the next adjustment mission.

United we remain!

See you soon.

Eléonore Diouf & Francine Adade
CODESRIA

Farewell Speech by the Staff of the Office of the Executive Secretary

Dear Professor Olukoshi,

Eight years have elapsed since your appointment to the Council in February 2001, eight years during which you served the Council with self-abnegation, courage and dedication.

Having worked by your side during these years, we have been particularly impressed by your dynamism, your very rigorous spirit, your strength of character and your exceptional working capacity, coupled with your clear-sightedness which have enabled you to manage the female and male employees of this institution with guts and uprightness, despite the workload weighing down on you.

This has not been an easy task for us either; but there was no doubt in our minds that we were making sacrifices for a good cause, as you served as role model in many respects for all of us.

Another lesson which we have learnt from you is that, by willing to elevate CODESRIA to the highest level of excellence, you have shown that one of the noblest ambition of a person is to serve others and not to be served by them.

Professor Olukoshi, your success and that of the whole CODESRIA is the result of an unfailing determination, a relentless effort and this thirst for knowledge transmission, cooperation and sharing which characterises you so well.

Now that you are leaving CODESRIA for other places, we want to thank you for your teachings and wish you all the best in discharging your new responsibilities. We have no doubt that wherever you are, you will always keep some connection with CODESRIA, your home where you can come as you please.

We shall miss you a lot, Professor Olukoshi.

Georges KOBOU
University of Yaoundé II-SOA
Vice President
Outgoing Executive Committee

Dakar, March 30, 2009

It is with great pleasure that I am taking part in this farewell ceremony organised in honour of he who will be perceived henceforth as one of the rare emblematic figures of the community of social science researchers in Africa. This is a ceremony which is at the antipodes of a tradition that seems to punctuate institutional and social life in Africa where people have developed an annoying habit of paying homage to illustrious personalities only once they are dead and, therefore, may no longer hear us.

If we consider that someone who is leaving the service of an institution is an example, a model, a reference, then to me, it is only natural and logical that he be paid homage while he/she is still alive among us in the flesh. In my view, this approach offers a dual advantage: first, it allows him or her to fully appreciate the work accomplished, something that is otherwise impossible to do, given the pace and succession of activities. Secondly, it allows his/her collaborators and other people to find out about his/her experience.

I would like, as the Deputy Chair of the outgoing Executive Committee, to try to pay a glowing tribute to someone who is so plural and multidimensional as a person that I do not really know from which angle I should proceed to grasp his personality and decipher his impressive achievements during his two terms of office at the helm of CODESRIA. As I am constrained by time to make my speech as simple as possible, I will just outline three aspects of our illustrious character to whom we are today paying homage: first, the *Professor*, secondly, the *Executive Secretary* and lastly, the *friend*.

1. Abebayo, the Professor

On this tone, I would like to formally confess here that I have never ceased to be marvelled by the intellectual extremely committed to the cause of Africa whom

you exemplified. How wouldn't one be seduced by your posture as an apostle of a standing Africa, better armed and not shying away from competition with the other continents? This is not an incantation, but a factual reality reflected in the ideals having underlined your mission at the heart of our cherished institution.

It is important to recall that your appointment at the head of CODESRIA occurred at a time when Africa got mired in economic crisis in addition to a crisis in thinking, particularly when it comes to seeking a specific way of promoting development. Without giving in to the surrounding afro-pessimism and armed with your usual courage, you incited vigorously and with a dose of subtleness, the social science research community to lead a critical approach to mainstream thinking. With this in mind, you developed the research activities that would lead to the design of programmes offering alternative and relevant options for the sustainable development of the continent.

With fervour, pugnacity and boldness you made it possible to create a receptive framework for alternative ideas by federating methodically and harmoniously the work conducted by African researchers from the continent and the Diaspora as well as the work of Africanists in Europe, Latin America and Asia. Deciphering these different studies shows that development does not only rely on physical wealth which is basically encouraged by the marketplace.

Such aspects as culture, arts, sociology, context, etc. are additional parameters that must be taken into consideration, as they contribute to questioning the economic programmes designed by international institutions in the early 80s. Your programmatic orientations which are based on a multidisciplinary approach have made it possible to outline an innovative and innovated African research during this last decade in CODESRIA. Yes, Professor, your work is gigantic and far-reaching and I can see once again how you so masterfully brought us to follow you with your strong will, perseverance and determination. Of course, you've always had this determination which helps me shed light on the second angle from which I'll attempt to grasp the second level of your personality:

2. Olukoshi as Executive Secretary

From this standpoint, I can see two outstanding features which impressed me very much while I closely watch your management of current affairs: a charismatic leader and a committed pan-Africanist.

Your charisma as a leader is stamped with rarely paralleled professionalism and as a role model you have always aroused our admiration and pride. You are an organiser at the controls, always present at CODESRIA whether in or outside Dakar. You are not the type of leader who issues instructions and orders from the distance. On the contrary, you are close to your collaborators, working relentlessly with them in search for a collective result. The nickname “*Bayowork*”, which your collaborators have affectionately conferred on you, goes a long well in telling the type of your relationship with them.

As a man of action, you were able to establish a pragmatic management embodying a managerial philosophy based on humanism in which the stage is set for the development of the individual values and human qualities and capacities of your collaborators. With your usual vigour and dynamism, you have integrated a style, that of a solidarity and participatory spirit. It is no surprise therefore that these elements coupled with the cohesive environment that you were able to carefully set up, contribute to the high-performance of CODESRIA which we are implicitly commending during this ceremony.

I cannot end it here or regrettably overlook another strong feature that is, the spirit of pan-Africanism, the overriding concern in your daily management of CODESRIA. I can witness here that despite the powerful rise in false nationhood that marked the 2000s, as the Executive Secretary, you have successfully elevated the large family of researchers to new heights without showing at any point in time, your individual or national preferences.

Throughout your tenure, the key-idea that has dictated your decisions is a diverse and borderless Africa. Incidentally,

I would like to allude to the Nigeria-Cameroon conflict, which could have aroused the patriotic instinct of a citizen like you of a great nation which has proven means to impose itself by force in this conflict. Having teased you on many occasions on the subject, you have always remained impassive, as you kept saying that on either side of the frontiers you only find the same and single people! Thank you, Mr. African for this lesson which I am borrowing by the way to describe your third level characteristic.

3. Bayo, the Friend

Bayo, I have known you since the end of the 90, and I should say how many times you have remained as the mathematicians say an identity. You don't consider friendship a triviality but rather something precious and sacred, and you know too well how to make the distinction, as you strive not to taint it with professional reality. You are not only sincere but you also know how to rid yourself of that strong personality of yours to become a common man with your friends. I would like to really insist on this in the light of two major occurrences that moved me.

The first one dates back to December 2008 during the preparations for CODESRIA's 12th General Assembly, organised in Yaoundé. Following my misunderstanding of some aspects of the organisation, I approached you for some explanations. You not only gave me the explanations that I needed but you also moved me as you burst into tears. I finally realised that you did not understand why I could not understand you. I was so moved and shaken by such a situation which was nothing less than the reflection of deeply rooted friendship.

There was a second major instance which took place following a sad event more specifically when one of your brothers died in Lagos. On that occasion, I had been mandated by CODESRIA to assist you during the funeral. On my arrival, as I was preparing to put up at a hotel, you spontaneously asked me to stay at your house and make myself at home. While I was there to share in your grief, I realised

that you were actually trying to make my stay as pleasant as possible.

There is no doubt that you naturally featured a very strong character that allows you to cope well in the face of adversity. But it was first and foremost the demonstration of deep and sincere friendship which never failed no matter where we met. You would always listen to everyone with your usual simplicity.

In the light of the foregoing and to make things short, I can describe our illustrious character using a lapidary expression: *Bayo the visionary*. This vision is tantamount to a note of hope for Africa in quest for credibility. And I think that by his courage and determination, Bayo has shown that it is possible. I would also like to add that Bayo taught me to cardinal virtues that characterise great figures: hard work and humility. Thank you for this brilliant teaching.

Before concluding my address, I would like to share with you Ladies and Gentlemen, this reflection borrowed from Seneca: “...there is no favourable wind for someone who does not know where he is heading”. Referring to this reflection, I am proud to say that by knowing exactly where he wanted to take CODESRIA to, Bayo has now become the compass which the institution needs to navigate confidently. After having just written an important chapter in the Council's history, by a happy coincidence, he is succeeded by one of CODESRIA's staff member, Ebrima SALL, whose hard work over time has earned him everyone's recognition. Characterised by humility and the sense of duty, I believe he will make CODESRIA's flag fly even higher thereby giving us another opportunity in a few years to organise an even more important and more magnificent homage ceremony. To conclude, I say:

Thank you my friend Bayo,

Thank you Professor Adebayo,

Thank you Mr. Outgoing Executive Secretary,

Good luck Mr. New Executive Secretary,

Thank you for your kind attention.