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STUCK ON THE RUNWAY: FACING THE CHALLENGES OF AFRICA'S DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

The Independence That Never Was

By the end of this decade, most African countries will be celebrating their golden jubilee of their independence. It will be an independence bonanza celebrated within the realm of rising abject poverty, misery, high infant mortality, rising rate of STD, HIV/AIDS pandemic; famine, economic crisis, political instability, civil wars, ethnic cleansing and genocide, declining living standards, rising rate of corruption and insecurity, the penetrating impact of globalization amongst many other ills plaguing the continent.

John W Forje

The question that beats the imagination of every one, is why a continent once held in high esteem, with much promise and expectations suddenly collapsed into a state of no return even beyond the lowest thinkable levels of the colonial administration? One begins to wonder whether the political independence of African states were wrongly negotiated; whether Africans lack the capacity to shape and manage their affairs and destiny? Is this due to wrong leadership role? Whether the colonial masters had a hidden agenda, that is, the instrument of political independence was handed out of spite, bad faith, creating salient hindrance and mechanisms of sabotaging the independence of African countries. Why has Africa after independence exposed itself to a new of form of colonialism? The article investigates issues surrounding the state of governance and democracy and its consequences in the region and within the world. Why does good governance remain imperative, holding the best sign and offering the right mechanisms for a lost continent and people at the dawn of the age of globalization and technological advancements ever known in the history of mankind?

Theoretical Setting

The conceptual framework of the paper departs from the premises that the absence of democracy contributes to the absence of good governance. It argues that African countries display the trappings of a consociational state, and good governance depends on the degree of application of the paradigms of consociation. Thus, the paper stresses the need of building a new culture of democratic governance through partnership between the state and civil society in the quest for sustainable development, and for the continent to be a part not apart of the rapidly changing global community of nations. The need

Continued on page 4

**ALSO IN
THIS ISSUE:**

■ Land Conflict in Zimbabwe ■ Poetry ■ Budapest Update
■ *Futures in Education* Reviewed ■ Slaughter: 4 Years After

CHRISTOPHER B. JONES

African futures are very close to the present. I have been working with two long-standing WFSF members, JOHN FORJE and CHARITY MANYERUKE to feature articles on the futures of Africa. At first glance they may not seem "futuristic" but it became obvious to me reading and working with them that these are very much about the future of Africa, and in a wider sense about our own futures on the planet: the legacy of colonialism and environmental and human exploitation, land use and tenure, equity, and meaningful lives and our very survival. As many others, I have watched the mainstream news broadcasts and read more politically-attuned analyses of the struggles for the future of Zimbabwe, but MANYERUKE'S look at the conflicts put this story into sharp relief and gave an inside view that has been sadly lacking in the mainstream press. FORJE takes broader sweep of the evolving struggles for political, social, and economic directions of national leaders and for governance and participation in Africa's future.

SANDRA BURCHSTED, DAVID HICKS, and RICHARD SLAUGHTER all present one of our fundamental dilemmas in futures: how to reach deeper into the educational process to enhance futures literacy. One of the clear roles of the Federation in addressing the global problematique is to push the futures education agenda. We are making progress, but why does the pace seem so slow? BURCHSTED reviews an AFI monograph and highlights a number of those issues; HICKS asks us to do more. Please contribute to this effort.

SLAUGHTER reviews our four years as executives and points to tasks ahead... In addition to his summary: We are also engaged in greater collaboration with other futures organizations around the globe. We have established a reciprocal exchange agreement with both the World Future Society and Shaping Tomorrow. We have been formally or informally



involved, primarily through individual member participation, in a number of European futures conferences this spring. WFSF had a large contingent and a panel, thanks to REED RINER, at the annual CONTACT conference. It is hoped to also forge greater ties with the new Association of Professional Futurists in shared interests and discussions of professional ethics, certification, and branding. There continue to be incremental movements towards an International Masters in Foresight and FS in conversations between faculty in the various academic institutions offering curriculum and courses in futures. We continue to support and receive the support of the UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE, FINLAND FUTURES ACADEMY, and TAMKANG UNIVERSITY as institutional members. Don't forget to put the November TAMKANG conference on your calendars: *Global Soul, Global Mind, Global Action: Futuring from Survival to Thrival* (see details at: www.wfsf.org/events/upconf.shtml)

We are looking forward to a vibrant and full 19th World Conference in Budapest, Hungary. I just returned from a wonderful planning meeting with members of the Corvinus University of Budapest (CUB) planning team, ERZSEBET NOVAKY, TAMAS GASPARI, and REKA VARNAGY. The planning team has been very busy and developed a very attractive web site. The BUC is an attractive venue in the heart of Budapest on the Danube River across from the Citadel. We are delighted to have received an modest NGO Participation Programme award from UNESCO for the Budapest Futures Course (BFC) and conference. The BFC will take place in tandem with the conference and run two days beyond it. There are a limited number of scholarships to cover local accommodations and registration costs. For more info, go to:

www.budapestfutures.org

Board Elections: you will find an insert above this page that details the details of the electronic voting process and the instructions for optional mail-in (paper) balloting. Most of the nominees for the Executive Board and executive positions have submitted their vision statements which are also on the insert. Late submissions and updates can be found at: www.wfwf.org/elections.shtml ... questions or problems email jones@wfsf.org or phone +1-808-955-8215.

The web site has undergone a facelift and some streamlining. After some technical difficulties we are now able to accept credit card payments again—on a secure server connection. Further upgrades to the web site, including enhanced features for chat space and discussion groups are planned for the fall (N Hemisphere). We have held off upgrading to individual passwords until further notice.

See you in Budapest!

Stuck on the Runway (con't)

to foster mutual, peaceful coexistence within and between nations, to ensure social justice and equity (i.e., a common politics for all, not the existing individual belly politics which confront the present generation).

The analytical framework builds on a number of theories. We begin with Rational Choice Theory which explains the behaviour in the public realm - the behaviour of bureaucrats, politicians and civil society or voters in terms of self interest (Ward 1995). Public Choice Theory analyses how individuals and groups seek to gain access to and control over public resources in the "political market-place". It explains such things as behaviour of bureaucrats and elected representatives (Niskanen 1994). Pluralism (Dahl 1961, Polsby, 1980) is based on the premise that political power is fragmented and dispersed (Judge 1995: 14), and shifts to Stratified Pluralism (Judge 1995: 15) in which the outcomes are likely to be very unequal. Stratified pluralism suggests that there are multiple elites who are influential in different

situations but not in all. Elite Theory (Harding 1995, Evans 1995) assumes that all decisions are effectively controlled by a few, with little or no opportunity for others to exert influence or change the situation. Then Regime Theory "analyses the conditions under which effective coalitions of interests emerge to bring about public purposes (Stoker, 1995)." The concern in Regime Theory is with developing the capacity to act, rather than simply with governing or controlling. The Theories And Principles of Consociationalism is based on four major principles:

- The principles of joint-decision-making by representatives of all significant groups in society;
- The principle of autonomy for the different segments in a multi-cultural or multi-linguistic society;
- The principle of proportioning in the voting system to avoid absolute majoritarian democracy as well as prevent any minority tyranny; and,
- The principle of a minority censorship and veto.

The argument of the study is that consociationalism is not an end in itself. It is rather a means to an end and that end is the equitable distribution of

power, partnership and participation in the common wealth and governance of state. It builds on the hypothesis that Africa displays the trappings of a consociational state. Its spread and intensity is best measured by the presentation of a wide checklist of power, resources and position sharing. In fact the very survival of African nations as an entity depends on the degree of application of the paradigms of consociation. It is the failure of government in African countries to bring about economic progress and democratic governance systems that enable people to feel secure about the present and the future or stimulate the emergence of a critical mass of enlightened public opinion that believes the time has come for democratic change. In short, "the people's simplistic understanding of democracy and good governance is that it is a mechanism for changing the people at the top who make decisions. But democracy is certainly much more than that. It is my opinion that democracy will survive as a mechanism in the political process only in its widest ramifications as a way of life are understood and accepted by the African Peoples" (Susungi 1992).

Earlier African leaders comported themselves to reason and sink their individual or personal interests and work for the collective good, the better and quicker for the continent to take-off the runway of chaos, underdevelopment, abject poverty and external exploitation. Without good governance, Africa is doomed or stuck on the runway of underdevelopment and global marginalisation. Good governance and democratic rule remain the most appropriate distress calls for Africa in the new millennium. The ideal by many African leaders to appeal, seek and insist on group identity based on descent to galvanize support, seek and perpetually retain political power is what has plunged the continent into total disarray. Using ethnic weapon to usurp power is bad governance.

The colonial issue and the hollow independence victory puts into question the structural and functional form of governance in the continent. In this context, the difference in colonial and post colonial perspectives between the colonial masters anchored on the degree and form of administration put in place to oversee the governance of

these colonies. Rightly or wrongly these different forms of colonial administration have been inherited and constitute the underlining framework on which to judge the state and quality of good governance throughout the continent. The bulk of the continent's problems, as each country struggles to design a nation-state from its colonial legacy, is linked to the bequeathed administrative and political structure be it a centralized or decentralized one, presidential, and parliamentary systems.

One of the key issues is the interplay between these various institutions whether through formal political and administrative processes or through informal interactions. Seen within these perspectives, the processes which are of fundamental interest and concern are:

- How state governance can influence the conditions for economic growth, social well-being, stability and conflict resolutions;
- How state governance institutions seek to distribute the benefits of that growth--how it works in practice, and who benefits what, how, where and when from these distribution processes: and,

path to sustainable development and ensuring genuine independence.

Good governance emerges from the literature review has having a number of critical elements, for example, broaden national trends and the role of the state in national economy; the role of the state in the new international division of labour and globalization in particular its ability to play a role in either the command and control system of global economic organization and activities or as a channel or receptor for international flows of investment, goods and services; the structure of state economy and its ability to restructure to maintaining competitiveness, profit levels and employment; the of politics in embracing issues such as the nature and role of political leadership, political order and stability, the rule of law and representation, and not the least, the issues of networks based on relations of trust, partnership, participation at all levels of society reflecting to a large extent, the concept of social capital and well-being.

What is required is a broad framework for analyzing the various issues and the various actors, parties and interests involved in, or having influence upon, those processes. The analytical framework is based on a series of questions:

- How the poor can bring their agenda to bear on state governance, in contrast to how other sectors of society influence the agendas.

So far, the traditional approach of government in respect to governance and societal development has been "top-down" and "trickle-down" in formal attempts at poverty alleviation and distribution. It is clearly evident that this top down system has not improved the social well-being of the vast majority of the population. The argument here is that this aged-old approach should be replaced with a "down-up" or "trickle-up" input approach of partnership and participation to enable excluded groups to gain access to and influence in policy-making decisions and overall national agendas.

The focus here is on the critical interaction between the various actors involved in addressing the issue of state-building and other development problems. The issue of good governance as outlined above can be tackled in various ways. In this case, the broad theme chosen is that of Africa being struck on the runway with a distress call for revamping the situation and placing it on the right

- First, about the decision-making processes and events, the rules which govern those processes, and the outcomes of those processes; and

- Second, about the different categories of actors, parties and interests involved identifying the context and constraints within which they operate, their source of power or authority, and how they relate to each other.

Seen within this perspectives, we can comfortably note that governance encompasses many and varied inter-related issues. For example see Figure 1.

How has Africa fared in the issues raised here? What is the role and significance of civil society in sustaining or impeding the culture of good governance? What part does the international community play? Why is good governance an imperative for moving the society forward? Can good governance become a reality in Africa?

Khan (1977) suggests that the way institutions and organizations work is important to enabling it to "push through" political change. Democracy and governance in Africa has been struck on the runway due to the absence of "bottom-up" approach, and exclusion. The

Figure 1

GOVERNANCE

- Promoting decentralization and strengthening local authorities;
- Encouraging and supporting participation and civic engagement;
- Ensuring transparent, accountable and efficient governance of the nation;
- Promoting and ensuring quality administration and management and assurance;
- Ensuring security - implying the rule of law as applied to property, human life and low levels of crime and violence;
- Provision of social infrastructure, especially health care and education, in order to develop appropriate labour force skills and a quality of life sufficient to maintain health and attract skilled personnel and investment; and,
- Administrative and organizational structure and capacity, relevant to decision making policy design, implementation of proactive policies and consistent and efficient implementation of service delivery and regulatory systems.

people have been excluded from the development process unable to "directly influence policy" (Blair 1998: 67-80) and hindered from working for the common good, (Ibrahim 1997: 53-66), and addressing public issues. Hence Devas (1999) notes that the concepts of "government" and "governance" and Hyden (1992) suggests that governance requires at least four inter-related perspectives, trust, accountability, reciprocity and authority." Africa's democracy and governance has been struck on the runway due to some of the issues presented in Figure 2.

To a large extent, the state has failed to address the political, economic and social circumstances, structures and process which influence the extent of good governance to which the society has to achieve economic growth and to escape from the state of abject poverty and deprivation. To go further, you cannot have a healthy economy when the political system is sick. Good governance equally implies that the political system, be it presidential or parliamentary, centralized or decentralized - be totally accepted by the citizenry as legitimate. Hyden (1992:15) goes further to identify

Figure 2

Failure of African leaders to provide an atmosphere of:

- Reciprocity, similar to exchange but involving a continuing relationship with mutual expectations, reciprocity relates to the quality of social interaction between members of a political community: without reciprocity, trust will be eroded;
- Trust and reciprocity, in effect, a socio-political contract which embodies a degree of political equality, tolerance and inclusiveness;
- Authority, including legitimacy of the decision clearly defined allocation of responsibilities at market and effective coordination; the legitimate power of political leaders to make and implement policies in the economic interest, involving voluntary acceptance by others of an asymmetrical relationship.
- Accountability, requires citizen influence oversight, responsiveness and responsible leadership, adherence to the rule of law and transparency.

fy three conditions (each with three elements) that facilitate good governance (see Figure 3).

Governance has been hijacked by a bunch of hungry and thirsty military tyrants or self-centered civilians. The two groups share one thing in common--holding society captive and the transformation of the state into a personal dynasty and private property, hence the triumph of what has become "Presidents for Life". It is only in Africa where presidents continue to govern for over twenty-five years and are not prepared to give up power. For this reason, the "top-down" policy approach and governance is much preferred to the "bottom-up" (civil society) approach which is more critical to the successful realization of developments. The "trickle-up" approach calls for transparency, partnership, participation,

accountability and responsibility sharing. These ingredients of transparency, accountability, responsiveness, partnership and genuine public participation and consultation future are the basic tenets of good governance. Similarly, one can identify state legitimacy and credibility being partly achieved through (i) accountability; (ii) transparency; (iii) responsiveness; and (iv) genuine public participation and consultation.

The interaction between the state and civil society is important in determining the context within which the scale and shape of constitutions are created, function and render the required services to the entire nation. It is this relationship or struggle not just between the state and civil society, but also between groups within civil society (whose relative power is often influenced through state interventions) that is a recur-

ring issues about the failure of good governance in political setting like Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Kenya, and Zimbabwe. State intervention has not been in the best interest of the nation, but to satisfy the needs and aspirations of certain selected classes of people who have claimed total hegemony over the rights and properties of the nation as their personal property.

Recognizing the weakness of government institutions in Africa, Halfani (1997: 31) refers to the critical need for "the vitalization of the institutional framework for articulated public action." This vitalization includes legitimacy, authority, vision and governance, and is essential if the public system is to complement civil society and individual actions and investments which now predominate. There is need therefore to identifying and strengthening formal government system in terms of:

- powers, functions, jurisdictions;
- financial resources and central-local relations;
- technical and human resources capacity;
- relationships with the private sector and community;

- political processes and leadership;
- urban planning and land management.

Descent to Decay

Government intentions to impose its will on the people can only be construed as ignoring the democratic process it claims to honour. Once the democratic process is thwarted and ignored, good governance and participatory democracy is blocked. Throughout the continent, attempts continue to be made to politicize and tribalise the constitution-making process either by using military might, party politics, ethnicity, racism and poverty to mislead ordinary citizens into believing that the violation of fundamental human rights is intrinsically linked to the non-cooperation of the other political parties in painting what they see as a good image of the country. That is to say, opposition parties are enemies of the nation. It is opposition parties that have contributed to the bad state of the economy. The recent case in Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Kenya are typical examples of confusing the debates on the real issues of governance plaguing each country.

Figure 3

Citizen influence and oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Degree of political participation ○ Means of preference aggregation; ○ Methods of public accountability
Responsive and responsible Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Degree of respect for civic public realm ○ Degree of openness of public policy making ○ Degree of adherence to the rule of law
Social reciprocities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Degree of political equality ○ Degree of intergroup tolerance ○ Degree of inclusiveness in associational membership

Constitutional making in Cameroon was thwarted by an ethnic hegemony and narrowed to the mere use of modern communications gadgets for people to fax, telephone in their opinions rather than organizing a constitutional conference to deliberate on the issues and a referendum conducted to approve the draft constitution. It was purely tele-guided by a political party that had since lost its credibility and legitimacy to represent the people. The numerous fraudulently and rigged elections conducted in many African countries tells the story of democracy and good governance teetering on the brink of a dangerous precipice.

It can be said that the major problem confronting the cultivation, nurturing and proper practice of good governance throughout the continent rests on chaos theory that has emerged between an unwanted regime and a peoples' movement. The peoples' movement is prevented by a dictatorial or military regime from addressing the situation and presenting a new vision for the nation. The underlying issues for struggle are:

- The quest for legitimacy;
- The quest for ownership of state property;
- The laundering of the fruits of the nation.

Since independence, most political parties and leaders have lost their credibility to serve and lead the nation. The pre-independence leaders and parties have served their usefulness and have failed to adjust to the realities of the changing period. The major aspiration of the people having changed from acquiring independence (in order to be free) to the desire to fulfill rising expectations of quality living standards through the provision of basic needs: shelter, health care, education, food, water, etc. The founding parties and leaders have failed to meet people's aspirations half-a-century after independence. Instead of accepting the realities of their declining status within the society, by packing and leaving the political stage, a policy strategy of coercion and might was introduced into the body politic of the society: a divide and rule tactic, with ethnocracy and blackmail injected into the mainstream of governance.

The collapse of monolithic party system is due to the failure of providing for the needs and defending the interests of the broadest segment of the population. The quest for legitimacy, participation and benefit-sharing by the excluded group challenges the existence and authority of the founding parties and leaders. That the wave of democratization or the emerging political grouping equally sought for legitimacy through a dual agenda, namely (i) the spread of its ideological orientation, influence to a possibly broad based section of the nation and across the broadest political spectrum and civic opinion of society; and (ii) gaining legitimacy as an all-inclusive and people-driven initiative with the objective of meeting the aspirations and fulfilling the needs of the people. The emergence of political parties in many African countries since 1990 was to reverse the dominating status of the earlier political parties for example, in Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Benin, and Nigeria, and to challenge the political legitimacy and credibility of the dominant one-party system as a representative instrument of the people.

The quest for ownership is in line with the quest for legitimacy. The dominant one-party system and leadership style had abrogated for itself the right of ownership of the state as party or individual property. The desire of the excluded public is equally to share in the ownership of state property, to be part and parcel of the constitutional-making process and governance, (see Sandbrook 1985: 95)

Finally, the laundering of state property is a combination of the first two by the ruling political parties and leaders. The

fruits of the nation are inequitably shared. The stronger get richer at the expense of the excluded majority. The laundering of state property (especially finances) in foreign countries has contributed to the prevailing economic crisis of African states today. That the governance has passed from these countries to an international financial conglomerate, the Bretton Woods Financial Establishment, is no surprise. Fifty years after independence, Africa has voluntarily gone to a new form of slavery with the total complacency of the leaders.

It can be stated that African leaders have demonstrated clear ingenuity in domestic politics by hanging to power for too long, often against the will of their people. A strong patron-client relationship has been established, present all kinds of political gymnastic for their political survival. Thus post-independent Africa started with a "false euphoria" which constituted the greatest obstacle to the social and economic progress of the continent designed and executed by Africans (see Barnes 1969). The African leadership style perpetuated the persistence of abject poverty for the vast majority and affluence for the few. Internal and external exploitation of the rich potentials of the nation encouraged. No doubt this prompted Dumont (1962) to castigate and classify the continent in a book as "False Start in Africa," or as Achebe (1962) noted in another publication "Things Fall Apart."

The situation is that "the kind of independence granted to the continent and the second generation of African leaders

at the helm of the continent did not augur well for Africa." Africa fifty years after independence reveals a whole range of painful problems still lingering for lack of effective leadership. To a large extent, Oginga Odinga's "Not Yet Uhuru" remains a fact of political decay. Hounnikpo writes about "acquiescence is the result of the socialization of leaders in secondary nations. Elites in secondary states buy into and internalize norms that are articulated by the hegemon and therefore pursue policies consistent with the hegemon's notion of international order." The quest for legitimacy and ownership has pivoted on the frontiers of the continent's quest for sustaining the old order and that of second liberation or the rejection of dictatorship and unaccountable governance which undoubtedly reflects a progress in Africa's rebirth through the fledgling democracies are still fragile.

Curing Africa's Poverty in Governance and Democracy

When Kwame Nkrumah preached the gospel of "seek ye first the political

kingdom" the idea was the struggle for and even it be an in-comprehensive deal construed on the inherent believe that partial freedom was better than slavery, or in the words of Mathurin Hounnikpo "bad independence was better than no independence." To a large extent, he was right given the plight of the continent in global politics. The Cold War placed Africa in an awkward and vulnerable situation. No one foresaw the collapse of the Communist system and the new contract of intent between East and West. Seeking the political kingdom implied getting political independence and be fully armed to secure the other items for the growth of the nation. The quest here is what did African leaders make of the "new political kingdom?"

It is not out of place to conclude that "leadership" is the underlying litany of the continent. Drawing from Anice "it is the failure of African rulers, African governments, African governance institutions that account for the emergence of first, political decay, socio-political instability, and social fragmentation,

and finally, political disorders in contemporary Africa."

Bad governance in Africa exposes Africa's descent into decay - the result of the tragic failure of African leadership, in the social, political and economic arenas, the personalization of rulership, the expropriation of social resources by the kleptocracy of the ruling classes in a patron-clientelist autocratic, coercive and dangerously intrusive state. Another writer, Ken Post (1964:65) states that the first political parties that emerged from nationalist movements was "a reaction against foreign rule, seeking above all to restore the dignity of people who felt themselves degraded by centuries of exploitation and control." Here we see Nkrumah's clarion call for "seek ye the political kingdom" as the most appropriate instrument of restoring the dignity of the people, their freedom and right of existence as human beings. It was signal for "hope" and for "freedom".

The hope for Africa is what Lijphart (1977) calls "consociational democra-