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Democratic Governance and Development in Africa: Challenges of African Union (AU)

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ABSTRACT Most African states had their independence in 1960. In 1963, May 25th, 32 countries formed the organisation of African Unity (OAU) for political and economic emancipation from colonial plunder. The state of underdevelopment in Africa remains bad. This is reflected in the poverty situation that engenders conflict and violence in the continent. What has happened to Africa in the past four decades can be compared to the effects of a World War. Its crisis is different from anything else found anywhere in the world. No other continent is suffering such acute famine and environmental loss and no where else do institutions and skills lag so far behind the problems. No other region of the developing world finds itself in such a steep and steady decline as Africa. To come out of this situation African leaders have decided to adopt a regional integration strategy with the establishment of the African Union (AU). The AU aims at restoring peace and stability and promotes rapid development through the full involvement of the private and public sectors. The paper thus highlights the problems of Africa, reviews some relevant literature and makes some suggestions such as democratic governance and increased private sector participation in the economy of member states to ensure the success of the AU.

INTRODUCTION

Africa is one of the continents of the world that has embraced the democratisation process. In the last century when the rest of the world moved towards democracy and development, Africa remained a predominantly military or semi-military controlled continent ruled mostly by non-democratic and dictatorial governments. The effect of this undemocratic government in the continent is poverty.

According to recent statistics, the quality of life for most people in Africa appears to have either not improved or only done so marginally. This situation arose from the misrule of early leaders most of whom spearheaded the struggle for independence. In the early 1960's soon after independence, they settled down to rule their people as though they were inheritors of the erstwhile colonial authority. The leaders separated themselves from the suffering people, engaged themselves in self aggrandisement and became insensitive to the yearnings of their people for basic economic and social amenities.

This state of affairs led to untold devastation of economies in the continent, people had to live below the poverty line with little or no food, no shelter to accommodate them and no medical or educational facilities to give them some hope for the future. In each case, the oppressive conditions in which they lived led these people to evolve gradually into a class of disgruntled citizens desperate for change to alleviate their suffering. In almost all cases, the military provided the answer by way of coup d'etat that toppled these political overlords. Usually, such military governments professed to have come in as corrective regimes that would stay for only brief periods within which they would put things in order before handing over to duly elected democratic governments. But, because absolute power corrupts absolutely, these military governments often ended up entrenching themselves in power. Intact, most of them exhibited all the traits of the much vilified early leaders and even more (Ikpi, 1997: 18).

To correct this ill, some civilians or military backed by civilians resort to rebellion which in most cases led to civil war. This was the case of countries such as Sierra -Leone, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Liberia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Civil wars in Africa have killed a lot of people, depriving the continent of critical labour resources. These wars have led to the neglect of education and in some cases, school facilities are destroyed or converted into military use. Young adults or children are forcefully drafted into the army either on the side of the government or that of the rebels. Military spending is so high that in some countries, the military budget tops the list and there is evidence that African leaders either borrow huge sums of money or use foreign development assistance to finance domestic wars. Civil wars in Africa undermine the continent's productive capacity, destroy or severely weaken social structures, distort economic policy, pollute the value-systems of the people and perpetuate prolong poverty (Elu, 2000: 60).

It is evident that Africa is the poorest continent in the world and the present situation shows backward movement into the 19th century while others are already in the 21st century- It has now become clear, even to obstinate and recalcitrant policy makers, that unless drastic measures are taken, living conditions for most people in this continent will continue to fall (Elu, 2000: 60). Thus, the formation of the African Union (AU) in Durban South Africa on 11th July, 2002 to replace the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) is a step in the right direction. The AU's aim among others is vigorous development of the continent through the New partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) established in July 2001. To ensure development and a leap forward from poverty, AU hopes to adopt good governance in the continent.

The aim of this paper is to highlight the effect poor governance has had on the development of the continent and the challenges it poses to the AU. The paper in an attempt to understand African development problems and the prospects, adopts the people-centered theory which is an offshoot of the Modernisation school of thought.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are many theories of development: they are classified into modernisation and dependency. The modernisation theorists based their argument on Economic, Psychology and Diffusion.

The economic approach of Rostow (1962: 6) identified five stages in the process of a nation's economic development. Rostow's postulation is that underdevelopment was an original position from which traditional societies could move through (stages) to development without a recourse to social revolution.

Weber (1930: 60), McClelland (1968: 20) and Everret (1983: 31) explained development in terms of presence (or absence) of (i) some individual personalistic trait or (ii) the general psychological state characterising a society. McClelland argued that the need for achievement encourages the individual to meet challenges to take risks and to succeed in the face of difficulties. Western industrialized nations contained individuals with high level of achievement motivation, which led to high rate of national growth. Hagen (1962: 16) argued that traditional developing nations produced authoritarian personalities who lacked self-confidence, exhibited a high level of anxiety when faced with new situations and who were content to preserve the status quo. Developed societies contained more innovative personalities who displayed self-confidence, derived satisfaction in solving problems and who are achievers. He argued further that for development to occur, individual personalities had to change. More innovative personalities could be encouraged by improving literacy, expanding the mass media, Urbanising and promoting nationalism (Eregha, 2000: 30).

Edari (1976:19) utilises diffusion theory to explain the process of less privilege societies' development. Diffusion is a process by which a third world country adopts capital, technology, and social structure from western industrialised countries. He argued that the developing countries would develop to the extent that:

(a) Western industrialised countries provide capital programmes.
(b) They adopt modern methods of agricultural and industrial production and
(c) They adopt those values, attitudes and behaviour patterns that are exhibited by western industrialised nations.

The people-centered approach to development views an individual not as a subject-'but an actor who defines the goals, controls the resources, and directs processes affecting his/her life (Korten, 1984:21). The key elements in this approach are:

(a) empowerment of people
(b) development of an administrative process which responds to the needs of the people;
(c) human growth and well being
(d) equality
(e) self-reliance
(f) participation and
(g) Sustainability.

White (1987: 60) argued that sustainability is a measure of lasting quality in development programme. A development programme can be sustained by creating a felt need among beneficiaries about the efficacy of the programme, developing institutions which continually adapt, providing (or self-generating) resources and building support among political elite and community groups. African leaders have come to see that the top -down delivery approach to governance does not lead to the desired development envisaged in the OAU's aim of economic emancipation of Africa. They have decided to adopt the people-centered approach as indicated in the aims of the AU.

Modernisation theories provoked a great deal of criticisms from radical scholars such as Andre Gunder Frank, Claude Ake, Bode Onimode, Shegu Oshoba, Zwingina Silas and others who argued that colonialism and Western capitalism were the two major factors responsible for the underdeveloped nature of third world countries. The Western industrialised countries developed by exploiting human and natural resources of their colonies and by making them economically dependent on their colonial powers after independence. Neo-colonialism continues as western industrialised countries continue their political and economic domination of their former colonies. The theory is that development in metropolitan capitalism is the underdevelopment in the periphery. The theory divided countries between 'core' and 'periphery' categories, the first directing the development of underdevelopment in the second. Development can be achieved if the third world states delink from the capitalist incorporation. (Eregha and Isitoah, 1997: 61). The Modernisation theory will be adopted in this paper because the behaviour of leaders in Africa show that they lack the personality trait and motivation skill that will lead to growth and development, that is, they are not "Modern Men".

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Ikpi (1997: 19) defines governance as the total ability to organise, synthesise and direct the various actions of the working parts of a government machinery in order for such a government to perform meaningfully, creditably and acceptably. Thus governance involves both the governing class and the governed people and good governance must of necessity be democratic, entail popular participation by the people, be accountable and ensure basic freedoms.

Akpotor (2001: 12) argued that governance clearly covers all aspects of the complex and myriad relations that exist between a government and a people. He went further to state that the extent to which the people's affairs are managed depends on the class of people in power. Thus, governance could be good or bad. Democratic governance is a good governance while an autocratic government is bad. Democratic governance according to Akpotor (2001: 13) is a normative judgement which indicates a preferred relation that would ideally govern relations between state and society and between a government and a people. It incorporates the following attributes: accountability based on the notion of popular sovereignty and public choice, a legal framework that guarantees the rule of law and due process, popular participation in decision making process based on political and social pluralism.

Ikpi (1997: 19-20) argues that democratic governance can be examined from six perspective, namely;

(a) The initiation and maintenance of rapid socio-economic growth,
(b) The establishment and development of a free market economy,
(c) The establishment of a basic organisational framework to act as a springboard for further development,
(d) The creation of an absorptive capacity for capital and other inputs,
(e) The organisation and promotion of private sector investment and
(f) The raising of the productivity of the people by improving their skills, enterprise, initiative, adaptability and attitudes.

In applying these principles, it is important to note that governance consists of two distinct but intimately intertwined dimensions: one is political and relates to commitment to good governance and the other is technical and relates to issues of efficiency and public management. It should be noted that without political commitment, little can be achieved. Even with an efficient public administration no government can be effective however benevolent. Thus, the performance of government depends on the role assigned to the state, the competence of public agencies and the extent to which there is an enabling environment that facilitates and encourages growth promoting activities by private citizens and honest behaviour by public officials (Anyanwu, 1998: 368-369).

AFRICAN UNION (AU)

African states were grouped into three

different bloc s before the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). These blocs were, the Brazzaville or Malagasy, Casablanca and Monrovia. However, on May 25th 1963, all independent African states met in Addis Ababa Ethiopia under the chairmanship of Emperor Haile Sellasie to form the OAU. The OAU achieved much in the areas of independence struggle and unity of the continent. However many scholars and policy analysts were not satisfied with the organisation's achievements as they point out major areas of weaknesses. According to Soyinka cited in Olayinka (2002: 5) some of these problems are: scratch-my-back-I-scratch your back attitude of heads of state closing their minds to the horrors being perpetuated by their colleagues and non intervention in the affairs of one another on serious issues of human rights violation.

It is observed that African states are poor in all ramifications and saddled with crisis and war, the continent thus, experiences under-development. To come out of this menace, regional integration has been identified as the major strategy.

Obasanjo (2001: 16) was of the opinion that in all these years, regional economic cooperation and integration has remained a central pillar of Africa's development strategy. It has rightly been considered as a necessity rather than a choice. It has been seen as an essential instrument for faster collective growth and prosperity for the countries and peoples of this continent. It is our hope and indeed our shared aspiration to create a larger economic entity and market place that would facilitate viable production capacities in industry and agriculture, through a collective exploitation of our enormous human and natural resources.

Regional economic cooperation and integration can also make it possible for us to collectively build integrative infrastructure in transport, communications and energy which would otherwise be too costly for individual small and fragmented African countries to undertake. Above all, in the ruthlessly competitive world of globalisation and liberalisation, cooperation and integration offers us the only chance to be relevant and to speak with one voice in international negotiations.

This new thinking perhaps informed the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in July 2001. Oyekanmi (2002: 6) observed that this new initiative is a pledge by African leaders based on common vision and a firm and sacred conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development. It is anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of under-development and exclusion in a globalising world. The goals of NEPAD are to:

1. Achieve and sustain an average gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of seven percent per annum for the next 15years.
2. Ensure that the continent achieves the agreed international development goals (IDGs) which are to:

(a) Reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by half between 1990 and 2015.
(b) Reduce maternal ratios by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015.
(c) Provide access for all who need reproductive health services by 2015 and
(d) Implement national strategies for sustainable development by 2015, so as to reverse the loss of environment resources by 2015.

The aims and objectives of AU are to:

1. Achieve greater unity and solidarity between African countries and the peoples of Africa;
2. Defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its member states;
3. Accelerate political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
4. Promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its people.
5. Encourage international cooperation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
6. Promote peace, security and stability on the continent;
7. Promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance;
8. Promote and protect people's rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;
9. Establish necessary conditions which enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations;

10. Promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;
11. Promote cooperation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples;
12. Coordinate and harmonise the policies between exiting and future regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union;
13. Advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular in science and technology; and
14. Work with all relevant international partners in eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent.

Obasanjo (2001:6) contends that the Africa Union will not only be building on existing regional blocs, but also broadening the objectives of economic co-operation and regional integration to include:

(a) the urgent restoration of peace and stability (conflict resolution)
(b) the protection of human rights and establishment of societies based on democratic governance and the rule of law;
(c) the co-ordination and harmonisation of macro-economic policies;
(d) the facilitation of the free movement of persons, goods and services and
(e) the full involvement of the private sector and civil society.

To avoid the pit falls of the OAU, the AU will be built on six strong pillars:

One, an appropriate institutional framework with sufficient authority and capacity for implementing agreed decisions;

Two, regional integration infrastructure in transport, communication and energy;

Three, full private sector and civil society involvement in order to ensure the building of integrated production capacities in industries, agriculture, mining etc to satisfy enlarged market and global competitiveness;

Four, sustainable developments through the adoption of regional strategies and policies on poverty eradication, environment, health and water resources management, human and resources development and on technical cooperation;

Five, promotion of intra-regional trade at a level that matches the potential of the continent and

Six, equitable burden-sharing in matters affecting the continent and the administration of the union.

To ensure the success of the AU, it will be built on these structures: Assembly of the Union, the Executive Council, the Pan-African Parliament, the Court of Justice, the Commission, the Permanent Representatives Committee, the Economic, Social and Cultural Council and the Financial Institution (the Africa Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund and the African Investment Bank) (Obasanjo, 2001:6 and Agubuzu, 2000:3).

Problems of Democratic Governance and Development in Africa

In 1963, May 25, about 32 independent States converged in Addis Ababa Ethiopia to form the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The major driving force was the need to cooperate and develop together in the spirit of Pan-Africanism The principles of the OAU as contained in Article 2(1) affirm this and others:

to co-ordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa.

To achieve these, member states shall co-ordinate and harmonize their general policies especially in the following fields:

(a) political and diplomatic cooperation;
(b) economic cooperation, including transport and communications;
(c) educational and cultural cooperation;
(d) health, sanitation and nutritional cooperation;
(e) scientific and technical cooperation and
(f) cooperation for defence and security (Obiozor, 1994: 41).

However, about 40 years after, the performance of governments and governance in the continent shows that not much was gained. The World Bank (1995: 30) made a compilation of some development indicators on Africa. These are:

Population;
Per capita gross national product;
Consumer price index;
Real effective exchange rate index;
Ratio of parallel market to official exchange rate;
Net foreign direct investment;
Total external debt;
Total external debt service payments: long -term loans and IMF credit;
Foreign financing;

Government expenditure: real per capita education spending;
Government expenditure: real per capita, health spending and
Capacity utilization in manufacturing (Ikpi, 1997: 22).

The coefficients of these indices taken together paint a pathetic picture of Africa. They imply that governance has been poor and much below expectation. They portray a lack of systematic approach to tackling macro-economic and sectoral problems especially in the areas of agriculture, industry, health, education, prices, exchange rates, government financing, balance of payments, debt and related flows. They also indicate that something must have gone very wrong and much has to be done by the AU.

Ikpi (1997: 29-30) is of the opinion that many factors have contributed to the poor performance of governments and to poor governance in Africa. Among them are the following:

(a) the electorate unwittingly select and put wrong leaders in power or allow malevolent military dictators to take charge of affairs and remain in office without any resistance.
(b) a set of technocratic advisers often emerge who encourage state leaders to develop completely new and often unachievable polices and programme objectives whole ignoring those of their predecessors.
(c) the governed class allows and tolerates systems of governance that propagate open greed by the leaders, fraud throughout the administrative machinery of government and non-accountability by those in positions of responsibility.
(d) a general neglect of the work ethic is condoned among African labour force. Over 90 percent of all African workers do not believe in a work ethic, which generates self-propelling initiatives that bring about societal progress.
(e) there is overemphasis on government as the key operator of the economy instead of seeing the establishment, expansion and operation of a viable private sector as the wheel of national progress.
(f) inadequate effort is made to promote the establishment of well-developed and fully functioning modern capitalist economies :n the continent which will provide the necessary base for catalytic rapid growth and development.
(g) incessant disruption of policies and frequent policy readjustments have increased the subjective sense of frustration and discontent among various sections of our population. These frustrations and discontent have important multiplier effects that are manifested in a bad international image, and
(h) both public and private sectors in Africa have adopted the wrong perspective to industrialisation. For example, the import-substitution approach to industrial development has led to a narrow conceptualisation of industrialization as only embodying the expansion of the modern manufacturing sector based on the importation and use of capital-intensive technology. Capital, has therefore, become identified by private investors in the manufacturing sector with durable capital equipment in the form of complex machinery and other inputs that the countries of the continent are not able to produce domestically.

Ndoh (1998: 316) argued that political instability is one of the major factors responsible for the non-realisation of socio-economic and political development in the continent. He cited the cases of informal political crisis in countries such as Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Algeria, Sudan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo and the cross boarder crisis of the two Congos, Tanzania and Burundi, Libya and Chad and the Nigeria and Cameroun dangerous silence over the Bakassi Peninsula. As a result of wars and natural disasters, Africa has the greatest number of refugees in the world. Evidence-shows that while Africa has over 11,800,000 refugees, Asia follows with 7,900,000. Additionally, war also reduces trade between the rural and the urban sectors (Mbaku, 1992: 80). According to the United Nations, in 1985 most of the African countries that were considered to have the most serious famine problems were also those which at the time were involved in civil wars. For several years since the 1970s Angola, Ethiopia, Chad, Mozambique and Sudan have had the greatest need for food relief in Africa. These countries have also either fought a civil war or have been involved in some form of international conflict (Cornwell, 1991: 74-77). Evidence from Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra - Leone, Mozambique, Somalia, Sudan, Angola and Rwanda, now shows that rehabilitating societies that have been devastated by many years of war and communal/ethnic crises is very difficult and expensive. Physical infrastructure must be provided for people displaced by the fighting, agricultural lands must be rehabilitated and made productive again, proper drinking water, especially in the urban areas, must be restored, just to name a few. Perhaps, more important is the fact that the state must not only restore law and order in order to allow the economy to function properly, it must restore the people's confidence in the ability of the state to govern (Elu, 2000: 64).

Elu (2000: 65) is of the view that poor macroeconomic performance in Africa is partly responsible for lack of development. He argued that since the 1960s, most of Sub-Saharan Africa's countries have encountered primary negative economic growth. As measured by changes in the gross national product per capita, over two thirds of the countries in the region regressed economically during he period 1965-1989. Among these Angola, Uganda, Zaire/Democratic Republic of Congo. Zambia and Madagascar experienced the highest rates of economic decline.

A look at how labour resources are utilized can shed some light on macroeconomic performance in the region. African states specialize, as they had done since the colonial period, on the production and export of primary commodities to the metropolitan economies. As a consequence, up to 1970s most African labour resources were engaged in agriculture. However, since the late 1970s, many sub Saharan Africa countries e.g. Angola, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Gabon and others have neglected their agricultural sectors in favour of increased activities in the extractive sectors In fact, Nigeria's agricultural sectors have been devastated by the increased investment in the petroleum sub-sector. Nigeria is so dependent on the export of petroleum that in 1988, the sale of petroleum and petroleum products accounted for as much as 95 percent of export earnings. For the region as a whole primary commodities accounted for 89 percent of export earnings in 1989 down from 92 percent in 1965 (Mbaku, 1992: 70-80).

A major problem affecting good governance and development in Africa is the issue of sit-tight leaders in office. Most African leaders amend their states' constitutions to enable them rule for life and others perpetually rig elections to keep themselves in power for as long as they wish. Nwabueze (2002: 21-22) observed that with the backing of constitutionally, ordained eligibility for re-election indefinitely, rulership in Africa has tended to become a permanent appointment as in the civil service. He observed further that Felix Houpheuet Boigny of Cote D'Ivoire died in office after 34 years as President, William Tubman of Liberia after 28 years, Sekoh Toure of Guinea after 26years, Abdel Gamel Nasser of Egypt after 16years, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana after 15years, Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, Sir Dauda Jawara of the Gambia, Lebua Jonathan of Lesotho, Hamani Diori of Niger and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana were in office for 32, 29, 20, 14 and 10 years respectively before being overthrown in military coups or armed revolts and Kamauzu Banda of Malawi and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia for 29 and 27 years respectively before they were voted out in a free multi-party democratic election. Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia was dismissed after 32years in office on the ground of senility certified by a group of medical doctors. Julius Nyerere of Tanzania voluntarily retired after 27 years in office as did Leopold Senghor of Senegal after 21 years. Gnassing-be Eyadema of Togo, Omarbongo of Gabon, Muammar Gadaffi of Libya and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe-are still in office after 31,31,28 and 23 years respectively.

It should be noted that Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia, Kamauzu Banda of Malawi and Emperor Jean-Bedel Bokassa of the Central African Republic had proclaimed themselves as life Presidents before they were removed from power. A leader who decided to remain in power for more than 8 years no longer seeks authority on the basis of law but on the basis of personal nature. Obedience to an individual in office is wrong and undemocratic. This is however the predominant situation in Africa. It is very unfortunate that a leader who does not have an iota of respect for democratic values hopes to provide good governance.

The African Union established by these group of leaders is starting with a major problem, that is, dictators who want to promote justice, equity and development in the midst of stagnant economic policies. Leaders who managed the OAU to become meaningless spectators in conflicts within the continent that result into mass killing of people, destruction of the leftover after colonialism, dislocate the social system and all elements of integration in the continent. The entire continent is in crisis. Political instability is the major feature of Africa caused by our leaders.

Ndoh (1998: 318) observed that to say political stability is a sine-qua-non to overall transformation of any economy is stating the obvious. One could thus say, without fear of contradiction, that peace is a prerequisite for actual development of any society. Any nation that lacks, it is bound to remain behind in the match towards socio-political and economic transformation.

This observation applies to Africa and it is a challenge for the AD. Many scholars are of the opinion that the AU may not be significantly different from the OAU because, the leaders are the same, the orientation and policy outlook of the leaders today are not different from those of the founding fathers of the OAU.

A critical review of the integration process in Africa will reveal some reasons for the past failures. Some of them are:

(a) the lack of political will on the part of African governments who have been unwilling to subordinate domestic political and economic interests to supranational institutions with long term regional goals;
(b) the lack of good governance and rule of law, coupled with endemic political instability, resulting in debilitating civil wars and armed conflicts;
(c) the inadequate mechanisms for equitable sharing of the costs and benefits of regional arrangements;
(d) the pervasive weaknesses in regional integration structures as exemplified by the absence of intra-industry linkages, poor or lack of transport and communication infrastructure and the non-convertibility of currencies;
(e) the lack of policy consistency and credibility as well as antipathy to market -oriented economic reforms resulting in vacillation and reversals in implementation of reforms and the continued state domination of production through inefficient and heavily subsidised parastatals and
(f) the overlapping membership of several regional groups with duplicative mandates and structures thus leading to inadequate financing of the integration process and inefficient use of limited resources and the lack of private sector and civil society involvement (Obasanjo, 2001: 6).

Corruption has been a major problem in Africa. In a recent publication of the Berlin based Transparency International (Tl) it was revealed that Nigeria was the most corrupt country in the world, despite the Federal Government declaration of war against corruption. The Tl chairman remarked that, political elite and their cronies continue to take kick backs at every opportunity. Hand in glove with corrupt business people, they are trapping whole nations in poverty and hampering sustainable development (Eigen, 2002: 1).

OAU failed because of the inability of some member sates to pay their annual dues. Evidence shows that outstanding dues of members is over 36 million dollars. OAU was budgeting about 30 million dollars annually. There are indications that the AU will budget about 80million dollars annually. The problem here is that in the midst of poor economies hew can they meet up with their financial obligations. The AU has a lot to do if it must replace OAU.

The problems of good governance and development is a challenge to AU hence African leaders must adopt the recommendations below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After a critical look at the problems of Africa enumerated above one may be tempted to say that the hope of attaining development in the 21st century is a mirage. Democratic governance requires the establishment and acceptance by a majority of the populace of certain key elements that are known to affect and guide political and administrative development. Such key elements include the following:

(a) the conduct of free and fair elections,
(b) the preparedness of government officials and elected representatives to remain responsive to the needs and reasonable desires of the majority of the electorate;
(c) the existence of transparent accountability to the electorate.
(d) the readiness of government administrations to respect basic human rights
(e) the entrenchment of basic freedom of expression, association and religious belief in the political landscape of each country.
(f) the ready acceptance of devolution of power and power sharing and
(g) the assignment and acceptance of roles among agencies and tiers of government.

As a measure of ensuring the success of AU, all obstacles or impediments to free movement of labour and capital as well as restrictions on travel and right of establishment should be removed.

African leaders should allow increased private participation in their economy for increase in investment production and savings.

African leaders should provide good leadership backed with moral uprightness to enable the AU initiate and implement people - oriented programmes. For example, in the European Union (EU) France and Germany have effectively provided leadership in the direction of the Union. In the absence of leadership, the African Union could stagnate.

African Union should put agriculture high on its agenda. A continent that cannot feed itself can hardly face the challenge of development. Hunger and under nourishment affect human development and human development is a sine-qua-non for socio-economic, scientific and technological development.

Abolition of all other regional integrations to give sharp focus to the AU and full commitment to the activities and problems of the AU.

African leaders must realise that their perpetual stay in office is undemocratic and cannot elicit any form of cooperation from the entire citizens to achieve 4-4 years tenure or a 5year tenure. This will help to eliminate the life presidency syndrome plaguing the continent.

The AU should be built on values of peace and stability, of democracy and good governance, on the promotion and respect for the fundamental human rights of our peoples; African leaders should reinvigorate the Pan-African spirit of Marcus Garvey and Nkrumah to ensure African unity, and complete sovereignty, freedom from foreign control, wars, ignorance and disease. The most important thing is the full implementation of these recommendations by these sit-down-tight-in-office leaders who are not interested in real progress. If they fail, it is incumbent upon the people to step out and rescue the continent from the captives.

CONCLUSION

In this paper we have seen that the quality of life for most Africans, has either not improved or has done so marginally since the inception of the OAU in 1963. Many obstacles to the elimination of poverty have been discussed. Any effort by the AU to enhance good governance and development in the continent must address some critical issues such as providing an enabling environment for production, introduction and sustenance of appropriate institutional frameworks for popular participation and reduction of violence and ethnic conflict in the continent. It is our hope that AU will elevate Africa if these recommendations are honestly implemented.

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