

Africa in the 21st Century: The Future Economic Outlook

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*Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up;
It knows it must run faster than the fastest lion or it will be killed.*

*Every morning in Africa, a lion wakes up;
It knows it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death.*

*It doesn't matter whether you are a lion or a gazelle;
When the sun comes up, you'd better start running*

It seems to me that Africa has been running for many years and the rest of the world has been feasting on the continent's challenges. Africa must run faster and turn tables around to ensure it gets its rightful place on this earth.

The subject of Africa's economic future is broad; I doubt anyone can do proper justice to it in the one hour we have here today.

What I hope I can accomplish is to paint for you a picture of the reality that exists on the ground and the pointers to the continent's future. It is the story of a glass being half-full rather than half-empty!

Africa's future is a hopeful one!

Africa's Yesterday

As you know, Africa is that continent with 51 countries; it is the cradle of mankind as human beings are said to have first appeared there. In other words, Africa is the birthplace of humanity as we know it today.

The 51 countries did not arise out of a natural evolutionary process as happened (say) in Europe. The Berlin conference of 1884 convened by colonial powers, in search of conquest and resources to fuel European development, divided the continent arbitrarily; the reality of that imposed division remains to date; it resulted in ethnic groups that had little in common ending up in the same territory; at the same time, it split ethnic groups (in some cases families) across the new territorial boundaries! It confined the free movement of people and goods and made Europe the destination of extracted resources from the continent.

The testimony to this is the design of colonial infrastructure! This has roads and railroads running from the interior to sea ports; these facilitated the transportation of extracted goods for shipping to the colonial metropolises. Walter Rodney captures this clearly in his book titled "*How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*". Extracted African resources and labour largely built and

sustained what were once global colonial empires, e.g. the British Empire on which the “sun never set”!

At independence most African countries retained ties to the colonial powers, which remain at play to date. They are manifested by the fact that it used to be cheaper (for example) to call Kinshasha (or Lagos for that matter) from Nairobi via Paris (or London for that matter) than it is to call directly between the two cities. Long after African independence, Africans were speaking more to Europe than they did among themselves. Consequently, there developed a dependence that Africa has yet to shake off!

The result has remained largely a south to northward flow of African resources and we will see some examples later.

Africa Today

As depicted in the media (radio, television, movies, newsprint, etc.) and a lot of text books, Africa is a continent of misery and little hope. We hear of poverty levels where individuals (340 million by some estimates) subsist on less than one dollar a day, matched with miniscule annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth numbers of about 2%; consider that Africa’s GDP per capita is around \$900! It is as low as \$300 in some countries!

Again according to the media, this is a place where people, especially women, spend most of their day trekking to far away, near-dry riverbeds to fetch water or forage through neighbourhood forests and bushes in search of firewood. Some estimates suggest that only 54% of the population have access to safe drinking water!

Many of you are aware of the Human Development Index (HDI) that has been adopted by the United Nations Development Program, UNDP. The HDI is used as a qualitative measure of development and is considered more meaningful than others like GDP, GNP or dollar-a-day living standards!. The HDI index takes into account **life expectancy, literacy, education and living standards**.

The 2006 HDI report drew the following comments:

“In the 31 countries at the bottom of the list, 28 of which are in sub-Saharan Africa, a person can hope to live on average only 46 years, or 32 years less than the average life expectancy in countries of advanced human development, with 20 years slashed off life expectancy due to HIV/AIDS.”

“... Norway ranks highest, while Niger is last of the countries for which sufficient information is available. People in Norway are more than 40 times wealthier than people in Niger and they live almost twice as long.”ⁱⁱ

Literacy levels remain low suggesting a major hindrance to programs (public health, democratic participation, etc.) that depend on literacy for effectiveness. “Illiteracy for people over 15 is 41 percent.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Death comes easily in Africa; people die of preventable diseases like malaria, and waterborne diseases like bilharzia, dysentery and typhoid.

Globally, \$12 billion is spent treating malaria, a disease that causes 1 million deaths world-wide; 90% of these deaths are in Sub-Saharan Africa.

There is more! Most malaria victims are children. Reports from 2003 suggest that Kenya loses 34,000 children annually to the disease; in that country 30% of all outpatient cases are malaria-related and 60,000 women suffer from malaria-related anaemia; consider that women are the bedrock of the African family and you can appreciate the implications of this illness.

Africa is the continent most impacted by the scourge of HIV/AIDS, where more than 500 people die in one day for a cumulative 2 million people a year. This is in a situation where there is a shortage of health workers. Africa has 16 doctors per 100,000 people; contrast this with 253 doctors per 100,000 in high-income countries like Canada.

Deaths from malaria, HIV/AIDS/, other communicable diseases, and the poor state of health infrastructure along with war have substantially reduced life expectancy on the continent. A child born in Africa is likely to live for 46 years compared to 77 years in developed countries like Canada and the United States

And we know that poor health has direct consequences on economic participation and hence economic output.

Let's look at another dimension pertaining to penetration of telephones in the society. The term teledensity is used to measure the number of phone lines available per given population.

With respect to communication, Africa has the lowest teledensity in the world with 18^{iv} phone lines per 1000 people, compared with a world-wide average of 146; teledensity 567 per 1000 people in high-income countries^v.

There is more. Africa has some of the highest service costs when it comes to telephones and the Internet.

Ironic, you might add!

Petty and violent crime are said to be widespread. South Africa, for example has been characterized by some as one of the most violent societies on earth, courtesy of the policies of western-supported defunct apartheid regime. From 1998 reports, there were 59 murders per 100,000 people in that country; compare this with 4 in Canada per 100,000!

Africa has also been a war theatre for a long time; it continues to be a war theatre today in the Congo, Sudan, Ivory Coast, Chad ... there is no shortage of African crises.

Africa was also backdrop against which east-west cold-war enemies fought proxy battles in Mozambique, Angola, South Africa and Namibia. And even where there wasn't such open conflict, many countries were not spared the polarization wrought by the east-west conflict of

the cold war. As a result, we had kleptomaniacs like Mobutu Sese Seko in power for many, many years; simply for being western allies. During that time, their countries stagnated as the rest of the world moved on.

At the peak of his power, it was common for Mobutu to lend the exchequer from his personal loot! This is loot that was stashed away in Western countries to which none of his western allies had any qualms about. They never protested this daylight robbery by Mobutu; they looked aside as he stashed this wealth in the western.

This happened as Mobutu amassed personal wealth worth more than was in the country's coffers; wealth that was largely held in western countries in terms of properties and bank accounts!

Today, Democratic Republic of Congo is anything but democratic; since Mobutu's overthrow more than 2 million people have died in internecine conflicts. There are gallant efforts by current president Joseph Kabila to turn that around; he recently won a runoff elections that his opponent disputed! Let's hope that reason will prevail.

News about the continent indicates that corruption is rampant. Transparency International consistently features countries like Kenya and Nigeria as some of the most corrupt places on earth! I don't have associated figures, but one can only imagine what all the oil revenue would have done for Nigeria that country had used it well!

The scenario painted above is of general nature and does not touch on gender dimensions. The impact on women and girls, in my view, is by far worse than the general indicators.

At the core of the continent's misery are a number of factors which have created a complex interplay resulting in the dismal state of affairs. Bad governance, unfair world economic system and imposed external solutions have are part of the causes of these problems.

Understanding this will also offer pointers to the new future that beckons to Africa.

Below we look at the nature of a few realities that testify to this condition.

Some Causes of the African Condition

Many causes we discuss here are inter-related; for example bad governance has a direct impact in brain drain and capital flight. These causes should be seen in the larger context of a milieu of factors responsible for today's dismal African condition.

Poor Governance

For many years, good governance and democracy were alien terms to African leaders. First generation African leaders, especially, failed to nurture democratic culture and few attempted to build democratic institutions. This was a great damper to economic development as there is correlation between freedom, democracy and economic development.

African countries have, to date, not nurtured democratic culture that is also seen to elevate economic performance and standards of living. Partly due to the polarization of the cold war, Africa remained a backwater of democratic agitation. The continent saw coups and counter coups; from Uganda to Ghana to Nigeria to Benin; from Somalia to Gabon to Sierra Leone to Guinea. Through the 1960s and 1970s, it was routine to expect a coup happening on the continent.

Simply said, the three decades following independence for most countries in Africa were not good for the continent. Dictators ran amok, killing, detaining and cajoling their people. Idi Amin, who some called the *Butcher of Africa*, is said to have killed more than 500,000 people in the 8 years he tyrannized Uganda following a military coup.

A few countries held elections on a regular basis. However, in many cases like in Kenya, outcomes were always manipulated to meet the whims and wishes of the powers that be. Indeed, many countries were one-party dictatorships with a strong-man at the helm; strong-men brooked no nonsense and dispensed with their enemies (perceived and otherwise) with little mercy.

Africa was also a target of destabilization by cold-war enemies. Frontline states such as Zimbabwe and Mozambique paid dearly for supporting the liberation struggle in southern Africa. In Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere faced a run down economy for failing to secure support from western powers and institutions for his *Ujamaa*^{vi} philosophy.

If there was a dark period in the history of the continent, the immediate post-independence era was one of those dark periods for the continent's long-term development.

Capital Flight

Mobutu Sese Seko is said to have accumulated more than \$4billion dollars over the period he ruled Zaire, now Democratic Republic of Congo; the money has never been returned to the country since Mobutu's death in 1997. Sani Abacha, former Nigerian strongman, is said to have had more than \$2billion stashed abroad when died after only a few years in power^{vii}.

There is more. It is estimated that more than \$1billion was siphoned out during the Daniel Arap Moi era in Kenya through corrupt deals. The total amounts taken out would be much larger than what is publicly acknowledged.

Debt servicing has also contributed to capital flight. James K. Boyce and Léonce Ndikumana studied 25 most indebted countries for the period 1970 to 1996 and concluded that:

"In the region as a whole, whereas the total external debts of the 25 countries stood at \$178 billion in 1996, their cumulative capital flight amounted to \$193 billion in 1996 dollars or to \$285 billion if the imputed interest earnings on flight capital are included in the total. Depending on which of these two measures of the stock of capital flight is used, it exceeded the stock of debt by \$14.5 billion to \$106.5 billion"^{viii}."

Africa has indeed been a net creditor for a long time, were one to calculate the difference between what is owed externally and the net private assets from the continent in developed countries.

Externally Imposed Solutions

African countries have faced externally-imposed solutions since independence. Often donor money and loans have conditionalities that benefit the donors more than they help the recipients. Starting the 1980s, for example, Kenya embarked on cost-sharing approach as a condition for receiving IMF and World Bank support. Specific sectors hit hard were education and health care where government budgets dropped suddenly. The results were dire: primary school enrolment dropped from high 90% to mid 70%. In higher education we saw government leave most institutions to their devices, with the resulting exodus of faculty to greener pastures in the west and other better-endowed African countries. Noted beneficiaries of this Kenyan faculty exodus were South Africa, Botswana, the UK, Canada and the United States. (We will have more on brain drain later.)

After the 2002 elections, the incoming government implemented free primary school educations that saw a sharp rise in enrolment levels, in the process, it dealt with the problem of street children that had become a menace in most towns.

This act alone facilitated access for one million children to the school system! This is a move that was not supported by the World Bank, IMF and Western donors.

Unfair World Trade

The World Trade Organization (WTO) has been holding talks on a new trade regime in the world. The latest round of talks took place in Doha and ended up in a stalemate. The major issue of contention: western farm subsidies that made non-subsidized farm products from developing countries non-competitive in world markets. Routinely, foreign subsidized farm products are dumped in Africa with devastating impact on agricultural output; the impact on those that depend on farming for livelihood cannot be measured easily.

At Doha, it became clear that the WTO was largely acting for western countries; they appeared to be saying that free and fair trade was good, except where it applied to them. In other words, do as I say! I won't do as I say.

The European Union's amount to more than \$100billion annually; some claims put it at \$300billion^{ix}! In that kind of situation, how do you expect an African farmer to compete?

Brain Drain

The following are words from a report published in the UK titled "*The 'Brain Drain:' Academic and Skilled Migration to the UK and its Impacts on Africa*"^x.

"... skilled labour is of crucial importance for developing countries to overcome the social and institutional barriers to successful development. ... Most contemporary economic theories of

growth highlight the key importance of skills to economic performance and development potential."

"... the loss of skilled labour is of vital importance for development and development potential. ... the loss of skilled professionals acts as a barrier to institutional capacity building, the efficient utilization of external assistance and private sector growth. The 'Brain Drain' ... marks a potentially serious barrier to economic growth, development and poverty reduction."

"... The loss of highly educated individuals is a loss of collective social knowledge vested by society in them. It is also a loss to individual families and communities who become separated from individual migrants."

The African Brain Drain is a debilitating phenomenon on the continent as its best people leave for the material comfort available in more industrialized countries, especially in the west. In my country Kenya, for example, we have more Kenyan medical doctors working outside the country than there are in the country!

Nigeria has a substantial number from its educated ranks in western countries; I once saw proceedings from a conference held by Nigerian engineers in the United States. At the time, there were close to 2000 attendees at the event! There may well be more today considering that the event took place more than ten years ago.

It is said that there are more African scientists and engineers working outside of the continent than there are on the continent. Other estimates suggest that "50% of Africa's university-trained professionals and up to 50,000 with PhDs now live and work outside the continent"^{xi}.

Back in the 1990s the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated that more than 20,000 professionals left the African continent annually. Recent estimates have put that number as high as 70,000! The gap left behind is filled by expatriates (to the tune of 150,000) at a cost of more than \$5.6 billion annually.

Cape Verde, Gambia, Seychelles, Mauritius and Sierra Leone are said to have lost more than 50% of their skilled workforce^{xiii} in the past three decades!

South Africa alone estimates that it has lost \$7.8 billion in lost human capital due to immigration of skilled workers to greener pastures. There is more:

Brain drain continues unabated and there is no end in sight for it.

Human mobility has been with us since the beginning of humanity. It is humanity's forte.

It is neither possible nor fair to limit the movement of populations across boundaries, especially when life out there beckons.

Creative solutions are required to remove the debilitating impact of loss of the continent's brain power. Any solutions put in place should NOT unduly limit people's choices of where to live considering that immigration is a natural phenomenon that has been with us for centuries.

Some suggestions that come into mind include

- Compensating African countries for professionals taken in by more advanced countries; low income countries that are a source of professionals should be compensated for the investment they have made in the training of the professionals, including projected future loss; there is a need for an international treaty, similar to the treaty on displaced persons to address the matter of brain drain.
- Brain-circulation: implement collaboration programs between the African Diaspora and the continent; this is especially so in areas of research, investment and business.
- Capacity building focused on collaboration as opposed to raiding the professional “kitties” of developing countries.
- African countries should wake up global realities and ensure that the treasured brain power has the right environment in which they can function. For scientists, especially, they need resources and labs in which they can work and collaborate with colleagues in search for practical solutions to problems. Creation of equitable working conditions is core to retaining qualified professionals; these include the political and economic environment in which these professionals work.

The Silver Lining in the Rain Clouds

They say that every cloud has a silver lining; so also is the cloud of African development into the future. When I look at the changes that the continent is undergoing today, I am most optimistic about its future. The structures that are being built, the vibrancy of the society that is emerging, the conversations that are happening and the rate of information exchange is simply amazing.

Whether one speaks of the economic or political front, the signs remain positive and are a cause for optimism. Alongside these are the infrastructures, especially information communication technologies that are fuelling interaction as never before. It is the cell phone, the FM radio and the Internet.

And the continental political leadership has not been left behind; they are awake to the fact that unless they create an environment for a new renaissance, the continent will sink further towards the abyss.

In this respect they have created one of the most forward-looking initiatives ever known in the history of the continent: NEPAD – more about this latter.

Continental & Regional Governance Structures

In the recent past we have seen the moribund Organization of African Unity (OAU) transform itself into an African Union. Whereas the former focused on political liberation and bringing an end to colonization, the latter is intended to realize an economic union of the African continent and bring economic liberation to the people of Africa.

Subsequently, the AU has published a strategy for the continent's development under the title *New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD). This is the single most ambitious of initiatives on the continent since the liberation struggles of the 1960s and 1970s spearheaded by political leadership on the continent since the founding of the OAU.

NEPAD is an attempt to address the political, economic and technological issues on the continent. NEPAD was created as a response to externally-imposed solutions to the continent that have failed and left the continent worse off than it was. Were we to achieve the letter and spirit of NEPAD, Africa would have taken a huge leap forward.

At NEPAD's core is an affirmation that Africa will own its problems and find solutions thereof. The NEPAD initiative has set goals whose achievement will mean the reduction of poverty and elevated human development index ratings.

NEPAD has a component on governance aimed at improving democracy and governance. African leaders agreed with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) that would provide mutual oversight and promote development within the continent. Since its inception in 2003, 25 countries have signed on.

The peer review report Kenya was completed in June 2006. Tanzania is current undergoing the process, while the process has also concluded in Ghana. The reports are candid and explicit. The Kenyan report, for instance, underlines the need for support for constitutional reforms that the country has been attempting to do for many years.

NEPAD initiatives also focus on Infrastructure, Human Resource Development (especially aimed at capacity building and countering the effects of brain drain), Health Care, Agriculture, The Environment, Culture and Science & Technology.

Improved National Democracy and Governance

Of the 51 countries in Africa, more than 75% are democracies: they hold elections regularly and many eject sitting presidents. No longer is an African country the fiefdom of a single kleptomaniac who treats the country as his property and bring economic liberation to the people of Africa.

This aspect is perhaps best underlined by the case of Kenya which has been discussing changes to its constitution for the last 16 years; in a spirited referendum that was intended to ratify a new constitution, the government side was defeated overwhelmingly! And no one was jailed or detained or mugged for supporting one side or the other.

Supported by a vibrant emerging free press, one can only see improved civic participation into the future; and that is good for democracy.

NEPAD's African Peer Review Mechanism will further enhance the growth of democracy.

Regional Economic Building Blocks & Economic Growth

At the core of its vision of attaining an Africa-wide economic community, the African Union has regional building blocks. The vision is to realize integration based on these building blocks.

The East African Community, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), South African Development Community (SADC).

One other pillar of economic development is the African Development Bank, which places African priorities in context.

African economies also show good signs of growth. In my country Kenya for example, we have recorded a consistent growth of about 5% since the last general elections that ushered a new regime to power. South Africa has been recording similar growth levels since the end of apartheid.

On the whole, NEPAD's target is 8% annual growth over the next several decades. Considering that China and India have achieved this, the targets are achievable. In

African stock markets are booming to some degree and where there have been stimulative policies, double-digit growths are predicted.

Part of this growth phenomenon is fuelled by the African Diaspora. Kenyans abroad alone remit close to \$1 billion a year. Harnessed appropriately, these figures can transform the continent, and reduce dependence on donors and international financial institutions like the IMF and World Bank.

Now imagine how much more growth we could achieve were Africa to have fair access to world markets? Suppose Europeans for a start dropped the billions worth of farm subsidies that would allow African produce to compete in the world market.

ICT Initiatives on the Continent

Information Communication technologies (ICT) is perhaps the most promising aspect growth for the continent. ICT encompasses telephones, computers, the Internet and broadcasting.

FM radio is booming business across the continent. For a start, almost all countries have liberalized broadcasting and the people of Africa are talking, sharing and exchanging views on FM radio. One can find many of these on the Internet. The vibrancy with which people phone in and the openness with which they speak says a lot about the future promise of democracy.

There is more, especially on the business of IT and outsourcing. African would like to follow the case of India and hopes to reap the benefits that have made India a player on global scale. And there are signs of this from Ghana to Kenya to South Africa where outsourcing is fast taking root.

All African countries have established ICT parks as a means for incubation of ICT services and products.

Telecommunications growth on the continent has been phenomenal, courtesy of the mobile phone. Today, the number of mobile phone users exceeds fixed line users. Here are more statistics^{xiii}:

- *Africa has added more ICT users in the first few years of the new century than in the previous hundred.*
- *Africa was the first region in the world where the number of mobile users overtook the number of fixed lines (in 2001); and by the start of 2004 there were more than twice as many mobile users as fixed lines.*
- *Africa has had the fastest growing mobile sector of any world region over the last five years and has the highest percentage of mobile users as a percentage of total telephone subscribers.*
- *More than three-quarters of African states now have competition in the mobile market and more than 95% of African users enjoy a choice of operator.*

Over the past ten years teledensity has grown at the rate of 16%; this figure has risen to close to 25% per year^{xiv}. If phenomenal describes anything, it is the rate of telephone growth on the continent.

The phenomenal growth has been in part due to policy changes that have seen market forces at play and competition among carriers. Innovative techniques such as pre-paid billing have been partly instrumental to the profitability for operators with surplus funds used for infrastructure expansion.

We are likely to see sustained pace of growth, especially considering the attention the sector has garnered from governments and regional bodies. As an example,

“The New Economic Program for Africa Development (NEPAD) has established an e-Africa Commission to promote its ICT Program, for the purposes of accelerating the development of ICT infrastructure, as well as the use of the infrastructure for ICT services and applications to bridge the disparity among African countries and between Africa and the rest of the world.”^{xv}

The results will be realizing a large proportion of in Internet users (currently at 1.8%) and mobile phone users (3.8%) of world telephones.

The NEPAD document continues^{xvi}:

The main priority projects of the Commission include:

- *To provide an submarine fibre optic cable to link East African countries;*
- *To provide broadband fibre optic links from landlocked countries to submarine cable landing stations to connect all 54 countries, and with the rest of the world;*
- *To provide an overlay satellite network to connect outlying areas where NEPAD projects require telecommunications links;*
- *To develop a rationalized system of terrestrial fibre optic cables that provides an economic yet robust network; [Work is in progress; Kenya has recently announced fibre optic connection via the Middle East; this would usher affordable bandwidth that should facilitate growth in Internet access.]*

- *To establish an e-Learning project in association with African Virtual University, which result in the transformation of all primary and secondary schools in Africa into e-schools within 10 years, i.e. by 2015? [This project has recently commissioned a number of schools connected virtually across the continent.]*

The War against AIDS

Africa is winning on a number of fronts; the war against HIV/AIDS is one such front. The Ugandan case is worth noting; here not only has there been a reduction in the HIV prevalence but the number of new cases has declined substantially. Kenya has recorded a similar trend. It is expected that Southern African countries will start seeing the same trends given programs they have in place to fight the scourge.

AIDS is no longer the death sentence that it was once! And with medication it can be managed like any other chronic diseases.

Africa may have lost a generation in this scourge; out of this, though, it has learnt a number of lessons now being applied to the management of the disease. Approaches like openness and demystifying the disease in the eyes of the majority of Africans.

What Africa Needs

One can describe a glass as either half-empty or half full; one can use scientific formulas to demonstrate that the two are equivalent. However, semantically, a half-full glass conveys positive meaning and is likely to attract positive attention.

Africa faces real problems; it also has real opportunities and promise for a better future. And it is a promise that needs to be understood and nurtured.

Africa's future holds promise; it is great promise; it is a delicate promise, though, that is dependent on building upon recent gains and potential.

The continent needs a hand-up yes; not handouts; recall the Chinese proverb about giving someone fish and they come for more fish; teach them how to fish and they will go fishing themselves. Africa has set out in a direction to the future; it should be supported to get there!

Africa needs empowerment not through AID but through fair trade; there is no dignity in begging across the globe for aid! There is pride in marketing and selling what one has produced! All African seeks is fairness in this system.

It needs support for African-initiated solutions like those of the African Union and NEPAD. They underline Africa's priorities and are designed out of need.

Our continent needs compensation for the loss of brain power to developed countries. It is hypocritical to decry Africa's development, or lack thereof, while harvesting its human resources without compensation; western countries are reaping when they never sowed.

African has seen enough wars; stop selling armaments to the continent!

African needs its stolen moneys returned to the continent! Those crying about the continent's underdevelopment should also require that moneys stolen from the continent is not laundered through their financial systems! This includes Mobutu's \$4billion, Abacha's \$2billion, Kenyans' \$1billion, and much more associated to other countries and former dictators.

The African debt is unfair considering how much capital has been exported from the continent. It is inhuman for a country to make a choice between buying medicines or paying for education and servicing debt; debt whose structure was dubious in the first place.

The call is simple and straight-forward: write of the debts for all countries in Africa

Conclusion

The African continent's glass is half-full. Yes, there are wars in the Congo, Sierra Leone, Somalia and the Sudan; we have internecine conflicts that appear to be perpetual like in Burundi, Rwanda and Chad. Africa continues to experience net capital outflows in billions of dollars; it is losing its best brains to high-income worlds and debilitating its capacity for advancement. And yes, there is disease (malaria, HIV/AIDS, etc.) and life expectancy has declined over years.

On the other hand, Africa has put in place governance and economic frameworks for jumpstarting the continent's growth. The African Union's NEPAD initiative, the regional economic blocks and African-based approaches to solutions offer promise. Technology, especially ICTs, continues to grow at an unprecedented rate, which would contribute to the continent's sustained growth.

And many of these are bearing fruit.

Africa's growth engine offers promise and it will be fuelled by a number of things:

- *Democratic governance, a path on which many countries have embarked;*
- *Being more assertive globally as it has done in the WTO forums demanding fair trade;*
- *Tapping into Africa's human resource potential, including its people in the Diaspora, which technology makes possible;(Kenyans' TAP program!);*
- *Exploiting technology, especially information communication technologies to enhance democratic governance and information sharing;*
- *Smart exploitation of its natural resources: a good example – the hydro potential on the Congo River can light up the entire continent; and did you know the preciousness of mineral deposits across the continent – we need a fair share. Smart exploitation of Africa's resources is key.*
- *Intra-African movement of goods, services and people!*

Let me repeat what I said earlier about the Chinese proverb that goes thus: *give someone fish, s/he will come for more fish; teach him/her how to fish and s/he will go fish.*

Africa doesn't want handouts; it requires support to implement its programs; the continent understands its priorities, the world should support it in attaining those laid down objectives.

There is another proverb that is apt here as well: *The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago; the next best time is now.* - African Proverb

Finally, Africa must realize that in a world dominated by capitalism, it must play its role more diligently. Remember the proverb about the lion and the gazelle?

Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up;

It knows it must run faster than the fastest lion or it will be killed.

Every morning in Africa, a lion wakes up;

It knows it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death.

It doesn't matter whether you are a lion or a gazelle;

When the sun comes up, you'd better start running

Africa must outrun those that have been eating her lunch!

Thank you for your attention!

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- ⁱ This data is cited from *The New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD). October 2001.
- ⁱⁱ See more on this at:
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=20548&Cr=human&Cr1=develop>
- ⁱⁱⁱ See *The New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD). October 2001
- ^{iv} More recent numbers suggest this number to be about 67 in 2003. See Tim Kelly's report titled: *Changing ICT Rankings of African Nations*.
- ^v Ibid
- ^{vi} Ujamaa was Julius Nyerere's brand of socialism that combined African communalism and East European socialism.
- ^{vii} Cited in James K. Boyce and Léonce Ndikumana *Is Africa a Net Creditor? New Estimates of Capital Flight from Severely Indebted Sub-Saharan African Countries*.
http://www.umass.edu/economics/publications/econ2000_01.pdf
- ^{viii} Ibid
- ^{ix} See reports following the collapse of WTO negotiations in Doha. A report capturing this controversy can be found at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/3591107.stm>
- ^x The entire report titled *the 'Brain Drain: Academic and Skilled Migration to the UK and its Impacts on Africa*. Report to the AUT and NATFHE. 2005. <http://www.aut.org.uk/media/pdf/3/4/thebraindrain.pdf>
- ^{xi} See the *Guardian* of March 17, 2006; story by Liz Ford.
<http://education.guardian.co.uk/higher/worldwide/story/0,,1733312,00.html> .
- ^{xii} See news report titled *Brain drain hits Africa* at http://www.news24.com/News24/Africa/News/0,,2-11-1447_1921604,00.html
- ^{xiii} See Tim Kelly's report titled: *Changing ICT Rankings of African Nations*. Tim Kelly indicates he works for the International Telecommunications Union (ITU)
- ^{xiv} *ibid*.
- ^{xv} See NEPAD: *The New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD). 2001
- ^{xvi} *Ibid*