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“IMAGED RO IMAGINED: AFRICA AND CONTEMPORARY WORLD
ISSUES OF SECURITY, GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT”**

BY

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INTRODUCTION AND PREAMBLE

My approach to this keynote address is to take account of the reflected reality (image) of the current situation in Africa and to reflect mentally (imagined) on the way forward and the future .It is a cliché to say the world has become smaller because of the advancement in science and technology particularly in Information and communication technology as well as transportation with particular emphasis on aviation. There are no longer any remote areas of the world as it used to be in the past, in other words there are no *terra incognita* any more. Africa is not a dark continent unknown to the rest of the world. Whatever affects the world affects Africa in equal measure. The irony therefore is that there is also a disparity and yawning gap between the political economy of the developing and developed world. The challenge therefore is to find ways by which a common humanity can together solve the problem of the world for the benefit of us all. These problems are those of security, governance, sustainability, food security, over population, environmental degradation and climate change. These are not problems limited by national, regional and continental boundaries but are universal and global in nature and have to be commonly tackled.

. It is becoming increasingly clear, in spite of the rise of nativism and nationalism in some parts of the world , that a common multilateral approach to these issues would be more meaningful and effective than retrogressive tendencies of unilateralism that may lead to violence if care is not taken . The last decade which emphasized globalization in spite of its unequal benefits to all , nevertheless saw millions of people in Asia and in particular China lifted out of poverty . Millions of people benefited in the west and the new countries of Eastern Europe and Russia albeit not equally. Globalization has brought the world into closer contact and possibly conflict because of the knowledge of what is possible and in the inequality that nevertheless exists .The effect of globalization on Africa is mixed. But there is no doubt that Africa is becoming part of a world driven by the knowledge industry in the sense that Africa is increasingly becoming part of the global highway of information and communication networks and people from Africa are also finding their ways into the rest of the world through emigration when their local environmental conditions are not intellectually friendly or stimulating . This is a phenomenon that could only have been dreamed of and imagined in the past. This period witnessed the rise in the knowledge industry of the dot com era and service industries of insurance, investment banking, tourism and hospitality business particularly in the West. But it left many millions of people behind thus creating the discontentment fueling nationalism in many parts of the world with ramifications everywhere including Africa.

The decade between 2006 and 2016 witnessed a shift in global wealth from the West to the East and the arrival of China as the workshop of the world and corresponding shift in power relations. For the foreseeable future the United States will of course remain **numero uno** among the major powers in the world at least militarily, but China is on its heels.

Even though popular opinion in the Western world says that China is aggressively replacing the West in Africa, this is mere propaganda than fact. Of course Africa possesses vast amount of oil and gas and strategic minerals like uranium, cobalt and copper as well as ornamental mineral like gold , acquisition of which , was fundamental to global currency stability especially in the past when the gold standard was in operation but this has since been abandoned even though central banks of many countries still continue to have stocks of gold reserves .Diamonds on the other hands have remained priceless in the much valued jewelry trade and wealth storage globally . In spite of Africa possessing these valuable minerals and more, Africa's contribution to global trade ranges between 2.6 to 4% and most of this trade is still with the European Union whose members enjoy neo colonial economic and cultural relations with Africa rooted in their shared history. Trade with India and China is on the rise particularly in the sale of crude oil and increasingly in the imports of capital and consumer goods from China .Africa has seen the bad side of globalization in the closure of its few industries, such as textiles in the face of Asian imports. Africa has also been subjected to the economic uncertainties of the rise and fall in the price of its primary produce and mineral exports with consequent rise and fall of its currency. Whatever affects the global economy has ramifications in Africa in spite of its little contribution to global trade. The down turn and upswing in global commodity prices have corresponding effect not only on African economy but on its politics. Africa is also not untouched by the globalization of terrorism with its implications on the security of the continent and rise in the Defence budgets of some countries including spending huge amount that would have been spent on development but which is now spent on security and pacification. The debt overhang of many African countries have had to be tackled through massive exploitation of the continent's mineral and forest

resources with deleterious effect on sustainability and governance. These issues are interwoven and intricately connected to such an extent that they are better taken together rather than separately.

SECURITY, GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

After its victory over colonialism in the second half of the 20th century the continent had to tackle the problem of integrating its various ethnic groups into the Nation states that were negotiated for them by their European colonial masters. Even the internal structure in some countries presented formidable problems of governance. Many of the countries inherited unitary form of government with strong Centres and consequent over centralization of Administration. This was the case in most of the francophone countries which followed the administrative practice of France. This may make sense in small countries like Guinea, Senegal, Togo, Benin, and Côte d'Ivoire .But certainly not in such places as Chad, Central African Republic the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There are very few federations in Africa apart from Nigeria. And even in Nigeria the military regimes the country had between 1966 and 1999 had done much damage to the carefully negotiated federal system with the effect that the country runs a federal system in name only while actually running a unitary form of government to the dissatisfaction of many of its citizens and thereby constituting. A challenge to the national unity and security of the country. It was refusal of Sudan and Ethiopia to adopt the federal system that led to the creation of Eritrea and South Sudan as separate countries. These fissiparous tendencies exist in many countries on the continent of Africa .Some of the existing national states even though unviable economically hold jealously to their sovereignty and in this, they were supported by the Organization of African unity now African Union which had as one of its articles of faith

the inviolability and sanctity of the colonially inherited International borders. This had made economic and political integration very difficult. Where there has been attempt at integration as in the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) the economies of the states have not been complementary rather they tended to produce the same products ,cocoa for example in Ghana, Nigeria and the Ivory Coast, which leads to a struggle among themselves for the same foreign markets. The same is true of oil and gas among Angola, Nigeria, Gabon, north and south Sudan and Libya. The same is also true of Diamonds in South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Sierra Leone and in the case of copper between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia. Some leaders in Africa since 1991 have been discussing the possibility of a continental customs union and recently have come together to form an African common market (African continental free trade area - AFCFTA) which they hope will give their industries economy of scale and corresponding price advantage in comparison with imports. But not all countries have bought into this with Nigeria and South Africa, the two largest economies holding back on the grounds that the continental market may be a Trojan horse by which foreign countries may use the small member countries to dump their product on Africa by manipulating the place of origin of products through assembling of totally knocked down parts in member countries. With Mono economies and over dependence on one or two minerals or agricultural produce the basis of economic development is absent in many African countries. With weak economies come governance issues. Many of the struggling democracies in Africa are in their unstable predicament because of lack of jobs for the rapidly growing youthful population who easily lose hope and become agents of destabilization. To stay in power rulers become desperate and dictatorial thus leading to the vicious cycle of political instability and economic underdevelopment . This political instability was

accentuated and worsened by almost three decades of military rule across the continent. Even where the military did not intervene as for example in Zimbabwe the sit tight syndrome is a malady affecting several African countries from Egypt to Algeria and until the overthrow of Muamar Ghadafi , Libya , Cameroon, Chad, to name a few .

The imperative facing Africa is to add value to whatever primary produce it has, be it, mineral or agricultural produce. To be able to do this it must produce appropriate man power trained either locally or abroad but preferably locally in order to save costs. Africa is not funding the educational sector as it should. Yet without Education Africa will continue to lag behind other continents. In spite of competing demands educational development must be seen in Africa as a fundamental imperative.

Africa suffers from poor business environment consisting of poor transportation and communication grid. Only South Africa has first world type of roads and railway net work and connectivity that makes investment profitable. The much ballyhooed New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) at the turn of the 21st century was how to bridge this infrastructure gap. It hinged the success of this project on Africa attracting sixty billion dollars a year of foreign investment for a period of ten years .But the lack of realism and failure of the international investment and government community to respond favorably to the African plan killed the ambitious project. If Africa is to develop it has to rely on itself rather than on hand outs, philanthropy or investment from the international community. There is no free lunch anywhere. There is also deficient legal infrastructure and judicial system that would make arbitration easy in case of commercial disputes and conflicts. All these problems are issues of governance. The only silver lining is that there is huge profit to be made in Africa much more than in many other parts of

the world that intrepid and adventurous investors are likely to want to come to Africa. Besides it is true to say that Africa is the last frontier. While still on transport infrastructural deficiency Africa needs to build transnational roads and railways that would cut across old frontiers in order for their countries to enjoy economy of scale. The SADC (Southern African Development community) which is an inter governmental organization headquartered in Gaborone, Botswana consisting of 15 countries namely South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, Mozambique, Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Malagasy, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland and Tanzania stand the chance of developing an integrated transport system because of their inherited colonial railways that connect some of the countries. But the hindrance to rapid integration is the rather diverse backgrounds and culture involving the use of several languages such as English, Portuguese, Afrikaans, French as well as the preponderant and domineering position of South Africa leading to poor political and economic cooperation in the region. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is also a regional economic union of 15 namely Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, guinea , Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania (left in 2002) Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Burkina Faso countries which appears to have done better than SADC in spite Of having French , English and Portuguese as official languages. It had been militarily active in pacification efforts in Liberia, Cote d 'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and lately The Gambia and Mali. There is a common ECOWAS passport and efforts are being made to extend roads, railway and gas and electrical grid across from Nigeria to Niger and other West African countries. The prohibitive costs of these project and the AID fatigue in the western world make many of the projects unrealistic and unrealizable .The concept of regionalism and world order is also embraced to a certain extent in the

Maghreb but recent development especially the chaos in Libya which was caused by the NATO intervention to overthrow Muamar Ghadafi has done incalculable damage and harm not only to Libya but North Africa and west Africa. Tunisia tittered on the verge of collapse following the onset of the so called “Arab spring” and Algeria has been able, at least for now ,to resist the push to overthrow its government by FIS (***Front Islamique de Salut***) while the Sherifian dynasty with a few constitutional adjustment weathered the storm in Morocco. In spite of constant attacks on the Christian minority in Egypt and constant attacks by ISIS and or al Qaida in the Sinai Peninsula the Egyptian regime of president Abdel Fattah Saed Hussein Khalil el Sisi , Egypt is still standing. But the entire North Africa from Egypt to Morocco has had to contend with the forces of al Qaida in the Maghreb and West Africa. Al Qaida in West Africa has been active in Boukina Faso and Niger and has destabilized Mali exploiting the differences between the various Tuareg tribes and the majority black population mostly malinke, solinke and Foullah. The attack on Mali has been so severe that it has attracted the coming of French troops and the American CIA and troops from ECOWAS particularly Nigeria. Nigeria itself has had to contend with the Boko Haram (Jamaa’ati Ahlis Sunna Lidda’awati Wai-Jihad founded by Mohammed Yusuf) an indigenous Islamic rebels claiming to fight under the banners of the Islamic caliphate of Abubakar al Baghdadi (ISIL/ISIS). For the last ten years the whole of the North Eastern part of Nigeria has been distressed following constant attack and kidnapping by forces of Boko Haram. Until 2016 a swath of territory was occupied by Boko Haram until Government forces were able to drive them away. In spite of this the insurgents still constitute constant threat to Nigeria, Niger and Cameroons and Chad and forces from the four countries joined recently by their Beninois counterparts with the leadership of Nigeria have been able to degrade the forces of Boko Haram. But this is at considerable

cost to Nigeria's exchequer. Money that could have been used for much needed development such as revitalizing the rapidly shrinking lake Chad perhaps through transfer of water from the Ubangi- Shari basin has been spent on containment of the insurgency. North Africa, The Sahel and West Africa are not the only areas in Africa infested by Islamic insurgents. Al shabab of Somalia had over the last decade destabilized East African countries of Tanzania but particularly Kenya and in the two countries american embassies and businesses have been targeted. Somalia itself has become a symbol of a disappearing state where there is no effective government in spite of an African intervention force in the country. This has not prevented a secession of former British Somaliland into a separate country of Somali land which has been ignored by the international community. Occasionally the USA has sent in raiding parties and air sorties with little or no effect. The absence of effective government in Somalia has presented the world with the recrudescence of sea piracy in the Horn of Africa with Somali pirates constituting a serious threat to international shipping. This has drawn in Chinese, American and Japanese navies to the Horn of Africa in order to secure safe passage for their mercantile marine. The same kind of piracy has been witnessed in the Gulf of Guinea where crude oil has been constantly stolen and spirited to Europe where it is sold and some of its proceeds have been used for gun running in the Gulf of Guinea. The threat posed to International shipping and to aviation across the Sahara as well as the incursion into West Africa of narcotic drugs smuggled from South America has led to America setting up an African high command with its headquarters in Europe, apparently for the time being because no African country wanted to be seen as encouraging American military involvement in Africa. This has not prevented the establishment of American military footmarks in Chad, Niger, Mali and Morocco and large American military mission in Egypt. The threat of

terrorism in Africa poses serious threat to the political and economic stability and sovereignty of the continent especially because of the fragility of many national governments in the absence of national unity arising as a result of plurality of their ethnic components. In recent times perhaps following the deleterious effect of climate change and proliferation of small arms and light weapons West Africa particularly Nigeria has witnessed a rise in conflict between farmers and herders in which lives are wantonly lost .The Islamic dimension of this threat has had ramifying effect on the sometimes fragile balance among different religious groups because of their ready exploitation as tools of political mobilization by unscrupulous political leaders in such countries like Nigeria, the Central African Republic where there is hardly a functional government, Kenya and Tanzania. The result of all these problems is political instability with every election being a matter of life or death. This governance issue is hardly a good condition for economic development. Democracy thrives on solid economic base but with the precarious economic situation in Africa it is hardly surprising that very few African states can be said to be democratically secure. Even though the incessant coups d'etat of the past decades have receded into memory but in situations of sit tight presidents as recently as in Zimbabwe, Congo (Brazzaville) Gabon , Mauritania , and the Sudan one cannot say democracy has become firmly rooted in the African political firmament.

With the exception of Egypt, South Africa, Morocco and possibly Nigeria there is little manufacturing going on in Africa. The age of industrialization has not fully arrived. Most African labourers and workers are still primary producers of minerals and agricultural produce. The extractive industries they are engaged in like oil, gas, copper, cobalt, coal, gold and diamonds, phosphates, and limestones are wasting

assets which are not replaceable. Many of their agricultural produce involve vast deforestation to produce coffee, rubber, cocoa, palm oil etc and even when there is a policy of reforestation this takes time to mature. In the meantime trees which serve as carbon sinks are felled, seas and rivers are polluted by fertilizers and because of poor electricity supply people generate individual power to service industries, their homes, businesses and even hotels .The few industries existing are based on import substitution. The effect of all these is the lack of sustainability in the economic development in most African countries. Even the few industries which rely on outside raw materials depend on foreign exchange generated from export of agricultural produce and minerals. When commodity prices go down and there is consequent shortage of foreign exchange, these industries close down because even when some of the raw materials are locally available there is no backward integration of the manufacturing industries. The locally produced goods are too expensive and are not able to compete with cheap products from Asian countries like China, India Vietnam and Indonesia. In the last decade Africa has witnessed deindustrialisation. Furthermore Intra African trade which could have boosted the economy of African countries is only 15% of total African trade. Recently there has been growing cross country investment by African entrepreneurs from one African country to another. Perhaps this is the future to look forward to in Africa. Africa needs to industrialize to provide jobs for millions of its relatively young population with 60% being under 30 years. There is also need for Africa to develop appropriate technology to add value to its produce whether mineral or agricultural produce. Africa must adopt measures to reduce its galloping geometric growth of its population while food production is growing at an arithmetical rate. Without reduced population African food security will be in jeopardy, and so will the health of its people. The current explosion in the number of young people

migrating across the Sahara desert and across the Mediterranean Sea and dying in thousands in the process is a sad commentary on sub-Saharan African economic development. This is a problem that must not be left to fester for too long and it is a product of the unsustainable development going on the African continent. Because if there were jobs and opportunities at home young men and women will not risk their lives and those of their children to embark on dangerous journeys across the Sahara desert and the Mediterranean sea to escape from grinding poverty at home. This has repercussions not only in Africa but on other countries particularly in Europe and America where African immigrants are not welcomed and are sometimes met with hostility, hatred and discrimination which do not augur well for good race relations in the future. The rise in nativism and nationalism in Europe and America is traceable to the fear of hordes of foreigners bringing themselves to their shores. This also has effect on the morale and confidence of the African governments and individual Africans at home who helplessly witness their young people perishing in the desert and the Mediterranean Sea and who are asked by African people whether colonialism of the past is not better than the current independence.

Gone are the years of excitement and enthusiasm on the African continent that were witnessed after independence. It is of course true that the political struggle was perhaps easier than the current economic struggle going on the continent. Cynics have been heard saying Africa has tried rule by the "big man" or what the likes of Kwameh Nkrumah of Ghana and Ahmed Sukarno of Indonesia in the 1960s called "guided democracy" and military rule in recent times without appreciable change in their economic condition. The current wave of democratic governance are also facing fundamental issues of how to graft democratic rule on weak economic foundation. Of course the issue of governance will not

be solved in one generation. It is an incremental thing requiring a lot of patience. Whatever the problem may be, the Democratic trajectory offers better chance of success.

THE FUTURE OF AFRICA IS PREGNANT: WHAT WILL IT BEAR?.

Based on our diagnosis of the “African condition “what is the prognosis for the future.? What are the inherent strength and weakness of Africa? Will Africans remain hewers of wood and drawers of water forever? How can Africa grow its economy to secure its people and provide jobs and food for its teeming population of the future. Is Africa preparing itself for the global economy of the future which may not depend too much on hydrocarbon source of energy. Is Africa concerned by the issues of sustainability, environmental pollution and the green movement generally. Would Africa be able to relate and negotiate with the rest of the world while remaining weak, poor and wretched? Will a world affected by climate change look at Africa as possible area for recolonization. Will the coming age have serious impact on the continent least prepared for climate change? These are the imagined responses the writer of this paper will attempt in the concluding second half of this paper.

What Africa needs more than any other thing is good governance and committed leaders who have the interest of their people at their hearts more than the pecuniary rewards of holding office. African leaders must be committed to transparency, and openness and readiness to transfer power to opponents when the electorate so decide. In other words they must do away with the sit tight syndrome and follow global best practice in electoral democracy. African states need to look at the problem of over concentration of power in one Centre and embrace the practice of decentralization. They need to adopt federalism in large countries and

even in small countries where there are many ethnic groups wishing to maintain some level of autonomy. All African states must embrace the principle of decentralization and respect for local autonomy .This is the tendency all over the world with even old countries like the United Kingdom , Spain and Belgium almost breaking up into independent countries recently .Countries such as the DRC , Egypt, South Africa , Angola ,Kenya , Tanzania ,Central African Republic, Mali, Ethiopia, Chad and the Cameroons along with Nigeria would be better served if attention is paid to local peculiarities than forcing everybody together in an enforced unity . Cooperative and competitive federalism would hasten development than the conflict ridden unitary system that seems to be the general trend in political and administrative form of government in Africa. Internal restructuring of units of government needs to be looked into to remove irritants that seem to afflict many African states today .It is important to state that African states must be guided by the principle of inclusion not alienation and if needs be affirmative action should be taken to bring up those lagging behind within the existing national states so that everybody can feel they are all joint stakeholders in the national project. If individual states stand on solid foundation the continent as a whole will be strong. There is also a need to embark on massive infrastructural projects to eliminate the developmental gap between rural and urban areas on the continent.

Education for citizenship should be added to functional and utilitarian education. With an educated citizenry, mobilization for development will be much easier. So also will mobilization for citizenship from the plural ethnic societies inherited from the colonial states .When people are educated they are likely to understand the basic commonality of all human beings than the current primeval and primitive solidarity with people belonging to the same clans, tongues and tribes. Proper

educational foundation would also lead to the emergence of the right kind of political leadership and labouring class that would propel the continent to the appropriate level of development. If Africa can break the yoke of tribalism it will be much easier to run democratic governments that have been elected on well articulated political principles than the present governments of coalitions of ethnic groups masquerading as political party governments. An educated citizenry would appreciate empowerment of women who in most cases constitute more than 50% of the population but are currently ignored in terms of representation in spite of the Beijing declaration of the need to at least give women 35% of the positions in legislative and executive branches of government. Involving women also has a security dimension. Women are more pacific in their inclinations and intuition and they are least favorable to policies of bellicosity perhaps arising from the fact that they are mothers who hate to see their children die in wars caused by men.

On insecurity fueled by religion whether Islamic or Christian as in the Lords Resistance army (LRA) a rebel group and heterodox Christian cult which operates in northern Uganda, South Sudan, Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; African leaders must impress on their people first the secularity of their states and secondly the fact that religion is an individual personal belief and has nothing to do with people as a collectivity. African countries from Egypt to Nigeria must emphasize the fact that there is no state religion. The easiest way to destroy Africa is to embrace theocracy. Africa also needs to develop forces of internal security particularly the police. The threat to Africa is from within the borders of each country not from outside. So rather than spending billions on expensive navies and Air forces Africa would be better served to focus on internal security. This is not to suggest that African military capability of offense and defense should be

completely abandoned but charity of home Defence must take priority. Without security there can be no development. In this regard Africa must maintain a policy of positive neutrality and not ally with the west or whatever group is opposed to the West. Africa must maintain a policy of not being involved in any foreign entanglements. This does not mean Africa's Intelligence operatives should not share or pool resources with friendly countries so that they can together nip in the bud any planned terrorist operations anywhere on the continent. Africa in the 1990s committed itself to nuclear free zone without of course abandoning peaceful use of nuclear energy for science, medicine and energy. It must continue with this policy no matter the temptation to want to join the nuclear club by any country on the continent .whatever armed forces African states may have in the future should be nimble and mobile and must be easily deployable at quick instance to troubled areas internally or externally. Not all states need to have armed forces. An efficient police force would do in such small places like Togo, Lesotho, Swaziland, even Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gabon, Guinea - Bissau and Equatorial Guinea. With special arrangement with neighbors these countries can make contributions to Defence forces of their neighbors who could then be called upon when and if their police forces cannot secure internal peace. This is not as far fetched as it may sound, Costa Rica for example does not have an army. In this way considerable savings can be made and such funds can be deployed to sectors like health especially to prevent such recurring epidemics like Ebola and Lassa fever that afflict Some African states.

Many African states are committed to diversifying their economies from dependence on one or two mineral or agricultural produce. Commitment is not enough these policies must be executed on sustainable basis. The way forward is to mechanize agricultural production away from peasant

subsistence agriculture. Value must also be added to agricultural production before exporting them. Africa should begin to export chocolate rather than cocoa, furniture rather than hard wood timber, tyres rather than raw rubber, cloth rather than cotton, jewelry rather than gold and diamonds and so on and so forth. Africa must grow enough food not only for export but also for food security, proper nutrition and health of its people's. Generous loans should be made available to farmers either individually or in cooperatives that should be officially encouraged or sponsored. Africa must also avoid the old slash and burn agriculture whereby rain forests are cleared for agricultural use. Rather proper management of agricultural land should be made rather than shifting from one land to another and destroying forests which serve as carbon sinks from emissions from automobiles, buses, industrial plants and ever present electric generators that bridge the gap in electricity supply. Where forests have been destroyed there should be a clear policy of reforestation. Africa should look forward to sustainable energy source. Instead of relying on coal, gas and oil and hydrocarbons generally. Africa should move towards renewable energy like solar, wind, tide, thermal, nuclear and massive hydroelectricity which the big rivers in Africa predispose the continent. The riparian countries on the Niger, The Limpopo and the Nile must negotiate peacefully the various uses including hydroelectricity those rivers are put to. African countries have huge deposits of uranium and like France Africa should explore the use of nuclear energy which is clean and does little damage to the environment. Of course the nuclear wastes must be properly and industrially managed. If Africa can solve its energy problems the GDP of the continent would quadruple within a decade.

Africa has comparative advantage in tourism focusing on rain forest and big game. The fauna and flora of east and Southern Africa cannot be

found anywhere else. Tourism and the hospitality sector need to be exploited as part of Africa's economic diversification.

Although Africa has contributed least to global warming and consequent climate change , it behoves Africa as a responsible part of the international community to contribute to reversing environmental abuse .it must along with the rest of the world reduce green house gas emission by embracing clean energy in running its industrial plants and automobiles and must adopt global best practice in its agricultural production and animal husbandry .Africa's commitment to help save the global environment should be seen as a policy of enlightened self interest because it is the least prepared for the consequences of global warming which may render some parts of the continent uninhabitable. The current conflict between herders and farmers in some parts of the continent is a harbinger of what may come because of struggle for pasture and water.

The key to Africa's sustainable growth is its population policy. In most parts of Africa the population is growing at about 3% per annum. This is too high. With this kind of growth Africa may find itself unable to feed itself. For example the population of Nigeria at the current rate of growth is projected to reach 500 million by the year 2050 This is simply unsustainable. The current population policy which focuses on women not having more than four children is wrong headed. It should have focused on men not having more than four children. This has nothing to do with religion. In Muslim Turkey and Egypt monogamy is the rule rather than the exception. We must do away with the rather indulgent cultural right of men to acquire more than one wife on the grounds that their culture permits it. This is one of the ways to control Africa's galloping rate of population growth. China and India did this and Africa needs to borrow a leaf from their books. Without control of Africa's

population all attempts to grow the economy of the continent will come to nought. There must also be focus on the girl child. She must be kept in school for much longer than what is the present situation. The only way the girl child will fully realize its potentialities and make contribution to the economy of the continent and participate fully in governance is to have full access to education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. In this way girls will not be married off at youth and turned into child bearing machine as their role in society. This is one of the ways Africa would catch up with the civilized world through full mobilization of all of its people for development. Women empowerment has ramifications not only on the economy but also on reduction in population, sustainable development, social security and democratic governance. A peaceful world order and international peace and security can be more secure with women participation because studies have shown that women are generally more pacific than men.

Regards,

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