

# **Global Peace Leadership Summit 2007**

## **Introduction**

by

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This volume is the synthesis of the scientific component of the 1<sup>st</sup> Africa Diaspora Foundation (ADF) Global Peace Leadership Conference, California in October 2007. The ADF is distinguished by its resolve to impact Africa's development landscape with a refreshing and quite innovative methodology- developing and propagating peace education curricula, this unique instrument is constructed on the premise that the ecology of development is crucial and the prime determinant of the scale and speed of development, in other words that unless extant conditions are urgently redressed, African development will remain stymied by conflict, State collapse and centrifugal class struggles; therefore the ADF postulates that sustainable development of the hitherto beleaguered continent, must be founded on an environment that conduces to planning and general well-being.

A second important element of ADF's interventionism is its perception of the African crisis as multidimensional, this well reasoned approach avoids the material determinism of several other commentaries that view the problem as first and foremost as a problem of poor economic returns- of negative GDP per capita, poverty, non-competitiveness in international trade etc; without gainsaying, these material dimensions of the crisis are crucial but problems of governance including social exclusion, social provisioning, accountability, democratic openness, Human rights and such are equally critical variables in

Africa's development dilemma. ADF is engaging with these myriad problems in partnership with a host of likeminded stakeholders in and out of the continent, pulling the resources, especially mental of Africa's rich Diaspora to partner with governments and institutions in the resolution of Africa's recalcitrant crisis. The conference was organized in this context.

The papers in this volume offer a rich kaleidoscope of the crisis, with policy recommendations often provided.

The volume engages the African development crisis in a refreshingly multidimensional and eclectic methodology, attempting to underscore the varying aspects of the crisis and challenges of socio-economic and political governance of the continent. From endemic conflict, the challenges of peace-building and regional governance in the spirit of pan-Africanism, authors reflect upon the crucial and often neglected roles of the Youth and especially the vast African Diaspora in Africa's developmental quest. Interventions regarding development strategies from the NEPAD blueprint, the PRSPs and the importance of overseas remittances by the Diaspora are made.

A perennial and conspicuous feature of most African development strategies- endogenous and external has been the conspicuous neglect of the Diaspora, several authors in this volume allude to this and make incisive suggestions of why and how the Diaspora can be mobilized.

Avosentiye, *Africa's Indebtedness: Role For The Diaspora* offers an examination of Africa's debt crisis, carefully delineating the dastardly effects of debts servicing on African economies and peoples; he engages in the debate regarding the proper lexicon for Africa's debt resolution- 'forgiveness or relief' and articulates a precise role for the Diaspora in the centrality of Africa's developmental quest. Olaniyi follows this trail with his piece *Children Abroad: Exploring the Role of Remittance in Africa's Development* by critically analyzing the dimension of remittances to Africa by the Diaspora; his premise is that remittances have been a blind spot on the literature of economic

development and peace-building processes. Hence, remittances for him raise the level of national savings and access to foreign exchange and lift communities out of poverty. In this context, there is paradigmatic shift by African governments with their Diaspora and thus the emergence of “remittance communities” creating symbolic relationships between source and destination countries. Given that remittances now outstrip foreign aid, foreign direct investment and loans in Africa, this works asks in what ways international migration foster sustainable development in Africa, and what challenges does globalization pose to labor migration and remittances in Africa?. Also emphasizing the role of the Diaspora, Kehinde *Brain Drain or Gain? The African Diaspora and Africa's Sustainable Development* and Amponsah *The Diaspora: Potential Contributions to Africa's Peace Initiatives* identify crucial niches for the Diaspora in Africa's Development. According to Amponsah, ‘While there are many obstacles to the effective engagement of the Diaspora, African actors must begin to employ strategies to reach out to this constituency’ The Diaspora for him is important for lobbying, publicity and mobilizing resources that could aid the accelerated development of the continent. Kehinde on his part poignantly discusses the Brain drain syndrome, his prime concerns are how Africa could stem the depletion of its skilled workers by emigration, and how the continent can transform the drain into gain which would ultimately engender sustainable development.

Johnson *Constraints and Strategies for the Management of Conflicts in Africa*, sets the tone for the discourses on Conflict and Peace by providing an analysis of the nature, causes and consequences of conflict in Africa. The author examines constraints to the management of conflict on the continent and, suggests strategies that could allow for nation-building, justice, good governance and meaningful peace and sustainable development to be attained in Africa. Mudasiru and Amos *Peace Before Development: ECOWAS Peace Keeping Operations and Conflict Management Experience in West Africa* and Uhwo *Regional Force and Peace Building in Africa: The Case of Liberia* present a sub-regional precisely West African dimension to the debate on Conflict and Peace Building. According to Muda

and Amos 'insecurity, arising mostly from armed conflict, prevented the organization from achieving its set aims and objectives.

This has been adjudged a problem from the evolutionary trend of the organization which placed emphasis on the argument of functionalism thereby neglecting the importance of political (stability) factor as a *sine qua non* for development' Uhuo on his part examines the role that regional organizations play in resolving conflicts in Africa with emphasis on the Economic Community of West Africa Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in tackling the political crisis in Liberia. Second, he assesses the contribution or positive impacts that ECOMOG made on political and democratic development in Liberia, and thirdly, examines the application of political asylum as a new concept in peace building and its implications in future peace initiatives in Africa.

On strategies, the NEPAD initiative is the thrust of Lawson and Abiola/Odoziobodo interventions. Their contributions in respective terms are *Neo-liberalism, NEPAD and Africa's Development and Strengthening NEPAD as a Strategy for Sustainable Development in Africa: The Role of the African Diaspora*. Whilst Lawson critiques the initiative and the appropriateness of neo-liberal policies in general for Africa's development dilemma, Abiola/ Odoziobodo are concerned with the capacity for effective implementation of the NEPAD provisions. Also on strategies, Quadri's intervention *Their Programs, Our Programs: PRSP in Africa, Whose Strategy?* interrogates the socio-economic basis, methodology and application of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, and concludes that PRSPs have failed to alleviate poverty and have not fostered sustainable development on the continent.

One of the momentous developments of the post Cold War era in Africa is the reinvigoration of regional integration, examples of especially the European Union and very much the rest of the World instructed that the new orthodoxy of global order compel collective governance, the stark realities of rampaging globalization also clearly betrayed the morbidity of the Organization of African Unity.

Pan-Africanism revived especially beginning from the troubled West coast with Nigeria's big brother role in ECOMOG activities in Sierra-Leone and then Liberia. The OAU mutated in Durban, South Africa to the African Union (AU), Gobalkrishna *From OAU to AU: The Challenges for Africa's Premier Intergovernmental Organization*, attempts to appraise new African efforts at revamping continental integration, and discuss specific challenges of the African continent, which might impede the realization of the goals of integration with some recommendations.

Asogwa *African Union and New Challenges of Leadership in Africa* intervenes in similar vein; he explores the role of the AU in charting a new leadership initiative, he contends that the challenges are onerous and argues that a compact between the organization and civil society organizations including African Diaspora groups and associations is vital for optimal impact of the AU.

An interesting dimension in this volume is the focus on the youth, and the niche several authors have carved for the in Africa's developmental quest. Adebo and Oluwatayo in their article *Youth restiveness in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria/; Implications for Agricultural Productivity and Rural Livelihood* with 320 primary data attempt to establish the centrality of youth in productivity and household livelihoods, Enoghase *The Youth in Africa's Socio-Political and Economic Future* contends that while greater reflection, knowledge and analysis are required to better understand the young people, their vulnerability, strengths, aspirations and prospects for the future as well as the broad conditions that shape their roles in society should be of serious concern. Against this backdrop, this paper discusses the challenges of creating an African youth awareness of local, national or global responses to their socio-political and economic future.

And last, this paper seeks to unravel a number of social cohesion and moral regeneration issues about redefining intergenerational relationships. Odoziobodo *Youth Movements and Leadership Education: A Role for the Diaspora* explores how leadership in Africa can be tackled through intervention with youth; and the role

of the African Diaspora in the formation and establishment of an African youth movement based on the regular hosting of leadership training conferences and workshops.

As the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference approaches, we hope this rich collection of incisive contributions will continue to agitate all Africans and friends of the continent. We can only hope they inspire the positive and urgent transformation of the beautiful and most richly endowed continent of all.