

# GOOD GOVERNANCE: ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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By

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## Salutation

It is again a pleasure for me to be here at Covenant University. This place is fast becoming a home for me in intellectual terms. I have always looked forward to returning here because I am now certain of the unfolding of significant institutional/educational dynamics that have the potentials to impact the rethinking of Nigeria's educational framework I have been championing for a while now. Education is critical to democratic consolidation and to sustainable development. This is because democracy and development require a solid mass of human capital that could carry the burden of transforming Nigeria by turning the two concepts into concrete programmes of democratic renewal and reconstruction.

I am particularly happy to be among the thematic guest speakers at this important conference. Issues like this are particularly dear to my heart, and are in consonance with my many years of crusading for a national reform philosophy that would jumpstart national development through an institutional rearticulation of Nigeria's national project. This Conference therefore becomes a really auspicious context within which we can all brainstorm around the issues of potentials, possibilities and problems. We really need to ask serious and disturbing questions why various African states that have been struggling, since independence, have been unable to find the right combination of elements that would translate into a truly

sustainable development around which we can sincerely say we have decolonized after the horrors of colonialism.

I am heartened by the arrays of thematic issues that would be flagging off this conference. Food security, gender, knowledge economy, entrepreneurship, health, environment, infrastructure, technology—all these are current issues that speak to the future of Africa. But as we all know, all these elements need to be woven into a pragmatic dynamics of implementable policies for us to achieve a commendable and sustainable development. I sincerely hope this conference will become a milestone in that regard.

### **Introduction: Is Africa really rising?**

Since the late 90s, most African states have had to come to term with the wave of democracy that blew across the continent. This was significant because Africa has had to contend with many states battling with all forms of authoritarian political disorder and its consequences. From Algeria and Burkina Faso to Sierra Leone and Liberia to Sudan and Ethiopia to DR Congo and Uganda, most African countries have had to contend with all forms of political regimes from one party state to the military regimes. All these represent the unfortunate symptoms of the colonial dislocations that pre-empted the postcolonial realities on the continent. In essence, the liberation that the African nationalists—Nkrumah, Kenyatta, Mandela, Azikiwe, Lumumba, Nasser, Toure, etc.—fought for did not lead to any development dividend which could have made Africa better in postcolonial times than during colonialism. The promises of the nationalists that all will become well once the colonialists have left did not materialise.

Democracy and development therefore offer a radical hope of a transformation that could effectively make Africans better off than they have been before now. In the political science literature, there is a debate about the relationship between democracy and development. Anna Lekvall summarised the discourse into three camps of arguments:

(a) the democratic governance camp, which stresses the importance of democratic governance for development; (b) the developmental state camp, which believes that the developmental state comes first and democracy later; and (c) the multiple path camp, which emphasizes politics but also highly context-specific paths to development (2013: 27).

These three camps deploy powerful argument on the priority of either democracy or development or a mixture of the two. In the first camp, democracy provides a suitable context within which development evolves and delivers the goods to the citizens. The second camp has the strong evidence of the centralized developmental states of Asia—Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, etc.—as a veritable example of how development trumps democracy in terms of rapid economic growth and transformation. And the third camp makes a reasonable claim about the context-specificity of any political strategy or institutions.

As a reform expert, the arguments of the second development camp have obvious appeal to me. In fact, a bulk of my writings has been dedicated to the exigency of evolving a developmental state in Africa, and especially Nigeria. Being a former civil servant, I see the significance of an autonomous, capacitated and committed bureaucracy as part of a larger centralized decision-making institution committed to development planning. But then, that bias must be subjected to a larger argument of peculiarity and possibility. In the final analysis, given that any mono-causal stands the risk of neglecting important variables, we must conclude that progress must be a function of democracy, development and political ingenuity that leads to a normative governance framework Africans can call 'good'. And here we confront a significant point, projected powerfully by our thematic topic today: good governance is a mirage outside those democratic values of accountability and transparency.

In recent years, African governments seem to have woken up to the democratic urging to open up the governance space and improve economic participation. We have had the Lagos Plan of Action, The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) as institutional dynamics to monitor governance relationship between the government and the governed in Africa. The result is what scholars and global organisations have called the 'Africa Rising' phenomenon, a situation in which many economies in Africa—Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt, Algeria, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Zambia, Uganda, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Kenya, etc.—were achieving above 7.0% economic growth. Since this is about the first time in postcolonial temporal reckoning that this kind of economic achievement has been reached, then optimism and euphoria must be balanced by rigorous policy initiative and political dexterity. In theoretical terms, Herbst and Mills call this 'Africa Rising' phenomenon 'Africa's third liberation'.

Africa's first liberation was from colonial exploitation. This is what Kwame Nkrumah considered as 'seeking the political kingdom'. But it soon became clear, even in Nkrumah's Ghana, that 'every other thing' would not follow that first liberation automatically. Africa had to contend with its very own liberators who took over the colonial institutions and reinvented them as autocratic machineries of domination and primitive accumulation. The second liberation, in tandem with the democratic consolidation on the continent, therefore has to do with the uprooting of all forms of autocratic regime. On the other hand, according to Herbst and Mills,

Africa's political evolution points to a third liberation that most of the continent has yet to experience, one that will likely prove as important as the political freedoms earned over the past half century, or perhaps even more important: the liberation from political economies characterised by graft, crony capitalism, rent-seeking, elitism and, inevitably, widening (and destabilising) social inequality. Such an emancipation is necessary to open up economic space in which business can compete, a necessary condition to expand employment (2012).

The optimism backing this emancipatory thinking about Africa's possibility in the 21st century is premised on three elements that give Africa an enormous edge in developmental terms—a human capital strength grounded in Africa's youthful and highly educated population; a rapidly evolving and entrepreneurial private sector; and an enormous natural resource base. The challenge is therefore straightforward: Can African states convert their ongoing economic momentum into governance frameworks for defeating unemployment, poverty and the infrastructural deficit that plagues the continent?

### **Institutions and the curse of underdevelopment; A comparative analysis**

From all empirical evidence available, the answer appears negative. And this is where we confront a paradox in Africa's political economies: Africa seems to be rising while still starkly underdeveloped. Africa is still third and not first world; Cameroon is still very far from Indonesia, and Ghana still lacks the governance stature of Malaysia. In comparative terms, how was it possible for Singapore and Nigeria, two erstwhile third world countries, to be so different in the space of thirty years? What explains the extraordinary difference in development level between the two countries?

Acemoglu and Robinson have an answer that ought to be taken seriously. But the effectiveness of that answer requires that they first displaced the cogency of the geography,

culture and ignorance hypotheses. The culture hypothesis, for instance, claims that the difference between the rich and poor nations of the world is a function of the kinds of cultural values—beliefs, values and ethics—that underlie those different societies. Max Weber’s argument is representative of this hypothesis. In other words, the Protestant work ethic in the Western society says a lot about progress in those societies where profligacy, superstition and laziness undermine productive work. Acemoglu and Robinson therefore ask:

Is the culture hypothesis useful for understanding world inequality? Yes and no. Yes, in the sense that social norms, which are related to culture, matter and can be hard to change, and they also sometimes support institutional differences, this book’s explanation for world inequality. But mostly no, because those aspects of culture often emphasized—religion, national ethics, African or Latin values—are just not important for understanding how we got here and why the inequalities in the world persist. Other aspects, such as the extent to which people trust each other or are able to cooperate, are important but they are mostly an outcome of institutions, not an independent cause.

For them, institutions constitute the single most significant argument anyone can make for the huge difference that occurred over time between Singapore and Nigeria that used to have the same GDP per capita some 30 years ago, and the huge leap that Singapore has made from third world to first while leaving Nigeria embroiled in the same predicament it has been since independence. Put in other words: “Countries differ in their economic success because of their different institutions, the rules influencing how the economy works, and the incentives that motivate people”. The economic difference between prosperity and poverty is grounded in the essential quality between the extractive and the inclusive political institutions that dominate the economic development profile of the country.

Political institutions are inclusive when they allow a broad spectrum of the citizens to participate in the formulation and implementation of the rules by which the society is to be guided. These institutions also allow the citizens wide enough participation in entrepreneurial economic activities that facilitate the display of their skills and creativity which add value to the overall economic profile of the state. On the other hand, the extractive economic and political institutions allow a few elite formations to extract the available resources from the rest of society and in the service of narrow interests. Thus,

Political and economic institutions, which are ultimately the choice of society, can be inclusive and encourage economic growth. Or they can be extractive and

become impediments to economic growth. Nations fail when they have extractive economic institutions, supported by extractive political institutions that impede and even block economic growth. But this means that the choice of institutions—that is, the politics of institutions—is central to our quest for understanding the reasons for the success and failure of nations. We have to understand why the politics of some societies lead to inclusive institutions that foster economic growth, while the politics of the vast majority of societies throughout history has led, and still leads today, to extractive institutions that hamper economic growth

There is no doubt that the institution hypothesis is central to the understanding of Africa's third liberation. If the rhetoric of 'Africa Rising' must be squared with the evidence of gross underdevelopment in terms of literacy, poverty, inflation, income inequality, gender imbalance and unemployment, then we need a deep understanding of how Africa's basic institutional dynamics have remained essentially extractive, and its political orientation has remained patrimonial.

Africa's terrible postcolonial trajectory began immediately after independence with a statist political dogma inherited from the framework of the colonial state in Africa. The colonial state was perforce a violent state devoid of any of the positive, legitimizing mutual links and reciprocal dynamics of rights and obligations between state and society. The transition from the colonial to the post-colonial state occasioned, to a large extent, a direct carry-over and continuation of colonial attitudes, values and *modus operandi* by Africa's nationalist elite. This inevitable consequence of this transition was the evolution of an authoritarian and centralized control over the polity and the eventual stifling of any democratic tendency. It is not therefore surprising that the immediate post-independence period was marred by the one-party ideology and the scourge of military rule which lasted well into the 90s.

The result of this approach is not only to stifle all opposition and the opportunity for more viable alternatives to development, it has also meant the use of the bureaucracy as a means of political intervention in the economy and society, thereby compromising its neutrality, impartiality and anonymity. In addition, it strengthens the bureaucracy's power vis-à-vis other institutions, and also renders it immune from accountability, whether from the people or their representatives. A politicized bureaucracy that loses its neutrality and impartiality becomes dysfunctional in terms of having a highly compromised capacity to rationally and efficiently allocate resources for development purposes.

We therefore have a statement of how the institutions dominating the political and economic landscape of most African states were already compromised in terms of how the rules of the budding African states would be made, and in whose interests. Furthermore, the patrimonial nature of the operation of these institutions ensures that they would be essentially extractive rather than inclusive. The reason for their non-inclusive nature is to be found squarely within the euphoria-induced neglect of the political leadership. Let me explain. The abundant literature on anticolonialism and nationalist protests against colonialism points at a vigorous attempt by the nationalist elites to wrest power away from the colonizers in order to establish a continental wide reconstruction of the national spaces of the African states. Unfortunately, once political independence was achieved, it became the gateway not to an unfolding template of emancipatory politics but rather a path to untold postcolonial socioeconomic anomie and deprivation of all forms. The simple reason is the unwillingness of the nationalist elites to deconstruct the state and its apparatuses which colonialism left behind as a 'legacy'.

In 'A Cultural Typology of Economic Development,' Grondona explains this elite failure in terms of the temptations that the leadership falls into when the process of economic development proceeds from one critical stage to another. Economic progress is therefore explainable in terms of the political will to overcome the temptation or fall into it. According to Grondona,

When the cycle starting with labor and ending in reinvestment has yielded some fruit and people feel richer, they may be inclined to work less. On the other hand, consumption may rise at a pace that reduces the surplus, so that development turns into enrichment. Furthermore, even if the surplus is increased, a nation may decide not to return it to productive investment. It may instead spend it on those priorities to which nations have often surrendered, such as works that are monuments to leaders, wars of prestige, utopian plans of welfare, or outright corruption. Nations may also be tempted to preserve their stage of development through protectionist strategies or policies that discourage entrepreneurship and investment (2000: 44).

This understanding of the relationship between the elite behaviour and the trajectory of national progress enables us to see economic development essentially 'as an unending sequence of decisions favorable to investment, competition, and innovation that are made whenever the temptation to diverge arises' (44). And such a decisional strength to overcome temptation is made possible, according to Grondona, if elite behaviour is conditioned by cultural values and attitudes that are conducive to development and prosperity.

He develops twenty cultural factors with two contrasting poles that could facilitate economic development or resist it: *religion* (whether it is ‘publican’, favours the poor and therefore resists development or it is pharisaic’, favours the rich and hence promotes incentive for investment); *trust/mistrust in individual’s entrepreneurial creativity*; *moral imperative* (whether the citizens comply with the laws and norms or operate in a ‘real world of furtive immorality’); *wealth* (whether it consists of what exists—land, or what does not yet exist—innovation); *competition* (whether it is condemned or accepted as the key to excellence); *justice* (as concerned with the present alone or with future generation); *value of work*; *attitude to doubt/heresy*; *the role of education* (as innovative or brainwashing); *the significance of utility* (the practical or the theoretical); *lesser virtues* (the difference between tidiness, courtesy, punctuality and love, justice, courage); *time focus* (the worship of the past or the control of the immediate future); *rationality* (the difference between smaller achievements and grandiose planning); *authority* (whether power resides in the law or in individuals); *worldview* (the world as setting for action or the search for utopia); *life view* (does life happen to me or I am the chief protagonist in life’s drama?); *salvation* (escape the world or transform it); *utopianism* (is utopia nearby or beyond reach); *optimism* (due to personal effort or the gods); *democracy* (absolutist or liberal).

It is easy to calculate the type of values that predominate in most African societies from this typology. However, the most damning conclusion to draw is that we have an insight into a set of cultural attitude and ethos that has not only undermined the process of institutionalisation in postcolonial Africa but has equally slowed the process of economic growth. In the next section, we will tie some of the comparative issues raised here together into a template for rethinking the idea of democratic governance on the one hand, and the relationship between culture and institutions as the engine of economic development on the other.

### **Democracy and the governance paradigm**

Governance is essentially about how decisions are made in the very act of governing, especially among state and non-state actors which are involved in setting the rules of engagement and the policies for making the society and its institutions work. Governance therefore involves the totality of the manner in which the norms and values, regulations and rules, policies, procedures and processes, and actions are established, implemented, sustained, evaluated and held accountable. In shorthand,



Governance refers to the exercise of political and administrative authority at all levels to manage a country's affairs. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences (UN. 2012: 3).

Traditionally, the governance responsibility was conceived in terms of the government's overall 'commanding height' political control over the whole of society and its various constituents. Specifically, traditional governance concerns how the government goes about the process of delivering public services to its citizens in a manner that is efficient and effective and would make their lives meaningful. However, by the 80s and 90s, there was already considerable unease about the capacity of the modern state, standing alone, to entirely oversee the policy making processes and facilitate efficient and effective service delivery to the populace. The 'new governance' agenda therefore led to a redefinition of the role of the state as well as the expansion of the governance space to admit more non-state and non-elected actors, markets, networks and partnerships in policy processes and service delivery. Thus,

The increased role of nonstate actors in the delivery of public services has led to a concern to improve the ability of the state to oversee these other actors. The state has become more interested in various strategies for creating and managing networks and partnerships. It has set up all kinds of arrangements for auditing and regulating other organizations. In the eyes of many observers, there has been an audit explosion. In addition, the increased role of nonelected actors in policy making suggests that we need to think about the extent to which we want to hold them democratically accountable and about the mechanisms by which we might do so (Bevir, 2007: 365).

The idea of 'good governance' ties the issues of democracy, development and governance together. It implies a normative understanding of the social contract between the government and the citizens that insists that any decision made on behalf of the people must be such that leads, in the final analysis, to the betterment and empowerment of the citizens. Governance is 'good' to the extent that the policy making processes and the institutions are transparent, accountable in a manner that promote such democratic norms and values like pluralism, accountability, participation, rule of law, equality, etc. It is very easy to see how the good governance dynamics facilitate development. When the institutions of any state are grounded on democratic tenets and ethos, it becomes smoother to facilitate the tackling of

development problems like poverty, unemployment, income/gender inequality, environmental degradation, insecurity, etc.

The good governance dynamics therefore draws attention to three pertinent issues. The first concerns the framework of political and bureaucratic corruption which is the singular most potent force that undermines the governance dynamics. The second is the urgent need to monitor the governance space with its various non-state actors and hence its thin line of accountability. The last issue has to do with the institutional basis for ensuring that good governance remains an enduring framework for grounding sustainable development. The new institutionalism, for instance, provides a viable theoretical matrix that enables us an understanding of institutions within the context of cultural norms and formal procedures and rules. The pertinent questions are: How do cultural values, habits and attitudes shape individual institutions and institutional behaviour? How ought institutions to evolve in ways that would reshape resistant cultural attitudes and values and engender development?

The United Nations Development Program has outlined eight criteria for identifying good governance. First, there is an open playing field for participation in the decision making processes in the state. Second, a state must build trust and responsiveness that ensure that the needs of the citizens are adequately addressed at reasonable times. Third, good governance, especially within the context of the plural states in Africa, requires that such states must always seek fair means by which differences—ethnicity, religion, language, class and gender—can be mediated with a mind towards consensus and consistency. Fourth, good governance fundamentally implies accountability. A state must be accountable to those affected by the decisions made and the policies implemented. Fifth, and as a corollary of the fourth, accountability presumes transparency. This simply means that the state must always strive to make the decision making processes as open as possible so that those affected would be given the understanding of what government is doing and why. Transparency requires that government must always justify its decisions and actions to its citizens. Sixth, good governance also requires that the various institutions involved in the decision making processes must operate by legally binding frameworks that are fair, impartial and incorruptible. Seventh, there must also be a system of visioning in place that ensures that good governance is backstopped by a process of development continuity in economic and social terms. And eighth, the fundamental objective of

good governance is to guarantee the rights of individuals while improving their well-being in a manner that is inclusive and participatory. Anything other than these eight principles can only be bad governance.

I hypothesize that the breakthrough for African development lies in our capacity to facilitate a unique relationship between democratic consolidation and institutional stability. Let me put it another way. Good governance can only become viable if we can locate its sustainability within two seemingly contradictory truths: On the one hand, cultural frameworks have the capacity to shape the political and economic behaviour, as well as the democratic institutions, of the society. On the other hand, institutional consolidation in any society is essentially significant for undermining cultural traditions.

In the last part of this paper, I will discuss how these variables factor into Nigeria's national development, especially within the change paradigm of the present administration. I expect that the conclusions I will be drawing within the Nigerian political experiment would resonate with a larger continental implications that could enable us make some significant developmental progress.

### **Democracy is productivity is development: Change and its contents**

Nigeria holds a lot of fascination and significance for Africa. When recently in 2013, Nigeria rebased its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from \$270 billion to \$510 billion, the more than 90% increase confirmed its economic strength and size over most other African states. Nigeria also wields a demographic advantage as the most populous country in Africa, and hence the one with the most potential to convert the entrepreneurial energies of its youthful population into a solid economic capital. Unfortunately, Nigeria's foreign relation slogan of being 'the giant of Africa' lost its appeal within the context of her gross inability to convert her comparative advantages to socioeconomic national strength. For instance, apart from the economic and demographic strength, Nigeria is also considered the corrupt and the most religious country in Africa.

Like most African countries, Nigerians feel these contradictions more at the level of local socioeconomic realities in terms of political listlessness, infrastructural deficit, institutional underperformance and economic underdevelopment. Nigerians are daily confronted with national insecurity (Boko Haram insurgency/the marauding of Fulani herdsmen), extreme

poverty, monumental youth and general unemployment, gender inequality, galloping illiteracy, etc. it is for these reasons that the Buhari Administration and its change slogan carry a lot of political resonance amongst Nigerians. According to popular opinion and scholarly analysis, it seems that this is the closest that Nigeria has ever come to a genuine transformation of its development profile since independence.

But after more than a year into its existence, it seems that the PMB administration is gradually losing its goodwill to engender a lasting paradigmatic change in Nigeria. This could be due to the intemperate expectations of Nigerians waiting for so long for betterment. Or, it could be a genuine assessment of another administrative failure in a long list of others since independence. The fundamental question is: How does real change translate into a real paradigm shift in terms of democratic governance and development? There are many layers to unearth in Nigeria's sociocultural and socioeconomic history before one can ever hope to adequately answer this question. A good place to start, however, is to excavate the link between the success of democratic governance and the unenviably low productivity profile that stagnate Nigeria's economic progress.

It is to be expected, with all empirical evidences, that when democracy inflects the governance dynamics of a state, the impact is felt by the extent to which the democratic institutions impede the corrupt actions of state officials and politicians. The reduction in corruption, again to be expected, leads to increase in productivity, technological advancement and economic development. This is not a seamless transition as Nigeria and many African states prove. Nigeria's institutional dynamics is still in the throes of maturation, and hence still grappling with the necessity of imbibing democratic stability doses that would strengthen it against negative cultural values. According to the World Economic Forum Global Competitive Index for 2015-2016, South Africa ranked 49 with a 4.4 value while Nigeria ranked 124, out of 140 states, with a value of 3.5. The GCI provides deep insight into the drivers of productivity and prosperity.

This ranking of 124 actually represents an improvement of three positions from 127 in the 2014-2015 ranking. This was due to

an increase in market size (up by eight places to 25th), lower government deficit and debt, and decreased national savings. Improvements in property rights, the efficiency of the legal framework to settle and challenge disputes, and the accountability of the private sector an increase in market size (up by eight places to 25th), lower government deficit and debt, and decreased national savings. Improvements in property rights, the efficiency of the legal framework to settle and challenge disputes, and the accountability of the private sector lift the country's institutions up by five places, albeit remaining low overall (124th) (WEF, 2016).

	Info	Rank / 140	Score
<b>Global Competitiveness Index 1-7 (best)</b>		<b>124</b>	<b>3.5</b>
Sub-index A: Basic requirements 1-7 (best)		136	3.2
1st pillar: Institutions 1-7 (best)		124	3.2
2nd pillar: Infrastructure 1-7 (best)		133	2.1
3rd pillar: Macroeconomic environment 1-7 (best)		81	4.6
4th pillar: Health and primary education 1-7 (best)		140	2.9
Sub-index B: Efficiency enhancers 1-7 (best)		81	3.9
5th pillar: Higher education and training 1-7 (best)		128	2.8
6th pillar: Goods market efficiency 1-7 (best)		100	4.1
7th pillar: Labor market efficiency 1-7 (best)		35	4.5
8th pillar: Financial market development 1-		79	3.8

	Info	Rank / 140	Score
7 (best)			
9th pillar: Technological readiness 1-7 (best)		106	3.0
10th pillar: Market size 1-7 (best)		25	5.1
<b>Sub-index C: Innovation and sophistication factors 1-7 (best)</b>		114	3.2
11th pillar: Business sophistication 1-7 (best)		94	3.7
12th pillar: Innovation 1-7 (best)		117	2.8

However, in all the 12 pillars measuring productivity, Nigeria’s performance was still dismally low overall. And the situation is more precarious now because of the current fiscal crisis occasioned by the global oil recession which has led to dwindling revenue base for the government.

So, change must work. But, there is no chance to make that happen in a sequential manner. The struggle to consolidate democracy must be simultaneous with the effort to entrench a sustainable productivity paradigm as the basis of a new social contract with Nigerians based on sincerity, trust, transparency and accountability. How then can the PMB change narrative be turned radically into a game changer in the democracy-governance-development dynamics in Nigeria? I have three fundamental suggestions that, I believe, have deep implications for other African countries.

- What seems most immediate is the need for a productivity model that would not only address Nigeria’s dwindling revenue base and the enormous cost of governance, but also seek to leverage the efficient productive framework that would enable us to produce more with less. The productivity exigency also requires a comprehensive reform package that would speak critically to the capacity readiness of the public service system to backstop government policy execution and management. This is

because good governance and its democratic components must necessarily lead to the stimulation of administrative reforms that improve government capacity to affect its citizens' lives. For instance, without optimally functional MDAs, there is no hope that any state would ever achieve a productive level that can serve as the governance basis for democracy to function in a manner that can qualitatively improve the lives of the citizens.

At the other end of the institutional renewal and reconstructive national surgery is the need for a wide-spread reorientation of national values as the basis by which any state can reengineer its fundamental institutions. Etounga-Manguelle calls this a 'cultural adjustment program' which involves infusing institutions with those African humanistic values—solidarity, social interaction, love of neighbours, care for the environment, etc. (2000: 75). The cultural adjustment program, according to Etounga-Manguelle, must begin urgently in four significant sectors: education, economics, politics and social life. For instance, an educational reform must find a way to achieve a curricula that promote a discursive collaboration between science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and the humanities and social sciences (HSS). Education is also very significant as the bedrock for the establishment of development-friendly values—meritocracy, civility, patriotism, critical thinking, creativity and imaginativeness, respect for differences in terms of religion, gender, culture, etc.

In this wise, there is a crucial need, within Nigeria, to reform the National Orientation Agency (NOA), the organisation saddled with the task of value awareness and rearticulation. To all intents and purposes, NOA is presently nothing more than a pedestrian organisation without any national clout. A deep reform of its organisational strength will involve elevating the agency's operational capacity in a way that enables it to deploy research tools towards creating some value and attitudes guidelines and practical initiatives that could be integrated into development policies, planning and programmes. The objective of value reorientation Nigeria requires for achieving development is huge, and NOA is barely even managing to scratch its surface. The objective is simple but fundamental: the gradual but steady evolution of a new mental

model that shifts focus away from the culture of patronage to meritocracy, from short-term to long-term considerations, from indolence to hard work, from certificated illiteracy to reflective practices and skills orientation, from profligacy and rabid consumerism to an investment mentality, etc.

The possibility of achieving this translates into a genuine collaboration between NOA and (a) the ministry of education, (b) the National Universities Commission (NUC) and all Nigerian universities, (c) the Nigerian judicial system which could backstop the incentivization and justiciability of the values and attitudes Nigeria wants to inculcate in its citizens.

- Africa's institutional renewal must be accompanied simultaneously by the deliberate manufacturing of a critical mass of new national elite grounded on purposeful and professional leadership in politics and administration. This new corps of patriotic leaders would be delineated by their conscientious and purposeful attitude to service as a Levitical vocation. The best way to manufacture this new generation of national leaders would be to achieve a deep reform of the system of incentives and reward in the national economy.

### **Conclusion: From here to there**

The democratic experiment in Africa has a long way to go. For now, the raging debate concerns both its viability in terms of cost and the possibility it has to engender development. Democratic governance requires institutional renewal, administrative reforms and development reflection and planning that would transcend the perennial problem of implementation and corruption. All these require a fundamental political will and commitment to national progress.

I sincerely hope this conference would, in the final analysis, evolve a practical development blueprint with practical policy lesson potent and sufficient enough to get us from where we are presently to where we need to be. We have the vision; we only need the machinery to commence the journey.



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