

Harnessing The Synergy Of Diversity As Tool For Development In Africa

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ABSTRACT

The world, characterized by its rich diversity, is evolving daily, and rapidly too. Africa as a continent in the world and unique in its own diversity as a black continent, is also experiencing tremendous progress and development in comparison to a few centuries ago. Historically, therefore, Africa can no longer be regarded as a dark continent. But the reality is that the progress is basically stunted, if not self-inflicted. The paper wishes to highlight the neglect of its rich diversity - in human and material resources - as a major obstacle in its economic development and promotion of security in all its ramifications. Bearing in mind the truism that every individual is by nature selfish and egoistic and that unless properly cultivated, he carries this raw nature into the larger society and wreaks havoc, every African needs to answer to the clarion call to wake up in order to develop properly. This conviction brings into play the relevance, if not the necessity of interdependence, cooperation and unity for the holistic development of human society. Unlike some other continents, such as Europe and America, Africa still needs a serious 're-think' in this direction. It requires as a matter of urgency a well-articulated synergy of her relevant diversity as veritable tool for Africa's development in contrast to the highly and prevalent trend toward ethnicism and tribalism, religious bigotry, self-imposed economic exploitation through corruption, non-transparency in governance, injustice and individualism.

Keywords: Synergy, Diversity, Interdependence, Development, Corruption.

INTRODUCTION

The paper would skip the sometimes unusual history of lamentations associated with Africa's past. It is presumed to have been taken of, by many scholars who also had and still have the good will of Africa and its growth at heart. In view of this, much attention would rather be paid to the harnessing of its rich diversity and the positive impact such an approach would have on the future of Africa.

One can rightly claim and argue that diversity represents both the hope and despair of the African people and their continent. For instance, whereas politically, it experienced colonial rule till about five decades ago, with its pros and cons, archeological studies show

that there has been more than a millennium of continuous habitation of many parts of it. The pyramid in the North, the Sahara desert in both north, central, and west, as well as the Atlantic Ocean in the south are signs of Africa's diversity. The mentioned geographical features are also associated and characterized by identifiable and dynamic cultures and economies. The caravan trade routes cutting across the continent is a clear indication of the rich diversity associated with the continent. In Nigeria, one of the earliest identifiable cultures is that of the Nok people, who are said to have inherited the northeastern part of the country between 500 B.C and A.D 200. According to Martin J. Gannon,

The Nok were skilled artisans and iron-workers whose abstractly stylized terra-cotta sculpture are admired for their artistic expression and high technical standards. In the South-eastern and South-western parts,

there are the Nricultures of Igboland and the high quality bronzart at Ife and Benin City.[1]

The visible diversity and dynamism in Africa have not been limited to vibrant cultures and traditions. There are documented waves of migration, evolution of emirates and sultanates, city-states as well as notable tribal and ethnic settlements/nations. This is why one can describe Africa from the point of view of the following and age-long characteristics without equivocation: its diversity, dynamism, and the tolerance between tradition and change, difficulties notwithstanding.

From the foregoing, the paper proposes that the proper harnessing of these existing characteristics constitutes the tool for its development. However, it also takes cognizance of the fact that Africa and its various societies/countries might continue to suffer under the bane of self-inflicted underdevelopment and economic retardation if

Synergy- A Core Value for the Development of Africa

The *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines Synergy as "the extra energy, power, success, etc that is achieved by two or more people or companies working together instead of on their own." [2] Indeed, the advocacy for the harnessing of the diversity of Africa fits properly into this definition because it is vital for its holistic development. In other words, it is an essential value for its economic, cultural, political, and religious development. For instance, the obvious and glaring poor performance by the political leaders and the majority of the citizenry due to wrong understanding and application of the principle of creative cooperation undermines the inestimable success associated with synergy. According to Stephen R. Convey, "the essence of synergy is to value differences - to respect them, to build on strengths, (and) to compensate for weakness." [3]

A proper understanding of the principle of synergy, therefore, disabuses the mind of the wrong notion held by some scholars that the poor performance of the continent in so many aspects of human endeavor is particularly traceable to their genes, color, or environment. This is evidenced by the huge contribution of some African scholars and intellectuals in many notable institutions all over world. The organizers of this conference

serious caution is not taken to redress the obvious lapses, especially those neglecting its diverse potentialities.

To attain the expected exposé, the paper begins by explaining why and how synergy constitutes a core value for the development of Africa; the importance of diversity as a tool for development and why its improper cultivation has remained and might remain Africa's bane to development; why corruption, inter alia, is the most dangerous obstacle to Africa's development and realization of the positive characteristic of diversity. Finally, some relevant recommendations and suggestions are made while admitting that the study remains a desideratum.

itself are themselves true Africans. As a result, one would rather think that the continent has a fundamental challenge with the real and correct understanding of what it means to be independent and free. This means that our notion of independence tends to negate the real conception of inter-dependence as inalienably connected with independence.

On the contrary, the former colonizers of Africa, though many centuries independent and free in the real sense of the word, strive to strengthen their cooperative, collaborative and inter-dependent spirit through various active unions in commerce, politics, technology, culture, etc. A glaring example is the European Union (EU) where many countries of Europe have harnessed their diversity to attain an enviable position in world politics. A lot of honest sacrifice has been made to achieve such a feat, which should serve as true challenge to Africa in her quest for development.

An objective survey of Africa shows a sharp contrast despite the existence of Africa Union, Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), etc. Thus, contrary to the age-long belief that Africans are highly communalistic and altruistic in their relationship with one another, majority of Africans and African countries manifest a sorry

sight of egoistic individualism. Such a trend remains the bane of her woes as a continent-politically and economically. Africa remains chronically under-developed. Simply put, Africa lacks the true and honest spirit of teamwork to launch the continent into the 'space' of modern development and advancement. The consequence has been appalling and disheartening, for as Richard Templar asserts,

A team doesn't pull together well when each individual member focuses on their own target.[4]

The majority of African political leaders are concrete examples of this malfeasance because most of them lack vision and sense of mission in governance. They lack vision because there is a poor sense or understanding of excellence in their undertakings. Moreover, the current and pervading downward trend in the economy (economic recession) of most African countries shows lack of vision and indicates paucity of innovative spirit. To add to the neglect of the power of synergy, one observes how various governments in the African continent utterly disregard the importance of engaging the entire citizenry who are really the major stakeholders in the polity. By so doing, the art of governance in the continent is handicapped and lopsided. It further strengthens the claim by some schools of thought that many African leaders rarely manifest any clear sense or understanding of the meaning of the mission policies they profess, as well as their implementation as a way of promoting development in the society. In fact, no one can really speak of sense of mission in governance in the absence of observable positive impact. Without any intention to be derogatory, one can argue that most governments in Africa lack any encouraging sense of objectivity, and so, cannot minimally generate desirable returns to all stakeholders in the polity.

The huge gap between the rich and the poor, often created by selfish governments and poor governance points to a societal crisis whereby the majority of the population cannot synergize equally and sincerely. In such a lopsided society, one cannot readily talk about

Diversity

The beauty of Africa is its diversity - culturally, demographically, politically, economically, and religiously. Nigeria alone, for instance, has

interdependence as a recognized and effective factor of synergy. Again, in the seeming environment of exploitation and manipulation of the majority, a huge wall of separation and division is created. In the end, the basic and core values of teamwork, respect, innovation, integrity, professionalism, and development disintegrate, or are radically weakened.

As already mentioned, it is not to be denied that the amazing progress and development which we all see in America and Europe are products of sincere cooperation and collaboration between political, social and economic institutions. They have translated their diversity and talents to the service of their various communities because they are convinced of the fact that they can serve their society better when they are sincerely united. This is, therefore, where Africa as a continent is challenged to translate her numerous diversity into a synergy for success and development instead of hatred, hospitality, and deliberate under-development. It suffices to argue that Africa should not allow religious, ethnic and tribal sentiments to destroy their public institutions as is the case in many countries. Rather, the continent should emulate the positive qualities of liberty, freedom, quality and justice, which have constituted the hallmark of tremendous and consistent development in Europe and America.

In the light of the above clarifications, it becomes necessary to re-write the harmful statement accredited to one of the founding fathers of political independence in Africa, Sir Ahmadu Bello, when he prescribed absolute rulership/dominion of Nigeria to the Fulani, thus, "The new nation called Nigeria should be an estate of our great grandfather Othman Dan Fodio. We must ruthlessly prevent a change of power. We use the minorities in the north as willing tools and the south as a conquered territory and never allow them to rule over us and never allow them to have control over their own future." [5] For Africa to grow and develop, such a language, or 'hate speech' should be regarded as obsolete because of its lack of inclusion of all the parties involved. It is devoid of diversity and equality.

about 300 ethnic and sub-ethnic groups, which have also their own languages and dialects, as well as cultures. Thus, though as a nation, the

linguistic and other socio-cultural and religious differences should assist to uphold its unity and identity. The actual situation rooted in perennial conflicts *cum* disagreements rather pose serious challenges and difficulties to its growth and development. Like many other African countries, similarly constituted, therein lies their own debacle as well. From Sudan to Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo to Rwanda, Cameroun to Mali, etc, there is the same ugly picture of intolerance and mutual killing of kith and kin. In short, the supposed charm and beauty of Africa's diversity also seem to be the basis for its under-development because it has not been properly and adequately harnessed.

Positively, though linked to former colonial allegiance, most African countries have adopted a central European language - English, French, Spanish or Portuguese - to enhance national unity among citizens, and have also established federal institutions to promote unity among and inter-ethnic harmony. In Nigeria, according to M.J. Gannon, "the requirement of an immediate 1-year national youth service of all graduates of postsecondary institutions"[6] is an exercise to promote unity in diversity.

It is, however, easy to observe that ethnic and tribal allegiance, often disguised in religious bias have impeded mutual national growth. The inter-ethnic mistrust is so deep and pronounced that a viable democracy is far from genuine realization. This ugly experience can as well explain the repeated military

dictatorships in the course of Nigeria's post-independence era. It means that the inability to harness the benefit of diversity has severally made a mockery of the continent's profession of patriotism. The result is that antagonism and acrimony have consistently and negatively affected various laudable economic and political policies. They also remain theoretical conceptions because the needed sacrifices on the part of the citizenry are lacking. Though it is a truism that ethnic collectivism give vent to their social dynamism the general inter-ethnic distrust and suspicion remain the bone of proper national development.

Citing the positive attributes of the Igbo as being resourceful, pragmatic, entrepreneurial and energetic, for instance, Gannon added that the average Igbo man becomes frustrated because of the deliberate government policies to prevent them from attaining or holding high political and economic positions. For him, the aftermath of the 1967-1970 civil war in Nigeria has remained the burden of any Igbo man in the Nigerian political sphere. In fact, the Igbo of the South-eastern part of Nigeria have been projected very negatively to the rest of the population because of the Civil war and the stigma is heightened from one generation to the other. This monumental prejudice and bias cannot permit a positive harnessing of diversity as a major device in economic development. Furthermore, the private and public sectors provide a glaring scenario of contrasts, social problems and retardation of economic progress, which points to a complete lack of synergy, thus:

On one hand, the entrepreneurs operating firms of various sizes work prodigious hours to build and maintain their businesses. On the other hand, the average salary or wage earner wants to put in as little effort as possible.....The attitude is not a manifestation of an inherent laziness; it seems to be a manifestation of a lack of faith in the system.[7]

The Conflict of Opposites: Obstacle to Harnessing Diversity

From the foregoing, it is obvious that Africa is rich and highly endowed. But harnessing her wealth is her greatest Albatross, her biggest burden. Why does Africa lack in plenty? Why does Africa live in abject poverty? According to Basil Davidson, the inability or unwillingness of Africa to tap from her rich diversity is her

burden, her seeming curse. In spite of the gloomy picture he painted of the situation, he, however, portrayed a very strong optimism and hope, thus, "... the history of Africa's self-development, before foreign rule began, has shown that these people achieved much in the

past, and will in all likelihood achieve much again.”[8]

The note of optimism expressed above does not blur his real, actual, and honest assessment of the challenges facing the continent. For him, “... the actual and present condition of Africa is one of deep trouble, sometimes a deeper trouble than the worst imposed during the colonial years.”[9]In this regard, he expressed the shock of “‘deserts widening year by year’; broad savannahs and their communities losing all means of existence, or at least, sorely threatened; tropical forests, such as the world had never seen feeding the export maw; cities manifesting indescribable plagues of poverty and misery; unimaginable harsh governments and dictatorship; the state becoming an enemy to the people who in turn distrust them to the point of hatred; corruption and mismanagement of resources while multitudes starve to death, etc.”[10]

In the current past, the heat wave in the atmosphere is terribly unbelievable because of acute deforestation. Sometimes, the temperature rises beyond 43°C. Even at night when it is supposed to be cool and moderate, the various governments seem not to bother about the looming side-effects on the environment and human life. There are no signs that the government have made adequate preparations to help the citizenry adapt to the rapid changing heat waves. Instead, one reads or listens to the radio warning people to prepare for more hot days and warm nights. The common effect of heat waves on humans are dehydration which can lead to fainting or death, chicken-pox, heat rash, and psychological stress. On the whole, the deliberate cutting down of trees and destruction of natural forest continue without replacement. Natural resources are readily destroyed.

The depletion of natural resources itself has snow-balled into a deliberate insinuation of inter-human conflicts. Currently, the picture in Nigeria, and perhaps, in the entire sub-Saharan region of West Africa is the consistent effort by the state - though pretends not to be aware - to induce conflict between diverse groups against themselves. In the past three years, the Fulani

herdsman menace has cost the region a lot of human life and natural resources. Farm lands are destroyed while streams are polluted. Any kind of resistance from the affected victims results to assault, insult, and outright elimination. The states continues to deny complicity. However, it is difficult to convince many people that the current pestilence in Africa is not the imposition of the Fulani hegemony on the rest through the activities of the so-called armed herdsman. This is why one can argue that from the foregoing, one can also readily perceive diversity in the African context as having been erroneously turned into a tool of under-development and societal conflict. In fact, the current situation is nothing but a degradation from the hopes and freedoms embedded in the struggle for the independence of African countries. Some people have been emboldened by the circumstance to describe the invasion by the armed Fulani herdsmen as a religious neo-colonialism under the umbrella of Islamic expansion. Others describe the cattle invasion as a camouflage to promote the Fulani Jihad of the 18th and 19th century under Uthman Dan Fodio. The speculations would have held no water or iota of suspicion if the government in power had not looked away while mass burials initiated by armed Fulani herdsmen are carried out almost everywhere in Nigeria. Moreover, in a multi-religious society like Nigeria, precautions should have been taken to avoid giving opportunity to such speculations. The fundamental question remains how any responsive government that promotes development allow one source of economic wealth to be used to destroy another. It does not promote natural cooperation and co-existence. Synergy cannot be properly harnessed under such a deplorable situation and environment.

It does seem that people are being forced through the current polarizations, based on religion and tribe, to resort to ethnicism, tribalism, bigotry and fanaticism, as well as a detour to self-imposed under-development. In the end, the situation is moving rapidly towards a conscientious effort to impede any effort to harness our African diverse values-cultural, religious, economic, political, etc. In all, it boils down to a crisis of institutions, for according to Basil Davidson,

This modern tribalism flourishes on disorder; is utterly destructive of ... society,

makes hay of morality, flouts the rule of law.[11]

It is not to be forgotten that Edem Kodjo, a one-time Secretary -General of the Organization of Africa Unity (O.A.U) warned that Africa as a continent should always be sensitive to the problems that can destroy its diversity and unity. His fear was informed by the constant trend to halt the slow expansion of wealth and

self-development by disgruntled elements within the continent. For him, she may have 'space, people, natural resources, but Africa is nothing, does nothing, nor can do anything.'[12]

Corruption as a major handicap to harnessing Diversity in Africa

Corruption, in fact, institutionalized corruption, has occupied a vital space in the history of modern and contemporary Africa and so cannot be left out in any meaningful discussion on Africa. As an acknowledged virus

in Africa, it has to be repeatedly mentioned in the search for a panacea to its challenges and obstacles to development and growth. In a language of mixed feelings, Martins J. Gannon describes Nigeria, among other sad examples in Africa, thus:

Nigeria represents both the hope and the despair of Africa,... Nigeria's ruling classes have squandered the country's rich natural resources irresponsibly and are, as the title of a recent article in *The Economist* states forthrightly, "out of control" ("Out of Control", 1999 p.44).[13]

After almost two decades, one can still refer to the observation of Gannon in the *Economist* as most apt to the situation, if not worse than before he made his observation. Continuing he had written that corruption was widespread using the years 1996 and 1997 as concrete instances, during which, *Transparency International*, an Organization dedicated to the elimination of corruption in international business, ranked Nigeria as the most corrupt nation among 85 in its survey. In a similar survey of 1998, Nigeria moved from 85th to 81st on the list. It was still a sorry story.

Strictly speaking, Corruption as already mentioned, is a virus and a handicap to positive development in any society, especially Africa. It does not recognize merit, equality, justice, fairness, and consciousness. Rather, it promotes everything that disregards positive collaboration and cooperation in the development of any society. From North Africa to South Africa, and from West to Central Africa, one hears about institutionalized corruption, with political leaders carting away national wealth and appropriating collective goods for their personal and selfish aggrandizement. Not long ago, John Zuma, the President of South Africa

was forced to resign on the basis of corruption. Shortly before him, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe was forced out of office on the allegations of highhandedness and dictatorship, which in contemporary democratic parlance also amounts to corruption of public institution. Many African leaders and dictators have enthroned and anointed themselves as life presidents. Paul Biya of Cameroun is a concrete example. During their imperial rule, they have always appropriated everything to themselves, except the recognition of the sense of democracy and 'otherness' as steps to harnessing diversity and its attendant advantages. It is not a hidden fact that for many decades the irrational misappropriation of national wealth by political leaders has worked against the proper development of Africa despite the acknowledged and observable human and natural resources. The other continents capitalize on this major weakness to describe Africa as a continent without hope.

In addition to fiscal irregularities, social and political institutions have been seriously undermined by undue emphasis on ethnic and tribal leanings within the same society in terms of allocation of political positions. Nigeria

remains a concrete example. The syndrome is so pronounced that the adage, 'anybody from outside my village is 'suspect' and an 'outsider'

to 'us'. Thus, the glaring reality is a contradistinction to the provisions of the 1999 constitution on Federal character, which states,

The government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies." (Section 14, sub-section 3-4). [14]

There is a further and deeper contradiction between the constitutionally professed inclusiveness of all sections of the country and the practice of exclusion in vogue. This is corruption boldly written.

In addition to the downward trend towards self-inflicted under-development through unjust distribution of resources and appointments, there is the upsurge in religious bigotry and fanaticism. Boko Haram and its menace is globally recognized as a religious terrorist group. Apart from the kidnapping of over three hundred Chibok school girls in 2014, the same group has in February 2018 kidnapped another 100 school girls in Dapchi, Yobe state, Nigeria. The Fulani armed herdsmen is another representation of a new trend of religious menace presumed to be seeking to actualize the enthronement of Islam as state

religion. Benue, Taraba, Nasarawa, and Plateau states have been reduced to a carnage. It is not to be over-emphasized that in any pluri-religious entity, the institutionalization of any religion - in whatever form - over the others could lead to mistrust and misunderstanding, if not to a total breakdown of law and order. Since injustice and insecurity breed mutual suspicion, the fabric of societal development would also be impaired, if not completely destroyed.

In fact, the tendency to drag religious bias and intolerance into politics and governance in many countries of Africa has led many scholars to raise the following questions articulated by Rex C. Kanu:

Is religion relevant to nation building? Can religion be of any benefit in community development? Is religion simply a destructive or disintegrating factor? [15]

With these soul-searching questions, the paper wishes to make a few recommendations bearing in mind that the discourse remains

pertinent for scholars, especially from Africa - at home and in diaspora.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The various governments in Africa should invest more in education than it is doing presently to enhance holistic development of the human person and the society.
2. There is need to discourage the imposition of a single party state or government since many voices need to be heard. Moreso, the electorate needs to be empowered to enhance diversity and development.
3. The wide gap between the few rich and majority poor should be a serious concern for the continent's economic and political planners. The various national and federal governments should reduce their hold on the economy and move towards the establishment of a freer or liberalised market/economy.
4. Many African countries profess Western-style democracy but are authoritarian in practice. It is even worse where many

retired military personnel have held on to reins of power in clearly-stated dictatorial fashion that is anti-progressive and does not encourage diversity of opinion. Nigeria is again a clear example.

5. Since an average African detests isolation and solitude, genuine effort must be made to provide centers where people can meet and share their experiences. Furthermore, the growing tendencies to allow kidnappers, terrorists, armed robbers and religious fanatics to disrupt common ceremonies like weddings, child dedication/naming ceremonies, funerals, chieftaincy installations, school activities, etc should be highly minimized. This is because people of different cultures need to interact to promote unity and development. Again, recreation is important for development of body and mind.
6. Religion should remain a medium of peace, equity, love compassion and progress in the society. Since Africa is mainly populated by adherents of African Traditional Religion, Christianity, and Islam, conscientious
 1. Al- Shabab(Africa)
 2. Al- Murabitun (Africa)
 3. Al- Qaeda (Islamic Maghreh)
 4. ISIS (Algeria)
 5. ISIS(Libya)
 6. Al-Itihaad al-Islamiya (Somalia)
 7. Ansar-Al-Sharia (Morocco)
 8. Moroccan Mudjadine (Morocco)
 9. Salafia Jihadia (Morocco)
 10. Boko Haram (Nigeria and other African countries)
 11. Egyptian Islamic Jihad (Egypt)
 12. Ansar Al sharia (Tunisia)
 13. Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (Libya)
 14. Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa

From the above list, it is obvious that there is not much space for rapid development in a poor continent like Africa, savaged by so many terrorist groups.

8. The governments in Africa need to overhaul their attitude towards wages and remuneration of work so as to reduce drastic brain from the continent.

effort should be made to encourage dialogue, mutual understanding, and justice in all facets of daily interaction in the society. The current wave of religious intolerance and attempt at forceful conversion of people as witnessed in wide-ranging activities of religious bigots in Africa should be tamed, if not completely eradicated. It is amazing that majority of the 145 acclaimed terrorist groups in the world are found in Africa, where every effort should rather be made to alleviate poverty and hunger.

7. Africa's population, economic activities and demography should not be allowed to be depleted on daily basis by terrorist groups like:

15. Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group (Morocco)
16. Jund al-Khilafah (Algeria)
17. Hizbut-Tahrir(worldwide Caliphate)
18. Ansar Dine (Africa)
19. Al Gama'a (Egypt)
20. Al- Islamiyya (Egypt)
21. Armed Islamic men of Algeria
22. Salafist Group for Call and Combat (Algeria)
23. Ansar-al-Sharia (Libya)
24. Ansar-al-Sharia (Tunisia)
25. Ajnad Misr (Egypt)
26. Fulani Herdsmen of (Nigeria).

9. Since social ills such as favoritism and nepotism do not enhance proper development and promotion of diversity there is urgent need to recognize and promote gender equality, especially from the point of view of employment and job opportunities. It will help to enhance productivity and development. In other words,

discrimination hampers development and kills the positive contribution of diversity in the society.

10. Governance should be a continuum, whereby meaningful projects and policies initiated by previous governments should be continued by successive ones. Thus, Governance by antagonism and acrimony should be halted as a way of promoting diversity

of ideas. Otherwise, it would be dictatorship.

11. Finally, since inter-ethnic and inter-communal clashes deter progress and interdependence, honest collaboration should form the hallmark of relationships across the nations of Africa.

CONCLUSION

Africa is a richly endowed continent. But it is observed that its under-development is to an extent self-inflicted. Having observed that the high level of civilization and development in Europe and America can be traced to a consistent and committed struggle by the leaders and the citizenry to treat each other with respect, dignity, fairness and equity, Africa needs to wake up. The aforementioned continents may not have arrived their perfect goal, yet the signs of genuine success are everywhere visible. Since their visible success has to a large extent caused a serious brain drain on Africa, it becomes imperative for the continent to embrace the challenge to commit herself to continuous innovations through the recognition and enhancement of her diverse endowments as the best means to deliver value and development in the continent. To grow effectively, African nations are challenged to be transparent, collaborate, and conduct the business of governance with integrity, as well as with the highest standard of ethics and accountability. If serious violations are treated with the highest level of reprobation, then corruption and inaptitude would give way for development in Africa. Again if professionalism is highly rewarded, the current drain of Africa's best brains from the continent might be halted and her resources rechanneled towards her own proper development. Above all, it is necessary for Africa to promote the spirit of genuine interdependence in politics, commerce, culture, and technology. The pluri-religious nature of African society demands a constant and sincere promotion of interreligious dialogue to reduce bigotry, intolerance, misunderstanding, and terrorism. In other words, Africa can become a great continent if her diverse endowments are harnessed to a positive end.

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