Challenges and Opportunities in the "New World Order": How can Africa Reposition itself Sustainably in a Shifting and Uncertain Global Order?

The 2ⁿᵈ Africa Governance, Leadership and Management Convention 2011: Mombasa, 2 – 5 August, 2011: organised by the Kenya Institute of Management and the Africa Leadership Forum.

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Honourable Ministers and distinguished delegates:

As you know, the topic I have been requested to address refers to a *"New World Order".* It is therefore necessary that we make an effort at least to identify the elements which would combine to determine the content of this *"new world order".*

I believe that some of the most decisive among these are:

(i) the end of the Cold War and therefore the collapse of the Soviet Union;

(ii) the 1993 US-led war against Iraq to defeat the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait;

(iii) the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington D.C., both in the United States of America;

(iv) the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq;

(v) the 2008/9 global financial and economic crisis; and,

(vi) the emergence especially of China and India, and therefore countries of the South, as important players in the global economy.

We should draw some conclusions from the dialectical interaction among these developments.

One of these is that the US emerged as the sole super-power in the world. Given the absence of any countervailing force, it gained the possibility to act as the sole decisive determinant of the structure and content of the system of international relations.

This meant that, at least, no major world development in the world would take place without its involvement.

With regard to Africa, given our relative weakness in the context of the global balance of power, this meant that:

· we had to pay particular attention to the views and wishes of the US, careful to accommodate our policies and programmes to the positions adopted by the US; and,

· we lost the possibility to do our best to defend our independence by using the bargaining power provided by the fact of the competition between the US and the Soviet Union to win our support and allegiance.

In this context we must mention that the neo-liberal economic development paradigm described as *'the Washington Consensus',* achieved its virtually unquestioned global pre-eminence in the context of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Accordingly, it played a central role in terms of influencing what Africa did among other things to adjust to the reality that it had to relate to only one super-power.

The 1993 war against Iraq confirmed that because and since it had emerged as the sole global super-power, the US had no choice but to act as the principal and vanguard guarantor of *'the new world order'.*

Its posture and actions in this regard would be sustained and legitimised by its knowledge that many nations in the post-Cold War era would willingly accept that the US should play this principal and vanguard role.

This served to reinforce a tendency in US politics which has been part of the US discourse with regard to international relations for a long time.

This tendency has sought to bestow on the country an ineluctable *'manifest destiny'* to act to fashion the rest of the world in its image, allegedly for the greater good of all humanity.

With regard to the 1993 Iraq war, we must also underline the fact that this war emphasised the gross imbalance between the US and even its NATO partners in terms of the capacity to deploy overwhelming military strength and means to achieve victory in any armed conflict anywhere in the world.

Informed both by the objective reality of its preponderance in terms of determining the content of the system of international relations, and the subjective appreciation of its role in world affairs, the US establishment made an important determination.

This was that one if its strategic foreign policy objectives would be that it would deliberately aim to ensure that no other power emerged which could challenge its *'natural'* global hegemony.

This posture was further strengthened by the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The US establishment interpreted these as indicating that the US had been targeted exactly because it was *'the premier home and exemplar of democracy, human rights and free enterprise'*.

This meant that it therefore had to act everywhere in the world to defeat all organised forces it determined to be hostile to 'democracy, human rights and free enterprise'.

This was because, inevitably, these would act in a manner that would threaten the very national security of the US.

Thus the three factors – the end of the Cold War, the 1973 Iraq war and 9/11 – all combined to assert both US global hegemony and the predominance of US interests as the defining feature of the system of international relations.

This was further reinforced by the 2008/9 global financial and economic crisis.

Having felt sufficiently empowered by all the other developments we have mentioned, the US decided invade Iraq in 2003 despite the absence of authorisation by the UN Security Council, the principal body in international law mandated to maintain international peace and security.

The mere fact that the global financial and economic crisis was generated by extraordinary disequilibria caused by the US financial sector emphasised the reality of the leading global role of the US economy, and therefore the US.

The corollary of this was that objectively the health of the global economy could only be achieved on the basis of restoring the health of the US economy, thus emphasising the pre-eminence of the US in the ordering of the system of international relations.

At the same time, the very fact that negative developments in the US financial sector resulted in a global crisis emphasised to the US that despite its immense power, nevertheless its own progress depended on the success of the rest of the world.

This highlighted the critical importance of the fact of the interdependence of nations as dictated by the process of globalisation, as a necessary condition for the success even of the US itself, despite its status as the sole global super-power.

In this context, and in the historically very recent past, China and India have emerged as significant players in the world economy.

In part these countries are important because between them they contain one-third of the world population.

As developing countries with thriving economies, they constitute an immense market for goods and services and are positioned as important drivers of the process of the further growth of the world economy.

Objectively they represent both an opportunity and a threat to the US on all fronts.

For instance China is already structurally linked to the US in a manner that is beneficial to the US as:

·   a leading source of finance to help sustain the enormous US balance of payments and fiscal deficits;

·   a source of cheap products which help to reduce the cost of living for millions of US citizens; and,

·   a highly profitable destination for US investors, which helps to underwrite the profitability and viability of important US corporations.

However they constitute a threat to the US to the extent that:

·   they are out-competing especially the US manufacturing sector, resulting in its de-industrialisation;

·   they have led to the outsourcing of especially ICT services out of the US particularly to India; and,

·   they have enhanced the economic dependence of the US on countries outside the North Atlantic area, and therefore countries which are not tied to the US in terms of a more strategic and comprehensive structural relationship, such as developed between the US and Western Europe in the context of the post-Second World War period; and,

·   as countries of the South, they constitute a competing centre of attraction for other countries of the South which, in the absence of this alternative, would structure their external economic relations exclusively on the basis of their dependence on and interaction with the economies of the North.

To all this we must add the aspiration consistently expressed by important emerging economies to move away from the US dollar as the dominant international reserve currency.

In this regard, we must take note of the growing international importance of the Euro, even in the context of the serious problem of unsustainable sovereign debts currently affecting the Eurozone.

The processes described in the preceding paragraphs have resulted in various outcomes relevant to 'the new world order'. These include that:

·   objectively the US has established itself as the sole world super-power;

·   as such it actually disposes of preponderant military and economic power globally, and therefore the attendant political influence;

·   the defence and advance of its unique national security, economic and political interests have assumed a more elevated place in the conduct of its all-round foreign policy;

·   in this context it has established a precedent that it has the capacity to act even against the wishes of the UN Security Council, and therefore in flagrant violation of international law, on the basis that is 'unique' interests were above such law, and therefore the international rule of law;

·   concern for the legitimate interests of other nations elsewhere in the world, including Africa, is predicated on the extent to which such concern is consistent with and serves the immediate US 'national interest';

·   connected to this we must expect that because of its natural pre-occupation with important concerns about its economy, social stability and national security, the US will reduce its focus on such matters as working with Africa to address its development challenges;

·   considerations of *realpolitik* dictate that all governments must design their policies and programmes, especially as they relate to, and have an impact on the system of international relations, mindful of the interests and concerns of the US;

·   nevertheless, the possibility for Africa to negotiate a better place for itself in the global economy, in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, has improved with the emergence of important economies of countries of the South, and specifically China and India, as important players in the world economy; and,

·   the future of the world economy will not be decided solely on the basis of US interests, given that the US itself, including its major corporations, understands the imperatives of the process of globalisation.

It is within the context of what we have sought to present as important elements of *'the new world order'* that we must answer the question posed in the second part of the topic we have been asked to address – *'How can Africa Reposition itself Sustainably in a Shifting and Uncertain Global Order?'*

In this regard, it goes without saying that indeed our Continent is faced with *'a shifting and uncertain global order'*.

As part of this, we must understand that the developed Western countries, responding to various imperatives we will discuss below, have essentially put in question our right to determine our destiny.

Accordingly they have pushed further down the global agenda the task to address Africa's challenges consistent with Africa's views about its own challenges and solutions.

Specifically, using the UN Security Council, the Western powers have acted to oppose specific African decisions relating to the resolution of the conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire, Libya and Darfur, intent to impose such solutions as would serve their interests.

Further, relevant to Africa's socio-economic development, in 2002 the G8, meeting in Canada, adopted the G8 Africa Action Plan (G8 AAP).

The G8 AAP committed the G8 to implement an integrated programme of action to support Africa's sustained development offensive as reflected in the objectives and programmes of the process decided by Africa, NEPAD – the New Partnership for Africa's Development.
This was the very first time that not only the G8, but also the rest of the international community, committed themselves to redesign their African development interventions to ensure their consistency with the Africa-devised NEPAD.

However, the reality today is that the G8 AAP has completely disappeared from the agenda of the G8, even when this collective convened once again in Canada in 2010, the first time since it adopted the G8 AAP.

This reality was emphasised when the G8 met in France this year, 2011.

For instance, the G8/Africa Joint Declaration issued at the Deauville G8 Summit Meeting only mentioned the G8 AAP in the context of G8 support for the AU with regard to the issue of the construction of the African Peace and Security Architecture.

When the decision was taken that the reinvigorated G20 would serve as the most important global economic forum, objectively this produced the result that the G8 AAP formally ceased to serve as a binding commitment of the developed world.

Rather than adopt the G8 AAP, relevant to Africa, the G20 decided to elaborate its own Development Plan, which was adopted at the 2010 Seoul G20 Summit Meeting.

Since then, the G8 AAP, the most comprehensive and mutually agreed programme of cooperation between Africa and the developed world, has ceased to exist, emphasising the reassertion of an unequal relationship between Africa and the countries of the West, some of them being former African colonial powers.

In summary this means that the West has now made the unequivocal determination that:

·   it reserves for itself the right to participate in deciding Africa's political destiny, regardless of the express wishes of the African people as expressed through the African Union; and,

·   it has abandoned the commitment it made almost a decade ago to design its interventions relating to Africa's socio-economic development to ensure that these are consistent with Africa's own development programme.

With regard to the latter we must also make two additional and important observations.
It is clear that to all intents and purposes, the WTO negotiations to conclude the Doha Development Round have stalled, with no successful end in sight.

This means that the effort has so far failed to establish a global, law-governed trading system purposefully targeted at facilitating the socio-economic development of the developing countries, including and especially Africa, as visualised when it was decided to launch the Doha Development Round (DDR).

Contrary to the purposes of the DDR, Africa has been engulfed by negotiations with the EU to conclude the highly contentious EPAs, the Economic Partnership Agreements, prescribed by the ACP/EU Cotonou Partnership Agreement.

The fundamental problem with the EPAs is that, among others, they require reciprocal arrangements between the poor and underdeveloped ACP countries and the highly developed EU collective of West European states, in direct opposition to the purposes of the development objectives of the DDR.

Accordingly, these two developments, relating to the WTO DDR and the EPAs, add to the reality with which we have to contend, as represented by the abandonment by the developed countries of the G8 AAP.

All this underlines the uncertainty in the *'new world order'* within which Africa must define its agenda.

However, this does not mean that we should allow that uncertainty so paralyses us as Africans that we feel incapable of arriving at definite conclusions about how we should conduct ourselves within this uncertain global order.

In this regard I would like us first of all to consider a particularly pernicious consequence for us as Africans which, once again, relates to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and therefore the end the Cold War.

This historical fact has given courage to Western powers to assert their own right to hegemony especially over the destiny of the peoples of Africa.

In this regard it would not be difficult to demonstrate how the US, the global hegemon, has been content to delegate a subsidiary leadership role with regard to the future of Africa to its allies within the NATO coalition of political and military powers.

The consequence of all this is that there has issued especially, but not accidentally, from various circles in the UK, a call for a *'new imperialism'* and therefore the *'recolonisation'* of Africa!

Because we considered this to be an obviously preposterous proposition, as a Continent we ignored this voice.

However, the fact of the matter is that the agenda for the *'recolonisation of Africa'* is a present and actual part of the reality to which we must respond in the context of the uncertain global order which, inevitably, shapes and will continue to shape the future of our Continent.

In essence the argument that has been advanced is that the process of globalisation has created such interdependence among all nations that the "*post-modern world*", the Western countries, has a responsibility to ensure the integrity and therefore the proper functioning of the global system.

The British diplomat Robert Cooper is one of the theoreticians of this view. In a 2002 article on *"The Post-Modern State"*, he said that one of the *"main characteristics of the post-modern world"* is achieving *"security (that) is based on transparency, mutual openness, interdependence and mutual vulnerability."*

In this context he wrote:

"The challenge to the postmodern world is to get used to the idea of double standards. Among ourselves, we operate on the basis of laws and open cooperative security. But when dealing with more old-fashioned kinds of states outside the postmodern continent of Europe, we need to revert to the rougher methods of an earlier era - force, pre-emptive attack, deception, whatever is necessary to deal with those who still live in the nineteenth century world of every state for itself. Among ourselves, we keep the law but when we are operating in the jungle, we must also use the laws of the jungle. In the prolonged period of peace in Europe, there has been a temptation to neglect our defences, both physical and psychological. This represents one of the great dangers of the postmodern state…

"How should we deal with the pre-modern chaos? To become involved in a zone of chaos is risky; if the intervention is prolonged it may become unsustainable in public opinion; if the intervention is unsuccessful it may be damaging to the government that ordered it. But the risks of letting countries rot, as the West did Afghanistan, may be even greater.

"What form should intervention take? The most logical way to deal with chaos, and the one most employed in the past is colonisation. But colonisation is unacceptable to postmodern states (and, as it happens, to some modern states too). It is precisely because of the death of imperialism that we are seeing the emergence of the pre-modern world. Empire and imperialism are words that have become a form of abuse in the postmodern world. Today, there are no colonial powers willing to take on the job, though the opportunities, perhaps even the need for colonisation is as great as it ever was in the nineteenth century. Those left out of the global economy risk falling into a vicious circle. Weak government means disorder and that means falling investment. In the 1950s, South Korea had a lower GNP per head than Zambia: the one has achieved membership of the global economy, the other has not.

"All the conditions for imperialism are there, but both the supply and demand for imperialism have dried up. And yet the weak still need the strong and the strong still need an orderly world. A world in which the efficient and well governed export stability and liberty, and which is open for investment and growth - all of this seems eminently desirable.

"What is needed then is a new kind of imperialism, one acceptable to a world of human rights and cosmopolitan values. We can already discern its outline: an imperialism which, like all imperialism, aims to bring order and organisation but which rests today on the voluntary principle."

These *'academic'* views have also been echoed by the media, and have therefore helped to prepare opinion in the *'post-modern world'* in favour especially of the *'recolonisation'* of Africa.

For instance, in this regard, in a June 2, 2003 article, Bruce Anderson, columnist of *The Independent* (London), wrote:

"Africa is a beautiful continent, full of potential and attractive people who deserve so much more than the way in which they are forced to live, and die. Yet it is not clear that the continent can generate its own salvation. It may be necessary to devise a form of neo-imperialism, in which Britain, the U.S. and the other beneficent nations would recruit local leaders and give them guidance to move towards free markets, the rule of law and - ultimately - some viable local version of democracy, while removing them from office in the event of backsliding."

On April 19, 2008 *The Times* (London) published an article by Matthew Parris entitled *'The new scramble for Africa begins'*, in which he said:

"Fifty years ago the decolonisation of Africa began. The next half-century may see the continent recolonised. But the new imperialism will be less benign. Great powers aren't interested in administering wild places any more, still less in settling them: just raping them. Black gangster governments sponsored by self-interested Asian or Western powers could become the central story in 21st-century African history."

Another British commentator, Richard Gott, wrote in the *New Statesman* magazine published on 15 January 2001:

"There is a growing belief, not least within the ranks of latter-day new Labour missionaries, that appears to favour the reconquest of Africa. No one really suggests how this would come about, nor is there a "plan" available for discussion. Yet the implicit suggestion of recent reporting from Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, sometimes echoed in London, is that imperial intervention might indeed be welcomed by peoples threatened with mayhem, anarchy and civil war…

"A second line of argument deployed by this new generation of imperial activists, coupled with the notion that the empire was not all that bad, has been to suggest that Britain's decolonisation process was seriously at fault. If only the British had followed the far-sighted policy of General de Gaulle, who granted France's African colonies self-government while retaining imperial control over foreign policy and defence…

"What Africa really needs, Maier, (in his book This House Has Fallen: Nigeria in Crisis), seems to suggest, is the advice of a new generation of foreign missionaries, imbued with the new, secular religion of good governance and human rights. Men such as Maier himself and R W Johnson would fit the bill admirably. Other contemporary witnesses, the innumerable representatives of the non-governmental and humanitarian organisations that clog the airwaves and pollute the outside world's coverage of African affairs with their endless one-sided accounts of tragedy and disaster, echo the same message.

"With the reporting and analysis of today's Africa in the hands of such people, it is not surprising that public opinion is often confused and disarmed when governments embark on neo-colonial interventions. The new missionaries are much like the old ones, an advance guard preparing the way for military and economic conquest."

What Richard Gott reported is the setting of a political agenda in the UK, which observation also applies to the rest of the *'post-modern world'*, which would help to create the conditions for Western governments to *"embark on neo-colonial interventions."*

The NATO bombardment of Libya is the ultimate outcome and practical expression of the theories advanced by intellectuals such as Robert Cooper, which have been popularised through the Western media by commentators such as Bruce Anderson and others.

Led specifically by the *'post-modern countries'* of France, the UK and the US, the UN Security Council authorised the current NATO military operation against Libya, which has absolutely nothing to do with helping the Libyan people peacefully to resolve the crisis afflicting their country.

Rather, it has everything to do with regime change and the assertion of the *'new kind of imperialism'* which Robert Cooper called for, which was echoed by Bruce Anderson when he wrote of the need for *'a form of neo-imperialism'.*

This means that we must understand the role of the proposition of *"the Right to Protect",* which has been used to justify military interventions allegedly to protect civilians and advance human rights. Similarly we must put in its proper context the elevation of *"international justice",* as represented by the ICC, even above the search for peace to save human lives.

All this fits in perfectly with 'the new world order' which Robert Cooper visualised when he wrote: *"What is needed then is a new kind of imperialism, one acceptable to a world of human rights and cosmopolitan values. We can already discern its outline: an imperialism which, like all imperialism, aims to bring order and organisation but which rests today on the voluntary principle."*

This point is emphasised by the reality that many organisations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the International Crisis Group have challenged the arguments used to justify the NATO military action against Libya.

In this regard, in an April 14, 2011 article in the *Boston Globe* newspaper, under the heading, *"False pretense for war in Libya?"*, Alan K. Kuperman said:

"Evidence is now in that President Barack Obama grossly exaggerated the humanitarian threat to justify military action in Libya. The president claimed that intervention was necessary to prevent a "bloodbath'' in Benghazi, Libya's second-largest city and last rebel stronghold…

"Obama insisted that prospects were grim without intervention… Thus, the president concluded, "preventing genocide'' justified US military action.

"But intervention did not prevent genocide, because no such bloodbath was in the offing. To the contrary, by emboldening rebellion, US interference has prolonged Libya's civil war and the resultant suffering of innocents…
"Nor did Khadafy ever threaten civilian massacre in Benghazi, as Obama alleged. The "no mercy'' warning, of March 17, targeted rebels only, as reported by The New York Times, which noted that Libya's leader promised amnesty for those "who throw their weapons away.'' Khadafy even offered the rebels an escape route and open border to Egypt, to avoid a fight "to the bitter end"."

All this means that as Africans we must understand the true meaning of the NATO assault against Libya, authorised by the UN Security Council.

It is neither an aberration nor a mistake.

It constitutes a concrete expression of the systemic *'neo-imperialist'* resolve to impose on Africa the *"world in which the efficient and well governed export stability and liberty, and which is open for investment and growth",* for which Robert Cooper argued.

The historic and immensely dangerous challenge Africa faces is that if the NATO military intervention in Libya succeeds, positioning the Western countries as the determinants of the future of Libya, this will open the way for these countries to use the Libyan experience as a precedent which would encourage them to intervene everywhere else in Africa.

Thus whatever we do to *'reposition Africa sustainably in a shifting and uncertain global order'*, we must take on board the present and concrete reality that the Western powers, presenting themselves as *'the post-modern world'*, are resolved to ensure that they determine the destiny of Africa.

In this regard they are convinced that they have to act to ensure the integrity of the '*new world order'* of globalisation whose essence they have defined, and that as Africans we are incapable of ensuring that our Continent conducts itself in a way that is consistent with the requirement to guarantee this integrity.

Accordingly, in their own interest, presented as a requirement to achieve a public good in favour of all nations, the Western powers are acting even through military means, to ensure that Africa is governed according to their wishes.

All this makes the statement, through actual practical action, that, as Bruce Anderson said, *"it is not clear that the (African) continent can generate its own salvation"*, and therefore that the West has no choice but to intervene and therefore define the parameters within which we can exercise our right to self-determination.

Throughout the post-colonial decades, as Africans we have counted on the United Nations to help mediate the global power imbalance which has served to disadvantage Africa and the rest of the South.

In this regard Africa had hoped that the UN would respect its obligation to serve as a true and loyal representative of the voice and will of the peoples of the world as represented by the Member States of the UN.

However, as demonstrated by the UN Security Council decisions on Libya, and specifically the authorisation of the use of force by NATO to achieve regime change, it is clear that to all intents and purposes the UN will not act in the near future as the kind of representative of the peoples of the world we had expected it to be.

Our view in this regard is reinforced by observations made by important voices in the US, such as the think-tank, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

The CSIS published an article on Jun 21, 2011 by one of its resident scholars, Daniel F. Runde, entitled *'Why Ban Ki-Moon Is Good for the United States'.*Runde says:

"UN secretary general Ban Ki-Moon, who has for the most part supported initiatives that coincide with American interests, recently announced his reelection campaign and received unanimous approval from the UN Security Council on June 17. From a U.S. perspective, a second term for Ban not only presents excellent international development opportunities but also bodes well for American interests.

"Elected during the Bush administration, Ban was seen as a welcome change from the difficult relationship we had had with Kofi Annan… As a friend to U.S. national interests in the United Nations, Ban is well positioned to advance U.S.-backed approaches in the Middle East, North Africa, and North Korea."

If Runde is correct, the perspective he describes must surely sound the alarm bells for us.

This is because it says that one of the consequences of *'the new world order'* we have been discussing, is the transformation of the vitally important Office of the UN Secretary General into an institution which would systematically *'(support) initiatives that coincide with American interests',* rather than those which coincide with the interests of the world community of nations as a whole.

All the preceding, including the observations about the UN SG, must surely communicate the strategic message to the entirety of our Continent, including our leaders across the board, and the African masses, that two of our most urgent and current tasks are to take all necessary steps:

· to mount a united offensive for the defence of the independence of the peoples of Africa and our right to determine our destiny; and,

· to evolve a minimum programme to mobilise the billion Africans into united action to advance our shared interests.

An important part of our response must of course focus on the implementation of existing Continental decisions including those relating to such matters as democracy and human rights, peace and security and the prevention of genocide and other crimes against humanity.

During the period of the South African struggle to defeat the criminal system of apartheid, the Black Consciousness Movement in our country developed the mobilising slogan – *Black man, you are on your own!*

As Africans we must understand that *'the new world order'* means that in many ways as Africans we are on our own.

This signifies that we must rely on our own strength and resources to achieve the renewal and renaissance of our Continent, which perspective informs the energising hopes of the peoples of Africa for a better future.

We must therefore now try to answer the question - *How can Africa Reposition itself Sustainably in a Shifting and Uncertain Global Order?*

The very first point we must make in this regard is that even as we are confronted by a whole variety of uncertainties in the global context, we must also accept that there are also some certainties to which we must respond.

In this context, and given what we have said, it is critically important that we organise inclusive all-Africa dialogues and interactions to:

· elaborate a common minimum programme relating to shared African objectives relating to various spheres of human activity including politics, peace and stability, the economy, social development including gender equality and youth empowerment, education and training, culture and the African identity;

· decide what actions we should take, in unity, to advance the all-Africa agenda relating to all these spheres of human activity;

· act in unity to defend the independence of all African states, as well as the related right of Africa to determine its destiny; and,

· strengthen or establish the inter-state and non-governmental institutions to ensure that we realise all these objectives.

Immediately, pending the outcomes of the inclusive all-Africa processes of dialogue we are proposing, we propose that we take a variety of measures to respond to the call to *'reposition Africa sustainably in a shifting and uncertain global order'*, as indicated below.

An Extraordinary Assembly of the AU could be convened to consider the critically important issue of Africa's place in the global community of nations, especially relating to issues of peace and security and Africa's development agenda. If time does not allow for the holding of this Extraordinary Assembly during 2011, these issues could serve as the principal subject of discussion during the January/February 2012 Assembly.

The AU ECOSSOC could convene a Consultative Meeting of African civil society to discuss these very same issues, as well as coordinated popular African actions to promote mass action to achieve progress in this regard.

The Peace and Security Council could hold an Expanded Session to consider what new steps the AU should take to address the current conflict and post-conflict situations, such as Libya, Somalia, Darfur, the Republics of Sudan and South Sudan, and Côte d'Ivoire.

Similarly steps could be taken to consider various economic questions. These could include:

·   actions the Continent should take to mobilise capital from within Africa;

·   accelerating the process of economic integration;

·   consideration of how the AU should use its structured relations with China, India and Japan, and other countries such as South Korea and Turkey, to help Africa to use these relations to address its development objectives;

·   a discussion of Africa's economic relations with the US and the EU, focusing on the AGOA and EPA processes respectively;

·   what could be done to accelerate the process towards concluding the WTO Doha development Round, as a development round; and,

·   what could also be done to ensure the implementation of the G20 decisions as they relate to Africa's development programmes.

The Continent should also bear in mind that there is a relatively strong body of organised opinion in the Western countries which supports Africa's development aspirations. We should therefore act proactively to mobilise these forces to support especially our interactions with the countries of the North relating to our development goals.

It is obvious that to drive the kind of coherent African agenda we have tried to indicate, we need the equivalent institutional capacity.

It is therefore imperative that the Continent should revisit the issue of strengthening the AU Commission and all other relevant AU structures, including the NEPAD Agency, to ensure that we have the capacity successfully to "*reposition Africa sustainably in a shifting and uncertain global order."*

The challenge we face is seriously to internalise the reality that nobody but ourselves can and should take responsibility for the renaissance of Africa towards which the billion Africans aspire. We have to act together to make our future and think together about what that future will be.

When H.E. Ben Mkapa, former President of Tanzania, delivered The Thabo Mbeki Africa Day Lecture at the University of South Africa on Africa Day this year, he said:

"I consider these three freedoms – from food insecurity, from ignorance and from disease – as the fundamental and priority measure of the dignity of African Independence. More emphasis should be given to the war against them. The terrain to fight them must be of our own demarcation. The weapons and terms of their deployment must be of our own determination. The indices of success must be established by us. External support groups whether civil or State, must be selected by us; their deployment too must be monitored by us. The war is fundamentally our own and we can win if we set our sights objectively. This is the first challenge and imperative facing the second generation of African Leaders."

I could not agree more!

President Mkapa went on to quote what the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere said when he addressed the South African Parliament on 16 October 1997:

"I am saying that Africa is changing because the leadership in Africa is changing. Africa is beginning to realise and we should all encourage Africa to get that realisation more and more that we have to depend upon ourselves, both at national level and at the collective level. Each of our countries will have to rely upon its own human resources and natural material resources for development. But that is not enough. The next area to look at is our collectivity, our working together. We all enhance our capacity to develop if we work together."

As Africans we must mobilise ourselves to respond to the challenge starkly posed to us by *'the new world order'*, which demands that we should not merely proclaim our right to self-determination, but indeed act to determine our destiny!

 Thank you.