

AFRICA DAY LECTURE

THABO MBEKI LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Investing in Thought Leaders for Africa's Renewal

TSHWANE, SOUTH AFRICA, MAY 27, 2010.

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Ten years ago, in the year 2000 marking the close of the 20th century, the World Bank published a Report provocatively entitled – *Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?*

Seeking to answer this question, the Report said:

“The question of whether Sub-Saharan Africa can claim the 21st century is complex and provocative...Our central message is: Yes, Africa can claim the new century. But this is a qualified yes, conditional on Africa’s ability - aided by its development partners - to overcome the development traps that kept it confined to a vicious cycle of underdevelopment, conflict, and untold human suffering for most of the 20th century.”

In their Preface the authors said: “This report proposes strategies for ushering in self-reinforcing processes of economic, political, and social development. Progress is crucial on four fronts:

- Improving governance and resolving conflict.
- Investing in people.
- Increasing competitiveness and diversifying economies.
- Reducing aid dependence and strengthening partnerships...

They went on to say:

“Claiming the future involves enormous challenges - not least of which is resolving the problems of the past. Much of Africa’s recent economic history can be seen as a process of marginalisation - first of people, then of governments. Reversing this process requires better accountability, balanced by economic empowerment of civic society - including women and the poor - and firms relative to governments, and of aid recipients relative to donors. Without this shift in power and accountability, it will be difficult to offer the incentives Africa needs to accelerate development and break free of poverty.”

It is probably true that all these World Bank observations are in themselves correct and unexceptionable.

However, notable by its absence in these observations is an element I consider to be of vital importance if Africa is to Claim the 21st Century – the need for Africa to recapture the intellectual space to define its future, and therefore the imperative to develop its intellectual capital!

This is the first point I would like to make concerning what we need to do to ensure that we claim the 21st Century.

The Lecture Series we begin today as the Vice Chancellor has just said, sponsored by the Thabo Mbeki Leadership Institute, a joint initiative by the University of South Africa and the Thabo Mbeki Foundation, is dedicated to the African Renaissance and also serves to celebrate Africa Day.

The tasks we continue to confront in this regard were identified even as the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was established in 1963. In this context, this is what Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia said when he opened the Conference which established the OAU:

“We stand today on the stage of world affairs, before the audience of world opinion. We have come together to assert our role in the direction of world affairs and to discharge our duty to the great continent whose two hundred and fifty million people we lead...The task on which we have embarked, the making of Africa will not wait. We must act, to shape and mould the future and leave our imprint on events as they pass into history.

And he said:

“We seek, at this meeting, to determine whither we are going and to chart the course of our destiny. It is no less important that we know whence we came. An awareness of our past is essential to the establishment of our personality and our identity as Africans...

He further said:

“Thousands of years ago, civilisations flourished in Africa which suffer not at all by comparison with those of other continents. In those centuries, Africans were politically free and economically independent. Their social patterns were their own and their cultures truly indigenous.

“The obscurity which enshrouds the centuries which elapsed between those earliest days and the rediscovery of Africa are being gradually dispersed. What is certain is that during those long years Africans were born, lived and died. Men on other parts of this earth occupied themselves with their own concerns and, in their conceit, proclaimed that the world began and ended at their horizons. All unknown to them, Africa developed in its own pattern, growing in its own life and, in the Nineteenth Century, finally re-emerged into the world's consciousness.”

Reading these words today, there can be no doubt about the answer those who had gathered in Addis Ababa in 1963 would have given if they had been asked the question – Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?

The critical importance of the awareness of our past and its relevance to the establishment of our personality and our identity as Africans was identified by the very earliest among our own modern intelligentsia, a hundred years before Haile Selassie addressed the African political leaders assembled in Addis Ababa in 1963.

In August 1862, the Rev Tiyo Soga, educated at the Lovedale Institution in the Eastern Cape and the University of Glasgow in Scotland, where he trained in theology, started publishing what I believe was the first African newspaper in our country, managed and edited by Africans, called *Indaba* (News).

In his editorial comment in the first edition of the paper, Tiyo Soga wrote:

“I see this newspaper as a secure container that will preserve our history, our stories, our wisdom. The deeds of the nation are worth more than our cattle herds, money and even food. Let the elderly pour their knowledge into this container. Let all our stories, folk and fairy tales, traditional views, and everything that was ever seen, heard, done, and all customs, let them be reported and kept in the national container.

“Did we not form nations in the past? Did we not have our traditional leaders? What has happened to the wisdom of these leaders? Did we not have poets? Where is their poetry? Was there no witchcraft in the past? Did we not fight wars? Who were the heroes? Where is the distinctive regalia of the royal regiment?

“Did we not hunt? Why was the meat of the chest of the rhino and the buffalo reserved for royalty? Where are the people to teach us our history, our knowledge and our wisdom? Let even the spirit of the departed return to bless us with the great gift of our heritage, which we must preserve!”

Tiyo Soga wrote these words sixteen years before the end of the last colonial war to subjugate the indigenous people in the Cape Province. He had seen that despite the continuing fierce resistance of the Africans, colonialism was bound to emerge victorious. To guarantee its victory it had started and was determined to wipe out the history, the customs, the self-worth, the identity and dignity of the African oppressed.

Soga knew that if this was allowed to happen, it would break the will of the colonised to continue the struggle to achieve their liberation, hence his call:

“Let even the spirit of the departed return to bless us with the great gift of our heritage, which we must preserve!”

Confirming that what he had in mind was the ultimate liberation of Africa, in a May 11, 1865 article in the *King William's Town Gazette and Kaffrarian Banner*, entitled “What Is the Destiny of the Kaffir Race”, Tiyo Soga wrote:

“Africa was of God given to the race of Ham. I find the Negro from the days of the old Assyrians downwards, keeping his 'individuality' and 'distinctiveness', amid the wreck of empires, and the revolution of ages. . . I find him enslaved...I find him in this condition for many a day - in the West Indian Islands, in Northern and Southern America, and in the South American Colonies of Spain and Portugal. Until the Negro is doomed against all history and experience - until his God-given inheritance of Africa has been taken finally from him, I shall never believe in the total extinction of his brethren along the southern limits of the land of Ham.”

Important contemporary members of the African intelligentsia have also understood the challenges Tiyo Soga posed and their responsibility in this regard. For example the Ghanaian novelist and thinker, Ayi Kwei Armah, has said:

“We need to regain knowledge of ourselves, the something that we are. To do that we have first of all to end the addiction to the poisons that put us to sleep. Secondly, we need to cultivate healing values that will help us remake ourselves and then remake the universe...

“‘What is our history?’ (Cheik Anta Diop) spent a lot of time answering the question because...there was a time, not long ago, when the idea itself of Africans having a history was considered unsound, academically wrong. Now his answer was, ‘Not only do we have a history, we are the root of humanity; we were there at the beginning. That is to say that all human beings are kin to us, whether they recognise that or not...

“He also said that we are at the root of civilisation. This is another area from which we had been pushed...He learned to read the records of ancient Egypt before he was able to assert: ‘No, you people are lying’...

“Now for centuries, we have been organised according to principles that are completely alien to us; principles of profit and advantage. The greatest African values are principles of justice, balance, reciprocity, which the ancient Egyptians called Maat. You will not find these principles at work in the great institutions of the modern world...

“We are people who have suffered from the search for profit. People have come to Africa to buy people, human beings. There are certain resources that should never be sold. If African values were on top of our existence, we would never sell land, we would never sell water, we wouldn’t sell the air, the sun, and we wouldn’t sell human beings. But we did, and in order to recover our values we have to go back and know what they are and find ways of affirming them against all the power of the destroyers.”

Another celebrated African intellectual, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, drew attention to the responsibility of the African intelligentsia to play its role in ‘the making of Africa’.

When he spoke in 2003 at a conference to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of CODESRIA, the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, he said:

“Despite her vast natural and human resources, indeed despite the fact that Africa has always provided, albeit unwillingly, resources that have fuelled capitalist modernity to its current stage of globalization, Africa gets the rawest deal. This is obvious in the areas of economic and political power. But this is also reflected in the production and consumption of information and knowledge. As in the political and economic fields, Africa has been a player in the production of knowledge.

“The increase in universities and research centres, though with often shrinking resources, have produced great African producers of knowledge in all fields such that brilliant sons and daughters of Africa are to be found in all the universities in the world...

“CODESRIA is reflective of the vitality of intellectual production in Africa and by Africans all over the world.

“Has this vitality resulted in the enhancement of a scientific and democratic intellectual culture? Are African intellectuals and their production really connected to the continent? Even from a cursory glance at the situation it is clear that there is a discrepancy between the quality and quantity of this production of knowledge and the quality and quantity of its consumption by the general populace. Ours has been a case of trickle-down-knowledge, a variation of the theory of trickle-down economics, a character of capitalist modernity, reflected more particularly in its colonial manifestation, which of course is the root base of modern education in Africa. And here I am talking of social production and consumption of knowledge and information in the whole realm of thought, from the literary to the scientific. Since our very mandate as African producers of knowledge is to connect with the continent, it behoves us to continually re-examine our entire colonial heritage, which includes the theory and practice of trickle-down knowledge. This means in effect our having to continually examine our relationship to European memory in the organisation of knowledge.”

Thus did Ngugi, as did Armah, and Tiyo Soga before them, challenge the African intelligentsia to understand that their very mandate as African producers of knowledge is to connect with the continent, precisely to act as a motive force for the renaissance of Africa.

From this surely it must follow that one of the tasks of this renaissance, which would enable us to give a positive reply to the question – Can Africa Claim the 21st Century? – must be the cultivation and nurturing of an African intelligentsia which understands its mandate in the same way that Ngugi understands the mandate of the African producers of knowledge.

I believe that in this regard the African intelligentsia has to understand that it has to carry out a veritable revolution along the entirety of what we might call the knowledge value chain. It must therefore address in a revolutionary manner the integrated continuum described by:

- Analysis of African reality and the global context within which our Continent exists and pursues its objectives;
- The policies relevant to the renaissance of Africa that would seek to transform the reality discovered through analysis;
- The politics Africa that needs to translate these policies into the required transformative programmes; and,
- The institutions that must be put in place to drive the process towards the renaissance of Africa.

I am certain that when it proceeds in this manner, seeking both to understand our reality and to change it, our intelligentsia will rediscover its mission as a vital agent of change, obliged critically to re-examine the plethora of ideas emanating from elsewhere about our condition and our future, including what have become standard prescriptions about such matters as the democratic construct, the role of the state and civil society, good governance, the market economy, and Africa’s relations with the rest of the world.

Thus should we depend on our intelligentsia as our educators and no longer mere conveyor belts of knowledge generated by others outside our Continent about ourselves and what we need to do to change our reality.

One of the urgent contemporary tasks that confronts these African producers of knowledge is to understand the meaning of the global economic crisis to the African continent and what the continent needs to do 'to overcome the development traps that kept it confined to a vicious cycle of underdevelopment, conflict, and untold human suffering for most of the 20th century', as the World Bank had said in 2000.

The second major point I would like to make with regard to Africa's challenge to claim the 21st Century is that the Continent has to take the necessary steps to ensure that it occupies its rightful place within the global community of nations, bearing in mind the ineluctable process of globalisation. This means that Africa must, practically, regain its right to determine its destiny and use this right to achieve the objective of the all-round upliftment of the African masses.

In June 2000 we attended the meeting of the European Council, the EU Summit Meeting, held in Feira in Portugal. The central objective of our mission at this meeting was to mobilise the EU to support what ultimately became the New Partnership for Africa's Development, NEPAD.

Immediately prior to our interaction with the EU Heads of State and Government we held discussions with the leadership of the European Commission.

These leaders of the EU Commission surprised us with an unexpected message about the attitude of the EU towards Africa.

In essence they warned us that the EU did not have any strategic perspective relating to Africa, as it did with other areas of the world such as East and Central Europe, the Middle East, Asia and the United States.

In short, in their view the EU did not consider Africa to be of such importance to its future that it was compelled to place the continent within a conscious and deliberate strategic framework.

The EU knew that willy-nilly, i.e. whether it liked this or otherwise, Africa would continue to provide Europe with raw materials and serve as a market for its products. Beyond this, the continent had no possibility to act in a manner that would threaten Europe's interests.

We therefore understood that in terms of the advice we received, the prevalent view among important sections of the European leadership, even sub-consciously, was that contrary to the situation with regard to other regions in the world, the relationship between Africa and Europe did not merit any purposeful strategic reflection on the part of the EU.

This communicated the very stark message to us that for Africa to assume its rightful place among the community of nations, especially in relationship to the developed countries, she had to demonstrate in theory and practice that she was a strategic player in the ordering of human affairs, globally.

Thus would we defeat the pernicious view that Africa was but a hapless appendage to the rest of humanity, condemned to survival as an object of pity and benevolent charity, and contempt, and the actions that derive from this perspective.

We took this important advice into account when we engaged the EU Heads of State and Government, determined to convince them that we had not come to them as supplicants but as partners they needed in their own interest.

In the result, the Final Communiqué of the European Council said:

“The European Council, agreeing that the challenges facing the African continent require extraordinary and sustained efforts by the countries of Africa helped by strong international engagement and cooperation, reaffirmed its willingness to continue to support measures aimed at rapid economic growth and sustainable development. This will only be possible in a proper environment of peace, democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law.”

Understanding the strategic imperative facing the EU, the then President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, said in 2003:

“The Africans are not asking Europe or the US for charity. What I hear from my African colleagues is a clear appeal to the rich countries to put policies in place that will allow Africa's peoples to take their destiny in their own hands.”

In this regard, in a March 31, 2001 Address at the Third African Renaissance Festival in Durban, I said:

“(The) response (of the EU) to the imperatives Africa faces as part of the global hinterland, are driven by considerations of conscience and guilt rather than fundamental necessities to which it must respond, in its own strategic interest.”

I then said that to respond to this:

“It is necessary that the peoples of Africa gain the conviction that they are not, and must not be wards of benevolent guardians, but instruments of their own sustained upliftment.

“Critical to this is the knowledge by these peoples that they have a unique and valuable contribution to make to the advancement of human civilisation, that...Africa has a strategic place in the global community.”

In this regard, the founding Framework Document of NEPAD said:

“Africa’s place in the global community is defined by the fact that the continent is an indispensable resource base that has served all humanity for so many centuries. These resources can be broken down into the following components:

Component I: The rich complex of mineral, oil and gas deposits, the flora and fauna, and the wide unspoiled natural habitat, which provide the basis for mining, agriculture, tourism and industrial development;

Component II: The ecological lung provided by the continent's rainforests, and the minimal presence of emissions and effluents that are harmful to the environment, a global public good that benefits all humankind;

Component III: The paleontological and archaeological sites containing evidence of the origins of the earth, life and the human race, and the natural habitats containing a wide variety of flora and fauna, unique animal species and the open uninhabited spaces that are a feature of the continent; and

Component IV: The richness of Africa's culture and its contribution to the variety of the cultures of the global community.

"The first component is the one with which the world is most familiar. The second component has only come to the fore recently, as humanity came to understand the critical importance of environmental issues. The third component is also now coming into its own, emerging as a matter of concern not only to a narrow field of science or of interest only to museums and their curators. The fourth component represents the creativity of African people, which in many important ways remains underexploited and underdeveloped.

There are at least **two other elements** we can add to the four components mentioned by NEPAD.

One of these is that over the years Africa has exported significant numbers of qualified professionals to the developed world, who have and are contributing in important ways to the further socio-economic development of these countries.

The **second** relates to what certainly the Europeans consider to be a threat – illegal migration from Africa and elsewhere. The fact of the matter is that as long as our Continent remains mired in poverty, so long will many of our people leave and try to enter and stay in Europe regardless of steps that might be taken to stop this human flow.

This makes the point that even if some Europeans sustain the view that they do not need a strategic perspective relating to Africa, the illegal African migration they consider to be a threat obliges them to treat Africa as a partner of one kind or another.

For half-a-millennium Africa had been treated especially by many in the white world as part of their patrimony which they could exploit and dispose of as they wished. Even during the period after the independence of the majority of African countries, the Continent has had to live with the reality of the system of neo-colonialism which perpetuated Africa's dependence.

Inter alia, it was this history which made it possible for some Europeans to convince themselves that they had no need to define a strategic relationship between themselves and our Continent.

The end of the Cold War created the possibility for our Continent finally to reclaim its right to determine its destiny and, among other things, define its relations with the rest of the world.

NEPAD was adopted at the last Assembly of OAU Heads of State and Government which was held in Lusaka, Zambia in 2001.

The partnerships we visualised as we worked on NEPAD were:

- A mutually beneficial partnership among ourselves as Africans; and,
- A mutually beneficial partnership between Africa and the rest of the world.

I am convinced that one of the greatest achievements of the African continent and its organisations, the OAU and the AU, during the first decade of the 21st century, was the acceptance of NEPAD and its partner African Peer Review Mechanism, the APRM, by the rest of the world as the defining programme which should inform the relations of the Continent with the rest of the international community.

In this regard:

In September and December 2002, speaking for the world community of nations, the UN General Assembly adopted a Declaration and Resolution which said respectively:

“We affirm that international support for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development is essential...(We urge) the international community and the United Nations system to organise support for African countries in accordance with the principles, objectives and priorities of the New Partnership in the new spirit of partnership.”

The Declaration adopted at the first Africa-EU Summit Meeting after the birth of NEPAD, held in Lisbon in 2007, said:

“In recognition of our ambitions, and of all that we share today and have shared in the past, we are resolved to build a new (EU-Africa) strategic political partnership for the future, overcoming the traditional donor-recipient relationship and building on common values and goals in our pursuit of peace and stability, democracy and rule of law, progress and development. We will develop this partnership of equals, based on the effective engagement of our societies...”

Earlier, in 2002, in their Africa Action Plan the G8 had said:

“We, the Heads of State and Government of eight major industrialised democracies and the Representatives of the European Union, meeting with African Leaders at Kananaskis, welcome the initiative taken by African States in adopting the *New Partnership for Africa’s Development* (NEPAD)... We accept the invitation from African Leaders, extended first at Genoa last July and reaffirmed in the NEPAD, to build a new partnership between the countries of Africa and our own, based on mutual responsibility and respect.”

Addressing the Summit Meeting of the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation in 2006, Chinese President Hu Jintao said:

“China values its friendship with Africa. To strengthen unity and cooperation with Africa is a key principle guiding China's foreign policy. China will continue to support Africa in implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development and in its effort to strengthen

itself through unity, achieve peace and stability and economic revitalisation in the region and raise its international standing.”

When he spoke in our country on January 9, 2001, the then Prime Minister of Japan, Yoshiro Mori, conveyed his clear understanding of Africa’s strategic place in the world when he said:

“In this age of globalisation, as the world becomes increasingly unified, it would be unthinkable to talk about "the world of tomorrow" without considering sub-Saharan Africa...If it can overcome the difficulties it faces and open the way toward a bright future, Africa will probably become the driving force behind vibrant development of human society in the 21st Century...

“On the other hand, if the problems of Africa are neglected and one fourth of the world's nations remain alienated, there is no reason that the world community should be able to prosper and maintain stability. Indeed, there will be no stability and prosperity in the world in the 21st Century unless the problems of Africa are resolved.”

I believe that we should agree with Yoshiro Mori that “there will be no stability and prosperity in the world in the 21st Century unless the problems of Africa are resolved.”

The current global economic and financial crisis has thrown into very sharp relief the important question – how should the international community act to respond to the challenge posed by Yoshiro Mori! In this context it had seemed to be self-evident that because they are poor, Africans would be among those who would suffer most from the effects of this crisis, and therefore that any meaningful response to the crisis would pay particular attention to Africa.

Our hopes were raised when the April 2, 2009 London G20 Summit Meeting Communiqué said:

“We recognise that the current crisis has a disproportionate impact on the vulnerable in the poorest countries and recognise our collective responsibility to mitigate the social impact of the crisis to minimise long-lasting damage to global potential.”

Earlier we spoke about the adoption by the G8 of the Africa Action Plan in 2002, which constituted a detailed response to support the objectives contained in the NEPAD programme.

The reality is that the G8 Africa Action Plan constitutes the only extant and comprehensive framework defining an equitable partnership between Africa and the developed world.

The tragedy is that in practical terms this Action Plan has fallen by the wayside. The G20 has now replaced the G8, which, despite its obvious limitations, signifies an important step forward towards the democratisation of the system of global economic governance.

Despite taking some welcome measures to assist Africa and the developing world to mitigate the effects of the global economic crisis, the G20 has not adopted the Africa Action Plan. It therefore does not have an integrated programme to respond to Africa’s development challenges.

As recently as last month, on April 23, in their Communiqué issued after their meeting in Washington D.C., the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors said:

“We will ask the World Bank to advise us on progress in promoting development and poverty reduction as part of rebalancing of global growth.”

What all this means is that in its programmes relating to the global economic crisis the developed world has not treated the response to the challenges of Africa’s development as one of its strategic tasks.

In a March 2009 paper on “Africa and the Global Financial Crisis” the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa discussed the importance of the stimulus packages put in place by the developed countries to mediate the impact of the crisis by increasing aggregate demand. In this regard it said:

“How does Africa feature in the discussion on the global increase in aggregate demand? The answer is that Africa has not featured in this discussion except in asides that refer to the limited ability of emerging and developing countries to undertake fiscal stimulus programmes...”

The reality is that once more Africa has drifted to the periphery, contrary to what we sought to achieve, i.e. to place the challenge of Africa’s development at the centre of the global agenda arguing, as Yoshiro Mori did, that “there will be no stability and prosperity in the world in the 21st Century unless the problems of Africa are resolved.”

This situation emphasises the vitally important imperative that among other things, we must reenergise our programmes focussed on:

- Relying on our resources to achieve Africa’s development, inspired by the objective to encourage self-reliance;
- Promoting our regional and continental integration, including by building trans-boundary infrastructure; and,
- Building the international solidarity movement to help ensure the necessary resource transfers and access to markets which Africa needs to achieve her development.

In this context, the question that remains to be answered is – what is to be done! In this regard I **would like to propose Six (6) Steps Forward.**

First of all we should recall what Haile Selassie said 47 years ago, that –

“The task on which we have embarked, the making of Africa will not wait. We must act, to shape and mould the future and leave our imprint on events as they pass into history. We seek ... to determine whither we are going and to chart the course of our destiny.”

During the 47 years since the founding of the Organisation of African Unity, our Continent has taken many collective decisions which answer the question – whither are we going? – and therefore chart the course of our destiny.

Accordingly and fortunately, we are not faced with the task to elaborate the fundamental policies that will result in the renaissance of Africa. This work has been done.

The work that has been done has taken into account our many painful experiences since we freed ourselves from the shackles of imperialism, colonialism and apartheid. This includes the lessons from our journey to achieve Africa's rebirth in a situation in which we were constrained by a global political geometry defined by the Cold War and institutions dominated by Africa's erstwhile colonial masters, by violent conflicts among ourselves, including the horrendous Genocide in Rwanda, constrained by domination by leaders who were nothing less than rapacious monsters, by failures to implement such far-sighted programmes as the Lagos Plan of Action for the socio-economic transformation of Africa, by the prevalence among our ruling elites of a culture of self-enrichment through theft and corruption, and by the demobilisation of the masses of the people, turning them away from the task to engage in continuing struggle as their own liberators.

The challenge we confront is to answer the question practically – what shall we do to translate the policies and programmes our Continent has adopted to achieve Africa's renewal into reality!

As we celebrate Africa Day we must therefore identify the practical steps we must take to achieve this objective.

1- One of these is to build and **nurture the native intellectual cadre committed to the transformation of Africa** as visualised by leading African patriots and thinkers for 150 years, from Tiyo Soga, to *Uhadi waseluhlangeni*, and Haile Selassie, and onward to Cheik Anta Diop, Ayi Kwei Armah and Ngugi wa Thiong'o, among others.

An urgent task in this regard is to rebuild and sustain our universities and other centres of learning, attract back to Africa the intelligentsia that has migrated to the developed North, build strong links with the intelligentsia in the African Diaspora, and give the space to these the time and space they need to help determine the future of the Africans.

2- Another is to **develop the capacity in our state, government, business and civil society institutions** to implement the already agreed Continental programmes, which visualise a renewed Africa of peace, democracy, development, unity and pride in its place as "the driving force behind vibrant development of human society in the 21st Century", of which Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori spoke.

3- What this surely means, among other things, is that we should **resurrect the African Renaissance Movement** which many African patriots in many African countries launched at the beginning of the 21st Century, which sought to mobilise and unite the African masses so that, once more, as we did in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid, we act as our own liberators.

When I spoke at an occasion in August 1998 to launch of the South African chapter of this Movement, I said that

"To be a true African is to be a rebel in the cause of the African Renaissance, whose success in the new century and millennium is one of the great historic challenges of our time."

Further, we quoted the Senegalese, Cheik Anta Diop when he said:

"The African who has understood us is the one who, after reading our works, would have felt a birth in himself, of another person, impelled by an historical conscience, a true creator, a

Promethean carrier of a new civilisation and perfectly aware of what the whole earth owes to his ancestral genius in all the domains of science, culture and religion.”

The African Renaissance Movement of which I speak should indeed seek to inspire the millions of the African masses to ‘feel a birth in themselves, of another person, a true creator, a Promethean carrier of a new civilisation’. Together we must be the organisers of this Movement.

4- Yet another practical step we must take is to **increase the momentum** in terms of which the development and transformation of Africa came to take its rightful and prominent place in the global agenda, binding the rest of the world to interact with our Continent according to principles, objectives and programmes Africa itself has set, which include the critically important objective of the eradication of poverty and underdevelopment.

In this context our international partners agreed to join us in creating the necessary institutional mechanisms to give practical effect to the kind of partnership spelt out in NEPAD, and effectively address the challenge of “mutual accountability”.

In this regard we must engage in struggle to ensure that the global agenda addresses such imperatives as capital and other resource transfers to Africa, the conclusion of the Doha Development Round, as a development round, and the democratisation of the international system of governance, which must not be delayed any further.

5- Another matter on which we must act is to **achieve African cohesion** in terms both of what the Continent says to itself and what it says to the rest of the world.

The objective to achieve the unity of our Continent, perhaps as a federation or confederation of states, will take time to achieve. However this does not mean that Africa cannot speak with one voice on matters of common interest.

Of critical importance in this regard is that we should do everything possible to strengthen both the regional organisations, the Regional Economic Communities, such as SADC and ECOWAS, and the African Union and its institutions, including the Pan African Parliament and others.

There is no gainsaying the fact that all these institutions are relatively weak, which militates against the capacity of our Continent to act collectively to advance the interests of the African masses as a whole, and which is a fundamental condition for the success of each of our countries, as was the unity of the oppressed in our country with regard to the struggle for our liberation.

6- The last point we would like to make in the context of what we need to do to help ensure that Africa claims the 21st Century relates to what Tiyo Soga said almost 150 years ago – that we must **develop the media and the means to communicate correctly** about who we are, what we are, what we are doing to change our condition, and where we seek to be tomorrow and the day after.

Thus should we, on both the objective and the subjective planes, act to determine our destiny – to ‘keep our 'individuality' and 'distinctiveness', amid the wreck of empires, and the revolution of ages’, as Tiyo Soga put it.

A fortnight hence the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup will kick off. From the beginning we had intended that this important tournament should help Africa to determine her destiny and take its rightful place in the world community of nations.

In this regard, when we presented our Bid to the FIFA Executive Committee in 2004 I said:

“(The millions of Africans) have embarked on an exciting human journey. This is an African journey of hope – hope that, in time, we will arrive at a future when our continent will be free of wars, refugees and displaced people, free of tyranny, of racial, ethnic and religious divisions and conflicts, of hunger, and the accumulated weight of centuries of the denial of our human dignity...

“(Through the decision to afford Africa the privilege to host the Soccer World Cup, FIFA has) conveyed the message to all Africans, both on the continent and the African Diaspora, that you are ready and willing to accompany us on our journey of hope, and give us the strength and stamina we need to traverse the difficult terrain that separates us from Africa’s renaissance.”

Accordingly as we wish our national team, Bafana Bafana, and the tournament success, we must, at the same time, use the occasion of the Soccer World Cup to inspire ourselves to persist on our journey of hope, supporting the decisions taken by the African Union which make this decade the African Women’s Decade and this year, the Year of Promoting Peace through Sports.

Earlier in this Lecture I spoke of Tiyo Soga’s newspaper, *Indaba*. Unfortunately, during its third year it ceased publication. However, it was replaced by *Isigidimi samaXhosa*, which became a platform for vigorous debate among the emerging African intelligentsia.

One of its most active contributors was one Jonas Ntsiko, who also wrote under the pen-name, *Uhadi waseluhlangeni*, ‘The Harp of the Nation’.

In 1883 *Uhadi* wrote an article which sought to alert all Africans about the threat posed to all of them by the system of imperialism and colonialism, regardless of their specific nationality. Specifically the article mentioned how the kings of the baSotho and amaXhosa and the communities they led had fallen victim to colonialism, having engaged in separate struggles to oppose this eventuality.

Uhadi therefore urged that the Africans should start an open debate among themselves to determine how they should respond to this threat, suggesting that only their unity would guarantee their independence.

This sentiment was repeated 30 years later when the African National Congress was established in 1912, with the task, among others, “to bury the demon of tribalism”.

Uhadi wrote:

“Therefore create in the newspaper the arena for those who have this view or the other, to talk about those things that serve the welfare of the black people and theirs, so that we come to know what should be done. On that arena will appear orators, and poets who will sing our

praises, and others who will hail the Other. What harm will it do if a MoSotho who speaks in what you consider a contrary voice says:

Vukani bantwana
Bentab' eBosiko,
Seyikhal' ingcuka
Ingcuk' emhlophe,
Ibawel' amathambo
'Mathambo kaMshweshwe,
Mshweshw' onobuthongo
Phezul' entabeni.
Siyarhol' isisu
Ngamathamb' enkosi,
Ubomv' umlomo
Kuxhap' uSandile ...

Arise offspring
Of Thaba Bosui,
The wild dog howls
The white wild dog,
Hungry for the bones
The bones of Moshoeshoe
Moshoeshoe who sleeps
On the mountain top.
Weighed down by its bloated stomach
Bulging with the bones of kings,
Its mouth is bright red
Red with the blood of Sandile...

We have met here to reiterate our commitment to the renaissance of Africa and to celebrate Africa Day.

In the article we have just cited, *Uhadi* said:

“It would seem to me that during these days, when the nation has been subjugated, when it is victim to protracted wars and short periods of peace, the patriots call on their leaders both to give them the time and space they need to determine the future of the nation, and to give due importance to the history the oppressed are making.”

As we disperse and go our various ways, we would do well to remember that as *Uhadi* said almost 130 years ago – ‘Arise offspring of Thaba Bosui; the wild dog howls, still, hungry for the bones of the children of Africa.’

In this situation we should give ourselves the time and the space the African masses need to determine the future of our Continent, at all times conscious of the glorious history that Africans have made through the ages, and the history they continue to make to this day as they strive to claim the 21st Century.

Thank you.