

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA DEPENDS ON THE QUALITY OF ITS LEADERSHIP.



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Peter Drucker once said: **‘the effective leadership is not about making speeches or being liked; leadership is defined by results not attributes’**. In other words, a good leadership must change a nation’s dreams into reality. “Politics is the ability to foretell what is going to happen tomorrow, next week, next month and next year. And to have the ability afterwards to explain why it didn’t happen.” Said also Winston Churchill.

For the past five decades, the crisis of leadership has bedevilled Africa due to unclear ideology, frequent changes of government and civil wars.

The issue of leadership had and has been the greatest challenge Africa is facing in the 21st century. Political commitment is missing in Africa, and the leader’s inability to understand the responsibilities and challenges that come with governing developing society (www.researchgate.net).

It has been said that an effective leader is **‘someone who knows when to lead, when to follow and when to go out of the way’**. The phrase is attributed to the American revolutionary Thomas Paine. In this view, effective leaders do much more than giving orders, they create a shared vision for the future and viable strategic plans for the present; they

negotiate ways to achieve what is needed while listening also to what is wanted.

(Edbooks.org)

Unfortunately, In Africa people rise to power without understanding of what governance is all about and leads to failed and autocratic leaders.

The routine wave of poverty; illiteracy; insecurity; disease; lack of water and electricity, lack of job and shelter and of good infrastructure (roads, railways, airports) and on top of that can be added an economic recession, monetary instability, poor plans on integration into the global economic system and all this together, constitute the major challenges facing Africa and for which the leaders of this vast and potentially rich continent are called upon to provide real and effective solutions.

It would be wise on behalf of anyone who aspires to one day become a leader of an African country, to get prepared accordingly in advance in order to be in a shape of an inspirational statesman.

BRIEF HISTORY

Historians teach us that history allows us to study the past in order to understand the present and prepare the future.

In pre-colonial Africa, societies (people) lived quite well in a good harmony and solidarity. With the use of iron tools, they could afford enhance weaponry, call groups of communities to clean and manage dense forests, graze animals and plow fields for farming basically to assure a better day to day life. Ultimately, iron tools allowed Africans to flourish in every environment, and thus they could live in larger communities which led to the formation of states and kingdoms. With state formation came the formation of modern civilizations with common languages, belief and value systems, art, religion, lifestyle, and culture (www.eolss.net).

This period has shown not only advances in technology from stone to iron tools, but also the emergence of organizational and governance systems, social hierarchies, specialization, the establishment and growth of African states and kingdoms. The period also saw the growth of

trade both within and beyond the African continent, as agricultural surplus, minerals (mainly gold), ivory, salt, slaves, and other items were traded on the continent and to Asia, the Mediterranean countries, and the Middle East (<https://doi.org>).

Nevertheless, you cannot understand the social imbalance of Africa without understanding the Impact of colonialism which is considered as the base of any kind of change that Africa has undergone. To understand the impact of colonialism, it is important to put it in the context of the level of African development in 1885. One of the main pieces of evidence for those who favour the conjecture that colonialism was good for development is that Africa was very poor in 1885 compared to the rest of the world. It had backward technology indicative of which was that writing, the wheel and plow were not used in Africa outside of Ethiopia. Some societies, for instance the pre-colonial Rwandan state, did not even use money. Though it is hotly debated, some would also argue that Africa did not have economic institutions which were conducive to development. Based on the studies of the United Nations from the 1950s. Dalton illustrates that even in the late colonial period, most Africans were engaged in subsistence activities outside of the formal economy while other evidence on economic institutions comes from the fact that slavery was endemic in the 19th century. (https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w18566/w18566).

Based on the preamble of the united nations charter and which disposes that; “ we the people of the united nations are determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in the fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom” we understand the concern of all nations around the world to consolidate their efforts for the social well-being of human race and preserve the future generations from the scourge of war, famine, illiteracy, etc.

In the same angle of ideas, the African charter of human rights agrees with the charter of the united nations in the sense that it provides in its preamble the same missions as those of the united nations while here they put an accent on how to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa, to coordinate and intensify the cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for

the peoples of Africa and to promote international cooperation having due regard on the virtues of the historical tradition and the values of African civilization which should inspire and characterize their reflection on the concept of human and people's rights.

From above, it is imperative to note the obligations that weigh on world leaders and particularly in this case, African leaders.

The societal rules are made by and for men to bring order in the society and meet the most vital needs of man in all its aspects.

Africa has already known good leaders and still hopes to get others again in following the steps of the previous ones by improving what needs to be improved in order to cope with these 21st century realities.

Having a curious look on what the former US president BARAK OBAMA said about a solution to the continent's political problems during his inaugural visit to Africa in 2009: "strong institutions instead of strongmen" from this we must understand also that to build strong institutions, we need strong men with clear ideology.

In fact, civic and moral education is very important for a leader and without which we will always have in power people who are crooks, profiteers, and bandits.

1. Thomas SANKARA

After saying "**He who feeds you, controls you**", president **SANKARA** rejected the idea of foreign aids and relied on local production which testifies the fact that in just three years, the wheat production rose from 1700 kg per hectare to 3800 kg, making the country food self-sufficient.

In power, he called both men and women to work together in unity for the well-being of the country. As president, he lowered his salary to 450 dollars a month and limited his possessions to a car, four bikes, three guitars, a fridge, and a broken freezer. A motorcyclist himself, he formed a woman for his personal guard. He required public servants to wear a traditional tunic, woven from Burkinabe cotton and sewn by Burkinabe craftsmen.

In Ouagadougou, the president **SANKARA's** government challenged the old political and social elites by dragging hundreds before revolutionary tribunals to answer for their corrupt deeds. It adopted policy in education, health, agriculture, and other spheres that heavily favoured poor, predominantly rural citizens instead of the better-off city profiteers who previously were the main beneficiaries of the state policies and resources.

Most famously, he took dramatic steps to promote women's rights and the environment (it's said that he has planted more than 10 million trees before he passed away) at a time where only few African leaders could talk about such issues.

In the capital, president SANKARA converted the army's provisioning store into a state-owned supermarket open to everyone (the 1st supermarket in the country). He forced civil servants to pay one month's salary to public projects. He sold off the government fleet of Mercedes cars and made the Renault 5 (the cheapest car sold in Burkina Faso at that time) the official service car of the ministers.

After reducing the salaries of all the civil servants and forbade the use of government chauffeurs in 1st class airline tickets, he redistributed lands from the feudal landlords and gave it directly to the peasants.

As indicates the name of his country "Burkina Faso= country of honest men", he himself served as an example of an honest leader who cared about his people.

2. Muammar GADDAFI

The world's largest irrigation project known as the great man-made river project to make water readily available throughout the desert country, is attributed to the president **Muammar GADDAFI**. While the electricity was free for all citizens in Libya, when he came to power only 25 percent of Libyans were literate but today the figure stands at 83 percent and this because education is free. If citizens were unable to find the education or medical facilities they needed in Libya, the government would find them a way to go abroad for it. Not only was this all free but they also received 2.300 dollars a month for accommodation and a car allowance. After graduation, if a Libyan is unable to get an employment, the state would pay the average salary of that profession until the graduate has found a job. Let's say some 25 percent of the Libyan population have a university degree.

The President **GADDAFI**'s father died while he, his wife and mother were still living in a tent having considered housing as a human right in Libya and this after he has vowed that his parents would get a house until everyone in Libya had one. All newlyweds in Libya received 60.000 Libyan dinar (about 25 dollars) from the government to buy their first flat and to help them start up a family. Banks in Libya are state-owned, and loans are given to all citizens at 0 percent interest. If a Libyan wanted to farm, he would receive farming land, a farming house, equipment, seeds, and livestock to kick-start his farm, all for free.

During his presidency, mothers would receive 5000 dollars every time they were giving birth while 40 loaves of bread could cost only 15 dollars. If a Libyan buy a car, the government subsidised 50 percent of the price. The 50 percent was subsidised also once one buys a car without forgetting that a litter of petrol was just 0.14 dollars. The portion of Libyan oil sale was credited directly to the bank accounts of all Libyan citizens. In terms of debt, Libya never had an external debt. In contrary, its reserves amounted to 150 billion of dollars, which would have been frozen globally now.

It seems that since the creation of the humanity, no leader in the world has bestowed upon his people such great benefits.

3. John MAGUFUFULI

Every people have a leader they deserve. This especially in case of free, democratic, and transparent elections.

After he has taken the office, the BBC's Sammy award said that the attitude of government workers has changed since the arrival of President John MAGUFULI on power.

“They are willing to do their jobs and are afraid of engaging in corruption. People are experiencing better services in hospitals and schools”. This because of his leadership style of making unannounced visits to public offices, catching the workers off-guard. He reportedly asked after those who were not at their desks a subtle message that he would not tolerate the legendary absenteeism of government workers. Surprise visits to government offices had become a trademark, meant to project his looming presence and to instil discipline and accountability.

He cancelled lavish celebrations and transferred the money to cover expenses in public hospitals. President MAGUFULI revealed through an audit ordered by him that there were some 10.000 “ghost workers” on the public sectors payroll. Payments to the non-existent employees had been costing the government more than 2 million dollars a month according to the prime minister's office. In five years of his mandate, he did not go outside the continent in search of investors, believing that there's no need to go abroad to develop his country. He only travelled to Uganda, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Rwanda. During his tenure, several works were born. This is the case of the construction of roads (such as that from Morocco to mwenge to reduce the traffic jams that were there every evening), railways, airport with the purchase of 9 airplanes, hospitals, and buildings of State. He had set an

example to the people by cleaning up the rubbish on the roads with his own hands (all a Dr in chemistry) and so invited his people to do the same.

As for international travel of members of the government, he considered that the ambassadors in host countries can represent the country and only in case of emergency or necessity that he could send the concerned diplomat under his express authorization or under his deputy's by limiting the number of the delegation as much as possible. In his time, only himself, his deputy and his prime minister could travel in the 1st class, others to the economy. This is how he was saving money in tickets, accommodation, and food. In the events such meetings, conferences everything was now held in the meeting rooms of State buildings and no longer in the expensive hotels of the place and thus spare the country from unnecessary expenditures in champagnes, drinks, and foods. Once elected, he went for a surprise visit to muhimbili hospital passing by the back door and challenged the director doctor who had left the scanner machine in the state of deterioration without a valid reason and at the same time he hired someone else to provide for that post and to whom he will give 3 weeks to fix everything and in only 3 days everything was on its place.

One day, the Tanzanian parliament was planning to provide 300 million shilling to organize a government party, but the President will say that only 25 million will be spent and the rest of money was sent to buy 300 beds and mattresses and 600 bedsheets for a hospital in need.

As if that weren't enough, He reduced the number of ministers from 30 to 19 considering that the other 11 were not necessary since there was a way of combining some of them and that is what was done. He cancelled bonuses for members of the government on the pretext that they were hired for a monthly salary. He did not wait 10 years, 15 years or 20 years to achieve these extraordinary things, but he only had with him strategies, courage and determination to meet the challenges of his country and reason why today he is being celebrated throughout Africa as a true hero for his commitment to the welfare of the Tanzanian people.

Among the common points between the 3 leaders (Thomas, Gaddafi and MAGUFULI), we can see external independence, clear plans, courage, integrity, determination, and their concern of putting their people's interests first.

Africa also recognizes the merits of other great fighters such as Patrice LUMUMBA, Nelson MANDELA, Mzee KABILA and many other leaders who have shown an outstanding effort of making advance their countries weather in fighting for justice, unity, independence, each one according to his vision.

SOME PERSPECTIVES.

One of the definitions of intelligence provided by English dictionary says that intelligence is the capacity of mind, especially to understand principles, truth, facts, or meanings, acquire knowledge, and apply it to practice; the ability to comprehend and learn. In view of the definition, let us understand that a leader must be intelligent to understand principles, facts or meanings, acquire knowledge and apply it to practice. In the case of Africa, the leader must understand that Africa needs foods, water and electricity, roads, railways, ports and airports and a class of elites well trained to meet these vital needs of Africans. In terms of priorities, Africa needs engineers in civil engineering, electrical engineering, mining and geology, and computer engineering. These four areas are the most important as long as they can quench African peoples' thirst. That is why it's appropriate to pin them down one after the other.

I. Civil engineering:

Is a discipline that deals with the design, construction, and maintenance of the physical and naturally built environment, including public works such as roads, bridges, canals, dams, airports, sewage systems, pipelines, structural components of buildings and rails.

Without hesitation or procrastination we can see that with civil engineering Africa will have its own engineers to build roads(transport of goods and passengers), bridges(to link the two sides), hydroelectric dams(to supply homes and industries), water channels(to prevent erosion and landslides), airports(for air travel and transport of people and goods), ports(for sea, river and lake travels), pipelines(made for conveying water, gas or petroleum, etc) railways(moving of passengers or goods).

II. Electrical engineering:

Is a branch of engineering that deals with the technology of electricity, especially the design and application of circuitry and equipment for power generation and distribution, machine control and communications.

The electrical engineer is also responsible for the design, construction and operation of electrical and electronic systems in many areas. It develops the equipment and components used in the development of new electrical networks or the renovation of existing networks, such as generators, transformers, or high voltage lines. These can be for example, intended

for the automation of industrial processes, for the processing of information, or even for the production, transport, and distribution of electrical energy. Finally, the electrical engineer also controls the installations and their safety while ensuring respect for the environment.

III. Mining and geology

The mining geologist ensures the proper conduct of mine's production policy and the renewal of resources. Raw materials, energy and water are the keys to all human activity. Most of these natural resources lie below the surface of the ground, the scientific field of choice for the civil engineer in mines and geology. It is up to him to carry out the sometimes delicate mission of looking for them, determining the most appropriate means of extracting them and implementing this exploitation in a sustainable manner and with respect for the environment. The mining engineer participates in the realization of major engineering works, metro, hydroelectric works or networks, roads, tunnels, etc.

IV. Computer engineering

It refers to the design, development, and maintenance in operational conditions of computer systems, whether hardware or software. This includes various areas such as the creation and programming of computer installations; application and software development; industrial computing and digital control; embedded systems, interfaces, and networks; digital electronics; artificial intelligence, etc.

CONCLUSION

It is not without reason to think that the development of Africa depends on the quality of its leadership since Africa has known good leaders who have given the best of themselves during their time. And it is always possible to do better than what they had done if we also have clear plans and the determination to meet them. If only any African leader alludes to the technical and strategic areas we have mentioned above and essentially in the part relating to 'some perspectives', Africa can gradually reduce the rate of poverty, illiteracy, insecurity, unemployment, diseases such as malaria and cholera which regularly separate us from our loved ones, lack of water and electricity, roads, railways, and other infrastructures.

It is clear and net that we must build strong institutions to hope for a sustainable development and that is why we must send our young people to the universities across Africa that can give a great formation in those technical areas we have mentioned above.

Every state should include the school fees in their annual budgets in order to support the students in this noble carrier which can certainly bring change in life of African peoples.

In these specific domains, some countries like South Africa, Egypt and Morocco can better offer to Africa some good specialist elites at the end of their cursus.