Chicago Summit on African Immigrants & Refugees

Cherylle Jackson of the Chicago Urban League Keynote Historic Summit

Gloria Havyarimana

Chicago - The 3rd Chicago Summit on African Immigrants and Refugees will take place on Saturday, May 30, 2009 at Malcolm X College, located at 1900 West Van Buren, Chicago. The summit is a public education and organizing program of the United African Organization (UAO) aimed at raising awareness about the state of the fast growing African immigrant and refugee community in Illinois, as well as providing a panoramic view of contemporary Africa and US foreign policy. Towards this purpose, it is an integral part of a series of groundbreaking initiatives of the UAO to promote dialogue and coalition building for social justice.

The theme of this year’s summit is “From Hope to Empowerment: Perspectives on Africa and the African Experience in the US.”

This year’s summit, free and open to the public, will have two main plenary sessions that will share perspectives on civic engagement and community development; Black-Brown coalition and the politics of immigration reform; inventory on Democratization, Security, Trade & Development, Health and Global Migration in Africa; and the need for re-engagement of US constituencies for effective Africa policy advocacy. There will also be cultural performances and a luncheon. The summit will be an all-day event beginning with a continental breakfast followed by registration from 8:00 a.m.

Panelists and attendees for the summit will include community organizers, academics, and political activists. The attendees will have an opportunity to share perspectives on civic engagement and community development; Black-Brown coalition and the politics of immigration reform; inventory on Democratization, Security, Trade & Development, Health and Global Migration in Africa; and the need for re-engagement of US constituencies for effective Africa policy advocacy.

It was this sentiment that was echoed at the forum, co-sponsored by the United African Organization and the Jacob Car ruthers’ Center for Inner City Studies. The attendees represented many different age groups, as well as many different ethnicities. The title of the forum was, “Struggles and Legacies: African Liberation and the Civil Rights Movement”. The program began with a drumming performance by the Swahili Institute Cultural Group at the Forum.

Cherylle R. Jackson
8:45 a.m. The program will end at 6:00 p.m.
Panelists and attendees for the summit will include community organizers, academics, and political activists. The attendees will have an opportunity to share perspectives on civic engagement and community development; Black-Brown coalition and the politics of immigration reform; inventory on Democratization, Security, Trade & Development, Health and Global Migration in Africa; and the need for re-engagement of US constituencies for effective Africa policy advocacy.

It was this sentiment that was echoed at the forum, co-sponsored by the United African Organization and the Jacob Car ruthers’ Center for Inner City Studies. The attendees represented many different age groups, as well as many different ethnicities. The title of the forum was, “Struggles and Legacies: African Liberation and the Civil Rights Movement”. The program began with a drumming performance by the Swahili Institute Cultural Group at the Forum.

Cherylle R. Jackson
8:45 a.m. The program will end at 6:00 p.m.
Panelists and attendees for the summit will include community organizers, academics, and political activists. The attendees will have an opportunity to share perspectives on civic engagement and community development; Black-Brown coalition and the politics of immigration reform; inventory on Democratization, Security, Trade & Development, Health and Global Migration in Africa; and the need for re-engagement of US constituencies for effective Africa policy advocacy.

Cherylle R. Jackson
8:45 a.m. The program will end at 6:00 p.m.
Panelists and attendees for the summit will include community organizers, academics, and political activists. The attendees will have an opportunity to share perspectives on civic engagement and community development; Black-Brown coalition and the politics of immigration reform; inventory on Democratization, Security, Trade & Development, Health and Global Migration in Africa; and the need for re-engagement of US constituencies for effective Africa policy advocacy.

It was this sentiment that was echoed at the forum, co-sponsored by the United African Organization and the Jacob Car ruthers’ Center for Inner City Studies. The attendees represented many different age groups, as well as many different ethnicities. The title of the forum was, “Struggles and Legacies: African Liberation and the Civil Rights Movement”. The program began with a drumming performance by the Swahili Institute Cultural Group at the Forum.
Like so many immigrants from around the world, Francis Youmsi says he came to the US to pursue the American Dream. When he first arrived in the US he was excited to start a new life, to meet new people, and to learn a new culture different from his own. “I was impressed by the size of the roads, the cars, the buildings and the food,” says Francis. “Everything is bigger than in Europe.” It reminded me of all the American movies I had watched in France.” Once in the US the images from American movies came to life for Francis. However, despite his initial hard work and destination, the iconic American Dream remained elusive. Initially, like many highly skilled immigrant professionals, he found it difficult to break into the American professional job market. Now with the support of a national, award-winning professional career transition organization, Upwardly Global, that fabled dream is within his grasp. Originally from Cameroon, Francis immigrated to France at the age of 14 to continue his academic studies. Eventually he completed a B.S. in Electronics and a M.S. in Information Systems Engineering and began a successful career as an Information Technology Consultant. A natural leader, he launched his own consulting firm and began working with a large multinational corporation, France Telecom, as a project manager. At the age of 31 he was doing well in his professional life and had a bright future ahead of him. He had never dreamt of moving to the US and calls the story of his immigration a stroke of fate. Francis explains, “My brothers-in-law were playing the Green Card Lottery and they asked for my assistance in the US Immigration Department and I was impressed by the size of the roads, the cars, the buildings and the food.”

According to the Migration Policy Institute, at any given time there are nearly 1 million immigrants in the US who have the legal right to work and hold a BA/BS degree or above, yet they remain vastly underemployed. Immigrants comprise 23.6% of the working poor earning less than $19,800 annually versus 7.6% for native born residents with the same education level. In Illinois, the number is even higher, with 34.6% of educated immigrants working in unskilled, low-wage jobs. Latino immigrants and African immigrants like Francis face disproportionately steep downward mobility. Each of these new Americans face barriers to economic integration, including unfamiliarity with the American job search process and customs, lack of a professional network, and employers who lack resources to understand and evaluate internationally-gained degrees and experience. Further exacerbating this gap is in services available to new Americans, which tend to focus on low-skilled, low-wage employment instead of reintegrating the professional workforce. Upwardly Global was created to fill this gap by helping immigrant professionals to move beyond the cycle of poverty into economic security. Since its inception in 2002, Upwardly Global has worked with more than 1,300 immigrant professionals from over 100 developing countries. More than 450 of these jobseekers are working in their professional fields in the United States today.

In partnership with the State of Illinois Office of New Americans, Upwardly Global has launched a career center office here in Chicago, pairing offices in San Francisco and New York City. The foundation of Upwardly Global’s jobseeker program in Chicago is a two-day Career Summit that focuses on the American job search, resume writing, interviewing skills, and on building the professional network so invaluable to landing that first professional job in the US. The Career Summit is hosted by Upwardly Global staff and draws on the strength of American professionals who volunteer their time, lending expertise in specific career fields. Francis attended the first Career Summit hosted in February, which included 40 immigrant professionals from around the world, as well as over 100 volunteers. A new immigrant, Francis was very concerned about getting a job in the increasingly competitive US job market. He felt he was an intern and struggling with improving his communication skills. Still, he was confident that with his strong education and experience in the IT field he would land a job. Although he did manage to get many interviews, oftentimes they were for positions below his level of experience and did not lead to placement. Francis learned of Upwardly Global when he first arrived in the US through an old family acquaintance, but the Chicago branch had not yet opened. He thought he would find a job before the Chicago branch opened, but many months later, still underemployed and frustrated with his job search, he signed up for the program. At the Upwardly Global Career Summit Francis was able to expand his professional network and make new friends with immigrant professionals who shared similar experiences to his own. He learned about the culture of the American job market, transferable skills, and how to effectively market himself. His resume received an American-style overhaul and he was able to make some valuable contacts with American professionals otherwise inaccessible to him.

Following the two-day Career Summit, Francis continues to get support from the organization. He receives ongoing coaching in targeting his job search, finding job opportunities and interviewing skills. An Upwardly Global Job Search Advisor assists him with cover letter revisions and building his job search strategy. “They really support us in these difficult times when we can easily become discouraged,” says Francis. In addition to their ongoing support, Francis cites Upwardly Global’s strong professional network as an important advantage for him in today’s competitive marketplace. “With this economic downturn, companies are receiving tons of resumes. If our resumes were to follow the normal process, it is more likely that they would end up in the trash. Upwardly Global passes our resumes directly to hiring managers, and we all know that sending the resume to the right person is a key element of the job search.”

Currently Francis has a good job in the Business Intelligence industry. Since working with Upwardly Global he has experienced a greater response to his resume and landed more in-person interviews. Next week he is looking forward to an interview with a Fortune 500 company for a position well-matched to his level of skill and experience. After working with Upwardly Global, Francis feels confident about his future in the United States. “I am confident in the future of my career changes as barriers to his professional growth in France. Francis believed that moving to
By forming an alliance, the Chicago Urban League and United African Organization have set out to rewrite the script for how U.S.-born Blacks and African immigrants combine and use our strengths and shared experiences for the greater good.

Seeing ourselves as one people, sharing networks and forming bonds of friendship will empower us to unlock the untapped potential in our communities.

I invite the African immigrant community to take advantage of programs and services available at the Chicago Urban League's Entrepreneurship Center to help them grow bigger business and create jobs. I also look forward to demonstrating to the world that African Americans and our African and Caribbean brothers and sisters are united in mission and purpose this July when Chicago hosts the National Urban League conference.

Seeing ourselves as one people, sharing networks and forming bonds of friendship will empower us to unlock the untapped potential in our communities. Let's see where it takes us!

Cheryle R. Jackson is the president of the Chicago Urban League.

Rampholo Molefe
What a farce? That an elite group of leaders of 20 countries that control an estimated 85 percent of the world's economy should seek celebration of their minstrel shows by the mobilizations of peoples of the world - most particularly in the underdeveloped countries - who live in conditions of staggering poverty at least than US$2 or P10 a day! Their solutions to the gargantuan problem created by a handful of mean capitalists in America and Europe rely on that very group of mischievous executives to preside over the use three trillion US Dollars in capital injections to the international financial system, which means American and European banks and insurance companies, and vital industries in the underdeveloped countries.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), together with the World Bank responsible for the prescriptions that have relegated the weaker economies of the underdeveloped world, and Africa in particular, to virtual vassals of the developed countries will get $250 to expand their activities in the satellite economies of the South. The South Africans will be co-opted into that game through the appointment of the country’s finance minister, Trevor Manuel, to a committee that is tasked with reforming the structures of the organization, presumably with the aim of accommodating the aspirations of the underdeveloped countries for greater representation on the organizations.

China, who put up $40 billion towards the refurbishment of the IMF - outdone only by the contribution of $100 billion by the combined European Union (EU) countries and an equal amount by the main culprits in this quagmire, the US - failed to secure concrete concessions from the leading 11 countries that hold true power at the gathering, for increased representation for itself and the Latin American, Asiatic and African countries.

The ‘emerging economies’ hold only nine seats at G20 summit, only one for all of Africa. Tiny Belgium holds greater sway at the World Bank and the IMF than the entire African continent. It will take some doing to break the traditional practice since the founding of those institutions whatever Manuel’s committee finds, that the Europe and America will share leadership of the organizations.

There will be effective regulation of the markets to ensure strict observation of accounting systems, also doing away with tax havens. Subsequent reports revealed a list of about 42 ‘dummy’ and ‘black’ countries that were identified as places that keep dirty and naughty money.

Nothing was said about putting in place an alternative to the World Bank’s and IMF’s rules for the operations of the institutions that would guarantee the underdeveloped countries a proportionate say in the way in which the money is used.

In effect, these reforms portend a change of a few of the faces behind the systems, practically leaving the real controls in the hands of the countries that will claim to control the most money. That does not change the fundamentals.

The G20 leaders, trapped in an unrelenting web of denial of the evident failure of the capitalist system to mitigate against greed at the top, continue to defer to the ‘market’ place as the most effective regulator of the economy, for fear of being accused of going the socialist way.

Obama told the British that during his tenure as senator of the state of Illinois, he proposed legislation that wanted a vote of the shareholders to approve exit packages or bonuses for the executive officers.

That is about as far as any leader of one of the G20 countries could go in mooting an alternative method of supervision of the activities of the company executives. The politicians rely on the executives for sponsorship of their campaigns.

In any case, oversight should not be done by the very people who produce the commodities that enrich the executives and the shareholders!

Implicit in the reference to the invisible hand of the market, therefore, is the assumed condition that there should be no change in the relations and ownership of the means of production. In other words, there should be no renegotiation whatsoever, that the workers who produce the commodities that bring wealth to the world should in any way find their way into ownership of the companies for which they work, or the decision making organs of those enterprises so that they can effectively monitor distribution and enjoyment of the resources that the workers and the managements create together.

The critics of the G20 rightly
Struggles and Legacies, (continued from page 1)

It is further reported that “ECOWAS recently revealed that food production in West Africa has doubled during the past two decades. A leaked report issued by the World Bank attributes high yield initiatives launched by the World Trade Organization, both of which aim to flood Africa with genetically modified food aid.”

The combined effect of these imperialist shenanigans is to force African countries into a permanent state of dependence on food aid.

The fact of the consistent and persistent failure of Western countries to honor their promises with respect to servicing their financial promises to African development programs is neither novel nor in need of proof. That reality has now become a given.

Dr. Worrill has been director of the Jacob H. Carruthers’ Center for African Studies and an instructor since 1998. She has worked with NEIU since 1976. She places a strong emphasis on developing viable strategies and tactics to

point out that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (UN) has found that it takes only $30 billion to feed the poor of the world. It takes $10 billion to ensure that the world has enough food. According to the FAO, “The G20 countries have saved the face of capitalism and the floundering theories that prop it up is a more viable future investment than the livelihood of the citizens of the rest of the world who provide only labour and natural resources for the furtherance of the capitalist interest.”

Khadijah Sharife, reporting for the New African, observes: “Paradoxically, Africa was self-sufficient in food in the early 1960s, complete with a billion dollar food surplus, and a net exporter of cereals, among other produce. Yet by 1990, Africa was a net importer of food, and in 2004, continental debt stood at $165bn and a food deficit of $11bn.”

The environmental watchdog, GRAIN, reports that: “Farmers across the world produced a record 2.3 billion tons of grain in 2007, up four percent on the previous year. Since 1961, the world’s cereal output has trebled, while the population has doubled. Today, roughly 70 percent of all so-called developing countries are net importers of food. And of the estimated 845 million hungry people in the world, 80 percent are small farmers.”

Needless to say, by far the largest constituency among the poor farmers are Africans, many of them women. Sharife reports further that as the former vice president of the World Bank, the economist Hollis Chenery, has stated the main objective of foreign assistance, as many other tools of foreign policy, is to produce the kind of political and economic environment in the world in which the US can best pursue its own goals.

“Farmers may begin to face the reality that the food being offered to southern African countries is not likely to present a human health risk and may be eaten.”

Apparently, despite the famine, the governments and peoples of southern Africa, who have been wisened up to the shenanigans of purchased African advocates of Western economic interests were not convinced.

Then president of South Africa, Kgalema Motlanthe, said they would attend more conferences because “I have learnt that the sugar carries the West’s share of the good news.”

Brianna Smith

advance the concept of African independence and self-determination at home and abroad. Professor Jones has worked at the Carruthers’ Center as an instructor since 1998. She also is the director of the Kemetic Institute and a priest in the Temple of the African Community of Chicago. Mr. Thindwa is the Executive Director of Chicago Jobs with Justice since November of 2002. He is originally from Zimbabwe and was an anti-apartheid leader from 1974 until apartheid ended in 1990. During his portion of the panel, Dr. Worrill emphasized the importance of being aware of the history of both struggles. He pointed out the fact that colonialism and Jim Crow are “first cousins”. They both took away one’s right to self-determination. He discussed a range of historical events that played a part in both struggles, ranging from the 5th Pan African Congress to the Montgomery Bus Boycott to 60,000 people gathering and marching in Washington D.C. and singing “We are an African people.” He then asked everyone in the audience who was alive at the time, to take a moment and remember what they were doing on April 4, 1968 when they received “the news” that the audience members were in elementary school; some heard it over the radio. Everyone, however, knew that something major had just transpired. Events all across the United States went up in smoke. People were angry, saddened, hurt and upset.

Professor Jones discussed a program called “Teaching about Africa”. It is a major problem that many people in the general public don’t know much about the history of Africa or much about contemporary Africa. It is worsened by the fact that the majority of people charged with teaching school kids are also lacking knowledge about this vital continent. Within this short program, teachers learn with the ability to identify at least 80% of the countries of Africa when given a blank map as well as an appreciation for its history and culture. During her presentation, a very interesting and heart-warming thing occurred. There were many young people in the audience, and she began to go through each letter of the alphabet asking them to name a country in Africa whose name begins with that letter. The children rose to the challenge. They named the countries without once faltering or stumbling! The entire crowd was overjoyed and the pride that all attendees felt filled the room. To see African Americans who are able to recite the names of African countries was a source of overwhelming happiness.

Mr. Thindwa began by discussing his experiences as a student at Beria College. During this time there he noticed the lack of interaction between students of color, especially Africans and African Americans. This clearly needed to be changed. He held a forum in which African and American students were able to come and discuss their feelings and stereotypes they had about each other. The students began to question what the origins of the stereotypes were, as well as how and why they were still being perpetuated, and provide a product that was very beneficial event. Once problems and issues are on the table, he noted, it is only then that progress can take place.

The open dialogue that followed the panel, moderated by Allie Kabba, executive director of the United African Organization, allowed members of the audience to ask the panel members, questions, make statements, and raise issues of their own.

The conversations that ensued were very productive. Based on evaluations that were distributed at the end of the forum, the response was very positive. One hundred percent of attendees said they would attend more events hosted by the United African Organization. The forum was just the first of many that aim to nurture shared vision between African immigrants and refugees and the larger African American community.

Africans at G20, (continued from page 3)
and faith-based organizations, scholars, advocates and organiz-
er volunteers and community leaders to support the efforts of stu-
dents and youth, and allies in the African American and immigrant communities.

The keynote speaker for the event is Cheryle Jackson, President/CEO of the Chicago Urban League. The first woman to lead the venerable civil rights organiza-
tion in its 90-year history, Cheryle R. Jackson, as president and chief executive, made na-
tional news when she shifted the Chicago Urban League from a social services agenda to focus exclusively on economic empow-
ernent as the driver for social change.

In her first year, Ms. Jackson launched Project NEXT, a series of initiatives created to support career, business and community development for African Ameri-
cans. The League founded an En-
trepreneurship Center in partner-
ship with the Kellogg Graduate School of Management to provide ‘high-octane aid’ to existing mi-
nority-owned businesses to help them grow to stabilize and build ca-
-pacity. Ms. Jackson also brokered a groundbreaking partnership with energy giant BP Inc. to sup-
port a League-sponsored venture with major players in business and
philanthropic arenas; and her un-
pretentious, down-to-earth dispo-
sion has won her the respect of the major players in business and
philanthropic arenas; and her un-
pretentious, down-to-earth dispo-
sion has won her the respect of
her audience.

Under Ms. Jackson’s forward-
looking leadership, the Chicago Urban League published a special report examining the potential economic impact of a Chi-
ago 2016 Olympic Games on African-
American businesses and commu-
nities. In February 2008, the League published a report examin-
ing 50
reflection

U.S.-Africa Relations
Hampered by Colonial Legacy

The following is excerpts of a lec-
ture delivered at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) by
Haskell Ward, examining 50
years of relations between the States and Africa.

UCLA is celebrating 50
years since the establishment of a for-
amal Center of Scholarship de-
voted to Africa. At the State De-
partment in Washington, the Af-
rica Bureau just last year cele-
brated 50 years as an independ-
ent bureau within the Depart-
ment. And in 2007 Ghana cele-
brated its fiftieth anniversary of
independence. 1960, 50 years ago next year, saw a great wave of
independence sweep over the continent.

My first trip to Africa was in 1962 to pre-independent Kenya. As menti-
oned earlier, my association with UCLA began in 1963. So the past 50 year policy period is one that I know quite well. I have adult and mature memories of the Kenya of the 60s, 70s. I like being
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
and, when she’s wearing braids,
Kwame Nkrumah at 100 - Lessons for African Leadership

Yao Graham

While many African leaders have aspired to inherit Nkrumah's mantle as the visionary and driver of Pan-Africanism and continental unity, writes Yao Graham, a gaping political leadership vacuum remains at the heart of the continent's collective expression. For an age when there were a number of outstanding African leaders, among whom Nkrumah was preeminent, Graham argues that the African Union's election of Gaddafi as its leader is a statement of a collective failure of leadership and underlines the crisis in which the Pan-African project is currently mired at the inter-state level. Where, asks Graham, are the African leaders who see opportunities for change in the current crisis, and who are 'ready to dare and look beyond guaranteeing the sanctity of aid flows?'

In February Ghana's new President John Atta-Mills announced that Nkrumah's birthday in September will be observed as Founder's Day and a national holiday. The long and tortuous national rehabilitation of the man who led the country to independence and remains an inspiration to Africans all over the world had taken yet another important step in the centenary year of his birth.

In the years after Ghana gained independence, Nkrumah's life and work was dominated by two primary concerns, one international, the other domestic. Internationally Pan-Africanism as a project of political and economic freedom, unity and structural transformation linked to the issue of Africa's place and voice on the world stage was dominant. Inside Ghana, the main issue became the structural transformation of the mono-crop dependent colonial economy bequeathed by the British into a balanced and internally linked one that offered improved and secure livelihoods to Ghanaians. The domestic and international concerns were of course closely linked in Nkrumah's political context and practice. He hoped that any achievements in Ghana would serve as a model as well as a unit in the economy of a united Africa. Nkrumah was ready to incur the wrath of the major imperialist powers of the day in pursuit of what he believed was in the interest of the African people.

David Rooney concluded his critical biography of Nkrumah with the points that Nkrumah's hopes were encapsulated in his ultimate goal of a United Africa in which its rich natural resources would be used for the benefit of all its people and would not be fished from them by foreign financiers and other exploiters. It may take centuries for Nkrumah's goal to be achieved, but when it is, he will be revered as the leader with the dynamism and intelligent imagination to take the first brave steps.

From an age when there were a number of outstanding African leaders, among whom Nkrumah was preeminent, the continent currently confronts the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression and a host of other challenges such as the situation in and international political play around Darfur without a rallying figure.

Nkrumah's leadership and rallying role in African affairs went well beyond his vision and theorizing. Importantly, it included support for national liberation movements. This support embodied a unity of his Pan-Africanism and commitment to anti-colonial independence as a necessary precondition for the continent's unity and progress. The activities of the Bureau of African Affairs which oversaw support for national liberation movements and the training of their cadre in Ghana with support from the Soviet bloc and China led to Cold War accusation that Ghana was a base for communist subversion in Africa. Two events however stand out in Nkrumah's readiness to support the national liberation struggle as well as defend its unity with the Pan-African cause, even when face to face with much more powerful countries. These are the financial aid Ghana gave to newly independent Guinea in 1958 and Ghana's stance and action in support of Patrice Lumumba's government during the Congo (DRC) crisis of the early sixties. Developments in the two countries soon after independence offer credence to Cabral's argument that 'so long as imperialism is in existence an independent African state must be a liberation movement in power, or it will not be independent'.

As France stared defeat in the face in Algeria at the hands of the National Liberation Front (FLN) it was a prospect made all the more difficult to countenance because of the humiliation inflicted by the Vietnamese in 1954 - it sought to re-package its colonial control by offering its African colonies membership of a French community. All French African colonies, except Guinea under Sekou Toure, agreed to the new colonial package. In an unforgettable act of resistance, the departing French stripped Guinea of anything they could carry, leaving the country on the brink of collapse. Nkrumah stepped in with a 10m loan to help the newly independent country avoid collapse. This was a considerable sum in those days and big sacrifice by a small country like Ghana.

Nkrumah's brave and sustained but ultimately doomed support for Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, the unity of Congo and his faith in the UN in the face of Western plotting and intrigue marked a high point of his willingness to assume international leadership on African causes. The outcome was also a stark statement of what could not be achieved without concerted African engagement in the face of powerful external forces. Nkrumah maintained a consistent line during the Congo crisis. He insisted that the country should solve its problems with the support of other African countries within the framework of the UN without the meddling of global powers, especially the NATO bloc. He assumed that the UN framework would give international legitimacy to the African-led process. Nkrumah sent troops to support Lumumba during UN forces' planes much to the anger of the USA. On 23 September 1960 Nkrumah used the platform of the UN General Assembly to make the case for Congo's unity. Lumumba's leadership and for an African solution under UN auspices to the crisis in the Congo. The appeal failed to gain traction, mainly because the UN assembly had also provided perfect cover for the US and its NATO allies to carry out their plans in the Congo.

It is now a public fact that even before Congo's independence on 1 July 1960, the American CIA was getting ready to put its puppets in power. President Dwight Eisenhower issued a national security order for the killing of Prime Minister Lumumba within six weeks of Congo becoming independent. Congo's fate as a pariah state in Western playing field that the Cold War was sealed and its long and tragic descent into what it has become today had begun. The gulf between Nkrumah's intentions and his weakness in the situation was tragically highlighted by how Ghana's continent in the UN military force became detached from Nkrumah's objectives and acted as accessories to actions against Lumumba.

Nkrumah's lonely and heroic, but ultimately futile, stance on the Congo crisis contrasts sharply with the flabby collective African approach on Somalia and Darfur. The former process has lurched from crisis to crisis with ever diminishing credibility and capacity of the transitional government. The situation in Darfur is compounded by the readiness of Ethiopia, the host country of the African Union, to act in concert with the Bush administration in pursuit of their particular national interests that converged in Somalia. Old Ethiopian imperial pretensions meshed with Bush's war on terror. All these fuelled the discredit, resistance to and delegitimation of the AU's role in that country.

The Darfur crisis and its escalation around the indictment of Sudan's President Bashir by the International Criminal Court has provided a grave test for Africa's collective ability to deal with African issues which are heavily intermeshed with international dimensions and interests. The UN/AU hybrid peacekeeping operation in Darfur (UNAMID) continues to face various difficulties. Joint UN-AU as well as Arab League mediation and peace initiatives do not appear to be making much progress. The indictment of Bashir and the issuing of a warrant for his arrest has further complicated the situation. Harsh faced the following the infamous case of the war crimes in Darfur, including on the behavior of the Sudanese government and the evolution of the ICC's pursuit. The case against Bashir remains an isolated case in the continent's collective expression. The UN/AU hybrid peacekeeping operation has taken a critical stance towards the implementation of the arrest warrant. As the internationaization of the Darfur conflict widens, the purchase of the Afri-
can Union on how it is likely to be resolved shrinks.

In recent years Pan-Africanic struc-
tures, institutions and processes have proliferated. The mecha-
nisms of the AU have been under-
going refinement since it took over from OAU as the premier
continental institution. Alongside 
these phenomena, many African leaders have aspired to inherit 
Nkrumah's mantle as the vision-
ary and driver of Pan-Africanism and continental unity. A gaping 
political leadership vacuum how-
ever remains at the heart of the 
continent's collective expression. 

Today, with the death of the 
Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi as 
chair of the Union. In recent 
years, he has emerged as the most 
forthright spokesman for the 
urgency of creating a United 
States of Africa. How best and 
how quickly to move forward to a 
union of African states was the 
main item on the agenda of the 
2007 AU summit, fittingly held in 
Accra during Ghana's 50th year of 
independence. The debate was 
inconclusive but the exercise 
underlined Gaddafi's stature as a 
leader of the Unity Now! camp. 

The African Union's election of 
the unpredictable Gaddafi as 
this grave moment in history is more 
a negative than a positive. It is a 
statement of a collective failure of 
leadership and underlines the cri-
sis in which the Pan-African 
project is mired at the inter-state 
level. Its seemingly radical stance 
on African Unity notwithstanding, 
the AU is a reality that Gaddafi is 
not the successor to Nkrumah 
that the continent currently and 
urgently needs. He does not offer 
a coherent vision or leadership 
practice of pan-Africanism in 
keeping with the needs of the 
age. These shortcomings are 
compounded by his unpredictabil-
ity and histrionics. Some of his 
vehemence is viewed by 
many as a way of keeping 
him up as a man deeply marked 
by his years as an authoritarian 
leader. Among his many bizarre 
acts is his current self-designation 
as king of Africa's kings, a reac-
tionary assertion out of tune with 
the democratic logic on the conti-
nent's national liberation strug-
gle.

The African people want democ-
Racy not monarchs. If there is one 
element of Africa's post-colonial 
history that the masses want 
behind them it is the years of des-
pairism, and underlines the 
Sympathetic study of Nkrumah's 
life and times, Basi Davidson, 
who devoted his life to supporting 
Africa's national liberation strug-
gle, in his work on the 
Internal party democracy and the 
grand ascent of authoritarian 
use of power in Nkrumah's Ghana as 
a key contributor to the ero-
sion of Nkrumah's leadership. 
Nkrumah's efforts to transform 
the ordinary people. The view for 
tomorrow is that Nkrumah's aims 
were the right ones and their re-
alization will become increasingly 
possible as conditions ripen and 
as other strategists take up fur-
ther struggles for liberation. 
These strategists will succeed... 
in the measure that they under-
take to eradicate the system of 
building democratic organiza-
tions which become the vehicles 
of mass participation as well as 
mass support: movements in 
independence of ordinary 
people really make, enshrine and up-
hold the fundamental law of the 
land'.

The African delegation to the 
London G20 summit was led not 
by the chairman of the AU, 
but by Ethiopia's Meles Zenawi, 
who is chair of NEPAD (New 
Partnership for Africa's Development) and 
a good friend of the West. 
NEPAD is at best a substitute 
of the AU and Zenawi's presence 
is illustrative of the ease with 
which many outside Africa are 
able to pick and choose how to 
engage with the continent. 

At the Beijing China Africa 
Forum the Chinese were able to deal 
with African countries as individu-
als while the AU was treated as 
observer.

Processes of restructuring 
global leadership are underway 
in the international level responses 
to the unfolding economic crisis. 
One strand of these is the emerg-
ence of the G20 as a key site 
of global economic leadership, 
the effective downgrading of the 
G8. This process mirrors the way 
in which the old wholly Western 
quarter of leading powers in the 
World Trade Organization (WTO) 
has been replaced by a new 
quad of the US, EU, Brazil and India. 
The seating around the G20 table 
reflects the power of individual 
African states and Latin American 
ocieties with South Africa the 
only African country there as an 
individual member country. Realisti-
cally the most effective way Afri-

can countries could have 
maximized their voice would have 
been through effective prior 
preparation and definition of posi-
tions and South-South diplomacy 
ahead of the meeting, as well as 
acting a collective representative 
of their own choosing.

The continent's response to the 
global crisis has so far lacked ur-
gency and the sense that this is 
an opportunity to make a break 
with the dominant market discrimina-
ties which have failed to deliver 
transformative growth over the 
past couple of decades. The main 
line in the global fora has been to 
place Africa ahead of Africa to be 
remembered for and the security of aid 
budgets. As African leaders 
traipe around international fora, 
the glaring absence of leaders 
who see opportunities for changes in 
the current crisis stands in 
sharp relief.

The current global crisis has 
validated 
what critics of neoliberalism 
have been saying for years. In 
the last few years the annual 
Economic Report on Africa (ERA) 
published by the UN Economic 
Commission for Africa has been 
gently putting out its critique of 
the experience of the neoliberal 
agenda in Africa. Years of growth 
that failed to carry through to 
structural transformation or the much 
touted poverty reduction. The 
current crisis had again brought to 
the fore the fundamental structural 
deficiencies of African economies 
in which the recent years of growth 
had masked, especially in coun-
tries exporting oil or benefitting 
from the commodities boom.

Nkrumah reportedly broke down in 
tears when confronted with the 
problems of African economies 
which had cut the ground from 
under his plans for the economic 
transformation of Ghana. In the 
years since Nkrumah's overthrow, 
the cyclical movement of cocoa 
and gold prices has been the de-
terminant factors in the health of 
the Ghanaian economy, tempered 
in recent years by the substantial 
investment in the country. 
Even some years now Ghana has been 
a model of the type of economy 
and economic policy that has 
been proclaimed as the way for-
ward for Africa. Ghana which has 
failed to deliver over a generation 
and has been exposed as bank-
rupt by the global crisis.

During the last six or so years of 
his rule Nkrumah attempted to 
transform the colonial economy he 
heirited. Many leaders of his 
generation - Nyerere in Tanzania, 
Kaunda in Zambia, and many oth-
ers - recognized this to be a pri-
tary task of post-colonial eco-
nomic policy. Despite the claims 
that Nkrumah's difficulties were 
because of his socialist policies, 
the truth is that for a long time 
he was a good pupil of the domi-
nant economic discourses and 
the way of his day as purveyed by leading 
thinkers in the West. His 

timate attempt to learn from the 
develop-
ment strategies of the Soviet 
state as well as the countries of 
Slavia showed a readiness to take 
risks and try uncharted paths. 

In retrospect it clear that many mis-
takes were made and offer rich 
lessons for today, but he dared. 

In the 15 years Nkrumah was in 
power a leading role for the state 
in the economy was the norm in 
both communist countries and 
the West where Keynesian eco-
nomics prevailed. The collapse of 
the Soviet Union offered lessons 
in rapid industrialization, which 
india had started learning before 
Ghana came along. The 
relative success of import substi-
tiation in China as well as 
Nigeria and Yugoslavia 
showed a readiness to take 
risks and try uncharted paths. 

In retrospect it clear that many mis-
takes were made and offer rich 
lessons for today, but he dared. 

In the 15 years Nkrumah was in 
power a leading role for the state 
in the economy was the norm in 
both communist countries and 
the West where Keynesian eco-
nomics prevailed. The collapse of 
the Soviet Union offered lessons 
in rapid industrialization, which 
India had started learning before 
Ghana came along. The 
relative success of import substi-
tiation in China as well as 
Nigeria and Yugoslavia 
showed a readiness to take 
risks and try uncharted paths. 

In retrospect it clear that many mis-
takes were made and offer rich 
lessons for today, but he dared. 

In the 15 years Nkrumah was in 
power a leading role for the state 
in the economy was the norm in 
both communist countries and 
the West where Keynesian eco-
nomics prevailed. The collapse of 
the Soviet Union offered lessons 
in rapid industrialization, which 
India had started learning before 
Ghana came along. The 
relative success of import substi-
tiation in China as well as 
Nigeria and Yugoslavia 
showed a readiness to take 
risks and try uncharted paths.
African Unity - Feeling with Nkrumah, Thinking with Nyerere

Chambi Chacage

Exploring Nyerere’s step by step approach to building African unity in relation to Nkrumah’s desire to ‘fast track’ the creation of a United States of Africa, Chacage concludes that while Nkrumah’s Pan-African vision remains powerful, his approach is unrealistic even today. ‘To that end, I will feel with Nkrumah, yet I shall think with Nyerere,’ he writes, ‘Africa must unite, albeit pragmatically’.

The times have indeed changed. What was known as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) is now called the African Union (AU). It is just a matter of time before we see a United States of Africa (USA) in our lifetime. At least that is what Pan-Africanists envision.

Any change tends to be characterized by both discontinuity and continuity. Discontinuity of what was/is meant to be changed. Continuity of the vision associated with a mission of bringing that change.

It is such continuity that this article seeks to address. Why? Simply because the terms of the debate on how to unite African states has not changed significantly since Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah and Mwalimu Julius Nyerere locked horns on the matter in the early 1960s.

The thoughts and sentiments of these two great Pan-Africanists on how to achieve African Unity still divide us today. There are those who side with Nkrumah. Others side with Nyerere. Yet some of us are caught somewhere in between.

Note, for instance, the position advanced by Ebou Faye in Dr Kwame Nkrumah: Remembering Africa’s Most Influential and Greatest in the 21st Century. Therein he claims that it was Nyerere who frustrated Nkrumah when he ‘cunningly pushed through a resolution which urged the OAU to accept the colonial borders as permanent, recognized frontiers of the OAU member states.’ Nyerere indeed admitted in 1992 and 1997 that he was responsible for moving that resolution, which was passed by a simple majority at the 1964 OAU Summit in Cairo with two reservations: Morocco and Somalia.

This move, Faye further asserts, was in collaboration with Emperor Haile Selassie, who one year earlier had annexed Eritrea and that ‘though Nyerere claimed that the intention was to minimize border conflicts in Africa,’ the underlying motive of the resolution was to frustrate Nkrumah and his Pan-Africanist ideals. ‘These ideals called for a speedy continental unity as early as 1965.

For the likes of Faye the choice was and is as clear as crystal: Nkrumah’s speedy way toward a United States of Africa is more than Nyerere’s gradual way toward African Unity. And to the Faye, Nyerere was ‘the architect of the OAU status quo’ because he ‘cunningly pushed through that resolution which allegedly made OAU cease to be an instrument of the Pan-African revolutionary change.

As such, they contend, even the liberation of the remaining colonies was conceived in the context of maintaining this status quo’ and that the OAU became its ‘apologist’. The situation became worse, they further contend, to the extent that in 1972 Nyerere himself publicly admitted that ‘the OAU had become no more than a trade union of Africa’s heads of state.

Then there is another relatively less polarized position advanced by the Malawian Nyerere Professor in Pan-African Studies at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, Issa Shivji, in his Bill Dudley memorial lecture on ‘Pan-Africanism or Imperiality? Unity and Struggle towards a New Democratic Africa’ on 17 July 2005. Shivji sides with Nkrumah’s position yet bails out Nyerere’s supposedly recanted position. After quoting in full Nyerere’s speech at the 40th independence anniversary of Ghana in 1997, Shivji concludes that in that quote ‘Nyerere is no different from any other vindicated Nkrumahite’ and asks rhetorically if thus Nyerere ‘is also critiquing his own position of step by step, any unity’.

Ironically, that same quote - coupled with what Nyerere went on to say prior to his untimely death in 1999 - proves that he never abandoned his own pragmatic position of step by step continental unity. In fact it shows how impractical Nkrumah’s position was vis-à-vis Nyerere’s practical approach. To get the context, let us revisit this quotable quote of Nyerere’s that Shivji was referring to:

As ‘the greatest crusader for African Unity’, generously notes Nyerere, Nkrumah ‘wanted the Accra summit of 1965 to establish a Union Government for the whole independent Africa’. But, he admits, they failed. ‘The one main reason’, Nyerere further notes, ‘is that Kwame, like all great believers, underestimated the degree of suspicion and animosity which his crusading passion had created among a substantial number of his fellow heads of states.

The major reason, however, confesses Nyerere, is that already too many of them ‘had a vested interest in keeping Africa divided.’ He then echoes his 1960s prophetic warning on the necessity of establishing an ‘East African Federation’ prior to independence by reiterating why Nkrumah encountered such resistance.

Such opposition, affirms Nyerere, naturally happens because once you multiply national anthems, national flags and national passports, seats at the United Nations, and individuals entitled to 21 guns salute, not to speak of a host of ministers, prime ministers, and envoys, you would have a whole army of powerful people with vested interests in keeping Africa balkanized.

Tellingly, Nyerere reminisced how in that summit he heard ‘one head of state express with relief that he was happy to be returning home to his country still head of state.’ Even though he was not sure if this leader was serious or joking - although Nkrumah was ‘very serious and the fear of a number of leaders ‘to lose’ their ‘status was palpable’ - Nyerere acknowledges his then pragmatic scepticism:

‘But I never believed that the 1965 Accra summit would have established a union government for Africa. When I say that we failed, that is not what I mean, for that clearly was an unrealistic objective of that single summit. What I mean is that we did not even discuss a mechanism for pursuing the objective of a politically united Africa. We had a liberation committee already. We should have at least had a unity committee or undertaken to establish one. We did not.

And after Kwame Nkrumah was removed from the African political scene nobody took up the challenge again.’

Contrary to what some Pan-Africanist revisionists would want us to believe, Nyerere was solidly consistent in his pragmatic position. While it is correct to argue, as Shivji does in his Bill Dudley lecture, that Nkrumah had much earlier held the gradualist position but was quick to learn from experience and switch to a fast-track position, it is equally correct to argue that Nyerere had also realized the climate of the continent in the context of regionalization but was quick to learn from experience and switch to gradualism.

In his 1960s call for an East African Federation prior to the independence of Tanganyika, Kenya, Uganda and Zanzibar, Nyerere ridiculed what he referred as the camps of the ‘bados’, that is, those who were saying ‘bado kido’ as in ‘we are already ready but not yet so let’s wait a bit’ to federate. He even asserted that this was the same argument that imperialists used to delay our uhuru - freedom.

Therein Nyerere used case studies of Somaliland/Somalia, India/Pakistan, Nigeria, Canada and USA among others to prove it was relatively easier to federate prior to independence, paying homage to what he hailed as ‘the most brilliant and far-sighted sons of Africa’, that is, Nkrumah and Ahmed Sekou Toure, for managing a then exception to that rule by uniting Ghana and Guinea after they became independent.

This is the Nyerere who was ready to delay the independence of Tanganyika so as to fast-track the East African Federation and prevent the balkanization of Africa, he insisted, ‘is a source of weakness to our continent’ and that the ‘forces of imperialism and neo- imperialism will find their own campaign to move our continent.’ Thus he saw that golden chance of removing the balkanization of East Africa as a chance to undo part of the harm of continental balkanization and as a step toward continental unity.

Barring conspiracy theories about continued on page 10
Third, the Hard Truth: We live in a world with tons of nuclear waste, too. The waste was not created in Somalia. Remember, Somalia is not one of those countries with nuclear plants in China or France or Britain or the US. But some of the nuclear waste has found its way to the open seas of Somalia...polluting the coastlines and destroying the livelihood of thousands of Somali fishermen. Someone is making lots of money for dumping nuclear wasted in Somalia waters, but we are certain that the Somalis are not among the Dumping Mafia. In a situation like the one prevailing in Somalia, one would expect the Somalis would wonder to this day why they are so helpless in the face of this brazen and illegal exploitation of their sea wealth. A few, in a sudden outburst of patriotic fever, would want to protect their coast with the little that they have left from all these years of fratricidal war.

Herein we find the clash of narratives: patriots as defenders of national sovereignty vs. petty criminal gangs in a lawless jungle of the high seas. Whose story do you believe? Whose side are you on? Whose agenda do you follow in the evening news?

The desperation that drives a sixteen-year-old Somali to take to the high seas is neither examined nor validated in the news. “We should bomb the hell out of them,” some talking heads scream as they demand that “our” governments bomb the Somali coast with the little that they have left from all these years of fratricidal war. 

The road to Mobutu’s fall started with the Plan Franglais which was the second offensive saw the European Union and the United Nations (on our payroll) vs. bad guys – becomes Kool-Aid for policymakers in search of “new fixes. Gunboat diplomacy won’t work!”

With typical contempt, he sought to divert attention by becoming a new philosopher of unity, cooperation and courage in relations between a deeply injured Congo and a seemingly more rapacious Rwanda. He saluted as a “courageous decision” a recent blood-stained collaboration between the armies of Rwanda and Congo that turned Hutu refugees into mere pests to be hunted down, outside the cover of morality and humanism, even though they remained citizens of Rwanda. In President Kagame’s view, armed Hutus are apparently the only ones who can commit genocide.

The year 1997 marked the historic, even if silent, fall from power and flight into a short exile, quickly followed by death from cancer, by President Mobutu Sese Seko Kukuabenda Wazabanga. His penalties were longer, and more destructive, than his names. Mobutu had, since his role in the murder of Patrice Lumumba in 1960, systematically anti-colonial Prime Minister ruled and ruined the country continuously for 29 years as a loyal friend of France and the NATO countries. Nelson Mandela must today dread the day he sought peace and reconciliation on a South African navy ship off the coast of Congo by calling a sick and frightened Mobutu sitting to his right, and a bulky Kabila cabinet officer sitting to his left. "two of the largest sons of Africa". Under his rule French global propaganda could proudly claim that sad and tortured country as the largest "French-speaking country in the world".

His fall came when the Cold War had ended, Soviet communists lost their support and Somalis hawking raw gold inside suitcases inside hotels in New York, London and Amsterdam. The Soviet empire had broken up under Mikhail Gorbachev in 1991 and the Geneva Convention that President Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher loved him and were trusted friends.

With the fall of Soviet power also fell the usefulness of Mobutu as a herds-boy and loyal foreman to protect the vast natural resources of the Congo by keeping away communist rivals.

The government of Paul Kagame has publicly accused French diplomats, military officers, business adventurers and administrators of deliberately and systematically planning and training Hutu militias to exterminate Tutsis out of Rwanda. France has countered back by accusing Kagame himself of carrying out the shooting down, in 1994, of the aircraft that was carrying the two democratically elected Hutu presidents of Rwanda and Burundi. They were returning from peace talks, held in Paris, Tanzania and London.

The "Rwanda hook-bomb" that would explode inside Congo and blast Mobutu out of power. The RPF, and their supports in Uganda, would not be allowed into the territory of Tanzania and Kenya. The road to Mobutu’s fall started when France decided to fight a defensive diplomatic and military battle over Rwanda against a British-American plan encircle and contain Islamic fundamentalism being brewed by Omar Bashir in Sudan by putting in power friendly rulers in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and Rwanda. In Rwanda they would replace the Hutu rulers, who were linked to the French language, by supporting an invasion launched from Tanzania against Idr Amin; and later re-launched from Uganda against Amin’s alleged baby brother President Idi Muteveni.

The second offensive saw Museveni’s troops, tanks and guns being used by the Tutsi-based Rwanda Patriotic Front, RPF, whose leaders had grown up and been educated up to university level, in Uganda. Their Tutsi parents had escaped brutal death and slaughter by Hutu gangs on the eve of the country’s independence in 1959. Having seen their parents die in Uganda around a tribal dream, even though clothed with Islam, the leaders of the RPF also began to dream of going back home to grab back the power that had been launched with the blood of the Tutsi as libation to long fertilized anger of oppressed Hutu ancestors. Realizing that the tribal identity of the RPF was the base of the expansion of the English language into the Great Lakes region, and would eventually eat up the vast Congo, French leaders wanted to welcome Tutsi fighters into a Rwanda without any Tutsis left to join their invading forces. France had once played a similar vicious game of destroying former French colonies and their government offices, tearing up and burning government files in anger that SekourToure’s people in Guinea had voted to become independent instead of remaining tied to France. If it is either France gets all the control in Africa or nothing remains standing.

The government of Paul Kagame has publicly accused French diplomats, military officers, business adventurers and administrators of deliberately and systematically planning and training Hutu militias to exterminate Tutsis out of Rwanda. France has countered back by accusing Kagame himself of carrying out the shooting down, in 1994, of the aircraft that was carrying the two democratically elected Hutu presidents of Rwanda and Burundi. They were returning from peace talks, held in Paris, Tanzania and London.

The "Rwanda hook-bomb" that would explode inside Congo and blast Mobutu out of power. The RPF, and their supports in Uganda, would not be allowed into the territory of Tanzania and Kenya. The road to Mobutu’s fall started when France decided to fight a defensive diplomatic and military battle over Rwanda against a British-American plan encircle and contain Islamic fundamentalism being brewed by Omar Bashir in Sudan by putting in power friendly rulers in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and Rwanda. In Rwanda they would replace the Hutu rulers, who were linked to the French language, by supporting an invasion launched from Tanzania against Idr Amin; and later re-launched from Uganda against Amin’s alleged baby brother President Idi Muteveni.

The second offensive saw Museveni’s troops, tanks and guns being used by the Tutsi-based Rwanda Patriotic Front, RPF, whose leaders had grown up and been educated up to university level, in Uganda. Their Tutsi parents had escaped brutal death and slaughter by Hutu gangs on the eve of the country’s independence in 1959. Having seen their parents die in Uganda around a tribal dream, even though clothed with Islam, the leaders of the RPF also began to dream of going back home to grab back the power that had been launched with the blood of the Tutsi as libation to long fertilized anger of oppressed Hutu ancestors. Realizing that the tribal identity of the RPF was the base of the expansion of the English language into the Great Lakes region, and would eventually eat up the vast Congo, French leaders wanted to welcome Tutsi fighters into a Rwanda without any Tutsis left to join their invading forces. France had once played a similar vicious game of destroying former French colonies and their government offices, tearing up and burning government files in anger that SekourToure’s people in Guinea had voted to become independent instead of remaining tied to France. It is either France gets all the control in Africa or nothing remains standing.

The government of Paul Kagame has publicly accused French diplomats, military officers, business adventurers and administrators of deliberately and systematically planning and training Hutu militias to exterminate Tutsis out of Rwanda. France has countered back by accusing Kagame himself of carrying out the shooting down, in 1994, of the aircraft that was carrying the two democratically elected Hutu presidents of Rwanda and Burundi. They were returning from peace talks, held in Paris, Tanzania and London.

The "Rwanda hook-bomb" that would explode inside Congo and blast Mobutu out of power. The RPF, and their supports in Uganda, would not be allowed into the territory of Tanzania and Kenya. The road to Mobutu’s fall started when France decided to fight a defensive diplomatic and military battle over Rwanda against a British-American plan encircle and contain Islamic fundamentalism being brewed by Omar Bashir in Sudan by putting in power friendly rulers in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and Rwanda.

In Rwanda they would replace the Hutu rulers, who were linked to the French language, by supporting an invasion launched from Tanzania against Idr Amin; and later re-launched from Uganda against Amin’s alleged baby brother President Idi Muteveni.

The second offensive saw Museveni’s troops, tanks and guns being used by the Tutsi-based Rwanda Patriotic Front, RPF, whose leaders had grown up and been educated up to university level, in Uganda. Their Tutsi parents had escaped brutal death and slaughter by Hutu gangs on the eve of the country’s independence in 1959. Having seen their parents die in Uganda around a tribal dream, even though clothed with Islam, the leaders of the RPF also began to dream of going back home to grab back the power that had been launched with the blood of the Tutsi as libation to long fertilized anger of oppressed Hutu ancestors. Realizing that the tribal identity of the RPF was the base of the expansion of the English language into the Great Lakes region, and would eventually eat up the vast Congo, French leaders wanted to welcome Tutsi fighters into a Rwanda without any Tutsis left to join their invading forces. France had once played a similar vicious game of destroying former French colonies and their government offices, tearing up and burning government files in anger that SekourToure’s people in Guinea had voted to become independent instead of remaining tied to France. It is either France gets all the control in Africa or nothing remains standing.

The government of Paul Kagame has publicly accused French diplomats, military officers, business adventurers and administrators of deliberately and systematically planning and training Hutu militias to exterminate Tutsis out of Rwanda. France has countered back by accusing Kagame himself of carrying out the shooting down, in 1994, of the aircraft that was carrying the two democratically elected Hutu presidents of Rwanda and Burundi. They were returning from peace talks, held in Paris, Tanzania and London.

The "Rwanda hook-bomb" that would explode inside Congo and blast Mobutu out of power. The RPF, and their supports in Uganda, would not be allowed into the territory of Tanzania and Kenya. The road to Mobutu’s fall started when France decided to fight a defensive diplomatic and military battle over Rwanda against a British-American plan encircle and contain Islamic fundamentalism being brewed by Omar Bashir in Sudan by putting in power friendly rulers in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and Rwanda.

In Rwanda they would replace the Hutu rulers, who were linked to the French language, by supporting an invasion launched from Tanzania against Idr Amin; and later re-launched from Uganda against Amin’s alleged baby brother President Idi Muteveni.

The second offensive saw Museveni’s troops, tanks and guns being used by the Tutsi-based Rwanda Patriotic Front, RPF, whose leaders had grown up and been educated up to university level, in Uganda. Their Tutsi parents had escaped brutal death and slaughter by Hutu gangs on the eve of the country’s independence in 1959. Having seen their parents die in Uganda around a tribal dream, even though clothed with Islam, the leaders of the RPF also began to dream of going back home to grab back the power that had been launched with the blood of the Tutsi as libation to long fertilized anger of oppressed Hutu ancestors. Realizing that the tribal identity of the RPF was the base of the expansion of the English language into the Great Lakes region, and would eventually eat up the vast Congo, French leaders wanted to welcome Tutsi fighters into a Rwanda without any Tutsis left to join their invading forces. France had once played a similar vicious game of destroying former French colonies and their government offices, tearing up and burning government files in anger that SekourToure’s people in Guinea had voted to become independent instead of remaining tied to France. It is either France gets all the control in Africa or nothing remains standing.
U.S.-Africa Relations Hampered by Colonial Legacy, (continued from page 5)

I like to characterize this period, the immediate years following the independence of Ghana in 1957 and Guinea in 1958 as turning points and prime examples of our lost opportunity with the continent. Long before, Nkrumah’s policies became overly hostile to U.S. policies; as such, we did not want to see him succeed in his Pan African aspirations. More recently, Nigeria’s attempts to this many years of complicity in his overthrow. Much the same is said of the death and overthrow of Lumumba. The prevailing sentiment, which I have discussed for much of the past years, is that a strong charismatic African leader is antithetical to U.S. and African interests and must, therefore be eliminated.

What, in fact, was this great, lost opportunity? In a phrase, it was our failure to differentiate. Differentiate what? The answer, concisely, was the failure to differentiate our policies and values from those of a still resistant and unfriendly Europe. For instance, the United States naively viewed the nature and force of Guinea’s break with France as hostile us. And sadly and telling, in 50 years of post independent U.S. engagement with Africa, our government never understood the basic, independent study and review of what are our national interests now were, not were with Africa. We really explored how, in the immediate post-independent period in the freshness of warm relations and great expectations, our interests intersected and/or converged with those of Europe. Moreover, on the flip side, we never seriously considered how these interests might diverge.

It was understandable, in the pre-independence period, that our policies were naïve, as a matter of course, a matter of simple, perhaps naïve policy. But, with our leadership, as it should have been with any policy, we might have anticipated that our policies might not be as acceptable to others in the post-independence period in the freshness of warm relations and great expectations; our interests might be less identical, and our interests might be more conflicting. Moreover, the fact that we could not, in the years of our engagement, attempt to distinguish our policies and our values from those of Europe, the West, and the Soviet Union, can be seen as an important test of the effectiveness of our policies.

The test for the Obama Administration, in the worst economic environment of Africa’s post-independence period, which has lasted 50 years, the continent confronts some of its greatest challenges. The test for the Obama Administration will be to find new ways to respond vigorously to crises in Africa, while celebrating and reinforcing many positive trends of progress on the continent.

What we are beginning to slowly recognize in this country is that Africa is not so different from everywhere else, except in its periphery, in embodying the extremes. Some of the world’s most vexing problems are there combined with a vastly, still largely unappreciated potential. If we can learn to see these dual realities and respond creatively, in a spirit of collaboration and mutual respect, the next fifty years of U.S./Africa relations can be a new, productive, and fruitful era. We can have a new era of mutual attention on the missed opportunities of the past.

Kwame Nkrumah at 100 - Lessons for African Leadership, (continued from page 7)

To be sure, Africans quickly learned to play this card well and to their own narrow political interests. Many Africans knew that they could get more if they threatened to create an alliance with the Soviet Union and vice versa. The change of partners in Egypt’s civil and military cauldron as a result of the defeat of Soviet invaders, therefore, had a profound moral and political im-
African Unity: Feeling with Nkrumah, Thinking with Nyerere, (continued from page 8)

being a stooge of Anglo-American Imperialism, it is this experience that made Nyerere lock horns with Nkrumah on the feasibility of fast-tracking unity. Out of this exchange, however, unless conspiracy theories hold water, that Nyerere displayed what Shivji’s (2008) ‘Pan-Africanism or Pragmatism: Lesson of the Tanzania-United States African’ refers to as ‘his limited appreciation of Nkrumah’s analysis of imperialism as a world system in which Africans could stand tall on their own in a united continent’ when he thus responded to his criticism at the 1964 OAU Summit:

‘To rule out a step by step progress towards African Unity is to hasten the day that the Almghty will one day say, ‘Let there be unity in Africa’, and there shall be unity; or pray for a conqueror, but even a conqueror will have to proceed step by step. To say that the step we are taking is to break the limits is to reach the limits of absurdity. I have heard the imperialists blamed for many things, but not for the limitations of mankind. That they are limited!’

Indeed Nyerere lacked the economic sophistication of Nkrumah, but that by no means meant that he did not then have a deep sense of the neo-colonial dynamics of imperialism. To prove that, one only has to reread his writings prior to the 1960s, such as his 1958 pamphlet on ‘National Property’ to see how he apprehensively foresaw, and tried to avert, the ongoing neo-colonization of land tenure in Tanzania.


In the case of the former interview, Nyerere thus reminisced:

‘My differences with Kwanme were that Kwanme thought there was somehow a shortcut, and I was saying that there was no short-cut. This is what we have inheritance but they are separated within the limitations that that inheritance has imposed upon us. Kwanme thought that somehow you could say, ‘Let there be a United States of Africa’. I said, “but that would happen. I kept saying, ‘Kwanme, it’s a slow process.” He had tremendous contempt for a large number of the leaders of Africa and he said, “But they are there. What are you going to do with them? They don’t believe as you do - as you and I do - in the need for the unity of Africa. But WHAT DO YOU DO? THEY ARE HERE AND WE HAVE TO PROCEED ALONG WITH EVERY-BODY!” And I said to him in so many words that we’re not going to have an African Napoleon, who is going to conquer the continent and put it under one flag. It is not possible to do! The OAU Assembly, in 1963, was actually trying to defend Kwanme. I was the last to speak and Kwanme had said this [OAU] charter has not been put into practice far enough because thought he would leave Addis with a United States of Africa. I told him that this was absurd; that it can’t happen. This is what they have been trying to achieve. He built, after putting the foundation down, complains that the building is not yet finished. You have to go on building and building until you finish, but he was impatient because he saw the stupidly of others.

In the case of the latter interview, Nyerere thus recollected:

‘Kwame Nkrumah and I were committed to the idea of unity. We also agreed that the African heads of state did not take Kwanme seriously. However, I did. I did not believe in these small little nations. Still today I do not believe in them. I think our people to look at the European Union, at these people who ruled us who are now uniting. Kwanme and I met in 1963 and discussed African Unity. We were absolutely and to the United States of Africa. But we both agreed on a United States of Africa as necessary. Kwanme went to Lincoln University, a black college in the US. He perceived things from the perspective of US history, where the 13 colonies that revolted against the British formed a union. That is what he thought his country should try to get East Africa to unite before independence. When we failed in this I was very worried about Kwanme’s continental approach. We corresponded profusely on this. Kwanme said my idea of “regionalization” was only balkanization on a larger scale. Later African historians will have to study our correspondence on this issue of uniting Africa. Africans who studied in the US like Nkrumah and [Nigerian independence leader] Aziwwe were more aware of the lesson, and the global African community than those of us who studied in Britain. They were therefore aware of a wider Pan-Africanism. Thiers in the US like the Pan-Africanism of W.E.B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey. The colonialists were against this and frightened of it.

Such was a context in which Nyerere clashed with Nkrumah. In his own words as the OAU Secretary General, Nyerere had been close to a federation of East African states and Kwanme was completely opposed to the idea. He, then, was the most practical solution given the fact that organic movements of the people, such as the Pan-African Movement of Eastern and Central Africa (PAMCEA), had made strides toward regionalization whilst the preamble of the OAU Charter that stated ‘we the heads of state’ rather than ‘we the people’ was an ideologically creating a bureaucratic Pan-Africanist political project. Later on these groupings would have come together naturally to form bigger units, ultimately, a greater African unity. This is a position that Nyerere consistently held, as his ‘Reflections’ during his 75th Birthday celebration in 1997 thus attest:

‘The small countries in Africa must move towards either unity or cooperation, unity of Africa... if we can’t move towards bigger nation states, at least let’s move towards greater cooperation. This is something to which, in 1963, I said, if the new leadership in Africa should encourage it... southern Africa has a tremendous opportunity... of South Africans... to bring need leadership, because if you get proper leadership there, within the next ten fifteen years that region is going to be the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Nations) of Africa... West Africa. Another bloc is developing there, but that depends very much on Nigeria... The leadership will have to come from Nigeria... But it is people’s loyalties to these...’

**Africans At G20, continued from page 8**

Thabo Mbeki, whose country was identified to promote proliferation of GM products into the southern African diet, appears to have failed for the bat, as was his Botswana colleague. Financial promises to African development programs dropped in 2009. Mbeki’s leadership and demands a good explanation that discounted the wisdom of giving the people of southern Africa to genetically modified seeds, amongst other things, would have benefitted much more. Mbeki’s leadership would have benefitted from elevation to sponsor of the program of the GM multinationals and fertilizer producing companies, whilst Mogae was compelled to follow suit out of lack of choice since his country is committed against home grown food self-sufficiency. And so, the citizens of the under- developed countries, who have only been betrayed by the World Bank and the IMF, who are in cahoots with both the American and European governmental aid agencies and the international trade gatekeepers such as the WTO, but also by some of their own leaders.

The G20 leaders, contrary to their own promises, are certainly not committed to refurbishment of the discredited system of international capitalism and its inherently self-destructive financial systems, whilst, paradoxically creating a system to build what remains of what Bob Geldof referred to as ‘forced cooperation’ under globalization, than to a fundamental rethinking of the problems of poverty, famine, lack of access to water, education, health and work in the underdeveloped countries. African civil society then is charged with the difficult task of defending the G20 captains of moribund capitalism, also staying vigilantly on the lookout against the vulnerability of these continent’s leaders - most of them culturally biased towards America and Europe through their education and personal economic interests - to cooption by the westerners.

The fact of the consistent and persistent failure of Western countries to honor their promises with respect to servicing their financial promises to African development programs is neither novel nor in need of proof. That reality has now become a given. The South Africans at the G20 meetings should also be held accountable to the Africans at home, in southern Africa and at the African Union.

The character, Geraldo, created by the American comedic, Flip Wilson. He was always portrayed as: ‘What you see, is what you get,’ as she fed the curious eye everything she had by way of her well endowed posterior.

The Africans should surely have learnt that: What you get, is what you see!
The Somali Diaspora

Sadig A. Abdirahman

You may never meet a photographer with the “eye of an eagle” quite like Abdi Roble, nor will you likely meet a writer with the talent of Doug Rutledge. These two gifted individuals have captured the finest experiences of Somalis from their homeland.

Their book is the product of many years of traveling, interviewing, and documenting the journey of Somalis residing in North America, especially in Minneapolis; Columbus, Ohio; and Lewishes, Maine. Though Rochester isn’t featured prominently, it has a strong community of Somali immigrants, and this book will resonate with them.

Through words and compelling images, they bring to vivid life the universal experiences of people leaving their homes to build new lives elsewhere.

The cover photo is of a young girl dribbling a basketball while wearing her native Somali attire. This photograph, along with intimate photography in the book, is a powerful reminder that “the eye of an eagle” captures the reality of a people living comfortably within their identity, living comfortably within their identity.

Sadig Abdirahman is a Somali American and lives in Apple Valley. He is a production systems management support engineer at Fair Isaac Corporation.

Donald G. McNeil, Jr., New York Times

Confirming the fears of Somali immigrants in Minneapolis, the Minnesota Health Department agreed Tuesday that young Somali children there appeared to have higher-than-usual rates of autism.

Though health officials emphasized that their report was based on very limited data, they concluded that young Somali children appeared to be two to seven times as likely as other children to be in classes for autistic pupils.

Dr. Sanne Magnan, the state health commissioner, said the finding was “consistent with the observations by parents,” who have been saying for more than a year that alarming numbers of Somali children born in this country have severe autism. Somalis began immigrating into the area in the 1990s, fleeing civil war in their homeland. The report made no mention of the children who had autism. Its authors did not examine children or their medical records. They accepted the diagnoses — some by doctors, some by school evaluators — that admissions boards permitted children to special-education classes, and they calculated rates for different ethnic groups. They counted only 3- to 4-year-olds, only children in Minneapolis public schools, and only children born in Minnesota. They drew no comparisons with Somalis in other cities.

There have been anecdotal reports of higher autism rates among Somalis in some American cities, and no formal studies. A small study in Sweden reported high rates among Somali schoolchildren in Stockholm.

Idil Abdull, the mother of an autistic child who has long tried to draw attention to the Minneapolis situation, said she was “happy that they said, ‘Yes, there is a problem.’ ”

“I knew they couldn’t count everyone,” added Ms. Abdull, a founder of the Somali American Autism Foundation. “I know there are Somalis whose kids are under the bed and not taken anywhere and kids who go to private schools or charter schools that weren’t counted. But at least they didn’t say, ‘No, it’s all in your minds.’ If they had done that, I’d picket in front of their building.”

Dr. Magnan noted that this study found “strikingly low” numbers of Asian and American Indian children in the same special-education classes. But she cautioned that the reason might not be lower autism rates; instead, parents might not be enrolling their children in those classes, or might be sending them to private schools.

The study was done in consultation with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coleen Boyle, director of the agency’s division of birth defects and development disabilities, called the study well done but preliminary, adding, “It highlights the importance of ongoing monitoring.”

There are no plans yet to study autism in Somalis elsewhere or to do genetic studies, Dr. Boyle said. The disease control agency monitors autism diagnoses among 8-year-old children in 14 sites around the country, and in 2007 it estimated that about 1 child in 150 had an autism-spectrum disorder. Rates are roughly the same for whites and blacks, Catherine Rice, another C.D.C. official, said recently. They are lower among Hispanics, possibly because of poor medical care or cultural reticence, she said. Too few Asians were monitored to make estimates.

Emperor Haile Selassie was the head of OAU. As such, my mind is with Nyerere. His pragmatic way of life is still valid today.

Thus to me the question is not Pan-Africanism or pragmatism? Rather, is it with pragmatic Pan-African patriotism? To that end, I will feel with Nkrumah, yet I shall think with Nyerere.

Yes, Africa must unite, albeit, pragmatically!

Chambé Chage is an independent researcher, newspaper columnist and policy analyst.

Upwardly Global: Feeding with Nkrumah, Thinking with Nyerere.

Book Review

Autism Rates Are Higher for U.S.-Born Somali Children in Minneapolis

Health Matters

The Somali Diaspora

Sadig A. Abdirahman

Upwardly Global in Chicago (continued from page 2)

Career Summit or Upwardly Global’s jobseeker program and employer network you can visit their website at www.upwardlyglobal.org or contact Jill Lakowski, Outreach Coordinator, at jill@upwardlyglobal.org.