

Pan Africanism: The Road to Africa's Security

by

Motsoko Pheko, J.D.
2003-2006 President, Pan Africanist Congress

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Program director, distinguished delegates, brothers and sisters at this historic convention, I salute you all for your persistence on the Pan African path.

Africa is a beautiful house that has been burning for some time with its children, women and men trapped inside. They are desperately trying to come out. As that Pan Africanist Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe correctly put it, “This Continent [Africa], has had the bad luck to be over-run by [European] soldiers of fortune that had neither [moral] fibre nor humanity. Slavery played its shameful role in depopulating Africa. Capitalism denuded [Africa] of its wealth. Colonialism deprived Africa of its birthright, and imperialism emasculated its will to live as human being and enjoy its share of bounties of the earth.”

Africans Must Control Their Riches for Their People

Africa has immense wealth and resources. There is hardly an agricultural crop that cannot be produced on this great continent. And almost every kind of mineral is found in Africa – vanadium, chrome, uranium, cobalt, tantalum, platinum, gold, diamonds, iron, coal, oil etc. Africa is blessed with three types of climate; temperate, tropical and Mediterranean.

The paradox is that its African owners are among the poorest people in the world. Africa is actually the size of Europe, America, China and India combined. The Democratic Republic of Congo alone is the size of the following twelve European countries combined: Britain, Ireland, France, Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Armenia, Albania and Belgium. Congo is 905,355 square miles. Its untapped potential wealth is estimated at twenty four trillion American dollars. This is equivalent to the gross domestic product of Europe and America put together.

What Africans Have Survived

Imperialist countries have made Africa their hunting looting ground for many years through various forms such as slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism. Congo became a Belgian colony as a result of the imperialist Berlin General Act of 26 February 1885 through which seven Western European countries stole the whole of Africa except for Ethiopia.

Boasting about how Belgium stole the riches of the Congo, the Belgian Secretary of Colonies Godding said, “During the War [European World War against Adolf Hitler], the Congo was able to finance all the expenditure of the Belgian government in exile in London, including the diplomatic service as well as the cost of armed forces in Europe and America...the Belgian gold reserve could be left intact.”

To get all these riches from the Congo, how did the Belgian colonialists treat Africans in their own country? The British philosopher Bertrand Russell reported about the European colonial treatment of the Congolese Africans under their Belgian colonial rulers. He wrote: "Each village was ordered by [the colonial] authorities to collect and bring a certain amount of rubber as much as the men could bring by neglecting all work for their maintenance. If they failed to bring the required amount, their women were taken away and kept as hostages in the harems of government employees. If this method failed, troops were sent to the village to spread terror, if necessary by killing some of the men.

They were ordered to bring one right hand amputated from an African victim for every cartridge used" (Freedom and Organization, 1814-1914). The result of these atrocities, according to Sir Harris H.H. Johnston, was reduction of the African population in the Congo from 20 million to 9 million in fifteen years.

Africans Have Given More Than They Have Received

The imperialist countries have psychologically conditioned Africans to think that they cannot live without the crumbs from Europe or America or from any other imperialist country in this world. But the American Senator Jesse Helms, during Ronald Reagan's Presidency, let the cat out of the bag when he warned the Americans about the loss of wealth in South Africa if a Pan Africanist government came to power.

"South Africa is the source of over 80% American mineral supply and 86% of platinum resources," he said. "I will not go into details of each vital mineral. It was former Secretary of State Alexander Haig who said the loss of mineral output of South Africa could bring severest consequences to the existing economic and security framework of the free world. South Africa has 90% of the world's chrome reserve. As you know there is no substitute for chrome in our military and industrial manufacturing. Without South Africa's chrome, no engines for modern jet aircraft, cruise missiles or armaments could be built. The U.S. air force could be grounded. Our military would be unarmed. Without South Africa's chrome surgical equipment and utensils could not be produced. Our hospitals and doctors would be helpless."

The imperialist countries have not only behaved as if Africa's riches belong to them; they have made Africans believe that they cannot do anything for themselves unless they totally depend on Western countries, in particular their former enslavers and colonizers. African leaders must exorcise this demon of helplessness and inferiority complex. This borders on idolatry where Africans worship the false gods of "superiority and invincibility."

Africa Needs the World and the World Needs Africa

The world needs Africa and Africa needs the world. Pan Africanists demand that there must be a new way of interacting with Africa economically and technologically. Africa needs a new breed of foreign investors who see Africa not just as a place to make quick riches, but as an important partner for the continent's economic development and true liberation of the African people. Investors must get their fair share of profits. But the exploitative relation between investors and Africa must go. It must be buried deep in the colonial grave.

Over 50 years ago, the late Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana hit the nail on the head when for his country, he declared: "We welcome foreign investors in a spirit of partnership. They can earn their profits here provided they leave us an agreed portion, promoting the welfare and happiness of our people as a whole, as against greedy ambitions of the few. From what we get out of this partnership we hope to expand the health services of our people, to feed and house all, to give them more and better educational institutions and see to it that they have a rising standard of living."

Billions of Dollars Stolen from Africa

Global Financial Integrity has researched and revealed that a cumulative sum of \$814.9 billion was swindled from Africa between 2004 and 2013. All African countries have lost large sums of money generated through corruption such as invasion of tax, bribes and cross border smuggling. A few examples are South Africa \$209 billion, Nigeria \$178 billion, Tanzania \$191.77 billion, Senegal \$8.03 billion, Uganda \$116.76 billion, Tunisia \$154.5 billion, Egypt \$39.83 billion, Ethiopia \$25.83, billion, Lesotho \$3.41 billion, Swaziland \$5.82 billion, Botswana \$13.68 billion, Mauritius \$6.09 billion. African countries such as Guinea, Liberia and Mali which not long ago experienced thousands of deaths of their citizens due to the decimating Ebola disease, were also robbed of billions of dollars.

Other research institutions on this illicit flow of money out of Africa such as Christian Aid and Tax Justice Network have quantified the illicit flow of money out of Africa as between \$1.2 trillion and \$1.4 trillion. This is said to be four times the size of "Africa's foreign debt."

The only African country from which there has been no money to steal is Somalia. This is a country that was long destabilized by America until October 1993. The American government withdrew from Somalia only after the Battle of Mogadishu in which 18 American soldiers were killed, 84 wounded, two Hawk helicopters downed by Somali army, three pilots killed and one pilot missing.

The then American President Bill Clinton called this, the “Battle of Rangers” or the “Black Hawk Down.” When withdrawing the America troops from Somalia, he said, “We had gotten to a point where we kind of thought that we could intervene without getting hurt, without our soldiers getting killed. The incident I call ‘Black Hawk Down’ certainly disabused us of that.” Unfortunately this American mess has badly destroyed Somalia and destabilized East Africa to this day.

Western economic exploitation of Africa goes on unabated. In July 2008 Pope Benedict XVI could not contain himself about this any longer. His Holiness said, “Our Western way of life has stripped Africa’s people of their riches and continues to strip them.”

Corroborating this fact, a member of the Scottish Parliament Mark Ballard affirmed, “Our [Western European] relationship to Africa is an exploitative one. The West no longer needs standing armies in Africa to strip its resources because it can do so more effectively with multi-national companies.”

Afrophobia Undermines Pan African Unity

Let me move to another point that urgently needs the attention of all Pan Africanists and leaders of the African Union. In some African countries there have been instances of Afrophobia. This is mistakenly called Xenophobia. The English borrowed this word from Greek. It means “fearing or hating a foreigner.” But in reality this is Afrophobia. It means African brother hating African brother and sister and African sister hating African sister and brother. In the espoused spirit of Botho/Ubuntu and Pan Africanism; there is no African who can be a foreigner in Africa, while non-Africans who live in Africa are not regarded as foreigners. It is a contradiction in terms, to be an African and a “foreigner” at the same time.

On 22nd May 2008 I spoke about Afrophobia as a Member in the South African Parliament. I pointed out that “African people have a common destiny. We are in the same ship. If it sails safely across the stormy seas we shall all be safe. If it sinks, we shall all perish. Europe enslaved or colonised us to accumulate their stolen riches from Africa. They did not care whether you were a Nigerian, a Zimbabwean, Azanian, South African or Mozambican. They inflicted their atrocities and genocide on every African whether in Jamaica or America.”

African Union Desk at Points of Entry

One of the beginning steps member states of the African Union must take is to erect sign boards at all ports of entry in Africa for citizens of African states reading, “citizens of African union.” these citizens must not be checked at the desk marked “foreign passports here.” this undermines the Pan African agenda. Africans travelling within Africa must feel welcome in every African country.

May 25 – Africa Liberation Day must be a Statutory Holiday

Africa Liberation Day so declared in Addis Ababa by African heads of state on 25 May 1963 did not come cheap. Much African blood and tears were shed. It is a shame that many African countries that claim to work for African unity have still not declared May 25 a statutory holiday. It must be a special day on which all Africans reflect about where post-colonial Africa has come from, where Africa is presently and where Africa must be tomorrow; in terms of economic prosperity, progress, security of life and high living standard of Africa's people; especially with regard to economic control of resources for African people and technological advancement in every sphere of life.

The 54 Member States of African Union are Rooms in One House

Africa is the epicenter of this planet. She has impeccable credentials to occupy a prominent place in the world as she did before she became the victim of the European Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and colonialism. The 54 member states of the African Union are like rooms in one house. When one catches fire, the fire is likely to spread threatening the safety and security of the whole house. Pan Africanism is not wishful thinking. It is Africa's weapon to survive the onslaughts of imperialism. Not a single African country can stand on its own without perishing. Pan African unity is not a choice. It is an imperative.

Africa Must Give Serious Attention to “Junk Status”

There is a subtle imperialist assault on Africa. In June 2016 three American credit rating agencies threatened to give South Africa a “junk status.” Their names are Standard & Poor, Fitch and Moody. They threatened to do the same to Nigeria in 2015. If Africans do not wake up, they will find their sovereign power that was paid with blood and tears lost to the greedy forces of this world. These greedy forces that have no moral fiber, humanity and a sense of justice have a clear political agenda to recolonize African people and continue to under-develop Africa. That is why they have a new program for Africa – “junk status.”

Pan Africanists must look seriously at the Western conspiracy of reducing African states to what they call “junk status.” These agencies are very powerful in the world of finance. They have the support of the American government. To prevent new companies that are not approved by the America government from offering similar credit rating services; new terms were put in place called “recognized rating manuals.” They protect and assist only the “Big Three” rating agencies against non-approved companies.

This June 2016, the move by the three American credit rating agencies has been followed by the arrogance of the American ambassador in Pretoria. He has warned of pending “terrorist attack in South Africa” in the media without first bringing this to the attention of the South African government. He ignored prescribed diplomatic channels. He behaved as if Azania (South Africa) is a colony of America.

The South African government has refuted these claims as unfounded. Will some desperate forces anxious to prove their falsehood true, now “manufacture these terrorists” to “prove” that they were right? Whatever the case may finally be; this is a wakeup call to Africans to grow to manhood and womanhood and look after their own interests. This can be done successfully and effectively through Pan African unity only.

The Pan African Path Leads To Life but It Is No Dinner Party

The mammoth task of liberating Africa economically and technologically can be brought about only through Pan African unity in a united Africa. Africans are the only people in the world who fight their common liberation struggles as individuals. Those who enslaved Africa and colonized Africa, however, have always united to achieve their imperialist goals. During the Berlin Conference when they stole the whole of Africa except Ethiopia, they sat at this conference from 15 November 1884 to 26 February 1885. They were serious. They were united. They were determined. They wanted to steal all of Africa at gunpoint. Ethiopia was saved only by its glorious Victory of the Battle of Adwa against the Italian colonial invaders of Africa. This was on 1st of March 1886.

Pan Africanism is anti-nobody. It is pro-Africa. It is anti-injustice and continued stealing of Africa’s resources by some foreigners while the children of Africa wallow in the quagmire of poverty, ignorance, short life expectancy and high child mortality. This creates a situation where Africans are incapable of educating their children for various technical skills and professions so that they can manage their national affairs competently. In a situation like this, Africans become victims of some foreign countries that see ignorant and poor Africans as their ready carcass to devour.

The struggle to return Africa to her power politically, economically and technologically is of course not a dinner party or a bed of roses. The enemies of Africa are determined to keep Africa and Africans weak, especially economically, technologically and militarily. Africa however, has already overcome worst tragedies in her history; the slave trade, colonialism, racism, genocide and the longest holocaust in this world.

The colonial history of Africa demonstrates that when Africa is united on her objectives, goals and aims there has always been resounding achievement and victory for the African people. Where would Africa be today, if there had never been the 5th Pan African Congress in 1945, to plan the destruction of European colonial rule over Africans?

What would be the situation in Africa today, especially with regard to Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe and apartheid colonial South Africa if there was never the Organization of African Unity Liberation Committee to assist liberation movements such as the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, the African National Congress, MPLA, FRELIMO, SWAPO, ZANU, ZAPU and PAIGC. The latter was led by that brilliant Pan Africanist Amilcar Cabral.

The past generations of Africa suffered and survived the most barbaric form of Western slavery and colonialism. Through their matchless resilience driven by sacrifice, selflessness and dedicated service; these older generations paved the way for Africa's ultimate victory for the total and authentic emancipation of this Continent. There are signs that victory is coming for Africa despite the current dark clouds. But this is only if Africa persists on the Pan African path and chooses her friends carefully. There are wars no nuclear weapons can win.

How would have the African liberation struggle against colonialism progressed if on 6th March 1957, Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah established diplomatic relations with South Africa, instead of declaring as he did, that "Ghana's independence is meaningless unless it is linked to the total liberation of Africa?"

The PAC Got South Africa Expelled From United Nations

The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) got South Africa expelled from the United Nations General Assembly. This was made possible because of the Pan African unity of the Organization of Africa Unity – the predecessor of the African Union.

Commenting on this important victory for PAC and Africa; Prof. Tom Lodge has written, "In November 1974 the Pan Africanist Congress succeeded in obtaining the expulsion of South Africa from the United General Assembly and in July 1975 the Organization of African Unity adopted as official policy a long document prepared by the PAC arguing for the illegality of South Africa's status."

That is how the PAC got the observer status at the United Nations. The ANC also benefited from this victory of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania and the Organization of African Unity.

Indeed, the political situation in Africa today is such that even those, among some African leaders who once opposed Pan Africanism and denigrated Pan Africanists as “racists” and “anti-white” are today forced by present circumstances to act Pan African or pretend to do so.

Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the first President of Tanzania was right when he said, “There is no time to waste. We must unite or perish. Political independence is only a prelude to a new and more involved struggle....” Nyerere warned that “African nationalism is meaningless, dangerous and anachronistic, if it is not at the same time, Pan Africanism.”

To advance victoriously to rebuilding the broken walls of Africa, Pan Africanism is the key and the most powerful weapon. Carefully planned action and vigilance are urgent in this age. Imperialism is overthrowing many governments it does not like. This has caused unprecedented terrorism in the world. It is now threatening even governments in Africa.

That Pan Africanist visionary Kwame Nkrumah was right when he warned: “If we [African people] are to remain free, if we are to enjoy the full benefits of Africa’s resources we must be united to plan our total defense and full exploitation of our material and human means in the full interest of all our people. To go it alone will limit our expectations and threaten our liberty.”

Forward Ever! Backward Never! Thank You!