ABSTRACT

CODESRIA’s 30TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

TOPIC

The African Union and the destiny of Africahood: addressing millennium challenges of neocolonial tendencies in the struggle for consolidating the pan African foundations with specific reference to the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

With the model of the State in Africa remaining absolutely an imported one, former colonial powers will continually perceive it their right to extend economic, political and cultural civilization to Africa. Hence most former colonial states on the African continent were established in the image of the colonizing master with the constitutional apparatus essentially drawn from the same master.

Over time such a controversial development got a deeper entrenchment that way further postponing the prospects on consolidating Africahood - that is African foundations to all development processes in resonance with the Greater World. Concentrating much on the political dimension of Africa, the Organization of African Union (OAU) beyond conviction, ensured the political independence of African states but the African foundations of the same newly independent states were not consolidated in political, economic, social, cultural, historical, psychological, scientific and technological terms. Essentially, this meant neo-colonialism was still entrenched in the newly independent African States.

With the evolution of OAU into the African Union (AU), now addressing the economic challenges of Africa especially after the devastating experiences of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programs and globalization, the problem of consolidating African foundations in State and Nation building on the continent remains equally urgent.
Considering the SADC as one of the key building blocks of the African Union, and the position it currently occupies against neocolonial tendencies, especially 'the land question', it would be necessary to give a more Afro-centric strategic impetus to regional cooperation and integration in Southern Africa. This would essentially ensure institutionalization of the problem on consolidating pan African foundations of development and giving the same content to regional development projects and programs, which would finally build into the overall Africa development program.

In the light of the above perceptions, this research paper will therefore:

- Explore the opportunities and constraints experienced by African governments within the SADC in their efforts to give content and meaning to the pan African foundations of development in the Southern Africa region since the early 80s to date;
- Critically assess the pan African foundations of the economic, political, social, ideological, cultural, historical, scientific and technological choices the African governments in the SADC region made then and the consequences;
- Finally make recommendations on the inevitability of consolidating integrated pan African foundations in development processes in the SADC as a strategy on securing the position and destiny of Africa as a greater competitor both within its ranks and in the global setting.