

The State, Democracy and Development in Southern Africa

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Abstract

Development cannot be left to the 'magic wand' of market forces alone. This observation has been vindicated by the dismal failure of the IMF/World Bank policies in Africa since the 1970s/80s. That development needs an active state participation and some deliberately dirigiste policies brooks no controversy. Interestingly, even the World Bank has begrudgingly come to accept the centrality of the state in development after peddling policies premised upon market fundamentalism for decades. Consensus is now emerging in development discourses in Africa that both states and markets do play an important complimentary role in the development process. The idea that this paper canvasses is that both democracy and development need a robust, capable, democratic developmental state. A democratic developmental state operates in such a way that it leaves ample room for other key non-state actors to make their critical input in the development agenda and the democratization process. The paper revisits the debate on the post-colonial state; interrogates challenges for democratic governance and sustainable human development; revisits the nexus between democracy and development in the context of Southern Africa. It further investigates the impact of the current process of accelerated globalization on the state, democratization and development project in the SADC region?

Introduction

Development goes hand in glove with democracy. Thus, the role of the state in development ought to be predicated upon democratic governance. It therefore goes without saying that development cannot be left to market forces alone. The widely documented failure of the IMF/World Bank policies in Africa has amply attested to this reality. That development needs an active state participation brooks no controversy today. Interestingly, even the World Bank has come to accept the centrality of the state in development after peddling policies premised upon market fundamentalism for decades. Consensus is now emerging in development discourses in Africa that both states and markets do play an important complimentary role in the development process. Thus, Southern Africa needs a developmental and capable state for socio-economic progress and sustainable democracy. Such a state, however, will have to contend with challenges of globalization whose pressures seem to denude and diminish state capacity and capability. This paper therefore addresses three main issues confronting contemporary Southern Africa: (a) the quest for a democratic developmental state, (b) challenges for institutionalizing democratic governance and (c) prospects for sustainable human development. It interrogates both endogenous and exogenous factors for the evolution of a democratic, developmental and capable state in the region. In the final analysis, however, we reinforce the point that both development and democracy need the state as their quintessential institutional fulcrum.

Democratic Developmental State

Let us kick off this discussion by clarifying two interconnected, albeit distinct, concepts namely the state and government. In a plethora of literature, the term '**state**' is usually enmeshed in heated controversy and debate marked by varying paradigmatic and ideological persuasions of different authors. This study conceives of the state as a set of institutions of government comprising decision-making structures, decision-enforcing organs, decision-

mediating agencies and decision-informing bodies (Matlosa 2005). The state, thus, comprises permanent institutions which do not change irrespective of change of governments over time.

It is thus important that we make a clear distinction between the state and **'government'**. For purpose of this discussion government refers to officers who man state institutions who are charged with responsibilities of running national affairs of countries. These officers man such key organs of the state such as the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, the security establishment and the bureaucracy. Unlike state institutions, governments come and go either through military coups or through electoral contests among politicians organised largely through party political formations. We are concerned here about the state, but obviously our discussion has a bearing on governments as well given the fusion of the state and government illustrated above. The nature and role of the post-colonial state in Africa has been shaped by internal political struggles over time and its multivariate external linkages.

The internal political struggles here refer to the politics of liberation that led to independence from the colonial forces since the 1960s. These struggles ushered the new state which, although different from the colonial state, still bore some hallmarks of its colonial era: it tended to be repressive and autocratic state (often marked by military, dynastic and mono-party regimes). Since the recent past, the post-colonial state has been confronted with renewed political struggles. While the political struggles of the 1960s aimed to rid the continent of authoritarian colonial regimes, the political struggles of the 1970s and 1980s, aimed to rid the continent of repressive regimes of military, dynastic and mono-party varieties. Hence it is that since the 1990s, the post-colonial state in Africa is increasingly marked by multiparty democratic regimes.

The external linkages of the post-colonial African state have been marked by dependent relations with powerful forces in the global political economy. These dependent relations have reinforced not only Africa's marginalization within the world economy, but also further weakening of the state. The weakening of the African state has been accentuated over time by (a) the economic adjustment programmes of the 1970s/80s promoted throughout the continent by the IMF and the World Bank; and (b) the process of accelerated globalization driven by these international financial institutions together with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other influential global actors. Aside from the challenges posed by adjustment and globalisation upon the state, the relevance of the nature of the state for the African condition still remains. Is a Euro-centric and colonially constructed state with its political moorings of the Westphalian state system appropriate for driving sustainable development and governance agenda for the African continent? Can it be transformed into a genuinely democratic developmental state?

Southern Africa needs a transformed Afro-centric state institutionally conditioned and structurally embedded within the regional political economy, while at the same time not divorced or insulated from global changes. This requires a political transformation of the state; a process that can only be propelled by popular struggles for restructuring of the state machinery. Put somewhat differently, to bring about a democratic developmental state in Southern Africa would require popular struggles leading to its transformation. These popular struggles ought to bring about liberation. Without liberation, democracy is incomplete and development is constrained. Liberation, Eghosa Osaghae reminds us,

denotes freedom and freedom is central to both democracy and development. It is within this context that Osaghae's notion of Africa's second liberation derives its currency and relevance in this debate. According to him, this notion "makes liberation (of the people, state, society and economy) from domestic tyranny and foreign domination fundamental to democratisation, democracy and development.... The point of liberation is that democracy and development cannot be externally driven, no matter how benevolent the international community... might be" (Osaghae, 2005:3). However, this transformative agenda, implicit in the concept of liberation above, should not be expected to deliver 'quick-fix' results overnight. The construction of a developmental state especially under conditions of underdevelopment is bound to be a long and arduous process indeed.

In a seminal treatise of this subject, Thandika Mkandawire perceives three factors as key to the definition of a developmental state in extant literature on the subject: (a) ideology; (b) institutional structure; (c) autonomy; and (d) social embeddedness or anchoring. His argument runs like this:

*In terms of **ideology**, a developmental state is essentially one whose ideological underpinning is 'developmentalist' in that it conceives its 'mission' as that ensuring economic development.... The **state-structure** side of the definition of the developmental state emphasizes capacity to implement economic policies sagaciously and effectively. Such capacity is determined by various factors –institutional, technical, administrative and political. Undergirding all these is the **autonomy** of the state from social forces so that it can use these capacities to devise long-term economic policies unencumbered by claims of myopic private interests. It is usually assumed that such a state should be a 'strong state' in contrast to ... [a] 'soft state' that had neither the administrative capacity nor the political wherewithal to push through its developmental agenda. And finally, the state must have some **social anchoring** that prevents it from using its autonomy in a predatory manner and enables it to gain adhesion of key social actors" (2001:290).*

It is important to underline the point, as Mkandawire does, that economic nationalism is key for the existence and functioning of a democratic developmental state. Thus, *dirigiste* policy frameworks that the African state pursued between the 1960s and 1970s must be reconsidered and brought back in as part of the transformation of the state today. These interventionist policies were reversed through the IMF/World Bank economic adjustment policies of the 1980s-90s and replaced by neo-liberal *laissez faire* policies thereby mortgaging both the state and the development agenda to powerful global forces which were more concerned with global flows of capital than with Africa's development process. However, we should point out here that our emphasis on economic nationalism as a fundamental ideological complexion of a democratic developmental state in Southern Africa does not suggest disregarding market forces. But rather, we propose that the emergence of a democratic developmental state should be marked by mutually reinforcing state-society relations on one hand and the complementarity of state interventionism and market forces on the other.

Democratic Governance

One of the most important and, indeed enduring, themes in the current development discourse in Southern Africa is governance (Landsberg and Mackay, 2004; Bratton et al, 2005). Governance denotes, in simple terms, the management of a nation's affairs by

organs of government and other key non-state actors at both national and local levels of the nation-state. Technically, governance implies institutional arrangements, systemic framework, political regimes and policy machinery of a given country that ensures that a responsible and responsive authority is in place for running a nation's affairs on behalf of the concerned population at all layers of social formation. It implies the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs. It encompasses the state's institutional and structural arrangements, decision-making processes and implementation capacity, and the relationship between the government officials and the public (Hyden and Bratton, 1992; Hyden et.al, 2000; Matlosa 2005; Landsberg and Mackay, 2005).

It is thus clear that governance (a process of running a nation's affairs) is distinct from the state (institutions for governance) and government (officers who man state institutions for governance) and a regime (policies and procedures for running national affairs). Thus governance encompasses the entire gamut of state institutions, government and regimes as well as non-state actors' participation in the management and administration of national affairs. It can, therefore, be deduced from this definition that governance can either be authoritarian and despotic (coercive) or democratic and participative (consensual). In the World Bank lexicon, democratic governance is referred to as 'good governance' while authoritarian governance as considered 'bad governance'. The essence of the terminology and semantics around governance in the current discourse is neither here nor there and as such we prefer to use the notion of democratic governance and not good governance in this paper. Incidentally, in its 2002 Human Development Report, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also uses the concept 'democratic governance' instead of 'good governance' (UNDP, 2002). The issue of governance in the African continent is critical for socio-economic development. Authoritarian governance is unlikely to trigger socio-economic advancement of the people, while democratic governance has greater prospects for advancing socio-economic progress.

That the African continent as a whole and the Southern Africa region in particular has undergone authoritarian governance over a long duration of time brooks no controversy today. Authoritarianism is defined, in political science discourse, as those regimes that aim to impose "one political group or interest over everyone else. They restrict pluralism and limit public participation, calling for obedience and not dissent. Authoritarianism is considered to be a very old form of government because of its association with Western culture with tyrants, despots, monarchs, sultans, and czars" (Jackson and Jackson, 1997:81). Different types of authoritarian systems include (a) one-person dictatorship such as the one that prevailed in Malawi under Kamudzu Banda until 1994; (b) military juntas such as the one that marked Lesotho's political landscape between 1986-93; (c) one-party states, such as Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia until the early 1990s; (d) dynastic rule such as present-day Swaziland; and (e) theocratic political systems (this type does not exist in Southern Africa, but is more prevalent in the Middle East).

A cursory historical perspective suggests that the pre-colonial African society was generally more participative in terms of governance regimes, institutions, systems and policy architecture that existed at the time, although, of course, there were still tendencies towards authoritarian systems anchored, as it were, upon dynastic-cum-feudalistic regimes (See Mamdani, 1996). We thus concur with Simiyu that "what comes out of a careful examination and analysis of the political institutions and mechanisms of the pre-

colonial African societies is a mixture of rudiments of democratic tendencies and practices on the one hand and aristocratic, autocratic and/or militaristic practices and tendencies, with varying degrees of despotism on the other” (1988:51). Bearing this apt observation in mind, though, it could be argued, however, that the firm foundations for entrenched authoritarian governance in Africa in general and Southern Africa in particular were laid during colonization and colonial rule and carried over in the post-colonial era by the political elite that inherited state power primarily to advance their own class interests (see Mamdani, 1996).

Colonisation proceeded through military conquest and, by logical extension, colonialism or colonial administration was predicated upon military authoritarianism (coercive politics). It is thus arguable that the colonial state, throughout the entire African continent, was an authoritarian/military state *par excellence* serving the interest mainly of the dominant colonial capitalist class to the disadvantage of all other weaker class forces including workers and peasants for there was hardly any national capitalist class to talk about in colonial Africa. It was no consternation therefore, that when African states attained political independence, since the 1960s through the early 1990s, authoritarian tendency of the state continued unabated given that the new political class made little, if any, deliberate attempts to transform the state machine towards a democratic project (Ake, 1996; Ake, 2000; Lumumba-Kasongo, 2002). The new political elite that assumed the post-colonial state power lacked both the political commitment and economic independence/autonomy to attempt any radical transformation of the colonial state fearing reprisals from the former colonial masters upon whom they still depended overwhelmingly within a new context of neo-colonial dependency syndrome.

What actually happened was that the new political elite, predominantly a comprador petty bourgeois class, without a sound economic base of its own, simply assumed the reins of power within the context of a Wesphelian and militaristic state without re-orienting the state towards democratic governance. This was a major challenge not only for socio-economic development in the continent, but more so for the way in which governance unfolded. It is thus no wonder that for the period 1960s-1980s, a majority of Southern African states had their political systems steeped more towards centralized rule of one variety or the other with the dominant mode being that of either one-person rule (Malawi), military dictatorship (Lesotho: 1986-93), *de facto* one-party rule (Lesotho:1970-86), *de jure* one-party rule (Angola, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe) and dynastic rule (Swaziland). Unlike in other parts of world, the SADC region has not experienced authoritarian rule of a theocratic nature. The only two members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) that have been hailed as important models for a relatively decentralized governance anchored upon long-enduring liberal democracy are Botswana and Mauritius. New stable liberal democracies include Namibia and South Africa.

This sketchy historical expose suggests that the record of democratic governance in the Southern African region, as is the case throughout the African continent as a whole, is indeed, mixed and amorphous. It is worth noting, however, that since the early 1990s a sea change has been underway in the region ushering renewed vigour towards democratization (Huntington, 1991; Bratton and van de Wall, 1997, Hyslop, 1999; UNDP, 2002; Matlosa 2005; Bratton et al, 2005). Three most compelling factors for this monumental development, which Huntington (1991) prefers to term, “the third wave” are

clearly (a) the demise of the Cold War on a global scale; (b) the collapse of apartheid in South Africa; and (c) popular political struggles engineered by organs of civil society. Thus, by all indications, the 1990s marked a watershed decade in Africa in so far as political transition is concerned. Both endogenous and exogenous factors brought pressure on authoritarian regimes to open the political market place for multiparty competition. Bratton et al put it as follows: “reluctantly, African presidents released political prisoners, unfettered the independent press, and recognized opposition political parties in preparation for competitive elections. Together, these liberalization reforms put an end to the political monopoly enjoyed by African one-party states and made it difficult for military officers to again stake a legitimate claim to rule. As analysts now agree, the liberalization of authoritarian rule amounted to the most significant political shift on the continent since independence was won a generation earlier” (2005:15). According to Huntington the third wave of democratization on global scale began with the demise of the Portuguese dictatorship in 1974, which also witnessed replacement of authoritarian regimes in about thirty (30) countries in Europe, Asia and Latin America fifteen (15) years later (1991:21). Whereas Huntington’s periodisation of the current democratization phase on a global scale could, generally speaking, be plausible, in respect of the Southern Africa region, the process did not begin in the 1970s, but rather in the early 1990s – some 20 years later. Thus, in terms of periodisation, therefore, the 1970s marked the period of intense liberation struggles for decolonisation and decisively shifted the balance of forces in favour liberation movements which had locked horns with intransigent colonial regimes in the region. The 1990s marked a new era whereupon the decolonisation process, through the liberation struggles, was concluded with the political independence of Namibia in 1990 and the transition to majority rule in South Africa ushered through the demise of apartheid and the establishment of a new government of national unity in 1994.

It is thus behind this backdrop that we can better explain and understand the democracy and democratization debate in Southern Africa today. Although it is not yet certain that the democratization process, in and of itself, has already been nurtured, consolidated and, thus, irreversible, what is obvious, however, is that almost all the Southern African states (bar only Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Swaziland) have deliberately steered their political systems towards a Western-type liberal democracy since the early 1990s. The most glaring aspects of this process has been enhanced political participation, deliberate efforts towards broader representation and accountability of the political elite wielding state power predicated upon the holding of regular parliamentary and presidential elections. It must be emphasized that even the wholesale adoption of Western-style liberal democracy by the SADC states has now become a matter for debate as some scholars have in fact argued strongly that although the adoption of liberal democracy is surely an improvement upon the erstwhile authoritarian rule of the yesteryear, African states need to move beyond liberal democracy to embrace and institutionalize social democracy which (Ake, 1996; Ake, 2000) which is, by far, more participative, inclusive, representative, accountable and social welfarist in both form and content.

One of the most visible indicators of the 1990s political transition in the SADC region is clearly the holding of regular multi-party elections by almost all the states bar three namely Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Swaziland. Almost all the SADC states have embraced the political practice of regular multi-party elections with the

exception of Angola, the DRC and Swaziland. The peculiar situation in both Angola and the DRC is explicable by the protracted war that has raged in these countries over the years. However, the political settlement of violent conflicts in both countries in the recent past has enhanced prospects for democratization. The prevailing peace and relative stability may witness the first general election in Angola in 2006 since the 1992 election which failed to usher political stability. A peace agreement signed at Sun City, South Africa allowed the belligerent parties to form a transitional government of national unity in the DRC. A national constitution has been agreed upon and there is a likelihood of both a national elections in DRC before the end of 2006. Swaziland's reluctance to embrace multi-party democracy is a factor of the hegemonic dynastic regime in that small kingdom which for decades has managed to whittle all forms of democratic initiatives by weak and fragmented social movements and civil society organisations. It should be note, though, that regular elections are not tantamount to democratic governance as such. They are just a single component of a fairly complex process. Further more, it is abundantly evident that despite regular multi-party elections, the SADC region is still marked by a dominant party system and the old, dominant and ruling parties still exercise considerable hegemony over the political system in general and the various organs of the state.

As noted above, although critical to the current democratic process in the region, elections, as such, are not synonymous with democratic governance. Although critical to the democratization process, an election as such is not synonymous with, or tantamount to, democratic governance. An election is just one of the key ingredients of democracy and democratization. As the 2002 UNDP Human Development reminds us "true democratization means more than elections. It requires the consolidation of democratic institutions and the strengthening of democratic practices, with democratic values and norms embedded in all parts of society" (2002:14). To this end, therefore, the challenges for democracy and democratization in the SADC region are still many and varied and indeed daunting, so to speak. The UNDP Human Development Report isolates six (6) such challenges as follows:

- A system of representation, with well functioning political parties and interest associations;
- An electoral system that guarantees free and fair elections as well as universal suffrage;
- A system of checks and balances based on the separation of powers, with independent judicial and legislative branches;
- A vibrant civil society, able to monitor government and private business – and provide alternative forms of political participation;
- Free and independent media; and
- Effective civilian control over the military and other security forces (2002:4).

Thus, while not all the above critical elements of the democratization process have already been achieved in the SADC region, there is no gainsaying that recognizable progress towards democratic governance has been registered. The most daunting challenge that still faces the SADC states is to transcend liberal democracy model and transform their political systems more and more towards social democracy or developmental democracy, which scholars, like the late Claude Ake (1996, 2000),

consider the most appropriate and relevant political system for the continent. In his own words, Ake observes as follows:

Democracy movement in Africa is being moved in the direction of a simple liberal democracy of multi-party electoral competition. The pressure to move in this direction will remain strong. *But this is not the democracy that is most relevant to the social realities of contemporary Africa. Social democracy would be more feasible.* Its advantages are an activist role for the state and strong commitment to social welfare. It places less emphasis on abstract political rights and more on concrete economic rights and also on removal of conditions, which block the democratic participation such as gross economic inequality. *This is the democracy, which the ordinary people, who have the greatest interest in democratization, want. And it is the kind of democracy they need* (Emphasis Mine) (Ake, 2000:185).

Corroborating Ake above, Lumumba-Kasongo persuasively argues: “given the nature of the African society, which is essentially communal, with a high level of tolerance of differences among various peoples and nations, it is possible to learn from a social democracy approach to development than from an individualistic capitalist model of development” (2002:102). Be that as it may, none of the SADC countries have their political systems steered towards institutionalizing social (developmental) democratic model. The current political condition in the region suggests the existence of four (4) types of regimes (see Schedler, 2002; Diamond, 2002; Bratton et al, 2005). First, a few countries including Botswana, South Africa, Mauritius and Namibia could be classified as liberal democracies with stable and consolidating democratic frameworks. Second, the majority of countries could be classified as electoral democracies whose democratic credentials are stronger in relation to the holding of regular elections while in between and beyond elections they suffer enormous democratic deficits and these include Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. Third, few countries fall within the ‘fuzzy’ category that scholars have referred to variously as grey zone democracy, ambiguous democracy, pseudo-democracy, virtual democracy, electoral authoritarianism or liberalized autocracy. Countries in this category have embraced the political culture of regular multiparty elections. The fairness and freeness of the electoral contest is often questionable. The electoral governance does not ensure procedural certainty and substantive uncertainty. Under this condition, the election becomes a façade behind which authoritarianism thrives. Zimbabwe falls under this category. Fourth, few countries fall under the category that is variously referred to as dictatorship, authoritarianism, closed authoritarianism or unreformed autocracy. These are countries that have not yet undergone political transition to multiparty democracy and these include Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Swaziland.

The debate on democracy and democratization in Southern Africa has not been confined to up-stairs politics relating to state policies, elections and political parties only. This debate has also extended to down-stairs politics relating to the role and position of civil society organizations or social movements in the democratization process including gender dimensions of the whole process. This debate recognizes the significance of popular struggles for democratic governance emphasizing the fact that the process itself is propelled by organized social forces whose struggles are meant to hold the state accountable and responsive to popular demands of the governed (See Beckman, et. al.,

2001). It should, however, be noted that although civil society organizations do play an important role in the democratization process, they are not, necessarily repositories of democratic norms, ethics and democratic culture as such. Given lack of a general code of conduct and the fact that these organizations are not elected and thus not directly accountable to the populace, they are also subject to undemocratic tendencies and often-times pander to foreign interest linked to donor funding.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the resurgence and revival of civil society activity is directly linked to the era of World Bank/IMF economic adjustment since the 1980s for this was part and parcel of the grand strategy of “rolling back the state” and informalisation of politics. Indeed, the intensity of the debate on civil society gained more momentum following the collapse of the Eastern Bloc socialist system. As Mamdani reminds us “the notion of civil society came to prominence with the Eastern European uprisings of the late 1980s. These events were taken as signaling a pragmatic shift, from state-centered to civil-society centered perspective, from a strategy of armed struggles that seeks to capture state power to one of unarmed civil struggle that seeks to create a self-limiting power. In the late 1980s, the theme of society-state struggle reverberated through the Africanist circles in North America and became the new prismatic lens through which to gauge the significance of events in Africa” (1996:14).

People-Centered Development

The linkage or interface between democracy and development has remained a heated subject in Africa in general. The bone of contention has revolved around whether or not politics constrains economic progress or vice-versa. Posed like this, the point at issue here may sound like the chicken and egg paradox. However, the debate is really a serious one, which teases out the interconnectedness between politics and economics in respect of sustainable human development in Africa. The stark reality, thus, is that for a long time since independence African states focused their policies at addressing economic obstacles to development and deliberately ignoring or disregarding politics. This was the case throughout the period 1960s-1980s and this is the era that was marked by a generalized policy trajectory of *developmentalism* wherein every state action was explained in the name of development, nation-building and national unity, to the extent that the three imperatives (i.e. development, nation-building and unity) were perceived as mutually reinforcing. Even authoritarian governance was justified on the expedience of developmentalism, nation-building and national unity. As a consequence, issues of democratic governance would not be entertained and worse still in some African countries (eg Lesotho following the 1970 election) the state publicly banned politics on the grounds that it was divisive. People’s attention would, it was argued, be diverted from development, nation-building and national unity if they engaged in politics. Thus for good or for worse, development was turned into a depoliticisation machine, in the interest, primarily, of state elite and not the general populace.

So it was that the two decades of 1960s-70s witnessed the a pervasive trend of *the ideology of developmentalism* in Africa in general and Southern Africa in particular which tended to jettison the significance of politics to the development process. Mandaza and Sachikonye poignantly note that “generally, the argument by most African leaders that development and national unity should come first before democracy (and by implication, the multi-party system) has been subjected to penetrating critique. It is an

argument that has developed within what has been termed “the ideology of developmentalism” which has also been termed “the ideology of domination”. The flaws in this ideology partly explain the failure to attain both political stability and significant economic development in much of the continent” (1991:5).

This general trend of disregarding politics for development translates to deliberate depoliticisation of development. Although this was the perception of states at the individual nation-state level, indeed the same warped perspective pervaded even regional integration arrangements where African states made deliberate initiatives to build supranational institutions to address regional economic development leaving aside regional political institutions as it were. Consider for instance the extent to which such initiatives as the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action addressed the political obstacles to economic progress in Africa. Commendable as the Lagos Plan was, it did not deal with the politics for it was meant to deal with economics as politics was considered tangential to economic progress in the minds of the political elite.

Given that the new elite that ushered Africa into the independence era was less concerned about development and more entangled in power struggles, the continent’s development agenda remained the exclusive purview of the external donor agencies and international financial institutions hence the dominance of the aid projects and World Bank and IMF economic recovery programmes particularly during the period late 1970s and 1980s. This has brought about a *development paradox* that Ake describes as the “Confusion of Agendas” in that the African leaders who were supposed to be the champions and engineers of the development path for the continent had essentially mortgaged that responsibility to conservative international financial institutions that were merely interested in globalising the neo-liberal economic orthodoxy for the interest of powerful global capital and not in promoting autonomous development which is what Africa needs for economic progress.

Only recently has the conventional wisdom of economics first and politics next been subjected to an avalanche of criticism for it is largely responsible for the economic woes of the continent. To state the problem in clear terms: *Africa’s development crisis is fundamentally much more political than economic in both form and content* (see corroborative analysis in Ake, 1996; Lumumba-Kasongo, 2002). This is important to grasp for it will inform even appropriate strategies that the continent puts in place to address and redress the crisis of development today. No other African scholar has captured this dilemma so aptly and poignantly than the renowned Nigerian social scientist, the late Claude Ake. Ake states categorically that

It is easy to see that the political environment at independence was profoundly hostile to development. The struggle for power was so absorbing that everything else, *including development*, was marginalized. Those who were out of power constantly worried about their exposure to every kind of assault by a state that was hardly subject to any constitutional or institutional restraints. Since what mattered in this type of politics was the calculus of *force*, *the out-of-power elites strove constantly to put together a credible force to challenge those in power, or, at any rate, to limit their power own vulnerability to harassment and abuse*. In a highly statist postcolonial polity, they did not even have the option of channeling their ambitions into economic success, which was primarily a matter of *state patronage* (1996:7).

It is clear therefore that developmentalism was a specific type of ideology for depoliticisation of development so that attention of the public is turned away from democratic, responsive and accountable governance. People’s energies would then be harnessed towards mundane issues of immediate survival as the political elite itself locked horns in an unending zero-sum struggle over state power and rampant accumulation by both fair and foul means. For economic progress to be registered and economic integration to bear fruit in Southern Africa it is imperative that political stability in member-states and political integration at the regional level are achieved and these should be made a top priority unlike in the yesteryear when the economic progress was considered uppermost over politics.

Not only regional integration, but even sustainable human development does hinge upon democratic governance in a fundamental way. The concept of Sustainable Human Development (SHD) has become one of the most important notions in development discourse in earnest since the first global human development report was produced in 1990. It has gained not only currency in African Studies, but has also been used widely as one of the highly reliable and clearly measurable indicators for social development. For this and other related reasons, the SHD concept has added to the criticism of the reliability and utility of such indicators as GDP and GNP as adequate indices for measuring socio-economic development *a la* World Bank and IMF. In contrast to economic and narrow indices such as GDP and GNP, the concept of SHD has introduced better-refined indices such as Human Development Index (HDI), Gender Development Index (GDI) and Human Poverty Index (HPI) with well-defined measurable variables and components.

Thus, sustainable human development essentially denotes a process of enlarging peoples’ choices in a manner that enables them to enjoy *long, healthy and creative lives* (UNDP, 1990). Sustainable Human Development (SHD), thus, denotes a decent standard of living for people and has three (3) main components used to measure socio-economic progress in countries namely (a) longevity, which measures life expectancy and state of health; (b) knowledge, which measures literacy rate; and (c) per capita income, which measures standard of living and poverty incidence. The significance and meaning of these three components of SHD are illustrated in Table Two below.

Table Two: Three Dimensions of Sustainable Human Development (SHD)

Index	Longevity	Knowledge	Decent Standard of Living
HDI	Life Expectancy at birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Literacy • Combined enrolment ratio 	Adjusted per capita income in PPP US\$
GDI	Female and male life expectancy at birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female and male literacy rates 	Female and male per capita incomes (PPP US\$) based on female and

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female and male enrolment ratios 	male earned income shares
HPI	Probability at birth of not surviving to age 40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult literacy rate 	Deprivation in economic provisioning measured by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of people without access to safe water • Percentage of people without access to health services • Percentage of children under five who are underweight

Source: UNDP, 1990.

Using the SHD concept together with its associated indicators, the state of socio-economic development in the SADC region becomes fairly vivid. The HDI indicator is thus helpful in measuring life expectancy, literacy rate and per capita income linking these dimensions neatly to Gender-Related Development Index and Human Poverty Index.

It is worth noting that during the period 1960s, development was generally considered a task of the state, even though in reality the political elite in a majority of African countries had little, if any, interest in development. The pervasive trend of *nationalization* of private companies led to some conventional wisdom that equated *dirigisme* (state interventionism) with economic growth and by extension development. Thus, perception of the political elite towards development was a simple one that runs somewhat like this: *state intervention=growth=development*. This particular understanding shifted somewhat in the 1980s during the era of economic adjustment when *dirigisme* and its associated economic nationalism was jettisoned by *market fundamentalism* (marketisation) whose development mode of thought ran somewhat like this: *market=growth=development*. With hindsight, it is now abundantly clear that states and markets are not polar opposites in the development process. Both have an important role to contribute to sustainable human development. Thus what Africa needs is neither a bloated state nor the magic wand of markets on their own for

development, but rather an appropriate mixture of states and markets complementing each other for the achievement of single goal: Sustainable Human Development. Put somewhat differently, what is needed is a market-friendly state interventionism for autonomous and endogenous development if Africa is to experience sustainable economic progress.

Sustainable human development in the SADC region is experiencing phenomenal decline due to multivariate factors. The major factor for this negative trend, however, has been identified as the pervasive spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic throughout the region, which has now become the epicenter of this killer disease in the world. Table Four below depicts graphically the HIV/AIDS prevalence in the Southern African region in comparison to the global and Sub-Saharan experiences. Judging by this data, clearly Southern Africa is, indeed, the epicenter of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The 2003 UNAIDS statistics reveals that the total number of people living with HIV/AIDS on a global scale is estimated at about 38 million people of which about 25 million are in Sub-Saharan Africa and about 15 million in the SADC region. The total death toll of the HIV/AIDS epidemic worldwide is estimated at about 3 million people of which 2.2 million are in Sub-Saharan Africa and about 1.2 million in the SADC region. It is abundantly evident that the HIV/AIDS is no longer just one of the major public health crises, but a major contemporary developmental and governance crisis that requires concerted policy effort to contain its devastating socio-economic impact.

Table Four: HIV/AIDS Prevalence and Mortality in the SADC Region, 2003

Country	Total No of People Living with HIV/AIDS	Adults (15-49 years)	Women (15-49 years)	Children (0-14 years)	Total Deaths	% Adult population living with HIV/AIDS
Angola	240 000	220 000	130 000	23 000	21 000	3.9%
Botswana	350 000	330 000	190 000	25 000	33 000	37.3%
DR Congo	1 100 000	1 000 00	570 000	110 000	100 000	4.2%
Lesotho	320 000	300 000	170 000	22 000	29 000	28.9%
Malawi	900 000	810 000	460 000	83 000	84 000	14.2%
Mauritius
Mozambique	1 300 000	1 200 000	670 000	99 000	110 000	12.2%
Namibia	210 000	200 000	110 000	15 000	16 000	21.3%
South Africa	5 300 000	5 100 000	2 900 000	230 000	370 000	21.5%
Swaziland	220 000	200 000	110 000	16 000	17 000	38.8%
Tanzania	1 600 000	1 500 000	840 000	140 000	160 000	...
Zambia	920 000	830 000	470 000	85 000	89 000	16.5%
Zimbabwe	1 800 000	1 600 000	930 000	120 000	170 000	24.6%
SADC	14 870 000	13 180 700	7 719 000	1 261 000	1 180 000	...
Sub-Saharan	28 500 000	26 000 000	15 000 000	2 600 000	2 200 000	

Africa						
World	37 800 000	35 700 000	17 000 000	2 100 000	2 900 000	...

Source: UNAIDS, 2004

In pursuit of the sustainable human development agenda, in 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration committing member states to achieving eight (8) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as follows:

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty. Halving the proportion of people living on less than \$1 a day and halving malnutrition;

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education. Ensuring that all children are able to complete primary education;

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women. Eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary schooling, preferably by 2005 and no later than 2015;

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality. Cutting the under-five death rate by two-thirds;

Goal 5: Improve maternal health. Reducing the maternal mortality by three-quarters;

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases. Halting and beginning to reverse HIV/AIDS and other diseases;

Goal 7: Ensure environmental stability. Cutting by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation; and

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development. Reforming aid and trade with special treatment for the poorest countries (UNDP, 2005:15).

When progress on achievement of the MDGs was reviewed in September 2005, during the UN General Assembly in New York, it was evident that in all the eight areas the gap between declaration on one hand and political commitment and policy practice on the other remained wide. Consequently, the MDGs have not yet been achieved and the 2005 UNDP Human Development Report points an accusing finger to three (3) interrelated factors for this failure: (a) ineffective aid; (b) unequal trade; and (c) conflict and instability. The report argues that achievement of the MDGs will not be realized unless “we can decisively resolve the bottlenecks currently retarding progress at the pace and scale that are needed over the next decade in three broad areas: aid, trade and conflict” (2005:4). This observation links us neatly to the discussion around global factors that have a bearing on the future of the SADC region. The next section, therefore, interrogates possible impacts of globalization on the state, development and democracy in Southern Africa.

Globalisation & The Challenges for Democracy and Development

Globalisation has now become a buzzword in development and democracy debate in Africa. It has come to be used by social scientists of various ideological persuasions to mean different things for different purposes. However, globalisation can best be defined in terms of both its nature and dimensions as the rapid internationalisation of capital through the adoption of free market or free enterprise economic development models and its concomitant liberal democratic models. Hughes defines globalisation as “a relatively different process due to its essential deterritorialisation or put conversely supra-territorialisation of social interactions. That is to say, globalisation is a process which increasingly reconfigures social space away from and beyond nations of

delineated territory, and transcends existing physical and human borders imposed upon social interaction” (2000:3).

What should be recognized, though, is that globalisation is not a new phenomenon at all. It is the same process that started with the demise of feudalism and the onset of capitalism and the expansion of capital across the globe primarily for purposes of maximization of profit by dominant tycoons of capitalism. As Zeleza aptly argues globalisation did not start just the other day with CNN or yesterday with the Internet as some post-modernists would like us believe. Zeleza’s own perspective on the historicity of globalisation is worth quoting *in extenso*:

I believe that the world has been ‘globalising’ for a long time, that the intensity and extent of international interactions across continents, countries, communities and cultures have been growing for centuries, although they progressively accelerated in the twentieth century. Africa has been an integral part of these processes, central to the construction of the modern world, in all its ramifications – economic, political, cultural and discursive – over the last half millennium. This is not to argue that Africa’s engagements with, and contributions to, the globalisation have necessarily been beneficial to its peoples. On the contrary, Africans have paid a high price over the last 500 years in the construction of a more integrated world through the European slave trade, colonialism, and structural adjustment. *The challenge for Africa’s intellectuals, leaders and assorted friends is to map out modes of integration into the unfolding global system that will maximize, not further marginalize, the interests of the continent’s peoples and polities, economies and environment, societies and cultures* (Emphasis Mine) (2002:10).

Essentially, I concur with Zeleza that principally, globalisation is the continuation of global outreach of capital in the era of imperialism and as such could be perceived as the highest stage of imperialism much the same way that Marxists perceived imperialism itself as the highest stage of capitalism. That the process is not necessarily new is also confirmed by the UNDP in its 1999 Human Development Report, which succinctly points out that “globalisation is not new, but the present era has distinctive features. Shrinking space, shrinking time and disappearing borders are linking peoples lives more deeply, more intensely, more immediately than ever before” (1999:1).

Although for the wealthy and powerful actors and states of the world, globalisation leads to a global village of capital accumulation, for the resource-poor and weak states, globalisation is tantamount to a global pillage of exploitation, domination and dependency syndrome. William Robinson aptly observes that if the earlier stages of globalization “brought colonial conquest, the creation of international division of labour, the partition of the world into North and South and apartheid in South Africa, this new era is bringing us into a singular global civilization in which humanity is bound together as never before, yet divided into the haves and have-nots across national and regional borders in a way unprecedented in human history (2005:106). This observation corroborates Eghosa Osaghae’s poignant observation that “globalization flows are not mutual, but are more of a one-way traffic from the global centres (North, around whose interest the world system was created in the first place) to the periphery (South) which was integrated as an appendage. It is this element of unequal exchange

and dependence that has bred resistance and contestations in the developing countries, that has historically characterized globalization” (2004:i). Evidence also abounds suggesting that in fact a trend is underway for further marginalisation and impoverishment of the African continent as globalisation forces gather momentum. A plethora of literature points to phenomenal decline in external resource flows to Africa especially foreign direct investment, aid flows and trade flows since the onset of accelerated globalisation in the context of mounting external debt and burdensome debt servicing (See UNRISD, 2000; Matlosa, 2004).

Globalisation presents few opportunities, yet it poses enormous numerous challenges for both governance and sustainable human development in Africa. The challenges include the following:

- Reduced state power and strangulation of the nation-state and its sovereignty;
- Enhanced hegemony of the neo-liberal orthodoxy and exclusion of regimes that are considered out of step with accepted rules of the game; that is those state that are considered rogue elements and not behaving in accordance with the basic tenets of neo-liberal paradigm or ideology;
- Privatization and marketisation of production and the development process;
- Internationalization of capital which does not process in tandem with internationalisation of labour; and
- Dictation of the development process and models by powerful economic and financial institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, WTO almost to the total exclusion of both state and non-state actors.

In essence, therefore the distinct impact of globalisation on governance is, among other things, the imposition of liberal democracy as the main political system that African states should embrace. The development challenge posed by globalization relates to, inter alia, the free enterprise economic model as the main economic system for Africa to pursue. This, in essence, suggests that globalization sets parameters for sovereignty of the nation-state and in turn limits Africa’s agenda for both governance and development (Matlosa, 1999). It becomes a tale of the power relations between industrialized states and underdeveloped states in determining the shape and direction of the global political economy. As the old international relations cliché goes: the rich and powerful do what they want, and the poor and weak do what they can.

We have argued elsewhere (Matlosa, 2004) that although the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) is a positive political statement of the political elite in repositioning Africa within the global political economy, the form and content of the new programme may not transform the structural underpinnings of the global power relations. Rightly, NEPAD identifies five main pre-conditions for development in the continent namely (a) peace and security; (b) democratic governance; (c) economic governance and progress; (d) socio-cultural development initiative and (e) regional cooperation (NEPAD, 2001). The NEPAD programmes are therefore organized in line with the above challenges. These include the following initiatives:

- Peace and Security Initiative;
- Democracy and Political Governance Initiative;
- Infrastructural Development Initiative;
- Human Resources Development Initiative;

- Economic and Sustainable Development Initiative;
- Socio-Cultural Renewal;
- Resource Mobilisation and Market Access Initiative;
- Regional Cooperation Initiative (NEPAD, 2001).

Related to the NEPAD initiative is another new development framework developed by the Commission for Africa sponsored by the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair. In its report entitled “Our Common Interest”, the Commission for Africa details Africa’s contemporary development challenges and concludes that attention should be given to the following areas (a) governance and capacity building; (b) peace and security; (c) human resources development; (d) growth and poverty reduction; (e) trade and market access; and (f) external resource flows especially foreign aid (Commission for Africa, 2005). Although much more detailed than the NEPAD initiative, the report of the Commission for Africa is not fundamentally different from the primary thrust of NEPAD. This raises a number of questions namely what is new that the Commission’s report has unearthed? What is the position of the Commission’s report within the British foreign policy towards Africa? What is the nature of the relationship of the Commission’s report and the NEPAD initiative? And whether or not the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission will indeed help re-order Africa’s position within the global political economy? These issues still remain moot points in the development discourse in the continent and time will tell which way the wind blows as NEPAD is implemented in tandem with the recommendations of Tony Blair’s Commission for Africa.

Conclusion

This paper teases out the contemporary governance and development challenges confronting Southern Africa. We investigate the role the state in both processes and inquire into the impact of globalization on the state itself and in respect of the governance and development trajectories of the regional states. Various key observations emerge from the discussion.

First, while the post-colonial state started off as being deliberately interventionist in the 1960s-70s, it soon became timid due to pressure from the IMF/World Bank in the 1980s and began to retreat in disarray giving way to the market fundamentalism of these international financial institutions. Since then the state has never recovered fully from the politico-economic shock of the economic adjustment era. The weakening of the state propelled principally by the adjustment programmes has been accentuated by accelerated globalization. Southern Africa requires a strong and deliberately interventionist state that drives the development and governance process in such a way that allows room free markets to influence economic trends and patterns. It is this type of state that we prefer to term a developmental state.

Secondly, it is observed that although the Southern African region emerged from colonial domination with an authoritarian governance system, there has been a recognizable trend towards democratic governance since the 1990s. Impressive progress is underway in this process, although it is debatable whether or not the process has been sufficiently nurtured, consolidated and the extent to which it is not reversible. Although most SADC member states have embraced liberal democracy, there emerging voices in

favour of a deliberate transformation of political systems from liberal democratic models to social democratic (developmental) models.

Thirdly, the issues of development and underdevelopment still confront Southern Africa in a rather harsh way. The available evidence points to the stark reality that Africa has not as yet managed to determine its own autonomous and endogenous development path given the overbearing power and hegemony of the powerful forces in the global economy including the IMF and the World Bank.

Fourthly, it is abundantly clear that both governance and development processes in Southern Africa are influenced and determined in a fundamental way by the accelerated globalisation. What is quite obvious is the stark reality that Africa remains a marginal and insignificant player/actor in the globalisation process. Thus as globalisation brings about a global village for the G-8 countries in particular, it tends to be tantamount to a global pillage for African states whose integration into the global political economy is predicated upon exploitation, domination and underdevelopment. Can Africa contain or direct the process of globalisation? The jury is still out and judgment on the extent to which Africa has the requisite capacity to influence globalisation and determine its own future is still moot point.

Fifthly and finally, there is no gainsaying that Southern Africa needs a developmental state that deliberately intervenes and directs the development process while at the same time facilitating efficiency of markets. So, the state-market binary or dualism in development discourse should be a thing of the past. States need markets for development, the same way as markets need states for productive and distributive efficiency. Both development and governance processes must deliver tangible results that improve the socio-economic livelihoods of the ordinary citizens. On its own, economic growth does not improve the daily livelihoods of the people and by now the Rostovian trickle down effect still remains a distant mirage. On its own, liberal democracy may not prove an adequate vehicle for driving a sustainable socio-economic development agenda of the SADC region. It is for this reason, that we have argued for re-orientation of the governance framework towards a social democracy that could provide a suitable anchor for a developmental state in the region.

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