



**AN EVENING WITH THE KONRAD ADENAUER FOUNDATION:**

**“SOCIAL AND CIVIL CONCEPTS IN AFRICA IN THE LIGHT OF  
CATHOLIC SOCIAL DOCTRINE”**

Your Excellencies,

Dear Friends of the *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung*,

I bring you all greetings and the prayerful wishes of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace; and on its behalf, I wish to thank the KAF heartily, first for what it is and seeks to be, namely, a foundation that espouses and promotes political thinking (governance) inspired by the Christian Faith (faithful to its founder, Konrad Adenauer..... one of the esteemed founder of modern Europe). With the same intensity of sentiments, I wish also to thank KAF for all that it has done, is doing and will do around the world, and tonight, especially for God's people in Africa. Perhaps not even your archivist and historian, but only dear God Himself, knows the whole impressive story of your promotion of Christian political leadership, articulate in their faith and social responsibility. So a very sincere „thank you“!

For this modest pre-dinner address, you have given me the expansive title, *gesellschaftspolitische Ordnungsvorstellungen der Katholischen Kirche mit Blick auf Afrika*. Even without carefully defining what we mean by "Ordnungspolitik" in German and in English, let me try to respond as concretely as possible, as an African Church leader with long pastoral experience and now as the head of the Vatican department or dicastery whose mandate resonates well with the mission of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

***A Predominant African Political Vision (Ordnungspolitik):***

If there is any predominant political vision and sense of Africa, in the diversity of its national histories, cultures and political experiences, it is *to be allowed and to be helped to develop in the hands of its sons and daughters, and, as developed, to be an opportunity for the world.*

As you may know or recall, it was Dr. Uschi Eid (Parliamentary State Secretary in the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development...Germany) who at TICAD III conference in Tokyo (2003) said: *“Cooperation means to realize a vision together with the people in Africa, the vision of an Africa that is modern and independent, where self-confident African men and women shape their own life, their own future and pursue their own*

*path of a sustainable and a democratic development. Only stimuli and efforts coming from within Africa will lead to success."*

And so it seemed to be! For, the onset of the third millennium appeared to have coincided with an emerging continental desire on the part of African leaders themselves for a new Africa. A new breed of African leaders dreamt of a new Africa. Thabo Mbeki of South Africa's ANC party, for example, believed that "*there was an African renaissance on the way which would change both the perception and the reality of Africa's drive towards modernization and prosperity*"; and "*it required renewal of our values and re-definition of our methods*".

From more than half way across the continent, in Ghana, another politician and a minister of Foreign Affairs (Nana Akuffo-Addo) would echo the sentiments of Mbeki, affirming that there was "*a new contemporary African self-assertion to build an African civilization which would be responsive to the dictates of our times, namely, economic prosperity, political freedom and social solidarity*".

These sentiments and many more were the precursors of the thought currents and ideas which fuelled the formulation of *NEPAD* (2001). African political leaders, it appeared, were determined to change the face of the political administration on the continent.

They spearheaded, accordingly, a critical self-appraisal of Africa, which identified poor and bad governance on the continent as a cause of Africa's poverty. They charted a path of good governance, accountability and transparency, and adopted a framework that would guide performance, and set the tone for Africa's renewal through transparent political leadership.

*NEPAD* did receive worldwide recognition and applause; and it was extolled as a "*development framework*", fashioned by Africans to guide Africa's emergence from poverty, and its attainment of the "*millennium development goals*".

#### ***NEPAD AND THE G8:***

Now, a critical dimension of Africans taking responsibility for the continent's destiny was the need to negotiate a new relationship with their development partners. Accordingly, in July 2001, *NEPAD* was presented, as the *New African Initiative* to the G8 leaders at Genoa. These committed themselves to preparing a *G8 Action Plan*. Such an action plan was endorsed at the G8 summit at Kananaski, Canada (in the presence of Kofi Annan and four of the five African initiators).

The aim of the *G8 Africa Action Plan* was neither to provide a massive infusion of funding nor to underwrite *NEPAD*. It was to put in place a new partnership that would unlock much greater resources, both public and private. Trade and investment were to be favoured over loans and grant, through deregulation, removal of controls, and creating an appropriate investment climate.

#### ***NEPAD AND THE EU:***

The five president initiators of *NEPAD* presented it in October 2001 to the EU at Brussels. EU issued a common statement expressing strong support for the African initiative, especially for the political values at the heart of *NEPAD* and its commitment to poverty eradication, and provided a follow-up mechanism to focus on capacity-building and infrastructure.

EU agreed, after the Kananaski Agreement between the G8 and the African leaders, to also contribute to the implementation of *NEPAD* in selected areas.<sup>1</sup>

### ***NEPAD - THE AFRICAN UNION - THE EUROPEAN UNION:***

The African leaders and architects of *NEPAD* failed to appreciate and to live up to the challenges of their own commitments and agenda, and thereby provided their external (developed) partners with an escape from honouring theirs. *NEPAD* went dormant; but the *African Union (AU)* has inherited some of its ideas and strategic visions to inspire an ongoing EU - African cooperation. And so, the EU - Africa summit of December 2007 cemented a new Africa - EU Strategic Partnership that sought to make a qualitative leap in eight (8) strategic areas, namely: Peace and Security, Democratic Governance and Human Rights, Trade - Regional Integration and Infrastructure, the MDGs, Energy and Climate Change, Migration - Mobility and Employment, Science Information Society and Space. These areas define the framework for Eu - African cooperation in the subsequent years with the principles of *African ownership, co-management and co-responsibility* as fundamental bedrock; and the third Africa- EU summit to take place this month (November 2010) in Libya is expected to be guided by these principles for a discussion of partnership in the interest of the two continents.

This basically has been Africa's appeal to EU and G8 sense of solidarity, and a common appreciation of human values, especially, the *universal destination of the goods of the earth* and Africa's *vocation* to development.

### ***Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Independence and the Good News of Development as Vocation to Progress:***

And so, as seventeen countries in Africa celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their independence this year, Africa's *vocation to development* and the concern about making "*Africa an opportunity for the world*" became the topics of conferences and study-sessions that sought to formulate new trajectories along which Africa could travel in its post-independence history to make real for its populations the opportunities of their continent.

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<sup>1</sup> Promoting peace and security, strengthening institutions and governance, fostering trade, investment, economic growth and sustainable development, implementing debt relief, expanding knowledge and improving and promoting education, and expanding digital opportunities, improving health and confronting HIV-Aids, increasing agricultural productivity, improving water resource management.

The invitation of the Holy Father to the Jubilee celebrations of independence of both Cameroon and Nigeria gave me the opportunity to represent the Holy Father and to refer to the rich *depositum* of the Church's Social Doctrine, variously propounded by the Popes in their encyclical letters and their addresses, as a guide for the formulation and implementation of those trajectories along which post-independent Africa wants to travel to good governance, development and peace.

Thus, for example, during his visit to Angola and his meeting with political figures, members of the Diplomatic Corps, and civil authorities just before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Synod for Africa, Pope Benedict XVI described the present moment as « *the time for Africa to be a continent of hope* », and exhorted his audience as follows: “*Chers amis, avec un cœur intègre, magnanime et plein de compassion, vous pouvez transformer ce continent,... en le conduisant sur le chemin indiqué par les principes indispensables à toute démocratie civile moderne: le respect et la promotion des droits de l'homme, un gouvernement transparent, une magistrature indépendante, des moyens de communication sociale libres, un réseau d'écoles et d'hôpitaux fonctionnant de façon adéquate, ...*”. And for such an exercise of transformation of the continent, the Holy Father raised the gaze of African leaders on high: to God; for as he reminded them in his welcome address at the airport of Luanda, “*Dieu a accordé aux hommes le pouvoir de s'élever avec les ailes de la raison et de la foi, au-dessus de leurs inclinations naturelles. Si vous vous laissez emporter sur ces ailes, il ne vous sera pas difficile alors de reconnaître dans l'autre un frère, né avec les mêmes droits humains fondamentaux*”.<sup>2</sup>

The Pope's reminder to the Angolans and to all Africans that “*Dieu a accordé aux hommes le pouvoir de s'élever avec les ailes de raison et de la foi au-dessus de leurs inclinations naturelles*”, recalls, especially, his doctrine about *development and progress* as a *vocation to transcendence* and that “*truth filled with love, from which authentic development proceeds, is not produced by us, but given to us*”; hence, the need to constantly turn to God's love (CIV. 79).

Indeed, progress, as integral human development, is the vocation of every person and of the whole person. The *Social Doctrine of the Church*, as articulated lately by Pope Benedict XVI, invites us to ponder this *vocation to progress* of every person, and how this *vocation* drives us to do more, know more and to have more in order to be more...” What this means, according to the Holy Father, is that:

Man does not develop through his own powers, nor can development simply be handed to him...[I]ntegral human development is primarily a vocation, and therefore it involves a free assumption of responsibility in solidarity on the part of everyone. Moreover...development requires a transcendent vision of the person, *it needs God*: without him, development is either denied, or entrusted exclusively to man, who falls into the trap of thinking he can bring about his own salvation, and ends up promoting a dehumanized form of development. Only through an encounter with God are we able to see in the other something more than just another creature, to recognize the divine image in

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<sup>2</sup> Pape Benoît XVI, Discours, Cérémonie de bienvenue, Aéroport International de Luanda, Vendredi 20 Mars 2009.

the other, thus truly coming to discover him or her and to mature in a love that “becomes concern and care for the other” (no. 11).

For the Holy Father, “the development of individuals and peoples is (likewise) located on a height, if we consider the spiritual dimension that must be present if such development is to be authentic. It requires new eyes and a new heart, capable of rising above a materialistic vision of human events, capable of glimpsing in development the ‘beyond’ that technology cannot give. By following this path, it is possible to pursue the integral human development that takes its direction from the driving force of charity and truth”; and it is the African Church which makes it her mission to inspire the world of politics and business on the continent with this doctrine. *KAF*’s envisioned project of developing a syllabus of the Church’s Social Doctrine to facilitate its teaching in the universities and institutions of higher learning (as in Latin America) is thus a very good news for the African Church and its continent.

Cardinal Peter Kodwo Turkson

*(President: Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace)*

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<sup>3</sup> Benedict XVI, *Light of the World: The Pope, the Church, and the Signs of the Times - A Conversation with Peter Seewald*, pp. 58-59.