

# How the rest of Africa sees South Africa

POLITICAL REPORT- BY DINEO SITHOLE

South Africa, the beacon of hope, peace and redemption for Africa, yet despite the history of Apartheid which instilled institutionalized exclusion. The aversion of racial bloodshed was implemented which enabled South Africa to uphold a rainbow nation, which today is an economic hub for the rest of Africa. With a proper parliament; transparent electoral system; a good new constituency and a first world stock market. It is important to learn from history and the mistakes that occurred at the time and not echo out brutality.

Africa used to be defined as a hopeless continent which would inevitably be left in despair and never be redeemed and see the light of day, where it would rise against all odds and break the shackles of oppression. Africa today has risen, it has risen against war; famine nation and rather it is marketing itself as a place of diversity, transparency, innovation, development stock market, as South Africa has paved the way for change and growth within Africa.

Africa is finally in the spotlight as it makes bold strides in implementing change and is now home to one of the world's fastest growing economies, meanwhile, South Africa the trend setter, still a treasure trove of minerals, sophisticated mixed economy on the continent is taking a dip both economically and politically, which raises many questions as South Africa was by far the most prominent and economically successful but now has taken a dive.

### **What went wrong with South Africa?**

The rest of Africa sees South Africa as an economic hub yet In the past decades Africa to the north of The Limpopo River has been growing at an annual average clip of 6% whereas South Africa's rate for the past few years has slowed to barely 2%, which has impacted South Africa hugely as rating agencies have just downgraded South Africa's Sovereign debt. Mining, once the country's power engine has been brutally battered by the wild protests and strikes due to lack of increase in the miners' income and benefits in the mines. This has caused the some companies to dismiss thousands of workers in the demand of wage increase and has resulted in an outbreak of violence across the board.

A confrontation at the Platinum mine in Marikana, near Johannesburg the commercial capital resulted in 34 deaths at the hands of the police. Foreign investment is slowly drying up as protests against the state's failure to provide services are becoming angrier and showing a great deal of hostility.

The ruling African National Congress (ANC) has indeed implemented genuine life changing developments – functioning health facilities, welfare and social services, housing and sanitation which would have been unheard of and denied to the poor black majority under the strong influence of the apartheid regime. Africa sees South Africa's transformation as exempt due to the fact that many Africa countries battle to acquire functioning health facilities and availing medication to all the poor people in the country .With that being said the party has also been a subject of incompetence and corruption which are the main causes of South Africa's sad decline in comparison to the rest of Africa.

The most important thing South Africa needs is political competition as its neighbors to the North are slowly moving away from the one party system that dragged them to corruption and stagnation for decades, however, South Africa is moving in the opposite direction which in actual fact is a concern to many. There's no clear or justified indication to state whether or not if South Africa is doomed to go down, but till that time all we can do is watch the multiple growing economies around Africa manifest into developing economies and global stock markets, which South Africa was once in the lead of.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.moneyweb.co.za/arch/why-does-growth-in-sa-lag-the-rest-of-africa>

**“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” - Nelson Mandela**

The only way people can better their lives in society is by acquiring education to pave a way for economic empowerment. Many African countries however fall short in the most crucial way including South Africa, according to the World Economic Forum; South Africa is ranked 132 out of 144 countries for Primary Education and again ranked 143 in Science and Mathematics. The lack of education in any society has very harsh and horrific implications because without education there will not be an empowerment process that will enable children guidelines, rules and regulations to develop analytical and critical thinking, decorum, nurturing and grooming wisdom for timely action and challenges which will enable the right actions to be conducted. South Africa falls short in this regard with multiple strikes, violence, corruption and mismanagement throughout the country, which portrays South Africans as being illiterate and unable to adhere to protocol due to the lack of education in their society.

As a result of the lack of Education in South Africa, it's impacting the unemployment rate hugely which increases crime and violence in the country. In recent years the unemployment rate officially sat at 25%, and now is currently sitting at 40%; half of South Africans under the age of 24 seeking employment have no jobs due to lack of skills in the country and some of those who are employed earn less than R23.70 per day. Inequality has rapidly taken a toll and is the worst in Africa since apartheid and the gap between rich and poor constantly carries on widening and is now the world's largest.

South Africa performs badly according to Africa Consortium of Monitoring Education Quality Research, The project had recent data captured on school attendance which proved to be very reliable in countries such as Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa .Taking enrollment into account South Africa still performs badly with only 71.2 % of children doing grade 6 are literate. South Africa is ranked sixth of the ten countries mentioned and Zambia is ranked last with only 49.3% of children that should be in grade 6 are literate. In this regard South Africa is ranked 5<sup>th</sup> behind Kenya, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe and again Zambia in last place with only 28.8% of their grade 6 children numerate. Africa as a whole should be very concerned and improve to increase the learner enrolment rates.

There is still a greater room for new implementations and improvements on the education system in South Africa, regardless of the fact that it spends more on education than most African countries .

**United Africa shall stand, but can South Africans show a change of heart.**

South Africa has recently been a home of many outrageous attacks on foreigners that have settled in South Africa and have established businesses in local communities, but due to the increasing rate of unemployment the locals feel that the foreigners are taking away their bread and butter and cannot survive due to the restrictions of entering local business as foreigners have invaded that sector. This has caused serious discomfort amongst the local communities which has resulted in serious and offensive attacks such as burning of shops, assaulting of foreign shop owners, and serious protest for foreigners to leave South Africa and return to their countries.

Nigeria and other neighboring countries feel they can teach South Africa a thing or two about treating foreigners well with regards to tolerance and showing other people respect and gratitude, according to Uche Ajulu Okeke, Nigeria's Consul General. She expressed the humility and fairness that Nigeria shows to foreigners in her country, as Nigeria is one country in Africa where you will not be requested to present your papers at any given time of the visit. The issue South Africans fail to address and adhere to is tolerance towards foreigners and this is causing serious discomfort and distress throughout the African Continent. There's a protocol of free movement between countries in West Africa. In South Africa's case the scars of apartheid may have left hindering effects on people as they still seem to be segmented with no signs of vibrancy and transparency. Apartheid meant that people faced institutionalized exclusion so therefore xenophobia has evidently become the anticipated consequences and challenges the country faces to date. The cause of xenophobia was mainly because of the scarcity of resources and prioritizing of locals in policies and anti-foreign sentiments. Such hostility was initialized against foreigners at its intended stage to be initialized but resulted in a great deal of resentment turned into other institutions, those seen as the cause of poverty and unemployment in the country.

Hostility and resentment are slowly shifting to include the corporate sector in the country, and white South Africans regardless of the fact that these were and still are the backbone of South Africa's economy. South Africa indeed needs to create a vibrant tomorrow for all South Africans and foreigners, to live in harmony.

Africa sees South Africa as hostile, full of hatred for fellow Africans, ignorant and ungrateful for the help which South Africa gave them during apartheid regime. Africa sees the xenophobic attacks as being similar to apartheid, they see South Africans as being lazy and jealous because many foreigners are

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successful business people in a foreign country, where as South Africans complain about unemployment, hunger, lack of resources and lack of service delivery from government .

As the second biggest economy on the African continent the increasing upraise and emergence of Xenophobia as social policy and practice will only leave South Africa destitute, backwards and demotivate its continental lack of integration and development in the near future and will leave South Africa without any support from other African countries.<sup>2</sup>

### **Why is South Africa so slow in comparison to the rest of Africa?**

The rest of Africa sees South Africa's minimal growth in comparison to their economies as a step up, up the economic ladder as the International Monetary Fund expects economies in Sub-Saharan Africa to grow at a staggering 6% and expects South Africa to grow by 3%, which means South Africa is growing half the rate of it African peers. As the rest of Africa takes the strides up the economic ladder South Africa still takes the dip as Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to grow from 5.0% to 6.0%, yet South Africa's growth expectations are less robust, with the IMF predicting growth 2.0% and 2.9% for the same given periods. The less robust growth in South Africa is partly a function of it being much more integrated into the world's economy, through trade and financial linkages, and that is what makes it more vulnerable in comparison to its peers as its developments abroad, both in advanced economies and emerging markets.

There are some internal factors that shrink South Africa's growth and it's due to the fact that there are rigidities in product and labour markets and the treat to high real wage growth. It is evident that growth is harder for South Africa then for many others African regions as it is deeply rooted to global economy and that means it is affected by global economic climate and it has numerous domestic policy constraints and holds it back from growing at its potential staggering rate.

The rest of Africa is rising with phenomenal strides in improving their economies in recent years as the crucial driver of growth. In these economies there has been regional integration for enhancing and nurturing competitiveness and ensuring the continent delivers on its massive growth obligation.

South Africa leads the continent in financial market development, technology readiness, market size business sophistication and innovation but lacks a great deal of transparency which is evident to the rest of Africa.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.news/SouthAfrica/News/Nigeria-can-teach-SA-about-treating-foreigners-well-20150309>

## How the rest of Africa sees South Africa

South Africa has lead the way for the rest of Africa from political problems in their countries as a beacon of hope with many highs and lows since democracy and acquiring strong sense of readiness and credited ability. South Africa has become the building blocks of Africa's economy as well as motivating Africa to strive for not only a better economy but a great nation, enabling Africa to see itself as a global stock market.<sup>3</sup>

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<http://www.southafrica.info/business/economy/globalsurveys.htm#.VRPx4UrwB2Y#Izz3VUXn0outG>