

**Leadership, Good Governance and Development in Africa in the Aftermath of
the Covid 19 Pandemic¹**

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Introduction

There is a need to start this discourse on the major theme of the Third Biennial Faculty of Arts International Conference by looking at the variables in the topic which are Leadership, Good Governance, and Development. Let me also quickly add from the very onset that these three key concepts are intricately linked to the process of nation-building and national integration. Indeed, the three concepts or terms have dominated global discourse for some time now. The conceptual ambivalence and ambiguity that surrounds them relate nevertheless to their multi-dimensional and multifarious perspectives. It is, therefore, imperative to operationalize them in order to properly situate them in the context of this academic discourse. We shall now discuss them piecemeal.

Leadership

Without a doubt, leadership occupies a crucial position in any human endeavour. It is one of the elements of effective and efficient management. The term or concept, Leadership, has been of interest for hundreds of years from the early Greek philosophers like Plato and Socrates to the plethora of management and leadership gurus, whose works fill bookshops. Seldom has the need for effective leadership in Africa been voiced more strongly than now, especially in the wake of the recently conducted 2023 general elections that ushered in President Bola Ahmed Tinubu as Nigeria's leader. It is argued that in this changing global environment following the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath, leadership holds the answer not only to the success of individuals and organizations but also to sectors, regions, and nations.

Leadership means different things to different people. The simplest way to explain it in the present context is in reference to the manner in which power is exercised through the right communication processes in the management of a country's political, economic, and social resources for the effective development and attainment of its corporate goals. Effective leaders provide an atmosphere that is conducive to the attainment of the nation's goals through the equitable discharge of functions by subordinate officials and the followership². Therefore, leadership may be defined as the process of influencing the behaviour of group members toward the successful implementation of set goals. Leadership encompasses adherence to the principles of equity, accountability, transparency, rule of law, inclusiveness, consensus building, and efficiency in the utilization of scarce resources for effective administration. Among the axioms of effective leadership is the fact that successful leaders display a positive

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attitude about their roles. From the outset, they adjust their mindset in such a way that they see only the bright aspects of things while closing their eyes to the gloomy side. Effective leaders are incurable optimists; they are men and women of daring faith, a fact that affords them the vision to manoeuvre difficult situations and attain their organizational goals³.

However, in spite of the recognition of the importance of leadership, there remains a certain mystery as to what leadership actually is or how to define it. Stogdill posits that there are “almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept.”⁴ Simply put, Leadership is a process by which an individual, says an executive, can direct, guide and influence the behaviour and work of others toward the accomplishment of specific goals in a given situation. This is the essence of the statement made by Bola Ahmed Tinubu as the Presidential candidate of the All Progressive Congress when he claimed that he was neither applying for the job of a bricklayer nor that of a carpenter, but one through which he has to use his brain and organize people to provide good governance and ensure the development of the Nigerian state. Leadership, therefore, is the ability of a manager to induce the subordinate to work with confidence and zeal. One hopes that the president would be in good standing to coordinate the affairs of Nigeria. Furthermore, leadership is a vital management function that helps to direct an organization’s resources, such as the university system, among others, for improved efficiency and the achievement of goals. Thus, an effective and efficient leader, in essence, provides clarity of purpose, motivates and guides the organization to realize its mission.

Northouse⁵ identifies four common themes in the way leadership can be conceived. These are: (1) leadership is a process,
(2) leadership involves influence,
(3) leadership occurs in a group counter context, and
(4) leadership involves goal attainment.

Thus, he defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal”.⁶ This is a good definition of leadership. It, however, still locates the individual as the source of leadership. Meanwhile, a more collective definition of the concept of leadership arises out of a review carried out by Yukl. According to him:

Most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person (or group) over other people (or groups) to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization.⁷

Even this definition obscures (doubtful) as much as it reveals. One may ask, what exactly is the nature of this ‘social influence’? How can it ‘structure’ activities and relationships? And when applied in a group setting, who is the ‘leader’? Little wonder, therefore, that Bolden posits:

While practitioners often see theory as separate from practice, within applied fields such as leadership the two are inextricably related. Traditional and contemporary theories of leadership

strongly influence current practice, education and policy and offer a useful framework for the selection and development of leaders.⁸

In sum, therefore, leadership is a set of behaviours used to help people align their collective direction, to execute strategic plans, and continually renew an organization or a society at large. Leadership is equally the ability to build up confidence and zeal among people to create and urge them to be led. Thus, to be a successful leader, one must possess the qualities of foresight, drive, initiative, self-confidence, and personal integrity. However, in this paper, we will identify some of the most influential leadership theories, but for time and space constraints, we will not be able to discuss them piece by piece. It is significant that they all offer a valuable context for the consideration of wider issues about defining leadership capabilities and development approaches. These leadership traits as identified by Bolden include,

1. Political leadership,
2. Situational leadership,
3. Transformational leadership,
4. Servant and Team leadership, and
5. Distributed leadership⁹.

Meanwhile, as we progress, we will adopt one of the types of leadership as our anchor for analysis of the subject under consideration. This is the political leadership that is peculiar to contemporary African societies generally as it consists of Instrumental and Societal leadership. Generally, leadership exists in all societies as no group can survive without the process of leadership. Therefore, leadership is an important resource of all societies and is exhibited by individuals through a broad scope of talents and abilities. However, leadership without vision is meaningless and cannot result in good governance and development, which is the focus of this paper in light of the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thus, visioning is a critical element of effectiveness in leadership. It is the epicentre, the cutting edge that keeps the mission and vision statements afloat. Without the qualities of visioning, the leader relapses into the status of a mere manager who tries to ensure that the organization stays alive, but is unable to attain its goals, eventually tottering to its inevitable death. It is the visionary flight that turns the tide for dynamic organizations. It demands the right attitude, morality, discipline, courage, tenacity of purpose, level-headedness, honesty, willingness to sacrifice, and refusal to quit in the face of grave challenges. Based on the aforementioned definitions, it may be concluded that leadership is a complex moral relationship between people that is based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and a shared vision of the good. With regard to the African case, leadership is the capacity to translate the national objectives of individual states into reality.

Leadership is closely related to political governance, which the World Bank (1999) defines as “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development”¹⁰. The Mo Ibrahim Foundation¹¹ has also defined political governance as the “provision of the political, social and economic public goods and services that every citizen has the right to expect from his or her state, and the state has the responsibility to deliver to its citizens”. From the foregoing, the question that readily comes to mind is how African rulers have steered

the rudders of their boats to achieve the national interests of their respective countries. Have they been able to attain the goals of maintaining political stability, security of lives and poverty, human rights protection, transparency, accountability, provision of employment opportunities, human development quotient, and sustainable development?

Good Governance

Like leadership, good governance, as a term or concept, has also become a phenomenon in world affairs and it is being increasingly used in development literature¹². Good governance is an indeterminate term used to describe how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in order to guarantee the realization of human rights. On its part, governance describes the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. According to Keohane and Nye, “the emergence and recognition of principles, norms, rules, and procedures that both provide standards of acceptable public behaviour, and that are followed sufficiently to produce behavioural regularities”¹³. They further describe governance as both processes and arrangements that ensure orderliness, acceptable standard of allocation of resources (both human and material), and a legal framework within which national behaviours are shaped and controlled¹⁴.

Meanwhile, bad governance is being increasingly regarded as one of the root causes of all evil within our societies. Major donors and international financial institutions are increasingly basing their aid and loans on the condition that reforms that ensure good governance are undertaken¹⁵. This development became even more evident in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the term, good governance, though seems to be something that could be objectively defined, is often very nebulous, especially when Africa and the Third World or underdeveloped/developing countries of which Nigeria is one are involved. Good governance is often defined in ways that are advantageous or in alignment with the agenda of aid organizations or authorities of developed countries¹⁶.

Good governance as a concept in international politics and the world economy has steadily entrenched itself in political and development discourse. It has permeated all sectors and become part of the common shared principles and virtues of different countries in the world. It has attained universality as an indicator of adherence to democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and economic development. In the view of Minogue, it is now a “broad reform strategy and a particular set of initiatives to strengthen the institutions of civil society with the objective of making government more accountable, more open and transparent and more democratic”¹⁷.

Good governance has been closely linked to “the extent to which a government is perceived and accepted as legitimate, committed to improving the public welfare and responsive to the needs of its citizens, competent to assure law and order and deliver public services, able to create an enabling policy environment for productive activities; and equitable in its conduct”¹⁸. However, there is a danger that good governance has become a catchword and that few people bother to consider its implications. In line with the pluralistic understanding of governance, scholars have applied a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches that have been used. These are

Argumentative theories, Cultural theories, Democratic and legal theories, Gender theory in political science, Network theory, Political economy, and Theories of system transition and transformation.

In sum, good governance is the process of measuring how public institutions, including the university system, conduct public affairs and manage public resources and guarantee the realization of human rights in a manner essentially free of abuse and corruption and with due regard for the rule of law. It is also the processes and institutions that produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. Good governance is synonymous with efficiency in the management of individuals, society, and resources. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, governance should be nothing short of good governance considering the damage that it caused to humanity. For, it is only good governance that can lead to the desired growth and development of society in view of the damages/ravages caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Governance should for now adhere strictly to the rule of law, accountability, transparency, fairness, responsibility, effectiveness, and efficiency in a bid to attain the desired goal of development.

Development

As with leadership and good governance, development, as a concept, has been used in several ways by different scholars. It is a multi-dimensional process that changes the economy, polity, and society¹⁹. In the words of Kuznets:

Development requires high rates of growth of per capita income, Gross National Product (GNP), population, and total factor productivity (especially labour productivity). It also requires a high rate of social, ideological, and political transformation (through modernization). It involves increased rationality, planning, equality, and improved institutions and attitudes. It also requires greater international economic links through increased exports and greater international influence.²⁰

Thus, development means progress in a range of areas. It means economic progress, as well as the fulfillment of basic human needs – material, emotional and cerebral. Economic progress requires growth, structural change, and distributive equity²¹.

As it is, therefore, development as a concept is many-sided. For instance, development has been defined firstly, as “a gradual advancement through progressive stages, growth from within”; secondly, as “a developed or well-grown condition, a state in which anything is in vigorous life or action” and thirdly, “the developed result or product, a developed form of some earlier and more rudimentary organism, structure or system”²². Yet, another authority also defines development as a “gradual unfolding, fuller working out, growth, well-grown state, stage of advancement, more elaborate form”²³. From these seemingly simplified definitions, what is obvious is that development is a progressive phenomenon. It takes cognizance of a given standard and upon which it grows. It is an attempt to improve on certain given accomplishments.

This position seems to be carried further by Michael Todaro who postulated that development should be perceived as a multidimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of entire economic and social systems. In addition to

improvements in income and output, it typically involves radical changes in institutional, social, and administrative structures, as well as in popular attitudes and sometimes even customs and beliefs.²⁴ This definition sees development as having many dimensions but principally involving a renewal of entire economic and social systems.

There is, however, a contrary opinion of development as portrayed by Joseph Schumpeter in his theory of economic development. While dwelling on what motivates development, he sees real development as a change in economic life which are not forced upon it from without but arises by its own initiatives from within.²⁵ Thus, it could be said that development is achieved through internal activities rather than from external influences. This definition also raises the question of 'real development' as distinct from 'development'. This is what Nnoli tried to differentiate when he wrote of 'artifacts of development' as distinct from development.²⁶ To him, Nigerians still look at the development of their country in terms of seeking to achieve many of the conditions of good life in Western Europe, America, and Japan. These include industrialization, economic affluence, military hegemony, advanced technology, urbanization, and the parliamentary political process. The concept of development involved here is that of a checklist of artifacts²⁷. He went further to say that the view that our leaders share is one of a country that is increasingly acquiring more and more artifacts of the type found in the advanced countries. These advanced countries are regarded as developed because they have a high level of technology, a high literacy rate, adequate social services, and various other artifacts. If Nigeria can produce such items within its territory, the more it is presumed to come closer to the standard of the advanced countries and, therefore, the more developed it becomes.²⁸

According to Nnoli, development on the contrary is neither catching up with the advanced countries nor the procurement of artifacts. He argues further that although the artifacts are not development itself and in certain cases may have no relationship whatever with that process, they reflect development only when they are the end-product of the efforts of the population to apply their creative energy for the transformation of the environment²⁹. Development then is a dialectical phenomenon in which the individual and society interact with their physical, biological, and inter-human environments transforming them for their own betterment and that of humanity at large and being transformed in the process.³⁰ Nnoli further contends that the lessons learned and experiences acquired in this process are passed on to future generations, enabling them to improve their capacities to make further valuable changes in their inter-human relations and their ability to transform nature. He thus sees development as first and foremost a phenomenon associated with changes in man's humanity and creative energies, and not in things.³¹

Nnoli's idea re-echoes Rodney's. According to Rodney, development in human society is a many-sided process. Like Nnoli, he says that at the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility, and material well-being.³² At the level of the social groups, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships³³. Rodney further says that development cannot be seen purely as an economic affair, but rather as an overall social process that is dependent upon the outcome of man's efforts to deal with the natural environment.³⁴ Thus, development means a capacity for self-

sustaining growth. It means that an economy must register advances which will in turn promote further progress.

It is obvious from these definitions that the stage of development is transient and thus will sooner or later give way to something else. This could be why some less developed countries create problems for themselves by using the developed countries as models for development when development after all is not a completed state of affairs, but an ongoing process. A nation as a matter of fact is continually developing. While it may not be necessary to totally debunk the idea that less developed countries should look up to the developed ones as models, it could be argued that development should be conceived in the context of a particular social system because every society has its own culture or ways of doing things, and so there is no ultimate conventional way of solving problems.

One can also infer from these definitions that development involves the proper utilization of a nation's resources in order to efficiently increase productivity for the betterment and general welfare of the people. Even the United Nations Organizations shares a similar opinion. The organization contends that much of the poverty in a large part of the world is due to underdevelopment of resources. It was for this reason that the United Nations General Assembly designated the 1960s as the United Nations Development Decade, and the 1970s as the Second Development Decade.³⁵

Development does not only refer to the provision of physical amenities but also to the mental development of the individual. Thus, no matter how elusive the term development may be, it implies a long-term process of change that touches every aspect of human society. This includes, among other things, issues relating to the economy, social life, and politics, all of which eventually contribute to the general progress of society. This goes to show that development involves the unending improvement in the capacity of the individual and society to control and manipulate the forces of nature as well as themselves and other individuals and societies not only for their own benefit but that of humanity at large. It is a process of actualizing man's inherent capacity to live a better and more rewarding life.³⁶ From this, it should be pointed out that development would only come if the resources of a people are properly harnessed.

At this stage, it is pertinent to point out that the term 'development' is often being used in an exclusive economic sense, and the justification is that the type of economy is itself an index of other social features.³⁷ Economic development is not equivalent to the total development of a society, but is only a part of general development. It is also important to note that development can be seen in its several ramifications and an aspect of it cannot be a substitute for the other.

In sum, it is noteworthy that in some countries, notably African countries, emphasis is placed on the economic dimension only, and the reason for this is that the less industrialized countries want to compete with the industrialized countries in the level of economic attainment because they see these countries as models for development.

From here, we shall, therefore, proceed to make a distinction between Economic Development and Social Development. We will start by asking the question, what is economic development? According to Walter Rodney:

a society develops economically if its members jointly increase their capacity for dealing with the environment. This is however dependent on the extent to which they understand the laws of nature (science); to the extent to which they put that understanding into practice by developing tools (technology), and the manner in which work is organized. Viewed from this, it can thus be said that there has been constant economic development within human society since the origins of man because man has increased tremendously his capacity to win a living from nature.³⁸

Put differently, what Walter Rodney is saying is that all people have shown a capacity for independently increasing their ability to live a more satisfactory life than before, and the only major difference lies in the rate at which development is attained.³⁹ The process of economic development cannot also be seen as automatic, but rather it requires consistent efforts on the part of the people.

There are two schools of thought on what economic development is. One uses the term to mean the same as economic growth, economic welfare, economic progress, advancement, or secular change. Those that belonged to this school of thought define the term as:

Increased production and productivity increased investment, better job opportunities, increased or stable population, higher rate of saving, reasonably high life expectancy, and low infant mortality.⁴⁰

The other school of thought consists of Western scholars writing on third-world Nations, notably, F. Sauvy, Schumpeter, and Mrs. Ursula Hicks who attempted to make a distinction between economic development and economic growth. Others are N. S. Buchana, H. S. Ellis and C. Zuvekas. They associated economic development with developing and underdeveloped nations, while economic growth is associated with developed nations.

Buchana and Ellis defined economic development as implying “a rise in the real income per person.”⁴¹ Economic development, therefore, follows a sustained rise in the potentialities of the land and people as well as of capital equipment and the technical knowledge they have. However, in a more comprehensive manner, economic development refers not only to increased-over-time in a country’s real output of goods and services but this increase must be accompanied by change – changes both in a country’s social structure and in its potential structure.

Sauvy went further to list the advantages to be accrued from economic development as:

The eradication of ignorance, poverty, and disease and would also enable a country to be militarily strong so as to better defend her ways of life.⁴²

It is in this sense that Claude Ake saw economic development as the very opposite of imperialism. That is, imperialism does not give room for development. We may, therefore, be saying that economic development is a necessary condition for the

improvement in the quality of life which is development. In other words, the primary concern of development is the individual and his quality of life.

On its part, social development would generally refer to social services that touch on people's health, education, housing, and communication. Nevertheless, social development in this paper will be used in a synonymous way with social change as seen by W. E. Moore. To him, social change or development means:

.... the significant alteration of social structure (that is, of patterns of social action and interaction), including, consequences and manifestations of such structure embodied in norms (rules and conduct), values, and cultural products and symbols.⁴³

He further adds that:

.... this definition encompasses small-scale change, such as the gradual development of leadership roles in a small-scale change, task-oriented group, cyclical patterns of change, such as the succession of centralization and decentralization, and revolutionary change, such as the overthrow of the government. It includes short-term changes in occupational structures, both growth and the decline in membership size of social units, continuous processes, such as specialization and bureaucratization, and discontinuous processes, such as particular technical or special inventions.⁴⁴

From the above, one could infer that social development refers to changes that have taken place in a particular area in terms of employment rates, leadership roles, and administrative structures over time. We will use the term in this paper to refer to changes that have taken place in health care delivery, employment opportunities, education, and social interactions among the people of Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, especially in light of the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. African leaders need to sit tight and ensure good governance and development by making it possible that the people enjoy the dividends of democratic rule in the African continent as it is elsewhere in the world.

Generally, it could be adduced that from all the different concepts of development given, it is clear that development means the provision of not only physical infrastructural amenities and other public utilities but also the improvement in the mental development of the individuals in the African continent. Development is, therefore, both a physical reality and a state of mind in which society has, through some combination of social, economic, and institutional processes secured the means for obtaining a better life⁴⁵. In other words, development refers to man's qualitative progress and continued self-improvement. Thus, the indicators of development are the availability of essential social amenities, such as good roads, pipe-borne water, electricity, the provision of health services, nutrition services, employment, and sound educational service to enhance the mental well-being of the people.

Leadership and the Dilemma of Good Governance and Development in Africa

In discussing the problems of leadership in Africa, it should be borne in mind that good leadership, among other things, involves the competence to govern a state for the promotion of the welfare and happiness of the citizens. This requires the creation of a conducive atmosphere for the individual to realize his or her highest potential. In Africa, government tends to depend on personal abilities and attributes than on impersonal and established institutions. There is the tendency, therefore, for government to degenerate into personal rule. This in turn results in the promotion of the relations linking the rulers with their patrons, associates, clients, and supporters rather than with the public. The ruler becomes more preoccupied with maintaining a system of relations than seeking to establish a rapport with the populace. In effect, the leadership is not mass-oriented, but elitist.

This meant that African rulers had to develop machinery for manipulating and monitoring personal rules. It is noteworthy that in the period of decolonization, it was generally accepted that the nationalist leaders would succeed the European colonial masters. However, having inherited the mantle of office some leaders became mere replacements of the former overlords, with no programmes or policies for the improvement of the quality of life of their fellow citizens.

In evaluating the purpose of leadership, therefore, we should bear in mind the goals of modern African states. This was supposed to lead to the realization of peace, justice, and development. The political kingdom was to be the gateway to economic prosperity and happiness. To what extent have African leaders been able to achieve such objectives? Again, in evaluating leadership, there should be a distinction between a politician concerned more with immediate gains of certain policies, and a statesman with a greater vision of the future and posterity. Undoubtedly, some African leaders have been outstanding in their performance. These include Samora Machel of Mozambique, Amilcar Cabral of Guinea-Bissau, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Moumar Gaddafi of Libya, and Murtala Muhammad of Nigeria. But also, the role of many African rulers has brought shame to the continent. By and large, stability, justice, good governance, and development still remain elusive. In some cases where stability appears to have been established as in the case of Sekou Toure's Guinea or Ahmadu Ahidjo's Cameroun, this was at the expense of the opposition and sowed the seeds for later turbulence.

There was also the problem of corrupt leadership in which the rulers subverted the state machinery for the purpose of amassing personal wealth. Tyranny was also prevalent in some states. Indeed, Africa produced some of the most grotesque tyrants like Idi Amin Dada of Uganda, Jean-Bedel Bokassa of the Central African Republic, and Sani Abacha of Nigeria.

External manipulation of African leaders by major world powers also poses some problems. For example, Colonel Mobutu Seseseko's continued excesses in Zaire were made possible by United States support rather than the backing of Zairean Citizens.

There is also the problem of a low level of political consciousness among the followership in the African States. This has contributed to the promotion of mediocrity in leadership. How critical and demanding have they been in choosing their leaders? Is it not true that every society gets the type of leadership it deserves? If in the traditional societies the citizens have been more careful in selecting their leaders, to what extent are

the criteria used in the process relevant to the modern states of Africa? Do we expect in our leaders at the state level those characteristics we demand at the local level? It should be noted that leadership should not only be evaluated at the political level but also from the social perspective. This includes the management of our affairs in different social spheres like religious organizations, youth clubs, and student unions.

It has been suggested that there is the highest standard of leadership in private rather than in public institutions. In many business concerns, leadership is taken seriously and so adequate provisions are made for the training of leaders. To what extent can we have this practice in the public sector? Can such training be directed to the political and educational spheres? The Nigerian Institute for Policy and Strategy Studies is one such institution as well as The Centre for Democratic Studies. In effect, there is the need to set forth acceptable criteria for the selection of the best leaders at every level in the state. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, a high level of leadership was required in all aspects of our national lives to usher in good governance and development in Africa. But was this the case?

An Overview of Leadership in Africa During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study of the Nigerian Situation

If during the colonial and post-independence periods, leadership in Africa was of mixed blessings as we have pointed out, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the ignorance and lack of able leadership on the part of African leaders in the continent when compared with the responses of other world leaders to the challenges they encountered and how they were able to surmount them. In the Nigerian situation, government efforts to deal with the scourge were not swift. We were only lucky that the situation in Africa was not as endemic as was the case in China, Europe, and the United States of America. The development brought to the fore the inept managerial skills of Nigerian leaders, both at the federal and state levels. Worse still, while the leadership was lackadaisical, the COVID-19 pandemic created room for a new class of wealthy people who benefitted from the fund government budgeted for palliatives. At the same time, it exposed the inadequacies of government as the palliatives were hoarded by its custodians until the citizens became unruly, leading to a state of lawlessness and anarchy all over Nigeria, especially in southern Nigeria and the north-central zone of northern Nigeria⁴⁶. While in Europe and the United States of America, efforts were made by governments to cushion the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, here in Nigeria, the reverse was the case. The government could not adequately respond to the situation and the conditions of its citizens. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore, there is a need for a rethink and repositioning not just by Nigerian leaders in particular, but African leaders generally. The need to take care of the welfare of the citizenry must be the desire of any government. It is the duty of the government to provide an enabling environment for good governance and ensure the development of society. African leaders should have this at the back of their minds as they rule over the people, no less no more

Indeed, during the pandemic, we saw a situation in which small and medium-scale businesses in Nigeria collapsed and the business owners never recovered from the shock after the scourge was over, while at the same time schools at all levels in the country were closed down and government could hardly find solutions to these

developments. It was not surprising that in Europe and the United States of America, Information Communication and Technology (ICT) became the order of the day, whereas Africa found it difficult to find its feet. It became increasingly very clear that there was a wide gulf in terms of good governance and development between Africa and the advanced or developed societies of Europe and America. Looking inward, one could assert very categorically that the missing link was leadership that African leaders could not provide at a much auspicious period of challenge to humanity. As Africans, we failed because 'you cannot give what you do not have'. Perhaps, it is so because the situation that came up suddenly was never envisaged. However, the essence of leadership is to be visionary as already pointed out in the conceptual analysis above. Now that the pandemic is over, how do African leaders rise up to the challenge of good governance and development of the continent in a changing world? What then is the way forward?

Conclusion: The Way Forward

From the aforesaid, it is quite clear that leadership is the main bane of Africa's development. The question then arises, does the current continental leadership have what it takes to ensure the right leadership, good governance, and development? The answer is yes and no. There are serving African leaders of vision and integrity, who are competent and committed. There are others who have not lived up to high hopes and expectations of their election and have manifestly failed their people⁴⁷. There are hawks and doves, there are movers and shakers and there are those leaders who delight in obstructing and thwarting progress. In short, Africa has some leaders who are a credit to the continent and others who are a disgrace.⁴⁸

Kofi Annan went straight to the point when he stressed that the resolution of the many conflicts in Africa was essential to making the continent work. But he also pointed out that these were "in a great measure the result of misguided leadership, which is unwilling or unable to put the people's interest first". He told a news conference: "No one can say that 'my country has peace and therefore conflicts in this or that country is not my responsibility'. No one wants to invest in bad neighbourhoods, so we need to clean up our neighbourhood."⁴⁹

It was not for nothing, therefore, that the desire to transform the Organization of African Unity into the African Union was pursued vigorously between 1999 and 2002 when the African Union emerged. Basically, the idea behind this was how to ensure good governance and bring about development to African citizens, with the hope that by the year 2063, poverty, disease, illiteracy, unemployment, conflict, mortality rate, and so on would have been eradicated in Africa. Thus, the initiative of the African Union Development Agency - New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD). The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a socio-economic flagship programme of the African Union. NEPAD'S four primary objectives are to: eradicate poverty, promote sustainable growth and development, integrate Africa into the world economy, and accelerate the empowerment of women.

In the final analysis, let me end this lecture by noting that, there is a need for a new plan for Africa, this initiative calls on African leaders to consolidate democracy and development on the continent and strive for prosperity. We urge the richer, industrialized world to increase investment, assistance, and confidence in Africa. We

equally urge African leaders to rise up to the occasion, as well as facilitate progressively the process of nation-building and national integration in the continent. Africa has long taken the backward seat, we need to move abreast with time, especially in this age of globalization, and launch out deliberately to catch up with the ever-changing development tide and global nuance for inclusive human-inclined visionary leadership now that the whole world is a global village, with varying dynamics of change and continuity.

Thank you.

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