



Report on Wilton Park Conference S05/9

THE COMMISSION FOR AFRICA: IMPLEMENTING THE FINDINGS

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1. INTRODUCTION

The year 2005 presents a rare opportunity for concerted action on behalf of Africa. The Commission for Africa, convened by the British Prime Minister, with a majority African membership, has presented its report in time for the G8 meeting and the British presidency of the European Union.¹ In September, the United Nations will review progress on the millennium development goals. Later in the year (December), the ministerial round of the World Trade Organisation will take place.

There are a number of encouraging signs. The African Union and NEPAD are becoming increasingly authoritative institutions on the continent. Many countries now have poverty reduction strategies. Twenty-four countries have signed up for the African Peer Review Mechanism. Compared with 10-15 years ago, far more countries now have democratic governments. The desire for peace and security is stronger than ever before. The response to the crisis in Togo, which prevented the automatic assumption of power by the late President's son, has shown that democratic procedures are taken increasingly seriously.

Compared with India, however, Africa faces formidable problems with getting its goods to market. Much of the infrastructure (whether it be railways or roads) leads directly from the site of extraction to the port. The trade policies of industrialised countries, in particular, EU and US subsidies, remain an obstacle to growth in African trade.

The Commission for Africa has recommended a doubling of aid (ODA) to Sub-Saharan Africa from \$25 billion to \$50 billion per annum. The Commission would have recommended an increase to \$75 billion had it not been for doubts about absorptive capacity. For Africa to attain the levels of growth required to realise the Millennium Development Goals, the private sector has a crucial role. Telecommunications are likely to be financed by the private sector, but public resources will still be needed for other infrastructure. Many countries are growing at 4-5 per cent per annum. However, a 7 per cent growth rate per annum is required to double the size of Africa's economy in the next decade. There is a growing awareness of the tragic consequences of leaving an entire continent behind. In an increasingly globalised world, there is an ever-increasing understanding that "no-one is an island". The tragic events of the Tsunami contain a positive potential. Although many thousands of people have died, there was a huge outpouring of sympathy and practical support. The predictable tragedy of African people costs many more lives. In the British general election, it was encouraging that policy towards Africa was not a contentious party political issue. Japan has agreed a doubling of aid to Africa, as have Canada and Germany. The key issue is how the United States will respond at the summit in Gleneagles. Within Africa, such leaders as Presidents Mbeki and Obasanjo are rallying support for the proposals of the Africa Commission. NEPAD has indicated it supports the report. Business action is increasing pressure on governments. What is needed is an effective coalition between Africa and the rest of the international community to ensure that the coherent package of recommendations is fully implemented.

¹ See website for the full report and other activities: <http://www.commissionforafrica.org/>

The readiness of Africa to demonstrate reform and commitment to improve governance underlies the efforts to achieve international support for Africa through the G8. Such countries as Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique, South Africa and Rwanda are exhibiting, through economic progress and reform, that they are ready to address the challenges which they face. For Africa as a whole to progress, the economies of South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya need to function as regional economic development centres. In some incidences, Africa does not help itself, for example by the failure to address the governance issues in Zimbabwe sufficiently trenchantly and through voting Sudan onto the UN Human Rights Commission. A focus on capacity building and tax reform needs to occur in order to mobilise domestic resources for development.

2 BEYOND CONFLICT

Dealing with, and getting out of, conflict

African perspectives on peace and security have received attention in the recent reports including the Cardoso report,² the report of the High Level Panel³ and the report of the UN Secretary-General, "*In larger freedom*".⁴ The emerging peacekeeping regime requires an African regional element. This needs to be harmonised with the overall UN system and must be adequately resourced to address the tasks with which it is mandated. An end to open conflict is a prerequisite for development.

In spite of the challenge of Darfur, there are encouraging indications of a readiness and increasing ability to address conflict prevention and peacekeeping challenges. The interventions of President Mbeki in Burundi and Obsanjo in Togo show a growing confidence. The frustration that African and other leaders feel with the situation in Zimbabwe cannot be reason to hold an entire continent hostage. A qualitatively new stage has been reached with the plans for an African standby force. This is an attempt to move beyond the constraints under which African leaders have laboured. The lack of readiness to criticise or intervene in neighbouring African countries is increasingly a matter of the past. A certain variant of solidarity politics is often a policy of the weak; growing confidence and political maturity allow for greater criticism of neighbouring countries.

In spite of the inflexibility of EU development assistance, the EU African Peace Facility, which provides €250 million from the European Development Fund to support African-led peacekeeping operations in Africa is a significant innovation. In October 2004, a further €80 million was provided for the enlarged African Union observer mission in Darfur.⁵ The EU had also approved a €6.5 million support programme for the AU's Peace and Security Department. To ensure that such arrangements are tied in to the UN system, but still flexible, an indication of UN support, for example, a statement of intent from the Secretary-General is adequate.

There is a need for his single integrated system of for peacekeeping in Africa. Whether the future peacekeeping needs will be for a Chapter VI or Chapter VII missions, it has to be borne in mind, that eight peacekeeping missions in Africa by Africans have been operations costing between \$5 million and \$10 million. It has to be recognised that African forces are some way short of a prerequisites of complex and multi-dimensional peace building.

² Report of the Group of Eminent Persons on Civil Society and UN Relationships.
<http://www.un.org/reform/panel.htm>

³ *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, <http://www.un.org/secureworld/>

⁴ *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*;
<http://www.un.org/largerfreedom/>

⁵ <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/1306&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Thus, peacekeeping missions in Africa by Africans the budget have generally been low budget affairs. African missions are likely to be of this nature unless externally financed. Insofar as complex multi-dimensional missions are required, it is likely that these will have to be carried out by, and certainly financed by, the international community. Where a comprehensive ceasefire is in place, the response is easier. Three regions within Africa (West Africa, The Horn and Southern Africa) are making progress to being able to conduct missions of this type. More extensive missions and those with a peace enforcement mandate will have to remain under the control of the United Nations. Beyond this, it is possible to argue that it is time to re-think peacekeeping fundamentally. The High Level Panel argued that the distinction between Chapter VI Peacekeeping Missions and Chapter VII Peace Enforcement Missions is collapsing. Even Chapter VI missions need a robust capacity for war fighting if necessary. Even when the African Standby Force is in place, it will have to work closely within the UN system. Although there are many positive indications at present, with coups being outlawed by the African Union, one has to be realistic about the capacity of military forces to absorb as much in the way of resources as is allocated to them.

It is also potentially worrying that the emphasis in African peacekeeping has been placed heavily on the security side, rather than conflict prevention. Within the African Union, the weaker Department of Political Affairs needs support. In a situation of extreme poverty and lack of resources for development, it would be a mistake to allocate excessive resources to military purposes. The emphasis should be on early warning, political settlements for disputes or incipient conflicts between competing elites.

In the post-conflict phase, it is also necessary to be severely realistic. Much of the theory of Demobilisation, Disarmament and Re-integration (DDR – or its variants) makes the assumption that there is a formal economy for demobilised fighters to be re-integrated into. In many of the poorer economies the informal sector is dominant. The civilian population, which has struggled through war, often feels twice punished. They suffer the consequences of the fighting, and then the fighters themselves are rewarded for stopping the fighting. These dynamics can lead to a self-defeating cycle and a war economy which is difficult to break. From the side of the international community, there has been experience of misleading pledging conferences and slow release of funds. For societies which are deeply entrenched in war, there need to be early incentives for making peace. There has also been a frequent experience of a gap between peacekeeping and announcement of the re-integration phase and any concerted development programme.

The overall mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) is critical, as is the integration of the response of the World Bank and the IMF. Unless effective governments and states are (re)built, people will look to other forms of social organisation to try to achieve security. There are no easy solutions to these issues, but excessive concentration on peacekeeping facilities, without development programmes, cannot lead to success.

The role of civil society and civilian initiatives in peacekeeping must also be stressed. Too often, the African institutions, whether that is the African Union, NEPAD or regional organisations, are seen as being far away from ordinary people. Often, at lower levels of conflict, traditional structures, elders and local government can play a role in mitigating tension. Attention must also be given, as ECOWAS has done, to

limitation of small arms and light weapons. Almost all of these weapons have come into Africa from outside; very few are manufactured on the African continent. The negotiation of an International Small Arms Treaty would be a step forward.

At present, it is clear that there is a likely imbalance in the likely structures. The African Union has 56 staff members in its Peace and Security Division and only 13 in the political division. An obvious antidote to this problem would be to strengthen the political division and place much more emphasis on early warning.

A more fundamental critique suggests that the whole model of peacekeeping must be re-assessed. Even at UN level, there is an assumption that the personnel should be military, but is it necessarily the case that military personnel are the best equipped to achieve reconciliation? It is also perhaps idealistic, or even unrealistic, to assume as NEPAD has done that 'developmental peacekeeping' can be achieved. The record of the military in all parts of the world as regards development is questionable. There is a danger of invention of new, but ultimately unsatisfactory, roles for the military, which will appeal to the military as an upgrading and justification of their place within African societies. On the other hand, it is often pointed out that the military have a reasonably disciplined source of personnel which can be deployed to parts of the country where they are needed.

Not least because of the behaviour of UN peacekeeping forces in Congo with widespread serious allegations of sexual abuse by troops, the civil and developmental role of military forces can be questioned. Again, however, it is essential to be realistic. Obviously, one would prefer civilian policing in most situations, but where the entire justice system does not operate, forms of justice dispensed by the military are perhaps the only option. The recommendation of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel for a peace building commission is recognition that peace building has so far not been accomplished successfully by the international community.

Both within Africa and within the wider UN constituency, there is recognition that an integrated system is required. Africa must guard against the danger of marginalising itself by assuming that it can bear more of the peacekeeping burden than is realistically the case. Only the UN Security Council can authorise peace enforcement. An African force took on this role in Burundi on a small scale. For the future, African peacekeeping missions are likely to be limited to Chapter VI missions, not more complex operations. There is still some way to go before the African Standby Force is fully operational and, for the foreseeable future, coalitions of the willing, with a limited role, are likely to be the model which Africa uses.

Post-conflict Reconstruction: Case Study – Sierra Leone

The eleven-year war in Sierra Leone was formally declared to be over by the President in 2002. The protracted and devastating conflict had left the government and people of Sierra Leone faced with a huge number of challenges. The war had been caused by a wide range of factors including poverty, corruption, bad governance, political exclusion of the opposition, lack of justice and widespread disregard for the rule of law. Even though the war, certainly in its initial phases, did not have tribal, religious or ideological underpinnings, the brutality with which it was fought and the vicious use of military force, including by the armed forces, led to such levels of destruction that the post-conflict reconstruction task is considerable. The

breakdown of trust between the civilian community and the various armed forces means that reconstruction is a huge undertaking. This has required comprehensive reforms in the security judicial and public sectors. The restructuring and rehabilitation of the security sector is an essential element. The civil service has been strengthened by the formation of a Senior Executive Service which has recruited high level staff also from outside the existing service. An anti-corruption commission has been set up to investigate and eradicate corruption within the country. Some foreign judges have been appointed to preside over anti-corruption cases. The overall programme has emphasised such elements as poverty alleviation, decentralisation of government, civil society participation, human resource development and promotion of human rights and empowerment.

Democratisation and decentralisation of government, with civil society participation, are now key elements of the political landscape. Decentralisation and strengthening of the framework of local government are also central to the strategy. In May 2004 local government elections were held for the first time for over thirty years. These local councils have replaced the management committees, which had been under the direct control of central government. Civilian initiatives such as the 'Campaign for Good Governance' play a key role in monitoring how local and national government is conducted. The media are now stronger and more independent.

The UN peacekeeping force (UNAMSIL) played a key role in promoting peace and ease of tensions that existed between soldiers and the civilian community. At the beginning of the process of DDR, there were about 17,000 soldiers. Good progress is being made towards the target of 10,500 by 2007. The current compliment stands at 11,200.

The security sector is democratically accountable to the government. The President is Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and the Deputy Minister of Defence is a civilian. There is also a civilian Director-General and a military Chief of Defence Staff.

Sierra Leone is a promising case of a country emerging from a massively destructive and long-lasting war. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU), the United Nations and individual governments, in particular the UK government, have all played their role in assisting this transition. The UK government is committed to a long-term partnership agreement to ensure that the progress is maintained. Much remains to be done in terms of basic infrastructure in areas such as health and education, housing, water and sanitation, telecommunications and power generation. There are severe budgetary constraints limiting the development potential of the country. Nonetheless, Sierra Leone serves as an example how committed leadership and support from the international community can help to turn around a war situation.

3 GOVERNANCE

Corruption

The fight against corruption is fuelled by the sense of outrage that ordinary people hold at the abuse of power and illicit taking of advantage by those in positions of responsibility. This deep sense of unfairness is exacerbated by the extreme inequalities within African countries. Since the 1990's, the dominant model of anti-corruption has been formed by initiatives by organisations ranging from the World Bank to Transparency International, as well as various versions of IMF conditionality. There are still many challenges which need to be addressed. By the mid 1990's, addressing corruption was central to the initiatives of global development economics. The key to understanding corruption is to see it as 'abuse of vested authority for private gain'. Corruption can be broken down into different levels of abuse. Petty corruption, for example, is the policemen at the roadside asking for 'a small consideration' for an alleged traffic offence. It is the low level paying of unjustified small sums just to keep the business of life moving. It impacts primarily on poor people. Grand corruption is more prevalent in the procurement area and relates to 'kickbacks' so that a contract can continue. It is the legendary '20% on top'. Looting is carried out by political actors dipping straight into state funds, often with the back-up of militias. This has even more serious macroeconomic impacts. How can corruption be addressed? The following are pointers.

- *Political will and determination of top leaders.* This is essential, but may not be sufficient;
- *Institutional reform and increased accountability of the judiciary, legislature, security services and other institutions of government.* This perception has led to the formation of anti-corruption agencies across Africa, of varying quality and effectiveness;
- *Legal reform.* Attention to the procedures applied to procurement and government acquisition of assets;
- *Free media and a sophisticated and active civil society.* The mobilisation of civil society requires an active role by churches and other religious institutions, the media and other NGOs devoted to other anti-corruption activities. For the media, addressing corruption sells papers, but also runs the risk of mobilising resistance. In a multi-party democracy there is a tendency for the media to align themselves with the opposition. This can lead to problems and contradictions, with the media being seen as 'oppositional'. The understanding of the issues among the media and civil society is deepening;
- *The role of the international community.* The emphasis on anti-corruption policies by the international community is generally helpful. However, the prescriptive and distilled governance agenda of IMF lists can end up by being formulaic. The mere formation of an anti-corruption agency or 'ethics tsar', if it is merely seen as a prerequisite for accessing funds, will remain ineffective. The prescriptions of the international community must also be locally and nationally owned. It is also clear that grand corruption usually cannot continue without some level of western collusion. 'It takes two to tango'. The key challenge is to change the nature of relationships within government and between government and the outside world;
- *The private sector.* For the private sector, predictability of policies is more important than anti-corruption policies. This indicates the pragmatism of the

private sector. Corruption, provided the anticipated level is predictable, is regarded rather like a tax;

- *Transitional justice is essential for countries coming out of conflict.* In the transition from an authoritarian to a democratic government, as well as confronting a catalogue of major human rights abuses, societies often find themselves addressed by the legacy of the previous government in terms of corruption. A new government, arriving with a mandate to address corruption, has a short window of opportunity (often less than two years) to address the situation. Current institutions are often not able to deal with corruption on this scale. This has an effect of meaning that the architects of massive levels of corruption escape with impunity and it becomes increasingly difficult to address any cases further down the scale.

It is necessary, however, to be severely realistic about the difficulties and the limitations of addressing corruption.

- A new administration will often institute reform. This has to be done immediately on assuming power as the first eighteen to twenty-four months are critical. For example, in Georgia, twenty-five of the twenty-nine generals were sacked. Such decisive measures can only happen in the first few months. The public will accept the inevitable mistakes in an early phase. However, the enemy 'knows who you are' and will also mobilise to prevent effective measures being taken.
- One of the most difficult tasks is to break the embedded corruption networks. If these survive, they will resist any effective anti-corruption strategy. With transition to a democratic society, one can assume allies in a freer press. However, the major players within embedded corruption networks include politicians, business people, their brokers and lawyers, some bureaucrats still within the system and security sector officials. Often these corruption networks have succeeded in entrapping entire sections of the political elite. They do not give up their access to funds easily.
- Grand corruption and looting cannot be addressed without skilled facilitation and assistance from countries in the West. This has not yet been taken seriously enough by the international community, although in the banking sector there are some signs that it is being addressed;
- Often a concerted anti-corruption policy will yield contradictory results. Even democracy must be paid for. Where are the resources for multi-party politics to come from? Financing is still a challenge and it is not spoken about enough. When multi-party politics acquires tones of ethnic mobilisation this can give the problems new twists. Key challenges are for societies wishing to emerge from the scourge of corruption are to define and dismantle the embedded networks and particularly to concentrate on three central areas: the energy sector, communications and the security and defence. The international community must address, in a concerted way, the UN Convention against Corruption and to strengthen AU in its efforts to address the issue. After ten years of advocacy, it is essential that the international community moves to a more effective phase of implementation. Public expectations can be quickly disappointed. The almost universal diagnosis of corruption as a problem which undermines macroeconomic stabilisation does not help if effective measures cannot be put into place. The failure to address corruption effectively by many governments has led to an intellectual backlash with some challenging the 'corruption obsession', which consumes great energy but

leads to little practical effect. To succumb to such pessimism would lead to soft pedalling anti-corruption initiatives. This would make governments other policies on wider objectives less effective and could reduce the effective life expectancy of democratically elected governments.

The following measure, which if actively taken, could lead to more effective anti-corruption strategies;

- *Mutual legal assistance and capacity building.* As soon as resources are externalised and lodged, e.g. in foreign banks, it can be very cumbersome and difficult to get them back. Many African governments are asking for assistance in this and the North-South co-operation needs to be improved;
- *In the security and defence sector,* the major manufacturing capacity is in countries of the West. There are a limited number of brokers who facilitate these deals and if western governments were really determined rather than seeking lucrative arms deals, they could name the brokers who are active in this sector and seek to ensure that corruption is eliminated;
- The activities of the Paris Club are coming under scrutiny but the issue of *commercial debt* (the 'London Club') must also be addressed. How is commercial debt acquired and managed? How much of it is fictitious? What more can the banks do to clear up this area?;
- The push for *deregulation in the area of communications* should be supported. This could lead to leapfrogging a stage of technological development and cut out one possible area for corruption and procurement;
- Introduction of regulation in the energy sector would be valuable. Such approaches as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative⁶ and the 'Publish What You Pay' campaign⁷ are helpful;
- The continued reform and scrutiny of the *judiciary and civil service* is essential. It is often smaller reforms which have a quick payoff, for example the provision of stenographers and filing clerks for the legal system could make a huge difference.

The key in much of the approach to corruption is the old maxim 'follow the money'. An emphasis on asset recovery is essential but it has to be noted that those charged with corruption are often in the position to hire the best lawyers and to complicate anti-corruption trials so that they become complex and interminable. It marked a decisive step that the UN had a panel on the illegal exploitation of the mineral resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁸ It is also important that western banks are now co-operating with, for example, the Nigerian Government, in working on asset recovery. The climate post 9/11 with the work of the Financial Action Task Force⁹ has meant that western governments have been keen to address the issue of networks financing terrorism. The same methodology and openness can be applied

⁶ See: <http://www.eitransparency.org/>

⁷ See: <http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/english/>

⁸ See: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=8706&Cr=democratic&Cr1=congo>

⁹ See: http://www1.oecd.org/fatf/SRecsTF_en.htm

to corruption. The UN convention on corruption and the OECD Convention on the Bribery of Foreign Public Officials¹⁰ also need full support.

Attitudinal research in eight countries has indicated that whereas in 2004 41% of the population said that there was now less corruption in their country than a year ago, by 2005 the proportion had dropped to 36%. The result was almost entirely due to the huge loss of confidence in the Kenyan government, with 84% indicating that there had been less corruption in Kenya in 2004 and only 41% in 2005.

Governance, Human Rights and the Rule of Law

The themes are clearly connected. Economic and social rights (the 'right to development') must be respected or society will break down. Ending impunity and achieving peace and stability are essential for economic development. African societies are increasingly taking responsibility for the development of their neighbours and seeking to ensure that there is an adequate response to breakdown in the rule of law in neighbouring countries. The breakdown of the rule of law and descent into open violence leads to huge additional costs. It is estimated, for example, that the international community invested £5 billion in eight years since becoming involved in Sierra Leone. However, the phase of post-conflict reconstruction is one of the most difficult. It is problematic if a country is left struggling to get its police force to be functional again. More attention should be paid to sustainable peace. There are clearly double standards at play. A country like Somalia is not being given anything like the attention accorded to former colonies – whether of the French or British. The African institutions are emerging, but need additional support, above all the African Commission on Peoples' and Human Rights and the associated Court.¹¹ The African Peer Review Mechanism is an important initiative and indicates a determination to get governance right, but the Peer Review so far has not addressed many of the most difficult countries or the tough issues. For the international community, it is important that serious situations are addressed in a comparable manner. For example, the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire led to the establishment of an international commission in November. The crisis in Sudan has generated a similar report which has already been discussed by the United Nations. Similar situations should be addressed with similar urgency. At national level, through human rights institutions such as national commissions and through the development of capacity, human rights observance should be improved. Countries should not wait until the situation deteriorates before responding. Violations of human rights cannot be dealt with in the absence of trained judges and a functioning court system. Developed countries should support initiatives to ensure that the legal sector is functioning well in all African countries. There is a need for mutual accountability by African countries and a need for the African countries themselves to address the tough issues.

The interplay with the extractive industries, for example areas where 'conflict diamonds' are mined is also essential. During the late 1990's there was a huge problem of lack of human rights in areas where major extractive industries were

¹⁰ See: http://www.oecd.org/document/21/0,2340,en_2649_34859_2017813_1_1_1_1,00.html

¹¹ <http://www.achpr.org/>

operating in countries affected by war. In such countries as Angola, Sierra Leone and the DRC, proceeds of mineral mining were a key element in fuelling the war.

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

Currently, twenty-four countries including Ghana and Kenya, have signed up for the APRM. All twenty-four have shown some capacity for reform and beginning to realise the goals and objectives of the APRM. This remains an African approach to improving good governance and accountability. It is essential to develop and apply objective standards as the peer reviews take place. One issue that is already emerging is the need for additional capacity-building. It is also essential to develop national consensus on governance and development. Peer Review has been helpful within the OECD, but it needs to be recognised that developed countries have far more capacity than African states. The significance of the APRM will be seen longer term but it was essential to get the process started. At the same time, if the results of the APRM are meagre or the hard cases are not addressed, there will be a tendency to lose confidence in the procedure.

Given that it is hard for Europe and Africa really to engage in discussion on human rights because the suspicion remains that European countries are 'imposing' standards on Africa, it is essential for Africans to take responsibility for application of universal human rights on their continent. The African Peer Review Mechanism is potentially a strong measure which involves evaluation of the following areas:

- political issues, democracy and governance and the rule of law;
- economic governance and long term poverty reduction;
- socio-economic governance including evaluation of policies on such issues as health, education, water and sanitation;
- corporate governance - looking at the health of the private sector.

The review is therefore potentially very comprehensive and will give a good 'clean bill of health' to any country passing it.

It should be recognised that there is greater openness within Africa to discussion between African countries of human rights issues. The lobbying work of civil society groups such as Amnesty and Human Rights Watch is of great importance and is not easily dismissed even by states which were criticised by such organisations. The attempts to make the UN system for human rights monitoring and response more effective still have a great way to go. Kofi Annan has proposed a human rights committee to replace the Human Rights Commission.¹² It remains to be seen how the member states of the United Nations will respond to this. In any case, it must lead to a strengthening, rather than a weakening, of the already limited institutions and their partial effectiveness.

Among some sectors of civil society in Africa, there is scepticism about the effectiveness of the African Peer Review Mechanism. Some see this as 'the bad boys reviewing themselves'. It is essential that more effective institutions at national and international level for the protection of human rights be instituted.

¹² See: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4419333.stm>

Mutual Accountability

Both North and South have their roles to play in the effort to achieve development for Africa. NEPAD and the OECD Development Assistance Committee are committed through the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's mutual review report to ensure that both sides are accountable.¹³ The Monterrey Financing for Development conference also stressed the concept of mutual accountability.¹⁴ The African Peer Review Mechanism is very important since if it works effectively, it will avoid the suspicion that accountability is synonymous with external pressure. Mutual accountability is also essential because the countries of the North have many types of relationship with those in the South. In many respects, such as agricultural subsidies or climate change (the biggest emitters of climate change gases are the rich countries) mutual accountability needs to be seen as part of a 'coherence agenda'. There is no point in increasing resources, however, if this does not lead to policy changes. There is also a need, for example, for the rich countries to become more accountable through restricting the paying of bribes.

¹³ See: <http://www.uneca.org/conferenceofministers/2005/speech4.asp>;
http://www.uneca.org/conferenceofministers/2005/documents/Mutual_review_of_development_effectiveness_in_the_context_of_NEPAD.pdf

¹⁴ See: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=3197&Cr=Monterrey&Cr1=%0D>

4 IMPROVING AFRICA'S ECONOMIC PROSPECTS

Africa's Economic Prospects

The Commission for Africa has emphasised that growth is vital for poverty reduction. Growth will be driven by the private sector, whether this is from small farms to big firms. Even in Africa, the majority of investment is, and will remain, domestic. However, government must create the environment for economic progress. There is nothing which determines that Africa has to remain the poorest part of the developing world. At the beginning of the 1960's, Africa had twice the income per capita of Asia.

Trade is also a central part of development. Lack of endowment with natural resources is important as an impairment to development, but neither this nor geographical conditions necessarily condemn a country to poverty. Geography is not destiny. If a state is landlocked the question is how to unlock it. The economic results (albeit from a low base) achieved by sub-Sahara Africa, indicate what could happen. Sub-Saharan Africa grew by 5% last year. Ten countries in Africa have had 5% or more growth in the last ten years. However, transport costs are twice as high in sub-Saharan Africa than in Asia. Over recent decades, the infrastructure has decayed dramatically. Cereal yield per acre has gone down. The continent is facing the fastest urbanisation of any continent in history. Malaria is proving tougher in Africa than in other parts of the world for geographical reasons. "Business as usual" would mean outcomes as usual. The underlying causes of Africa's slow development generally lie in governance and geography. These include political factors including poor capacity, lack of accountability, corruption and conflict. Structural factors which have slowed Africa's growth include weak infrastructure and investment climates, dependence on primary commodities and late entry into manufacturing; the environmental and technological factors include Africa's fragile physical environment, climate change, weak science and technology, low agricultural productivity and human factors, HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB and poor health systems generally, weak education systems and the pressures of population growth and urbanisation.

To give further illustrations, 31 out of 43 sub-Saharan countries (excluding island states) suffered from civil conflict during the 1980's and 1990's. Armed conflicts destroy the prospects of development, but surprisingly quick progress can be made on the return to peace.

The infrastructure in Africa is directed mainly from the exploitation of primary goods to transfer to ports or export to Europe. The legacy, in terms of infrastructure, left to Africa by the colonial powers has not been as advantageous as, for example, the connected infrastructure of India. In 2000, the percentage of crop land that was irrigated was ten times higher in South Asia than in sub-Sahara Africa (40% as opposed to 4%). Malaria kills between 1.1 and 2.7 million people each year of whom one million are children under five.

Africa could be strong and prosperous. The analysis for the Commission for Africa argues that clear measures on peace and security, governance, investment climate, infrastructure, trade and human development, supported by strong external finance, could enable African countries to achieve 7% growth by 2010 and make strong progress towards the millennium development goals.

Trade

More trade is vital for increased growth and poverty reduction. Africa faces huge challenges in catching up with its competitors since its world share of trade has fallen from 6% to less than 2% in 20 years. Both Africa's limited capacity to trade and its limited market access must be addressed. Africa's capacity to trade must be increased by a mix of better infrastructure, a lively private sector, reduction of internal barriers within Africa and more diversified economies. Africa also has to increase its efforts to accelerate regional integration. Improved market access through the dismantling of developed country trade barriers is also essential – only an ambitious Doha Round will benefit Africa. This would require agreement by developed countries:

- on progressive reduction of tariffs to zero by 2015;
- the commitment to reducing non-tariff barriers;
- elimination of trade-distorting support to cotton and sugar; and
- commitment to end export subsidies and all trade distorting support to agriculture by 2010.

Transitional support will be required to help Africa adjust to the new trading regime. Building capacity will take time but in the interim financial assistance ('aid for trade') is required. Unrestricted access and preferences should be extended to all low income countries.

Aid

In preparation for the G8 meeting, a consensus is being built (or at least attempted) to double aid to Africa during the next 3 to 5 years. This includes efforts radically to improve the quality of aid by strengthening the processes of accountability, allocating aid to countries where poverty is deepest and aid can best be used, channelling more aid through grants to avoid the build up of debt, making aid untied, predictable, harmonised and aligned to the policymaking processes of recipient countries, reducing conditionality and protecting countries better against unanticipated shocks.

Since there are issues related to absorptive capacity, the Commission for Africa has recommended a two-stage approach. In the first stage, only half of the Commission's full package would be implemented. Aid effectiveness is stronger where policy environments are better and where aid delivery is of good quality. Further increases in aid would be subject to a review assessing improvements in governance and in the quality of aid.

Debt

For poor countries in sub-Saharan Africa which need debt relief there must be 100% debt cancellation as a part of a financing package to achieve the millennium development goals. The key criterion must be that the money should be used to deliver development, growth and poverty reduction for countries actively promoting good governance. This should replace narrow sustainability ratios. The Commission for Africa has recommended that a transparent debt compact be produced to include all low income countries in sub-Saharan Africa including those excluded from current schemes. This should cancel debt stock and debt service by up to 100% and cover multilateral and bilateral aid. For poor countries in sub-Saharan Africa which need it

the objective must be 100% debt cancellation. This should be part of the financing package for these countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals as was promised in Monterey and Kananaskis.

The Role of Business

The primary contribution of business to poverty reduction is through generating economic growth which creates the jobs and economic opportunities which lift people out of poverty. It also produces tax revenue needed to fund public spending. Business Action for Africa is a banner under which African and international businesses are mobilising support for Africa.¹⁵ Each participating business will sign up for a business action plan for Africa setting out clearly what they believe the G8 and African governments should do and their own commitments both as individual firms and together. Business sees its role as advocacy for business friendly policies, promotion of business opportunities in Africa by combating excessive gloom, responsible behaviour by business, improving commitment to investment through small and medium enterprises, capacity development developing new products making these affordable. A partnership with governments, communities, business and donors.

Infrastructure

It is now three years since the new partnership for Africa's development (NEPAD) adopted its socio-economic renewal programme for Africa. In the last three years the NEPAD founding document has been augmented by detailed implementation plans covering key priorities. Infrastructure will require major external financing. The principals of NEPAD are African ownership and leadership for self-reliant development, promotion of good governance and sound economic management, recognition of the diversity of African countries, accelerated regional economic integration, promotion of partnerships with the private sector, civil society and the international community and a new partnership with highly industrialised countries and multilateral institutions, based on mutual respect and responsibility.

The significance of the infrastructure for Africa's development is widely accepted. Regional and international trade are central to economic growth and development. Efficient infrastructure has the effect of generating new investment in other sectors. African countries, individually, are too small to generate the economies of scale found in larger markets. The weak infrastructure linkages condemn the African region to low competitiveness in the global market. Regional infrastructure leads to larger project sizes capable of attracting more private sector investment.

NEPAD has recognised this and is seeking to promote regional integration and development to generate economies of scale. Infrastructure is regarded as a priority in promoting the regional integration and bridging the infrastructure gap has been identified as an important element in promoting regional integration. Infrastructure is also an important element in using Africa's economic marginalisation. Significant investment in infrastructure is required to improve Africa's trading position.

¹⁵ See: <http://www.cbcbglobeink.org/cbcbglobeink/events/baa05/Background.htm>

Cross border development needs to be fostered and significant financial investment in infrastructure is needed. This will also help to lower the risks facing private investors. NEPAD has developed a two-pronged approach on infrastructure:

- The short-term action plan (STAP) with an emphasis on facilitation i.e. the establishment of policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks that create a suitable environment for investment, capacity building initiatives, physical or capital investment in projects and studies to prepare new priority projects.
- The medium- to long-term strategic framework seeks to develop the short term action plan and will look at longer term investments. It will also seek to co-ordinate approaches by NEPAD members.

NEPAD will seek to assist African countries, the regional economic councils and other institutions to prepare high quality, viable regional infrastructure projects in energy, water, transport and information and communication technology. The African Development Bank has created an infrastructure project preparation facility with initial support from the Canadian government. The European Union Water Initiative has a budget of €20million for the African water facility. The US Trade and Development Agency and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency are also supporting infrastructure projects. African countries are seeking to improve political stability, create an enabling environment for investment, to intensify private sector participation, to share knowledge and good practice and establish institutions which can assist in the implementation of regional programmes. The Africa Commission has recommended that \$10 billion be made available for infrastructure projects (with seed funding from the Canadian government). The Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund is recommended with a budget of \$100 million for small enterprises.

Encouragement of investment

Small and medium enterprises require support in Africa. In addition, the Investment Climate Facility requires \$550 million. This is a serious attempt to ensure that appropriate policies are in place. It is essential that business speaks with one voice and builds on the momentum of the Africa Commission report.

The private sector is clear that infrastructure, health and education require public money. Business will not provide these essentials. The Commission for Africa has done excellent work in getting the business action group together. That group is seeking to encourage African and international business to speak with one voice and to showcase promising approaches to development. Governments need to address property rights and cut red tape, as well as taking the measures recommended by the investment climate facility. It is essential that business also gets behind initiatives such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and that this is extended from the extractive industries to such industries as fishing, forestry, construction and engineering. Business must also work together to remove bribery, particularly from the procurement issues. Government has a responsibility for ensuring that rules are clear and that there is no discretion for officials to take additional payments. There is great scope for developing small and medium sized industries¹⁶ through specially dedicated funds and with the support of the banking

¹⁶ See the report by the Shell Foundation, *Enterprise Solutions to Poverty*, March 2005; http://www.shellfoundation.org/download/pdfs/Shell_Foundation_Enterprise_Solutions_to_Poverty.pdf

sector. The African Business Action Plan has also achieved great support.¹⁷ Within South Africa, one hundred companies are cooperating on a business trust and there is a national business initiative involving three hundred companies. Such business cooperation may seem to work against the usual business approach of competition, but if businesses speak with one voice they have more influence, they have one framework and many options for further economic development. Business can also address particular issues such as HIV/AIDS and its impact on poverty eradication. Business in Botswana has been particularly active in this regard.

Financing Needs

The Commission for Africa has taken a serious step in assessing what Africa would need in order to meet the Millennium Development Goals. There is now an increasing consensus within the donor community on what is needed. It is clear that aid is not enough. The Doha Round must be a trade round with better market excess and internal resource mobilisation. This will require raising taxes. Writing off debt will also make a positive contribution. The British government has also proposed the International Finance Facility to enable front-loading of ODA flows. France and Germany have proposed international levies, for example, on air travel.

Traditional development assistance has to be increased. Most major industrial nations are not yet close to the 0.7% agreed in principal. The British government has reversed the trend of declining aid payments and has committed itself to achieving 0.7% by 2013. It is proposed that the European Commission donor countries achieve an average of 0.56% of GNP by 2010. Even this, however, would not deliver the financing quickly enough. The International Finance Facility is an attempt to leverage the Monterrey commitment and securitise future aid flows in order to get to the additional \$50 billion per annum needed by 2015. GAVI¹⁸ is attempting a prototype of an IFF-type instrument. There are already donor commitments of \$4 billion dollars per annum and a launching plan by the end of the year. If it works it could help to convince sceptics of the success of the IFF as a scheme. At Harvard University, proposals have been made for a scheme to enable advance purchases on a large scale of new vaccines as a very effective way of preventing illness and safeguarding the development costs for drug companies.¹⁹ The French and Germans are proposing levies on air tickets which could generate some of the needed capital. Debt relief of up to 100% on bilateral debt has already been achieved. There is still considerable debt outstanding to the multilateral agencies. Debt relief is one of the most effective forms of transfer. In effect, it becomes a flow of money that the developing country government does not need to pay and thus the funds go straight into the budget. Given proper agreed conditionality (e.g. that the money should be spent on health and education) it can be used very effectively. The British government is also pressuring the IMF to sell more gold. The US currently does not

¹⁷ See:

http://www.foundation-development-africa.org/africa_development/commission_africa/commission_general/concluding_statement.htm

¹⁸ The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation: See: <http://www.vaccinealliance.org/>

¹⁹ For an introduction to the academic discussion of this proposal, see: <http://content.healthaffairs.org/cgi/content/abstract/24/3/653>; Berndt & Hurvitz in : *Health Affairs 2005* <http://content.healthaffairs.org/cgi/content/abstract/24/3/690>; Batson in : *Health Affairs 2005*

want this. To sell gold reserves would require agreement by 85% of the shareholders. As the US currently has 70%, it is unlikely this approach would proceed although it is still under discussion. Throughout the year, there are a number of opportunities for making further progress. The Gleneagles G8 meeting is an important event to generate action. The G8 finance ministers have a series of opportunities to move such proposals forward. In September the Millennium Review Summit will check progress against the MDGs. There are also the autumn meeting of the World Bank and IMF and the WTO ministerial in December.

5 INCLUSION AND THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

Equity and Development

It is often argued that growth and basic services are the most essential prerequisites for development and that redistribution can occur later. Equity is a normative concept related to distribution of outcomes. A key principle is equality of opportunity, whereby outcomes should be driven by individual preferences, efforts and talents and not by predetermined circumstances such as gender, race, social group or family background. Two of the strongest factors relating to inequity are where one is born and the educational level of one's mother. African and Latin American societies are among the most unequal in the world. In addition, there is the HIV/AIDS impact which exacerbates income inequalities. There are also instrumental reasons why inequity is important. Where there are market failures, resources flow to those who already have more resources. Development thrives best and is fairer where there is an increase in opportunity rather than a re-enforcement of mechanisms emphasising status and influence. Unequal power and influence leads to the capture of institutions. For example, there is a strong correlation between protection against expropriation and economic growth. Political and economic elites need to be constrained. Particularly in situations where cultural differences are politicised, within an authoritarian political system, there are harmful outcomes. Unequal control over resources leads to flawed political institutions. These in turn lead to bad economic institutions and impaired development. The corresponding strategy is to expand access through concentration on access to education, health and safe water. The taxation system, justice system, land distribution and infrastructure also need to be addressed.

There is a clear case for aid to offset adverse circumstances. In the design of poverty reduction strategies, there is a clear case for shifting the rules of aid management towards countries where these policies will be applied. The main challenge for the design of aid is to ensure its effectiveness within the country. Aid will work badly in settings where institutions are weak and there is great inequality. An analysis focused on equity suggests that greater liberalisation of movement of labour, particularly unskilled labour, would produce significant results. Such a message is, however, politically unpopular in rich countries.²⁰

Gender Dimensions of Development

A proper understanding of development and human rights requires recognition that poverty 'wears a female face'.²¹ Priorities in African contexts include reducing the poverty of women, addressing violence against women and also the differential

²⁰ Fuller presentation of this argument is anticipated in the 2006 World Development Report: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTRESEARCH/EXTWDRS/EXTWDR2006/0,,menuPK:477658~pagePK:64167702~piPK:64167676~theSitePK:477642,00.html> ; for advance publication details, see: <http://www.oup.com/us/catalog/general/subject/Economics/Developmental/?ci=0821362518&view=usa>

²¹ For valuable material see the UNIFEM website: <http://www.unifem.org/>

impact of HIV/AIDS.²² 70% of food production is conducted by women who are operating in rural settings. Women's marginalisation has many dimensions. There is often a verbal recognition, including in NEPAD, that addressing gender inequality is essential. If this is systematically carried through it would be a landmark decision. A proper process of development should involve leaving no-one behind. This is true at continental level where Africa is in danger of being left behind and also in national development where the rural economy and women in particular are in danger of being excluded from growth and economic development. A gender analysis requires an assessment of the different interests and contributions of women and men to development.

There are some encouraging signs both in terms of women's economic empowerment and also representation of women. Rwanda has the highest percentage of women representatives in parliament. The African parliament is presided over by a woman (Gertrude Mongella). Women and women's peace groups tend to be more critical than men of arms spending. Spending on arms in Africa has reached \$70 billion per annum whereas only \$3 billion is contributed towards gender equality work. Women must also be involved in efforts to overcome the digital divide. Often the application of new technology merely serves further to marginalise women. In the ten years since the Beijing conference there has been much talk and policy commitment to involving women, but the practical results have been much weaker. The response to this needs to be an increase in resources devoted to furthering the capacities and choices of women in addressing issues related to poverty and human security. These measures, such as poverty reduction strategies, have to also involve a gender analysis and accountability and responsiveness to women's initiatives. Detailed analysis is required to assess the impact of policies on the lives of ordinary women. This requires such approaches and poverty assessments, differentiation of socioeconomic, health and demographic surveys by gender and time use surveys. More women than men are HIV positive. More women have low incomes and women also have less access to financial markets. To address these issues requires that precise information is available on how resources are used to benefit men and women and boys and girls. This requires a detailed knowledge of: 'who are the poor?', 'where are the poor?' and 'what mechanisms keep these people poor?'. With the tendency to provide sector wide support, the need to do such analysis is increased. It is often the case that gender-based initiatives are the most under-funded. Criticism of gender-based initiatives is also made under the guise of advocating 'mainstreaming' which then may or may not happen. The socioeconomic situation of women is unlikely to improve unless there are specific agencies, policies and approaches directed particularly to improvement of the situation of women and girls and full attention is given to mainstreaming such approaches within established programmes. The area of sexual and reproductive rights remains critical.

The dimension of culture remains a problematic area since there are elements of most cultures worldwide which discriminate against women. Religion is an ambivalent factor. In many contexts it backs up the cultural values which discriminate against women. It can, however, have a liberating function and religious values can be mobilised by women for self-empowerment.

²² See: <http://www.genderandaids.org/>

African societies remain profoundly unequal. The Gini co-efficients²³ for many African countries are among the most unequal in the world. Within these societies the gender impacts are also more severe on women than men.

Health

Key concerns for addressing the health problems of Africa are finding finance, developing effective health systems and addressing the main killers of poor people. The USA spends \$5000 per person per year on the health of its people. In Europe, the figure is \$2500. In Africa the figure is only \$15 per person per year. As the Commission of Macroeconomics and Health²⁴ has argued, this is far below the minimum level estimated at \$40 per person per year on which a basic health service can be run. Both the quantity and quality of the spend must be increased. Sustainability is a key factor. Aid volatility undermines the predictability of financial flows and is critically important for treatment with anti-retrovirals and the new malaria drugs. The further problem for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria has been substitution.²⁵ In some countries, as additional resources are made available through the Global Fund, expenditure on the health service has been capped. There are new and encouraging initiatives. For example, the International Finance Facility (IFF)²⁶ anticipates front-loading expenditure for key development priorities such as health. A pilot approach for immunisation is under way.²⁷ The Commission for Africa has estimated that \$7 billion per annum are required to build (or re-build) health systems in Africa. The model implied or assumed within the report is similar to that of the UK National Health Service - a system of publicly employed health officials provided for by general taxation. The UK model is, however, increasingly atypical. In many African countries, the network of Catholic and Protestant not-for-profit hospitals is essential to the provision of health.

Serious attention must also be addressed to the big killers of poor people. Malaria kills about 3 million people per year. This situation has worsened since the late 1970's. There are four key interventions which have been identified and effectively can limit the spread of malaria. Rapid diagnosis and treatment; use of chemically impregnated bed nets; presumptive treatment of pregnant women and vector control (mainly through DDT spraying indoors). Treatment in Zambia has indicated that interventions can be very effective. In percentage terms the HIV/AIDS crisis is most acute in Africa. In terms of absolute numbers, however, India leads the world in

²³ For a technical note explaining the calculation and significance of this measure of inequality, see: <http://www.nscb.gov.ph/ru10/teknotes/tnidi.htm>

²⁴ See: <http://www.cmhealth.org/>

²⁵ See: <http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/>

²⁶ See the explanation of the International Finance Facility, through the Treasury website of the British Government: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/international_issues/int_gnd_intfinance.cfm

²⁷ Generally known as the International Finance Facility for Immunization (IFFIm): http://www.vaccinealliance.org/Board/Board_Reports/14brd_IFFIm.php. The issue was addressed by the British Chancellor, Gordon Brown at the IMF in April 2005: <http://www.imf.org/External/Spring/2005/imfc/stmt/eng/gbr.pdf>

terms of affected people. In Swaziland, 42% of the adult population are HIV positive, among 25-29 year old women, 56% are infected. However, it is not necessary to be fatalistic. The infection rate for 15-19 year old girls in Ghana is decreasing. As a result of international efforts, generic anti-retrovirals, mostly produced in India, have brought down the cost of treatment per patient from almost \$30,000 per patient to under \$140 in five years. The message needs to be stressed that safe sex is not only a matter of use of condoms, but requires cultural shifts and a clear stand against imposed or involuntary sex. Curbing the behaviour of predatory men is essential.

While the needs are formidable, with an estimated one million new health sector workers needed in Africa, there are also many approaches which are relatively cheap which could be achieved. Many parasitic diseases and eye diseases can be treated for less than \$1 per person per year. Faith-based networks and Non-Governmental Organisations have a great deal to offer and it is encouraging that several Presidents and First Ladies are giving health care high priority in publicity.

Education

In recent years, education has been reduced to “primary education for all” too often in discussions. There is an increasing tendency to counteract this short-sighted approach. Higher education is again being recognised as an essential priority. Education, development of skills and capacity-building will require an adequate higher education sector. The Commission for Africa report recognises that higher education requires renewal in Africa. The brain drain has impacted on Africa very substantially with 70,000 PhDs of African origin currently in the United States.

Science and technology policy also requires careful attention. A comprehensive strategy for training of nurses and teachers is also required. The commitment to universal primary education and gender equality are both essential. It should be recognised, however, that universal primary education and higher education should not be regarded as in a trade-off against each other. The “education for all” commitment whereby no government with a properly formulated plan for achieving universal primary education would be left without the resources to complete it, is one of the more progressive commitments undertaken by the international community.²⁸ If \$7-8 billion per year could be made available for education in Africa, serious attention would have to be given to the quality of education provided.

As well as primary education, the needs for secondary education and the needs of those emerging from school for employment have to be taken into account. It is estimated that 36% of the 15-24 year olds in Africa are unemployed.

The Role of the Diaspora

It is estimated that, worldwide, remittances are possibly twice as high as the sum total of all development assistance. Engaged diaspora groups have many links back to their countries of origin. In the media, much negative attention has focused on such issues as organised crime and trafficking. Increasingly, diaspora groups are organising themselves and finding a voice within their countries where they have settled. Attempts have been made to assess how the skills and resources of

²⁸ See: <http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/index.shtml>

diaspora groups could be made more readily available to Africa. There is a need for co-ordination of such efforts. Some obstacles could be addressed, for example, such as making remittances less costly. The role of diaspora groups could go well beyond this in terms of providing expertise and advice, developing towards being trans-national communities, providing political advice and capacity building. Diaspora groups are also interested in longer terms partnerships and alliances.

The Role of the Media and Public Opinion

The media can play an important role in changing perceptions of Africa and thereby indirectly assisting Africa's development. Radio is particularly powerful and important. As Africa democratises, there is more space for the media to operate in.

In developed countries, there is a perception of Africa as 'one big risky country'. Such ill-informed views fuel 'Afro-pessimism'. There is a tendency for journalists to major on negative stories of war and famine.

The media climate and the impact of the media would be improved if African countries were to have a strong regulatory framework to protect democratic media; if African governments were to encourage, or even allow, plural or free media; if the AU and NEPAD were to put pressure on governments to eliminate restrictions on the media and if donors would support independent media institutions. The encouragement of media to develop and not just publish bad news, to increase their coverage and provide more balanced information and for western media outlets to employ more African journalists would be positive steps. The funding and support of independent media institutions, through a consortium of partners would be valuable. The concept of an African 'Al-Jazeera' has become an important slogan for such developments.

In the rich world, media follow the domestic interests and agenda. There is no prospect of this changing without serious pressure from the public. The campaigning success of Jubilee 2000 has shown, however, that public opinion can influence and use media reporting for progressive policies. \$100 million worth of bilateral debt has been relieved largely as a result of such pressure.

The 'Children of Live Aid' from 1985 onwards have used the media in an intelligent way. On an annual basis, Comic Relief publishes stories of hope. Unless there is very strong public support for campaigns such as Make Poverty History, the media will not be pressed to report it. The use of celebrities in campaigning provides stories for the media to fasten on to in a way that makes the issues easier for the public to understand.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The Commission for Africa has made a serious attempt to involve African voices in its deliberations. Civil society inputs were received from 49 of the 54 sub-Saharan countries. The Commission has remained convinced that the Report is comprehensive and that the recommended plans for action hold together. In addition, the Commission Report has support from the African Union and NEPAD. There are some easy actions that could be taken, for example, for developed countries to ratify the UN Convention against Corruption. There is clear need for a stronger African voice within the Bretton Woods institutions. No specific recommendation of the precise nature of shareholdings is given in the report since this would be too precise and would pre-empt the outcome of a process of negotiation. However, the Commissioners are clear there needs to be change. The Report is not saying that conditionality should cease to exist, but it makes clear that partnership and an obligation to tax payers require different forms of conditionality. The conditionality should be based on the wishes of the African population themselves. This clearly articulated through civil society as, for example, opposition to corruption.

It is clearly counter-productive when, for example, the Tanzanian Ministry of Finance receives up to 200 donor missions per year. It is in everyone's interests to change such a system. It is essential that African countries sign up for, and bring to fruition, the evaluations of the African Peer Review Mechanism. This is not an imposition of a model from outside, rather African countries deciding themselves to put their own house in order.

Growth is the key message. The international community and African governments need to set their sights high to avoid further marginalisation to have any chance of meeting the millennium development goals. The private sector and trade will stimulate growth. African governments must change their perspectives on the private sector and vice-versa. The investment climate is vital. Development agencies should place growth at the centre of their policies and understand the private sector better. Development agencies should invest strongly in infrastructure, the capacity to trade and adjustment. Rich countries should open their markets and support integration within Africa. With strong action and good partnerships an African resurgence is possible.

- Prevention of *conflict* must be prioritised. This includes binding agreements on arms transfers and brokering, as well as clarity about corporate behaviour in conflict zones. Investment in development is investment in peace.
- *Governance* must be addressed and externally supported through efforts including the African Peer Review Mechanism. Corruption must be addressed and accountability and transparency in economic matters improved. This requires strengthened data collection and support for initiatives such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.
- *Education and health systems* must be strengthened. HIV/AIDS must be a priority. Reduction of vulnerability and exclusion with the priority on the health and development of women and young people.
- The *constraints to growth and participation* must be addressed. The goal is 7% economic growth by 2010. Infrastructure must be a priority. The

investment climate facility is one option. MIGA²⁹ risk insurance in post-conflict countries should be reassessed. Investment in agriculture must be a priority. Development of entrepreneurial skills and employment generation with a gender and youth focus are key issues.

- Africa's *capacity to trade* must be strengthened by improving Africa's access to markets in the context of the reform of the international trading system.
- *Aid* must be doubled with an extra \$25 billion provided over the next three to five years plus \$12.5 internal public finances mobilised. Further increases in aid in the future would have to be based on reviews of absorptive capacity and other issues. If the International Finance Facility is successful such increases in aid could be frontloaded.
- 100% *multilateral debt relief* based on development criteria could be available and an increased use of grants.

To focus on just one area, the detailed recommendation of the Commission for Africa concerning growth include:

- *Promoting growth*: \$10 billion per year for infrastructure up to 2010 and, subject to review, \$20 billion per year by 2015. The support for the NEPAD investment climate facility and the package to promote agriculture.
- *Promoting the participation of poor people* in growth through an Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund to promote small enterprises. Also, measures to promote youth employment. Role of business calls for action by businesses in support of the reports recommendations and measures to encourage pro poor investment. Business is already active in this field.
- *The environment*: Measures to improve sustainability must be taken and Africa's ability to adapt to risks and impacts of climate change supported.

The recommendations of the African Commission make a coherent package not a series of options to choose from.³⁰ There are positive signs already. France and the UK have indicated that they are prepared to double their aid to Africa as have Japan, Germany and Canada. The US has trebled its assistance to Africa in recent years and it is being asked to double aid again. The criteria for the success of the African Commission report is whether the recommendations are implemented. It should be possible to look back from the year 2015 and identify 2005 as being the year in which the global community recognised that the time for implementation is now. 2005 could be the year in which a significant shift was made and the necessary changes began to be implemented.

Roger Williamson
June 2005

Wilton Park Papers are summaries of the main points and conclusions of a conference. The reports reflect rapporteurs' personal interpretations of the proceedings – as such they do not constitute any institutional policy of Wilton Park nor do they necessarily represent the views of rapporteurs.

²⁹ Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency : <http://www.miga.org/>

³⁰ For the full recommendations of the report see: *Our Common Interest (Part1)* : <http://www.commissionforafrica.org/english/report/introduction.html>