

## Editorial

### **Democracy and Good Governance as a Prerequisite for Sustainable Peace en Development in Africa**

The absence of peace and underdevelopment are probably the most serious problems confronting African people since independence. During the first two decades of Africa's independence, international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) favoured the 'dictatorships of development' in Africa. They argued that a truly 'developmental state' had to be authoritarian. Put otherwise, an authoritarian state rather than a democratic one was the most suitable to contribute to socioeconomic development on the continent. Many political scientists and legal scholars endorsed the idea of a developmental or modernising oligarchy. The support for the 'dictatorships of development' under the form of military and one party regimes was coupled with the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) devised by the World Bank and the IMF as a panacea to the problems of Africa's economic underdevelopment. They were inspired by Eastern Asian countries better known as 'Asian Tigers' that made significant progress in terms of economic development under authoritarian regimes.

Towards the end of the 1970s, the inability of African governments to deliver on their developmental promises became evident. Africans people, Western governments and IFIs unanimously concluded on the failure of these 'dictatorships of development'. 'Governance' then replaced SAPs as a 'conditionality' to benefit loans and other financial advantages from the Bretton Woods institutions. Interestingly, when it was adopted, 'governance' referred to the management of state's affairs or the practical exercise of power and authority to conduct public affairs. The emphasis was on accountability, fight against corruption, and freedom of expression. It is only in a paper read at a World Bank-sponsored conference on development economics in 1992 that Boeninger suggested that governance was the same as 'good government'. Still, it did not necessarily mean 'democratic governance', as democracy and governance continued to represent two different worlds.

Many African social scientists rejected 'governance' and even 'good governance' without democracy. The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), which is the premier think tank consisting of African social scientists, established an institute on democratic governance in the early 1990s. African social scientists definitely contributed to changing the governance discourse nationally, regionally and globally.

After decades of authoritarianism, African leaders also agreed that good governance should be democratic governance. The African Union (AU), which replaced the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), takes democratic governance seriously.

In the Preamble to the AU Constitutive Act, which was adopted in Lomé, Togo, in July 2000 and came into operation in May 2002, Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the AU held that they were ‘determined to promote and protect human and peoples’ rights, to consolidate democratic institutions and culture, and to ensure good governance and the rule of law’.

The Constitutive Act provides that the objectives of the AU are inter alia to promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance. On the other hand, one of the major principles of the AU is respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance. There is clearly a close relationship between democracy, respect for human rights, the constitution, and the rule of law. This relationship is also stressed in the declaration on the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) (2001) and in the NEPAD Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance (2002) that is the founding instrument of the African Peer-Review Mechanism (APRM).

The AU adopted several other instruments aimed at promoting good governance. These include the Protocol to the African Charter on the African Court of Human and Peoples’ Rights (adopted in 1998 and in force since 2003), the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (adopted on 11 July 2003 and entered into force on 5 August 2007) and most importantly the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG).

The adoption of the ACDEG in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 30 January 2007, and mostly its entry into force on 15 February 2012 was an unprecedented, historic, and miraculous development, as it came from the very same leaders who were regularly blamed for their authoritarian and corrupt governance.

The Preamble to the ACDEG reaffirms the commitment, determination, and conviction of AU leaders to promote and work towards the establishment of a culture of democracy, elections and good governance in Africa. Under the ACDEG, democracy entails respect for human rights, supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law, separation of powers, gender equality, popular participation through universal suffrage, and political pluralism, including opposition political parties. It also requires some political culture and peace to prosper.

The linkage between democracy and peace is critically important for a continent plagued with numerous conflicts. Peace contributes to the creation of an environment that helps democracy prosper and vice versa. Violence and war are inimical to democracy. On the other hand, African countries have been going to the polls since independence without these elections contributing to democratic consolidation. Accordingly, the ACDEG aims at promoting democratic elections. These are and should be regular, free, fair, transparent, competitive and credible elections conducted by competent, independent and impartial national electoral bodies.

Like the NEPAD Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance that undoubtedly inspired it, the ACDEG adopts a holistic conception of governance, which is political, social, economic, and corporate governance. It emphasises political governance, which should be ‘good governance’ and ‘democratic governance’, entailing transparency and participatory democracy, access to information, freedom of the press, and accountability in the management of public affairs, and an independent judiciary while excluding corruption.

Broadly understood, democracy and good governance are a prerequisite for sustainable peace and development, which are interrelated. Without democracy and good governance, there can be no sustainable peace and development in Africa. However, promoting them requires constant production of knowledge that would inform public policies on the continent. It is our social responsibility as African scholars to produce knowledge that would promote democracy and good governance desperately needed for an African renaissance.

The African Journal of Democracy and Governance (AJDG) is a bilingual and multi-, inter- and trans-disciplinary peer-reviewed journal of the Institute for Democracy, Governance, Peace and Development in Africa (IDGPA) which is registered in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in South Africa. It constitutes an African intellectual response to the major problems of African people that mainly relate to democracy, good governance, peace and development.

All the contributions to this inaugural issue revolve around democracy and governance. Four articles reflect on democracy and political governance, one on economic and financial governance, and one on corporate governance.

Jean-Pierre Mbelu Babanya tackles the critical land question and the issue of natural resources in the DRC. He explains how the lust for the Congolese land by foreign powers and companies resulted in repeated wars to help them maintain their stranglehold on the Congo. His main argument is that of an international complot against the sovereignty of the DRC, a complot hatched by the dominating capitalist elite and some ‘peripheral minorities’ interested in the perpetuation of a ‘chaos’ in this country endowed with immense natural resources.

As for Babatunde Fagbayibo, he focuses on the role of the youth in the democratisation of the continent. He argues that the disenchantment of young people with the political and economic conditions prevailing in Africa is justified. The oft-mouthed cliché that the young people are the leaders of tomorrow has not been matched by genuine commitment to prepare them for the future. His article looks at different ways of enhancing youth activism, including through the use of technology, in order to advance socio-political change in Africa. He holds that the primary responsibility of articulating and defining the youth agenda and achieving lofty objectives such as democracy, good governance, peace and development lies with the youth across the continent.

André Mbata Mangu's article questions the presidential 'third term syndrome' and the tendency of a number of incumbent African Presidents to behave as monarchs, cling to power and run their countries in violation of the Constitutions. The result is the conversion of some constitutional or de jure 'republics' into de facto 'monarchies' as our presidents would prefer to die in power. The author calls for an end of the 'presidential monarchies', which were or are being established in the total indifference and even with the support of some foreign 'democratic' leaders. He reminds African people of their duty to oppose the establishment of such 'presidential monarchies' while advising leaders and associates to stop subverting the rule of law as there is 'life after the presidency'.

Etienne Mutabazi takes the issue of good political governance further by addressing the central role that the prosecutor plays in criminal proceedings before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). Based on the examination of some cases brought before and already decided by the ICTR, he comes to the conclusion that the prosecutor has constantly abused his power due to lack of independence, professionalism and accountability.

Emile Muadimanga Ilunga discusses the under-'bancarisation' or the underdevelopment of the banking system in the DRC. His article touches on economic and financial governance. The author examines the causes of the underdevelopment of the banking system, its negative effects on economic development and the possible remedies for establishing an effective banking system in the DRC.

Yves-Junior Manzanza and Justin Monsenepwo rather focus on corporate governance as they deal with employees' participation in the management of companies as an advanced form of democracy in comparative German, French and Congolese labour law. Starting with an analysis of the co-determination in comparative law, relying in particular on the German and French models, their article highlights the benefits of this mechanism and recommends its instauration under the Congolese labour law which provides for a simple representation of the employees and not their participation in the company's governing bodies.

The AJDG will provide a platform for the production of knowledge and exchanges of ideas aimed at promoting democracy, good governance, peace and development in Africa. Such knowledge should assist all those interested in democracy and good governance at the national, sub-regional and regional levels.

As the first issue of the Journal goes out, I wish to thank all the colleagues who made this possible, especially those who kindly agreed to serve on the editorial committee and board, those who peer-reviewed the articles and others who encouraged this initiative. I should also thank all the members of IDGPA.

The AJDG is the first African bilingual and multi-disciplinary journal of social sciences and humanities to be published in the DRC. Publishing a high-level scientific journal under the conditions that currently prevail in the country

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and in the rest of the continent is costly. I therefore wish to express my gratitude to all those persons, natural and juristic, that will come on board to help us ensure the sustainability of this intellectual enterprise that is vitally important for the future of our continent and our people.

**André Mbata Mangu**  
Editor-in-chief