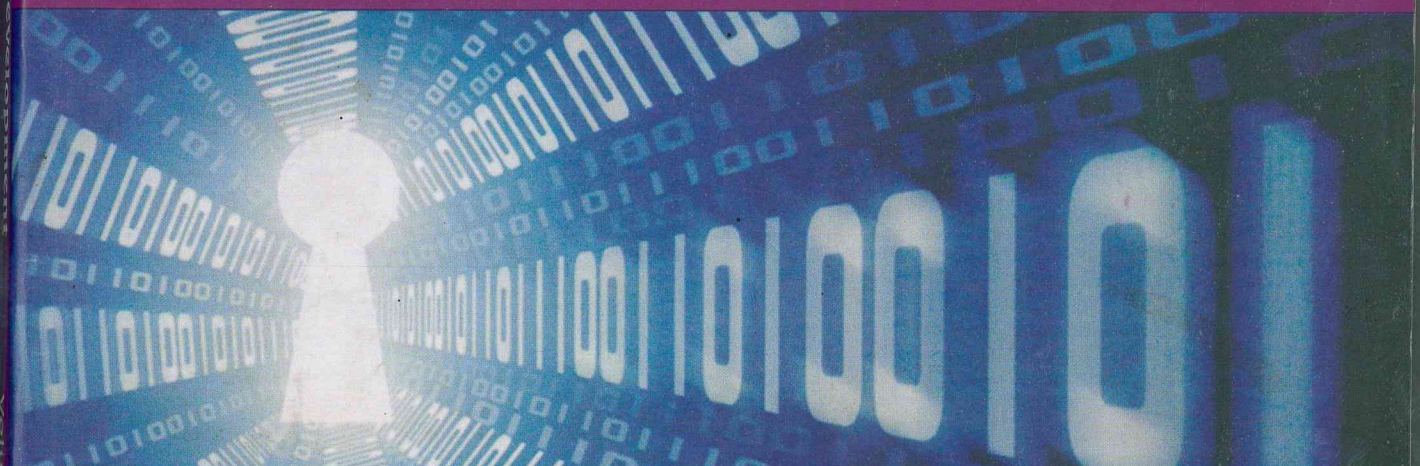


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Journal of Peace, Security & Development

ISSN: 2360-9435

Volume 1, No. 4, 2015



RE-OPENING NEPAD DEBATE FROM A PEACE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This study is centred on the debate which followed the launching of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in Abuja (Nigeria) in 2001. By reopening the said debate the paper contends that the question as to whether this blueprint for development has the potential to turn the conflict-ridden countries around and produce a peace-friendly environment does not come out clearly in the literature. Far from being an oversight, the omission of its potential for promoting peace in Africa seems to imply that most critics subscribe to the power politics which only calls for military intervention on the continent to quell internal as well as interstate conflicts. This desk research adopts a content analysis method in an attempt to unveil the peace agenda of NEPAD base document in the light of the liberal peace theory. Findings from the paper indicate that the pacifying dimension of NEPAD rests on the interplay of its core objectives, namely political and economic governance, regional integration and partnership with the world at large. At the national level, good governance precludes civil wars and stimulates interstate cooperation which in turn facilitates a strong partnership between Africa and the rest of the world. However, the study observes that the plan has remained largely unknown to the general public owing mainly to the bad press which surrounded its launching fifteen years ago. As goes the saying, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Thus the paper recommends that a reactionary approach to policy formulation which dominates African scholarship gives way to the emergence of innovation and creativity if critics mean well for peace and development on the continent.

Keywords: African Union, NEPAD, peace, conflict, development

Introduction

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the African Union (AU) has become the new policymaking body for Africa. It has adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a blueprint that fosters the renaissance of the continent. As far as the promotion of peace on the continent is concerned, it is worth stressing that the launching of NEPAD in October 2001 in Abuja

(Nigeria) coincided with a critical period during which a good number of African states were being torn apart by civil wars. As a matter of fact, rebel movements backed by foreign troops (Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi) fought the Congolese government and its allied forces (Angola, Chad, Namibia and Zimbabwe) in what came to be known as Africa's World War (Prunier, 2009). In the meantime, a crop of democratically elected leaders pushed for the adoption of the development plan

as a panacea for peace with little support from the grassroots. This paper is centred on the debate which followed the birth of NEPAD. By reopening the said debate fifteen years later, the paper seeks to identify the gap in the literature from a peace perspective by way of addressing the question as to whether this blueprint for development has the potential to turn the conflict-ridden countries around and produce a peace-friendly environment in Africa. The study adopts a descriptive content analysis method based on NEPAD document in the light of the liberal peace theory and takes into account a relevant critique emerging from the debate. The argumentation is thus articulated around four sections as follows. The first section takes a cursory look at Africa's challenges that propounded the creation of NEPAD plan with a special attention to its main protagonists. The second section re-opens the debate by highlighting the positions of Western scholars and their African counterparts so as to bring forward the missing item on the table of discussion. In the third section, a brief literature review of the liberal peace theory provides the study with a theoretical framework in order to associate NEPAD with peace. The last section of the paper attempts to fill the gap in the literature by describing NEPAD as a peace project before concluding with a recommendation

Africa's challenges leading to NEPAD

The wind of change that blew across Eastern Europe and precipitated the fall of the Berlin Wall eventually reached African shores in early 1990s. Pushed by the wave of democratisation, a few dictators quickly organized multiparty elections; accepted the ballot verdict and

gracefully stepped down. Others held national conferences to delay positive changes but allowed the formation of political parties in a desperate attempt to either buy in opposition candidates or gerrymander a part of the electorate altogether. The unlucky among them who led their respective countries into civil wars lost the battle when rebel movements overran national armies in the absence of foreign support (Francis, 2006: 142). Strikingly, a new generation of African leaders emerged in the 1990s as architects of change and staunch supporters of the renaissance of Africa. In particular, the democratic election of President Nelson Mandela is worth celebrating. Not only did it mark the end of the apartheid system of government in South Africa, it also opened a window of opportunity in subsequent continental summits. As Meredith (2005:676) argues, it was Mandela who led his peers into self-examination at the Organisation of the African Unity (OAU) summit in June 1994: "We must face the matter squarely that where there is something wrong in how we govern ourselves, it must be said that the fault is not in our stars but in ourselves that we are ill-governed." This self-examination culminated in the Cairo Agenda for Action, which was adopted at the OAU summit the following year and constructed around what African leaders could do for themselves in addition to what would come from their external partners. It was indeed a commitment made in favour of *inter alia* "democracy, governance, peace, security, stability and sustainable development" (Maloka, 2006: 97).

The year 1999 witnessed the accession to power of other democratically elected leaders in a

number of countries. These include Obasanjo (Nigeria), John Kufor (Nigeria), Abdelaziz Bouteflika (Algeria), Joaquim Chissano (Mozambique), Alpha Konare (Mali) and Abdoulaye Wade (Senegal). The outstanding contribution of this new breed of politicians can be captured in the fact that for the first time at the next OAU summit in Algiers, the heads of states agreed to depose unelected governments. The Algiers Declaration on Unconstitutional Changes of Government was indeed a milestone in the African politics hitherto marked by dictatorship and frequent military coups d'état. In Lome (Togo) the following year, African leaders adopted the Solemn Declaration of the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA), establishing a 'triangular relationship between democracy, peace/security, and development.' The Lome Declaration outlined a common understanding of what constitutes democratic governance and constitutional changes of government (Maloka 2006: 99). Eventually in the spirit of the Great Jubilee 2000 dominated by a global call for a fresh start, world leaders came together and adopted a worldwide agenda for development which produced eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). On their part, African leaders deemed it necessary to overhaul the regional organisation (OAU) in order to work closely with the international community and achieve the said goals. Discussions around debt cancellation led African leaders to move beyond the historic of blaming the colonial past in order to become actors of their own destiny. They decided therefore to take charge of their own problems through joint efforts instead of leaving it to the rest

of the world to dictate the solutions to them. The question of transforming a declaration into a policy led political leaders to design appropriate vehicles for change. On top of the list was the drafting of a development plan that could facilitate the integration of the continent in the global economy while improving the life of African people. The mandate to develop such an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa went to four Heads of State representing Algeria, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa.

The Lusaka OAU summit (July 2001) decided that the three important plans still in the making should merge into the New Africa Initiative (NAI). These include (1) the Millennium Africa Recovery Plan (MAP) initiated by the then South African President Thabo Mbeki with the support of his Nigerian and Algerian counterparts O. Obasanjo and A. Bouteflika respectively; (2) the Omega Plan proposed by the then Senegalese President A. Wade; and (3) the Compact Initiative for Africa coming from the Economic Commission for Africa. Indeed the merger of these three plans informs the urgency of a continental strategy for the development of Africa as a whole. The rationale behind these plans is based on the premise that "Africa must assume the primary responsibility for that effort" (Nabudere 2002, 54). Finally on October 23, 2001 in Abuja (Nigeria) the approved plan (NAI) was baptised the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). At the first meeting of the Heads of State Implementation Committee (HSIC) on the same day, the leaders also set up a seven-member Steering Committee, an Implementation Committee of twenty

Heads of State and a Secretariat to be located in Midrand (South Africa). The foregoing indicates that NEPAD builds upon the legacy of the OAU whose many achievements include among other things the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action (1980); the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (1993); Solemn Declaration on the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation (2000). Against this backdrop, the plan appears both as a vision and a strategy for the renaissance of Africa that takes into account many issues including human development, peace and security. However, NEPAD's potential for connecting countries through joint development projects and preventing interstate conflicts appears as the missing item on the table of discussion. By reopening the debate which greeted the launching of NEPAD, the next section attempts to identify the gap in the literature from a peace perspective.

Re-opening the debate

At various forums, many analysts have dealt with the crucial question as to whether NEPAD is a blueprint development plan for Africa or another false start. As early as April 2002, two major gatherings took place in West and East Africa simultaneously. The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) in conjunction with the Third World Network-Africa (TWN-Africa) formally launched NEPAD debate at the Accra Conference (Adesina, 2006). Under the auspices of the African Academy of Sciences, the Heinrich Boll Foundation and the Mazingira Institute, a similar

forum took place in Nairobi (Kenya) to reflect critically on NEPAD concept and agenda. Putting more weight on the need to use *African values* in defining core concepts such as peace, democracy and development, the Nairobi forum produced a set of interesting recommendations. These include among other things (1) the development of a concept of peace and justice, which are anchored on Women's liberation and participation in governance, and the prevention of the use of biotechnology for promoting conflict; (2) the commissioning of a group of scholars charged with the task of overhauling NEPAD as it is, and developing a viable, alternative framework (Anyang Nyong'o, 2002, viii.). Four years after the adoption of NEPAD by the AU (November 2005), the African Finance and Economic Association (AFEA) and the United Nations Institute of African Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) convened another international conference in Dakar (Senegal) which brought together African and Africanist experts, researchers, academics and representatives of civil society drawn from Africa, North America and Europe with the mission of finding ways of improving the implementation of the plan (Boko, 2008). There are certainly many more contributions that cannot be listed here but taken together they point to the growing interest in this development plan which is worth studying in detail. Maloka (2006) recapitulates the debate by grouping NEPAD critics into two clusters, namely Western-backed and African scholars.

Western scholars along with some NGOs maintain that NEPAD is a renewed form of securing aid from donor countries to keep alive the patron-client relationship which is characteristic of African politics

and unless this relationship is broken, the plan is doomed to founder in the same way it happened in the past. As the title of his book suggests, Taylor (2005) questions the assumption that NEPAD provides a road map for Africa's development before concluding that the plan is another false start for a number of reasons. How the plan emerged and what makes it different from the previous initiatives constitute the opening chapters of his book, thus setting the stage for the debate about African development. According to him, most of the previous initiatives have been elite-driven and their failure should be attributed to the lack of capacity, resources and political will (Taylor 2005: 32). On their part, African critics and activists on the continent join hands in rejecting NEPAD base document. Little wonder that the launching of the plan was followed by the African Social Forum in Bamako (Mali) which produced a joint declaration in 2002: "We do not accept NEPAD!! Another Africa is possible" (Maloka, 2006: 87). Indeed most African critics perceive NEPAD as a disguised way of doing business as usual in Africa by rich countries and their financial agencies. Their campaign aims at clamping down what seems to be a new vehicle for the exploitation of Africa by foreign agents. Co-editor of the book under review, Adesina begins with a portrait of the prevailing crisis in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) resulting from violent conflicts, civil war, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, economic stagnation and poverty. The scholar then argues that the plan has embraced the core policies of the Bretton Woods Institutions which have crippled Africa's development for the past two decades. Accordingly, the plan appears

as a repeat prescription of old cures. Though he endorses the conditions laid down in the document for sustainable development, namely peace, security and good governance, he remarks that these issues have been addressed long before the launching of NEPAD and should not be part of the debate. The scholar strongly believes that only in confronting global inequality will the African predicament be adequately addressed (Adesina, 2006). The short review below highlights a series of emerging issues from the debate before pointing to the gap in the literature as far as building peace on the continent is concerned: a top-down initiative, gender and HIV/AIDS, African peer review mechanism and neoliberal project among other things.

A top-down initiative

NEPAD appears in the eyes of its many critics as a top-down initiative that "has not been a part of the discourse and the subject of debate within African countries from its inception" (Taylor, 2005: 134). Bond (2005:233) argues that, "in spite of its proclaimed recognition of the central role of the African people to the plan, the African people have not played any part in the conception, design and formulation of NEPAD." It seems however that NEPAD critics are putting the cart before the horse in their demand for popular participation because only a democratic society can produce a civil society that is participative in the decision making through popular consultation and not the other way around. As Eade (2000: 128) contends, "civil society groups coalesce not on the basis of primordial attachments (ethnicity, language, religion), but rather on 'small issues' that

cut across such boundaries and bring people together in new coalitions." Given that the political space in Africa has been hitherto the abode of the junta in most countries, "only the courageous or the foolhardy would insist on linking economic development with freedom of association, human rights and peoples' participation" (Adedeji, 2008: 245). So far, any popular movement that seems to oppose the interests of the ruling party has always been framed in terms of ethnic clashes by the same experts of African politics.

Contrary to most critics, however, the plan translates the mandate of elected leaders that supposedly must act on behalf of their respective constituencies. According to the base document, "while African leaders derive their mandates from their people, it is their role to articulate these plans and lead the processes of implementation on behalf of their people" (NEPAD, 2001: #47). This was not the case in the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action that was mainly supported by undemocratic governments under the auspices of the OAU. In an interview with *Newsweek* magazine as quoted by Tadesse (2002), the then Senegalese president A. Wade contends that "what distinguishes NEPAD from the preceding recovery plans is that while previous plans were written by experts and never read by Heads of State, NEPAD was worked out by Chiefs of State." This is one of the plan's strengths because its architects have recognised the triangular link between development on the one hand, and governance, democratisation, and peace and security on the other (Landsberg, 2008: 208). Interestingly the initial rejection of the elite-driven NEPAD seems to originate from an appraisal of the

then South African President Thabo Mbeki's handling of the Zimbabwe crisis (Taylor 2005: 122). As it appears in the analysis of most Western-based critics, the inability of the African leaders as a whole to openly challenge the notorious regime of President Robert Mugabe has downplayed the credibility of NEPAD plan. In particular, "Zimbabwe is NEPAD's credibility test, and so far Mbeki has failed to pass it (Sparks 2003: 326; Meredith, 2005: 326; Taylor 2005: 125). It begs the question as to why should one single country out of fifty four, say Zimbabwe, become a test case for NEPAD's credibility which Thabo Mbeki has failed when at the UN General Assembly, President Robert Mugabe continues to occupy the country's seat? Is the UN less important than the AU when it gives voices to the world dictators? Would NEPAD be more marketable if South Africa under the ANC leadership enforced democracy in Zimbabwe just the way the United States under the administration of President George W. Bush invaded Iraq in 2003, captured its leader and left behind bloodshed?

What the critics of South Africa's leadership role seem to conceal is the fear that the anti-White virus which has crippled the Zimbabwean economy under President Mugabe would soon infect South Africa where the dominating ruling party (ANC) has the tendency to turn the government into a one-party system to the detriment of the White minority. In an interview with Sparks, Mbeki has this to say:

I am not saying the things that are going on in Zimbabwe are right. But I am saying the extraordinary

preoccupation with what is going on in Zimbabwe in reality has got to do with white fears in South Africa. What they are afraid of is, here are these black people across the border doing these terrible things to white people. What assurance do we have that they won't do the same thing to white people here? That is the issue. And that's all (Sparks, 2003: 327).

If the face value of NEPAD is associated with individual leaders, much of the critiques no longer hold water because some of the targeted figures have proved to be true democrats when they peacefully handed over power to the winners of presidential elections in their respective countries (Mbeki, Obasanjo, Kufor, and Wade among others).

Gender and HIV/AIDS

With regards to the issues of gender and HIV/AIDS, Taylor (2005: 128) argues that both represent the two missing dimensions of the development project under review. The scholar does not see how a recovery plan devised by elite men for elite men can speak for all the people, including African women. Whatever is said about gender equality should be interpreted as "a contentless, politically-correct gesture of window-dressing probably required by donor 'partners.'" Does the mere absence of women among the elite male who drafted NEPAD document constitute an affront against women on the continent? Are we talking about single or married women,

careerists or caring mothers, city dwellers or rural peasants, educated or illiterate, Christian or Muslim? Apparently these many attributes of women are not taken into consideration when some critics of NEPAD claim that gender is not properly addressed in the plan (Randriamaro, 2006). To have a few women in top position does not necessarily mean that a given policy is gender-friendly. Given that in Africa, most women happen to be caring mothers, uneducated and rural dwellers, it may be misleading to ignore these clusters when gender issues are being addressed globally. Gender must rather challenge the so-called African culture and her many values that cause African women to suffer and die in silence as ordained by the tradition.

NEPAD sceptics strongly contend also that African leaders have failed to acknowledge the HIV/AIDS pandemic as a development setback. According to them, these leaders simply expect the means to fight such pandemics to come from outside of Africa when they appeal to the donor countries for an increased financial support to fight HIV/AIDS (Taylor, 2005: 137). Though more prevalent in Africa than elsewhere, HIV/AIDS is still a global issue to be addressed with global means just as it is the case for climate change and the war on terror. In *Conversations with Myself*, Mandela (2010: 329) argues that AIDS is a major problem to be tackled by the entire world with a worldwide multi-faceted strategy. To add insult to injury, a colossal amount of money is badly needed not to finance education, infrastructure or health generally but to secure the high cost of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs to the affected population to the benefit of Western pharmaceuticals. Heeding the

clarion call from analysts as of July 2006, most African leaders have finally incorporated the HIV/AIDS issue in the healthcare budget of their respective nations. In concrete terms, they have agreed to channel 15% of their national budget to healthcare in order to implement "an African Common Position that calls for Accelerated Action towards Universal Access to HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Services in Africa" (Ndinga-Muvumba, 2008: 171). This is probably a technical way of getting back what goes out as development aid.

African peer review mechanism (APRM)

Under the old regime (OAU), solidarity among leaders became somehow synonymous with complicity in evil-doing when no one was expected to challenge their counterparts on internal affairs of state. The creation of the APRM concretises the proposal made by the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee of the AU in Abuja that "NEPAD countries should subject themselves to a voluntary self-assessment process to review progress in the achievement of mutually agreed targets and compliance with mutually agreed standards" (Afekhena, 2006: 132). According to Adedeji (2008: 242) the mechanism "has the potential for holding leaders accountable, for seeking collective sustainable and equitable solutions to common problems, and for making all forms and levels of governance transparent." However, even before the APRM panel of Eminent Persons began its work in 2003, NEPAD scrappers had already reduced it to a *quid pro quo* for more aid from donor countries as if the law of nature has ruled out the

improvement of African politics. In other words, APRM is perceived as a disguised mechanism for extraversion that only "facilitates increased aid and foreign investment into the country, depending on the grade achieved" (Collier 2008: 63).

APRM concretises a search for African solutions to African problems with the willingness "to let outsiders examine national findings and express a view on how a country is governed is a new experience that should be encouraged" (Afekhena, 2006: 147). Landsberg (2008: 221) contends that "African states have repeatedly asserted that they will police themselves, not through punishment, but using the APRM to encourage good democratic behaviour." Countries already reviewed so far include Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya and Nigeria. To illustrate the merit of the APRM, the review report on Ghana underscores among other things the country's best practice in its commitment to build and sustain peace within a volatile sub-region. Such a laudable effort to promote civil peace is palpable in the peaceful elections and transfers of power from one political party to another over the years. The post-genocide Rwanda's review recommends among other things that the country harmonizes its domestic laws to international legal norms and standards; deepens national reconciliation efforts; and encourages a policy of inclusiveness that wins the trust of all citizens (Afekhena, 2006: 138). Commenting on the country review report, the Nigerian government acknowledges the role of traditional rulers as custodians and promoters of the culture and tradition of the people but the report strongly recommends that the institution of Royal Fathers be insulated from partisan politics

and made accountable to higher authorities (*African Peer Review Mechanism Country Review Report, 2008: 12*).

A neoliberal project

As it emerges from the debate, most critics concur with the view that NEPAD is a neoliberal project in consonance with major international financial institutions (WB, IMF, and WTO) whose policies are designed to keep the exploitation of Africa going under the guise of a new partnership with the developed nations. Actually the document under review contains a number of references to financial institutions dubbed neoliberal (NEPAD 2001, #184). The rejection of NEPAD plan among African scholars reflects a general disapproval of IMF-imposed SAPs on poor economies but it runs the risk of absolving corrupt and autocratic leaders whose personal assets exceeding national debts of their respective poor states are safely kept in Swiss vaults. However, the question as to whether the renaissance of Africa can escape the predatory system of neoliberalism in this era of rapid changes without turning the continent as it were, into an epicentre of growing poverty and armed conflicts does not come out clearly in the debate. The failure of Structural Adjustment Programmes to turn African economies around is not enough to decry neoliberalism in Africa when one party-system of government and nationalisation of the economy have proved to be detrimental to the socio-economic development of Africa over four decades (Saad-Filho *et.al*, 2005). Moreover, opponents of NEPAD seem to overlook the political zeitgeist at the turn of the new

millennium in which democracy and state legitimacy are tied together by the international community. These two concepts "have been redefined to include accountable government, a culture of human rights and popular participation as central elements" (NEPAD, 2001: #43).

Baylis (2008: 132) contends that peace and prosperity necessitated that "independent states pool their resources and even surrender some of their sovereignty to create integrated communities to promote economic growth or respond to regional problems." Countries that fail to go with the flow run the risk of falling apart. Accordingly, cooperation among states rather than autarky is central to the neoliberal ideology. As Steans *et.al* (2005: 40) argue, "Neoliberalism is built upon the assumption that states need to develop strategies and forums for cooperation over a whole set of new issues and areas." For instance, collective security is no longer confined to the realm of the military and intelligence. It rather includes issues of common interest ranging from climate change, environment, poverty, pandemics and natural disasters among others. A cooperative multilateralism suggests a plethora of actors both state and nonstate, local and external, each according to their areas of interest and expertise, sometimes referred to as global governance (Dufield, 2001). What matters therefore is for the leadership in Africa to learn from past mistakes instead of trying to reinvent the wheel in the midst of sustained propaganda unleashed by prevailing colonial scholarship. One of the many lessons that can be learnt from the IMF-bailout policies is that in the past, financial deals in Africa were signed behind closed doors between International

Financial Institutions (IFI) officials and autocratic leaders. Such secret bailouts were treated like generous loans issued by donor agencies to some leaders in support of their longstanding friendships and as a result, much of the money ended up in private bank accounts. But in democratic countries such as Ireland, Italy and Greece, both IFIs and respective cabinet ministers with the support of parliaments engage openly in a series of high-level meetings to determine the kind of conditions which must be attached to the loans without compromising the life of future generations.

Everything considered, it may be easy to visualise another Africa unstained by neoliberalism but as the saying goes, 'a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.' Even though NEPAD is donned in the neoliberal outfit, it does not put Africa on sale as long as potential buyers still perceive the continent as a high-risk zone for foreign investments. Neither does a continental initiative concerned with developmental strategies need to become a tool of subversion against globalisation in order to attract the approval of its many scrappers. Landsberg (2008: 214) critically observes that "many NGOs appear to have developed ideological hang-ups with NEPAD that they battle to overcome. They are not very good at offering policy alternatives to redirect and redefine NEPAD." Fifteen years after the launching of NEPAD, African scholars and their corresponding sponsors (NGOs) are yet to come up with an alternative plan that is bottom-up, peace-friendly and unique to Africa in order to concretise the total rejection of NEPAD. Moreover, much of the discussion concerning the relevance of the plan has eluded the question as to whether NEPAD has the

potential to turn African nations around as far as peace is concerned. This is the missing item on the table of discussion which this paper puts forward by reopening the debate. But before proceeding any further, the next section discusses the liberal peace theory as a theoretical framework that sheds light on the peace agenda of NEPAD.

Theoretical framework

Most scholars concur that the liberal peace theory originates in the classic work of Immanuel Kant, *To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795). The philosopher contrasts what he describes as 'the lawless state of savagery' with a project of long-lasting peace among nations whose foundation requires the implementation of three principles (articles), namely republican constitution, federation of free states and universal hospitality (cosmopolitan right). First, a focus on the highest political authority of a state unveils three types of sovereignty, namely aristocracy, monarchy and republicanism. The Kantian republicanism, contend Danilovic *et.al* (2007: 399), is different from the Greek notion of direct democracy in which all citizens exercise executive power: "The question that matters most to Kant is not who rules – he goes so far to note that even monarchy can be republican – but rather whether the policy reflects the general will of the people." Kant makes it clear that democracy in its narrow meaning (people's rule) parallels with tyranny of the majority (despotism) when it is reduced to an executive power in which all citizens make decisions about and, if need be, against one who therefore does not agree (Stewart, 1997). In the

absence of checks and balance, the despotic ruler applies the laws he alone has made, thus transforming the public will into his own will. Only in the strict observance of the republican constitution underpinned by the people's representativeness can a government be guarded against the double evil of anarchy and despotism.

Second, the federation of free states targets a kind of collective security pact known as a league of peace. Just as self-interested individuals ratify common laws and observe them without losing their individual freedom, sovereign states can form an association of like-minded nations based on common aspirations (international laws) in order to transform the anarchical behaviour of states into cooperation at the international level. According to Kant, a league of peace (*foedus pacificum*) is different from a treaty of peace (*pactum pacis*) because "the latter seeks merely to stop one war, while the former seeks to end *all* wars forever" (Kant, 1795: 8). Third, from a perspective of people living in each state, the league of peace affirms the citizens' common right to peace with a snowballing effect beyond national boundaries (cosmopolitan right). Taken together, the people's right to peace overtakes the right of nations to go to war with other nations (anarchy). In the long run, this cosmopolitan right will facilitate the emergence of "a nation of peoples (*civitas gentium*), that (continually growing) will finally include all the people of the earth" (Kant, 1795: 8). Not only does the cosmopolitan right of people embody universal hospitality, it also makes economic exchange (trade) an important dimension of the global society. In short, the Kantian peace has a triple dimension.

It is a process of coexistence among citizens under the provision of the rule of law (republican constitution), which enables similar independent states to form a federation. The latter confers a cosmopolitan right upon people beyond national boundaries and promotes universal hospitality. How does the Kantian peace with its vision of a cosmopolitan society put on the mantle of the liberal peace?

Toward the end of World War I (1914-18) which pitted great powers against each other, US President W. Wilson sought American intervention for a post-war settlement in Europe which was to become a milestone for international peace. According to Mansbach *et al.* (2008: 25), Wilson's contribution at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1917 was "to make the world safe for democracy." He thus became "the first statesman to articulate what is now called the democratic peace thesis" (Paris, 2004: 41). On his part, Michael Doyle undertakes to test Kant's principles of perpetual peace in his famous article, *Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs* (1983) with a focus on the behaviour of liberal states in their foreign policies over a period of 180 years. His empirical study reveals not only the growth in number of constitutional republics but also the development of a pacific union among them "as if the Kantian treaty had already been signed" (Doyle, 1983: 227). Doyle is credited for being the first scholar to establish a correlation between liberal states and peace by stating that liberal states by their very nature do not go to war against each other. Referring to Kant's three articles of peace, he argues that "No one of these constitutional, international or-

cosmopolitan sources is alone sufficient, but together (and only where together) they plausibly connect the characteristics of liberal politics and economies with sustained liberal peace" (Doyle, 1983: 232). Although Doyle's study is concerned with the way liberal states behave toward each other and toward their non-liberal counterparts, the article devotes an important part of the argument to the appreciation of the legacies of liberalism espoused by Immanuel Kant and centred on individual freedom. As the scholar contends, this particular kind of freedom is "a belief in the importance of moral freedom, of the right to be treated and a duty to treat others as ethical subjects, and not as objects or means only" (Doyle, 1983: 206). Thus, a liberal state refers to a nation of citizens whose rights are respected under the rule of law. However, the application of the Doyle theory raises the question as to whether any correlation exists between peace and *demos-kratos* (democracy) to support the democratic peace theory.

MacMillan argues that the distinction between democracies and other systems of government serves as an alibi for the use of violence by some states in the name of democracy, thus misreading the work of Kant. As he puts it, "Liberals will presume other liberal states to be just and therefore deserving of accommodation; but presume non-liberal states to be unjust, and therefore regard them with deep suspicion" (MacMillan, 2006: 54). Rasler *et. al.* (2005: 33) contend that the role of democracy (as regime type) in creating the Western zone of peace has been overemphasized. The scholars rather suggest that whatever has caused the emergence of this political system may also be responsible for the

ensuing peace among such states. Newman (2007: 109) argues that the democratic peace does not develop into a more broad liberal peace: "while the 'democratic peace thesis' has attained empirical validity in terms of peaceful relations between states, the 'liberal peace' is now promoted conceptually and in policy circles as a panacea for peace and development within states." In the democratic peace theory, democracy is treated as the only independent variable for a dyadic peace/war relation associated with the Wilson approach (interventionism). It is therefore misleading to use democratic and liberal peace interchangeably as it appears in the literature. Whereas the democratic peace focuses only on dyadic behaviours of democracies and the rest, the liberal peace provides empirical explanations for international cooperation of republics (federation of free states) by means of international laws and trade. The foregoing has provided the study with a theoretical framework which is central to the assessment of NEPAD from a peace perspective in the next section.

Peace through NEPAD

In his analysis of NEPAD, Seck (2008: 22) defines behavioural priorities listed in it as the enabling factors for the success of the initiative, associated with "the way in which Africans want to conduct their affairs." These actors' behaviours are apparent in their claim for democracy and political, economic and corporate governance, peace and security, regional co-operation and integration, promoting diversification, capacity building and market access. In contrast, sectoral priorities target the creation of

wealth (agriculture, infrastructure, education, health, environment, energy and new technologies of information and communication). Whereas the study of behavioural priorities belongs to the social sciences, an analysis of sectoral priorities requires the expertise of financial economics. In the light of this analytic classification, it makes sense that the rest of the study centres on the behavioural priorities in order to take NEPAD on board the peace research discipline. Reflecting on the causes of armed conflicts on the continent, the authors of NEPAD have this to say:

Long-term conditions for ensuring peace and security in Africa require policy measures for addressing the political and social vulnerabilities on which conflict is premised. These are dealt with by the political and economic governance initiatives, the capital flows and market access initiatives and the human development initiative (NEPAD, 2001: 73).

Apparently, the pacifying strength of this development plan rests on the correlation of three core concepts: political and economic governance, regional integration and partnership with the world at large.

Political and economic governance

Landsberg (2008: 211) argues that NEPAD is premised on the attainment of peace and stability through sound governance based on democratic values

and principles." The exercise of power lies at the heart of both government and governance but these two concepts are not synonyms. Whereas government or rule is associated with the nature of power (totalitarian, autocratic, or democratic), governance addresses the question of how power affects the general public politically, economically and socially. State-focused, good governance is an attribute of a government that is not only democratically elected and accountable to the people but also capable of protecting its citizenry, defending its national territory and developing its economy accordingly. It is tautological to state that bad governance practice is characteristic of a government that exposes its people to poverty and war. In a nutshell, good governance implies the respect of the rule of law (republican constitution). Unfortunately, the concept of good governance gained currency only in the nineties as a result of the paradigm shift in the development literature of the post-Cold War. Since then, both Western governments and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have tied development aid and pluralism together and good governance has become the catchword for popular participation, transparency, accountability and the rule of law. Given that poverty and war are familiar bedfellows in Africa, a development plan that seeks to improve the living conditions of the people through the mechanism of good governance offers ipso facto an alternative to armed struggle when the capacities of actors to use natural resources to finance conflicts are curtailed. This pro-active approach to liberal peacebuilding is more explicit in the context of regional cooperation by

ways of fostering mutual interests and shared responsibilities.

Regional cooperation

Under the auspices of the OAU, strict adherence to the UN determining principle of non-interference in internal matters of member states implied the scrupulous endorsement of national boundaries bequeathed by colonialism. As a result, African leaders would rush to ratify international treaties which only guaranteed the sovereignty of the state such as the UN and its sister agencies but remain less enthusiastic about genuine cooperation at the regional level (Herbst, 2007). In such a context of mistrust, border rivalries and controls were more damaging to the movement of peoples and goods as long as individual states held on to the hub-and-spoke relationship which once characterised the colonies and their respective metropolises (Adedeji, 2002: 300). Accordingly, rich nations took advantage of this lack of common policies in many ways including the ratification of preferential agreements with some African countries bilaterally (Taylor, 2010: 98). Even though the Lagos Plan of Action (1980) underscored the establishment of regional economic communities in order to revive the continent through self-reliance, lack of political will that dominated the minds of autocrats coupled with a dearth of regional infrastructure impeded the implementation of such a laudable but 'economically illiterate' prescription. The deficiency of regional cooperation was more apparent in the context of civil wars of 1990s involving neighbouring states. Here and there, economic disintegration in one state spilled over and fanned regional conflicts.

From Liberia and Sierra Leone to Rwanda and DRC to name but a few, neighbouring countries provided logistical bases for rebel groups to fight unpopular regimes and trigger regime change. Consequently in West Africa, the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) that came into being in 1975 for the purpose of market integration within the sub-region became more effective through its military wing of the Nigeria-led Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

Since its inception however, NEPAD has provided the incentive for regional economic communities (RECs) to implement their economic agendas hitherto undermined by the colonial politics of hub and spokes. Unlike its predecessors, this continental development plan lays a particular emphasis on the benefits of strong and reliable infrastructure networks for the regional integration to become effective. Such infrastructure networks are clustered into four sub-sectors: (a) energy; (b) water and sanitation, (c) transport; (d) information and communication technology. These include: West Corridor: Inga III Power Stations on the Congo River and transmission Interconnections; Missing links of Djibouti-Libreville Transport corridor; Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya Interconnection Project; Isaka-Kigali-Bujumbura Railway, Gambia River Bridge; and Brazzaville-Kinshasa Rail/Road Bridge to name but a few. To borrow from the peace building efforts in Europe, this African initiative is reminiscent of the Schuman plan which brought harmony between the warring parties in Europe to date. Against the backdrop of the Second World War,

French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman argued in 1950 that the pooling together of the raw materials in high demand for the production of ammunitions (coal and steel) would turn France and Germany into economic partners, thus making war between them not only unthinkable but materially impossible (Dinan 2005). Interstate peace is likely to prevail when cooperation between countries translates a common destiny in terms of resource management at the regional level and improves the continent's relationship with the outside world. The promotion of regional integration places NEPAD signatories in the liberal tradition of cooperation among independent states in the light of the Kantian second article, namely federation of free republics.

Partnership with developed nations

The new crop of African leaders refuse to be bound by the past but hold that, "it is within the capacity of the international community to create fair and just conditions in which Africa can participate effectively in the global economy and body politic" (NEPAD, 2001: #41). Under the clause of the new partnership with the developed nations, principled pressure is needed from international actors to tie substantial flows of development assistance to the institutions of governance (African legislatures, judiciaries, counter-corruption commissions) in order to rid the continent of personal rule (Diamond, 2010). By engaging once again with the West hitherto blamed for the continent's retardation, the new leadership seems to have overcome the conspiracy theory with the claim of NEPAD's leadership and ownership. This is a new way of doing

business with the developed world in which Africa no longer takes the seat of an observer but a partner whose contribution cannot be ignored. Partnership does not imply equality of powers but a relationship that implies the sharing of burden and reward based on mutual respect and accountability. As one of NEPAD officials contends, "even if Africa were the junior partner, this does not in itself, diminish the respectability that Africa gains as it redefines and redesigns its relationship with the rest of the world" (Dogonyaro, 2002: 325). In this way, the gains accrued to Africa can be multiform.

For instance, fighting corruption in Africa will involve the commitments of Western nations where much of the dirty money has always been laundered and granted asylum in their vaults (Swift, 2002). Back in Africa, most countries now streamline their policies to appreciate the valuable contribution of the Diaspora in various fields of expertise. It is expected that the developed nations assist in making Africa more attractive not only to foreign investors and aid agencies but also to the local manpower that is forced to leave the continent as a result of armed conflict and lack of opportunities. To develop incentives for African academics and other trained staff to return to or stay in Africa requires a joint effort (partnership) between the North and the South. Africa will succeed in capping the brain drain when the immigration policy in the developed nations help the migrant workers of African descent to think twice before settling down in their countries of adoption without depriving their countries of origin of their needed skills and expertise. As far as the power relation is concerned, a new partnership with the rich

and powerful nations also implies strategic alliances that put a premium on human development instead of militarisation. Owing to the fact that most donor countries are also the top manufacturers of weapons being shipped around the world, the imperative of economic progress impels African leaders to recast the 'Everything But Arms' (EBA) initiative between EU and Least Developed countries agreed upon in 2001 in order to cut military spending, contain the proliferation of light weapons on the continent and focus on developmental projects. The rise of China, India and Brazil as important trade partners adds another layer to the new partnership which goes beyond Africa's traditional partner (Europe). The continental vision for economic development stands out as a peace project when "the resources of the world currently dedicated to resolving civil and interstate conflict could therefore be freed for more rewarding endeavours" (NEPAD, 2001: #202).

Conclusion

This study has reopened the debate on NEPAD and found out that the plan's potential to prevent conflicts by ways of integrating peoples and nations through joint development projects has not been discussed enough. Instead, many eminent scholars wish to find in NEPAD base document a revival of Pan-Africanism accompanied with a corporate commitment from the African elite to break away from Western institutions dubbed neoliberal (Murithi 2008). They decry the lack of popular consultation in designing the plan as well as the little concern given to salient issues such as HIV/AIDS and Gender by the political

elites. What's more, the failure of the all-male political elite to cast the first stone at their Zimbabwean counterpart, Robert Mugabe for his record of human rights violations discredits the claim contained in the peer review mechanism. The Zimbabwe case also discounts the credibility of the plan to walk the talk. On the whole the blueprint for Africa's development appears in the eyes of its critics as a repeat of the same old cure that has failed to heal the wounded continent.

However, as it emerges from the debate, any serious study about Africa has something to say about NEPAD because its agenda of development overlaps many fields of research, including peace and security. This paper has painted a rather modest image of NEPAD that attests to the author's association with Afro-optimism. By focusing on its core objectives (good governance, regional integration and partnership with the developed nations) it has described NEPAD as a peace project in the Kantian tradition. As civil rule gains currency in post-Cold War Africa, civil wars are fast receding and within the provision of APRM, like-minded leaders are learning from one another's success and failure. Regional cooperation facilitates a strong partnership between Africa and the rest of the world. It is nevertheless too ambitious to credit the plan with peace on the continent when, right from the onset, critics have rallied around to cramp it. Needless to say, the inability of NEPAD to meet its objectives is a reflection of the growing gap between the leaders at the top and the followers at the bottom of the ladder. As a way forward, the paper recommends that a reactionary approach to policy formulation which dominates African scholarship gives way to the

emergence of innovation and creativity if critics mean well for the renaissance of the continent. In other words, a constructive critique must include workable alternatives so as not to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

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