

Youth Dialogue

Youth Voices in Africa's peace and security paradigm: Exploring the Post-2015 Development Agenda and Agenda 2063

Date: 27th of May, 2015
Time: 17:30 beginning with refreshments
Venue: The Sanlam Auditorium, University of Pretoria

Rationale of Workshop:

Inspiring youth dialogue towards the future we want for Africa by 2063

The end of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is an opportunity for reflection and a global exercise towards the definition of a new developmental trajectory. This Post-2015 Developmental Agenda promises to be transformative and inclusive, requiring in-depth debate by all stakeholders, in particular previously excluded voices of the youth in Africa. Dubbed the "Dark Continent", Africa is home to immense poverty, inequality and insecurity; having in the past attracted considerable attention during the MDG processes. Nevertheless, little has changed in the African continent since the initial MDG process which brings to question: What is the way forward for development goals in Africa? How can Africa contribute to a better world? How can the post-2015 development framework be best positioned to contribute to a better Africa? As the world gears towards the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, 25 to 27 September 2015, in New York, Africa prepares the complementary Africa 2063 Vision to address these questions. Agenda 2063 is a set of seven aspirations identified by the African Union, aimed at uplifting, empowering and developing Africa towards the year 2063. Within the regional and global processes influencing the developmental agenda, South Africa is a notable peace and security actor on the African continent. In recognising the need for an informed state actor, this series of panel discussion, is an opportunity for youth in South Africa to lend their voices to their inclusive agenda. This panel discussion will seek to address how Agenda 2063 plays a pivotal role in the Post-2015 development agenda, with a special focus on the 4th aspiration "A Peaceful and Secure Africa", specifically with a focus on the role of the youth.

Objectives of Workshop:

Overall Goal: Empower youth and students to engage meaningfully with the AU Agenda 2063 and Post-2015 Development agenda as possible vehicles for peace and security in Africa through creating awareness

Objectives of the Dialogue

- To create awareness and inform participants on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and its linkages to the Agenda 2063 vision.
- To assess the viability and practicality of Agenda 2063 as the Post-2015 Development Agenda for Africa, specifically in achieving a peaceful and secure Africa.
- To assess the role of the youth in Agenda 2063 and the future of Africa.
- To bring together a diverse set of stakeholders including students, lecturers, researchers and affiliates from the University of Pretoria and other organisations.

Report of the Discussions



Welcoming Address

The event was opened by the **Right Reverend Rubin Phillip**, Chairperson, SALO. He spoke of SALO's role in multilevel African developmental dialogue and the promotion of regional and global peace agendas. He noted that SALO has been facilitating dialogue for the post-2015 agenda since 2014 in an attempt to popularise and make relevant the common visions and plans formulated by the Africa Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN). He underscored the importance ensuring that the goal of ensuring an inclusive development agenda is followed up on and that the outcomes ensure that "no one is left behind".

Whilst stating the importance of the post-2015 agenda's goal 16, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, he further highlighted the importance of access to social justice for all people on the continent and its relevance to poverty and xenophobia. Furthermore he noted that the domestication, monitoring and evaluation of plans and goals within states would ensure greater accountability towards these aims.



In her opening remarks, **Professor Maxi Schoeman** the Head of the Political Science Department at the University of Pretoria welcomed the audience. She noted the generational challenge before the youth in Africa with moving the Agenda 2063 vision forward.



Keynote Address: Dr Bhekinkosi Moyo Director, Southern African Trust (SAT) and Board Member of the AU Foundation

The session sought to unpack some of the key issues related to the post-2015 agenda the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlighting their differences and possible approaches. The three pillars identified were firstly the implementation and the localisation of the SDGs in Africa. Secondly the role of regional integration, regional and continental strategies namely those of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the AU. Finally he highlighted the progress of economic integration within Africa and how this will be affected by the SDGs.

The commitment to inclusivity has been a distinct approach with wider spread of multi-level stakeholder consultations for the developmental agendas. Dr Moyo noted the seven aspirations of the Agenda 2063 Vision and highlighted aspirations number four, similar to Goal 16 of the SDGs. Utilising the case study of SADC he noted that the role players that implement the Regional Indicative Strategic Plan. Dr Moyo asked how the goals will be financed given the aspirations and targets espoused by the development plans. One example referred to is the report by former president of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo on alternative financing arrangement which suggests increasing road taxes and taxing the informal sector. However, Dr Moyo felt the key to successful financing would rather reply on African solidarity. Picking a further issue particularly relevant to youth in the developmental plans, Dr Moyo cited migration within and outside of the African continent. Dr Moyo felt migration to be a critical gap in the SDGs that needs to be accounted for as further discussions on addressing the root causes emerge. In addition, the legislation and the domestication of SDGs is an imperative discussion point, Dr Moyo stated in a reflection of the weaknesses of the MDGs.

Noting that there are “invited spaces”, where youth organisations and individuals are invited to give their input on issues related to their development, Dr Moyo in his conclusion encouraged youth to invent their own spaces to articulate their views on African development. Linking invented and invited spaces would ensure gaps are addressed and the youth voice become stronger.

Desiree Kosciulek

Youth Development Office, South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)



Ms Kosciulek began her speech with an outline of the Rio + 20 Conference and the “Future We Want” document as a key point of departure for the SDGs in their current form. She further noted the role of the Open Working Group between 2013-2014 in deliberating on the goals which were agreed upon namely 17 proposed goals and 169 *Targets*. She went further to reiterate the role of the United Nations General Assembly in formulating the document

“The Road To Dignity By 2030: Ending poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting The Planet” which highlighted 6 essential elements.

Africa and G77 + China led by South Africa has been at the forefront in articulating Africa's position. Ms Kosciulek highlighted the group's interest in poverty reduction and inclusive growth. In addition to the phrase, ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’ as they related to financing the development agenda. Nigeria was noted as the country representing the Africa Group's role in pushing for integration the OWG's SDG report with the post-2015 agenda. As the previous speaker she noted the overlap between the Aspiration 4 and Goal 16 of the global and African developmental plans. She further noted the ambitious target by the African Union to “end all wars in Africa by 2020”.

Ms Kosciulek listed a number of youth groups that are involved in the current debates and challenged the attendees to be involved with them for Africa to have a strong youth voice. She stated that one of the proposals was for governments in Africa to have a youth representative for their delegations in development debates. Examples for organised youth engagement included the UN Major Group, African Union Youth and the Pan-African Parliament's intergeneration debate during its May 2015 session. Ms Kosciulek also mentioned her own initiative for youth based in South Africa, the Youth Policy Committee that sought to bring young people into international developmental debates.

Rebone Tau

Former Chairperson, ANC Youth League International Relations Committee

In a wide ranging speech on the situation of peace and security for the African continent, Ms Tau began by reflecting on what it means to be African. She further stated that it is important for the youth to understand the Agenda 2063 *Africa We Want* documentation for nuanced implementation and improved contribution in developmental dialogue. Reflecting upon the geopolitics of development, Ms Tau asserted that though cooperation is required between states to see the fulfilment of the developmental aspirations, promoting Africa's independence is also a key concern expressed through the agency of the African 2063 Agenda. She further underscored the role of collective leadership by African youth in ensuring that the fight for liberation on the economic level is won. She bemoaned the lack of solid infrastructure on the continent and the need to improve it for Africa to grow.



Ms Tau emphasised the need for exchange programmes in Africa, to ensure that there is a better

understanding of different cultures and different socio-economic positions (citing university and learnership exchanges). She praised South Africa's role in promoting mediated solutions in various countries and the role of Governments of National Unity (GNUs) in resolving seemingly intractable political problems. In conclusion, Ms Tau challenged the youth to be active.

Open Discussion

The discussion involved a wide range of questions related the speeches. Questions touched on the social factors such as education and its transformative influence in achieving the SDGs particularly in an African context. The participants enquired into the role of agriculture in industrialisation. Other questions centred on how leadership structures can be reformed towards better accountability. Participants questioned the very nature of the debate and the factors inhibiting sustainable growth. Participants also questioned the role of the development agenda itself in light of the development challenges within states

Closing Remarks

Bishop Phillip in his closing remarks noted that transformation would only be possible through political emancipation and sincere dialogue on the economy.

Ms Sonja Yonehara, President of the African Union Student Alliance, noted that though African youth may have negative perceptions about the national and regional institutions, they do play an essential role for the development and peace and security agenda of Africa. Furthermore she stated that it is imperative for the youth to take advantage nvited and invented spaces and not be apathetic.



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