

**REVITALIZING AFRICA
FOR
THE 21st CENTURY:
AN
AGENDA FOR RENEWAL**

**NORTH SOUTH ROUNDTABLE
Society
for
International Development**

Contents

Preface

Revitalizing Africa for the 21st Century:
An Agenda for Renewal
The Priority of Fortright African Leadership
The Priority of Human Security and Regional Action
The Priority of Wider Roles for Women
Achieving In Africa the Commitments of
the 1999s Summits
Rethinking International Partnership:
Trade, Aid and Debt
Regional Approaches and Institutions
A New Africa in the 21st Century:
What Agenda? What Conditions?
Key Recommendations
Annexes
I. List of Participants and Observers
II. List of Papers Distributed
About the North South Roundtable

Preface

This was the seventh North South Roundtable meeting on Africa. We met in South Africa, a country whose remarkable political transformation and democratic vibrancy have brought new hope to all Africa, and indeed have brought new hope about Africa to all the world. We focused our discussions on how to build on this and other changes, by formulating an agenda for renewal which would help take Africa forward in the 21st century.

The North South Roundtable is an international group of policy makers and analysts. In this Roundtable, more than half of the participants were drawn from Africa and one third were women. A list of the participants can be found in Annex 1.

The Roundtable agreed at the very outset that an exclusive preoccupation with crises must give way to identifying new sources for growth and hope in Africa. It then considered what would need to be done to achieve in Africa the goals and commitments for human development and poverty reduction as agreed upon, with full African support, by the high-level international conferences of the 1990s. The Roundtable focused on some of the major actions required to lay the foundations for more dynamic development and a new Africa in the 21st century. The Roundtable ended by exploring how global and regional institutions could be strengthened for Africa-and how new strength and impetus could be given to the international partnership that is an indispensable requirement for development oriented growth in Africa.

This summary report provides an overview of the main themes and conclusions of the discussion. A first draft was prepared in Johannesburg and reviewed by the group in the final session of the Roundtable. Subsequently this report has been elaborated upon, drawing on the reports of the rapporteurs of each session of the conference, as well as on the papers presented at the conference. Following the long tradition of the North South Roundtable, the report is issued on my own authority as Chairman. While no one is bound by its conclusions, I hope these reflect as fairly as a brief report can-the many view points and creative suggestions made during the meeting.

In addition to this booklet, the overview and selections from most of the papers will be published in 1996 in *Development*, the quarterly journal of the Society for International Development, of which the North South Roundtable is a part. A full list of the papers presented at the North South Roundtable can be found in Annex 2.

Financial support for this Roundtable meeting was provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Government of Norway. The North South Roundtable thanks both for their generosity and commitment-and for ensuring the participation of senior officials during the meeting. The Roundtable also thanks those who wrote papers, the rapporteurs who most carefully summarized the discussions and Francis Wilson, the chief rapporteur. We also thank Scholastica Kimario, UNICEF Representative

to South Africa, for her help and support for the Roundtable, and her colleagues in Johannesburg, Admassu Tadesse and Men i.e. Saudi.

In the course of the discussions, the Roundtable recognized the new dynamism within Africa today and elements of an emerging common vision for Africa's future which need to be greatly strengthened and built upon: a vision of Africa, by Africa; a vision that is democratic; a vision of an Africa that is firmly set on a path of human development-oriented growth, concentrating on poverty reduction and including special actions for women and children, and which lays strong human foundations for the future generations who must lead and sustain Africa in the 21st century. To achieve this, ways must be found to establish new relationships between Africa and the rest of the world.

This vision can be fully articulated only by a leadership whose legitimacy derives from democratic processes: one that is fully accountable for its actions and which devotes itself to building capacity for the hard work of policy formulation as an urgent priority. The North South Roundtable hopes that this report will contribute to such a vision.

Richard Jolly
Chairman, North South Roundtable
New York
November 1995

Revitalizing Africa for the 21st Century: An Agenda for Renewal

International attention has focused largely on the multiple crises besetting the African continent. This perspective is both excessive and one-sided. There are, in truth, significant signs of hope and opportunity in Africa. Since the North South Roundtable last met on the continent seven years ago, racist rule in South Africa has been brought to an end. The entire southern Africa region is at peace for the first time in 30 years. In some 30 countries since 1990, multiparty elections have brought the return of democratic governments. In most of northern Africa and in a number of countries of sub-Saharan Africa, there has been economic growth and development, albeit at lower rates and in far fewer countries than is needed. Most important of all, there is evidence throughout Africa that the people of the continent increasingly recognize that they must take charge of their own destiny, whatever the external pressures upon them may be.

Moreover, Africa is far from a simple, uniform entity. The sheer scale of the African continent is often underestimated. Botswana is twice as far from Rwanda as Sweden is from Bosnia. While no one would imagine linking the problems of Bosnia to Sweden, many readily extrapolate the tragedy of Rwanda to the whole, huge continent. The recent report of the Global Coalition for Africa commented (In May 1995) that:

Africa remains a continent of stark contrasts. The continuing stability and economic progress of countries such as Mauritius and Botswana has to be set against the inability of Somalia and Liberia to negotiate an end to conflict. The hope and potential of South Africa and Mozambique should be contrasted with the tragedy of Rwanda and the reversals and setbacks in Nigeria and Angola. And the economic progress of Ghana, Uganda, C6m d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso must be balanced against the economic collapse of Zaire.

Beyond the continent, there are signs of a new willingness to listen to Africa, especially as the earlier certainties about prescribed policies give way to a recognition that the actions most likely to succeed are those devised and taken by Africans in support of Africa's own priorities. In this regard, the participants of this Roundtable were highly impressed with South Africa's determination to forge international partnerships on the basis of its own vision and plans, avoiding the temptation to focus primarily on how to obtain much-needed external resources.

But daunting challenges remain. Military regimes continue to undermine democracy. Vicious civil war, including genocide as in Rwanda, as well as low-level conflict continue to devastate the continent, where children, in particular, have suffered the most appalling consequences. The overall reality is one of economic decline. Our discussion identified many areas in which Africa has regressed since the late 1970s, following the dynamic gains made in many countries on the wave of independence in the early 1960s.

Moreover, prospects are still far below what the continent - and human solidarity - requires. Even with some improvement in the current rates of economic growth, it will still take several decades for Africa to return to the level of per capita income it enjoyed in 1975. A loss of confidence has resulted from repeated crises, often leading to the acceptance of policies, many imposed from outside, that have proven to be highly flawed. At a global level, Africa has become increasingly marginalized.

The Priority of Human Security and Regional Action

The Roundtable focused on conflict within Africa as its second theme. It concluded that a fundamental shift in thinking is required: away from preoccupations with military and state security to a focus on human security and on ways to reduce human insecurity in such fundamental areas as access to food and water and personal safety against crime and violence. In the latest year for which figures are available, sub-Saharan Africa allocated US\$ 8.6 billion to the military. There are now important new opportunities for freeing some of these resources for more productive uses, especially with the ending of conflict in southern Africa. Although discussion showed the complexities of this process and the difficulty of judging just what resources could realistically be freed, there can be no doubt about the potential gains in terms of the resources that would be made available for increasing investment in education, health, agriculture or industry.

Indeed, the whole continent needs to move beyond the ending of war and conflict to the building of peace. Security has to be achieved both at the individual level, ensuring basic conditions for life in a well-ordered society, and at the regional level, by building confidence, trust and cooperation across national boundaries. And new challenges will be emerging. Several participants identified conflicts over water resources as growing areas of tension and potential flash-points for conflict. Migration of people or cattle, growing inequalities between neighboring countries and youth unemployment were also cited as sources of growing tension. In this connection, several Roundtable participants emphasized that in their view violent extremism in some Islamic countries is fuelled by the embitterment resulting from growing social and economic problems such as unemployment, inequality and marginalization of large sections of the population.

whole, but most notably in Africa, has often led to the destruction of local production and productive capacity. Pressures to become more market-oriented have too often been accompanied by an ideology of unregulated markets that has been damaging to the weaker partners in trade. The opening of markets inside Africa and between Africa and the rest of the world must be negotiated rather than imposed. Aid, loans and conditionality have often been based on policies that are now widely recognized to have exacerbated poverty and underdevelopment. As the international community moves away from earlier views of structural adjustment, the principles as well as the practice of conditionality must now be fundamentally reviewed.

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embitterment resulting from growing social and economic problems such as unemployment, inequality and marginalization of large sections of the population. In this regard, the Roundtable emerged with a number of practical suggestions. There is a need to establish early warning mechanisms on conflict, set within collective regional security agreements among African states. For this, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has an obvious and important role to play, but especially at regional levels within Africa. It was also recognized that initiatives by the larger countries within the main regions of Africa could be very positive-and part of the real politik of action, especially if supported by OAU and the United Nations. But for such initiatives to succeed, a common view of Africa's future is needed, "a common ambition and a common commitment". To achieve such a view is one of the major challenges to political leadership throughout Africa-and an essential challenge if adequate foundations are to be laid for a new century of more dynamic human development.

The Roundtable did not underestimate the difficulties of moving ahead - even within areas where conflict appears to have ended. Peace and the lack of conflict are not necessarily the same. Conflicts are now more diffuse, with many causes, and of growing magnitude. Nevertheless, there is growing exhaustion with conflict, among many leaders as well as among ordinary people. This can provide the stimulus to the exercise of political will, which is an essential ingredient for ending conflict. New international efforts to control the export of arms could help. And there is the prize of a peace dividend in resources, as a few countries - too few but at least some - have demonstrated in recent years.

The Priority of Wider Roles for Women

A third theme which pervaded the entire discussion focused on the role of women in Africa. Participants stressed that in order to achieve serious implementation of gender-equity policies, a critical mass of women must be ensured at every level of decision-making within society, including both governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and within the United Nations, as well as in donor agencies. In this connection, the Roundtable noted with admiration the requirement of the majority party in South Africa's Government of National Unity that women constitute at least one third of all candidates for both national and local elections. This, and similar models, deserve study as an effective way to accelerate action. The Roundtable also noted with appreciation the statement by the Norwegian Deputy Minister of Cooperation that Norway's ability to maintain its high level of aid to Africa-and its 8 per cent increase in aid in 1995 - was achieved in no small measure by virtue of the fact that more than half the members of the cabinet of that country are women.

The results of the recent Fourth World Conference on Women were reported in some detail, focusing on their implications for Africa and emphasizing the fact that the conference was truly a "women's conference on the world". Since women and girls comprise 70 per cent of the world's poor, the female face of poverty should be a major focus for action. In addition, women can greatly help set the peace agenda-especially to help reduce all forms of violence. Women and girls are the ones who suffer most from modern warfare -and thus have the biggest stake holding in peace.

Seven key areas in the Beijing Platform for Action were identified as requiring a priority focus of action for Africa: poverty, access to education and training, access to health and related services, violence against women, greater participation in decision-making, new institutional arrangements for implementing and following up on the platform of action within every country. In Africa, priority areas especially include reducing gender disparity in education, increasing access to credit for women and greatly expanding access to reproductive health services.

Discussion brought out some of the reasons often falsely put forward for failing to appoint or promote women to more senior positions: lack of women's education, cultural tradition and so forth. In contrast, many examples within and outside Africa show the enormous potential and contribution of women's leadership where it has been drawn upon and allowed to flourish. As one African woman participant put it, countries need to look at the reality of women's situation on the ground: feudal systems of landholding in which men are supreme; education systems based on a pyramid in which only a tiny fraction of girls can go forward to secondary schooling; rural credit going to

men even though women are the main food producers; and inheritance rights and other legal arrangements slanted against women. Now all these elements must be put to the test of the needs of Africa in the 21st century. Can a developing country provide quality education for all, as in the industrial countries? But in the global village set in a global economy, can Africa settle for anything less?

Advancement of women needs to be pursued at all levels: not just top-down or bottom-up, but horizontally, throughout society. Women's equality must be treated as a fundamental right-and as a condition for other development. As one participant put it, women need to be 50 per cent of top managers - and until this level is achieved, gender progress will not ensue.

Achieving In Africa the Commitments of the 1990s Summits

The North South Roundtable considered the commitments of the major conferences held in the 1990s: the World Summit for Children (New York, 1990), the World Conference on Environment and Development (Rio, 1992), the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and the forthcoming Habitat Conference (Istanbul, 1996). What would it take in Africa to ensure implementation of the objectives and core goals arising in these conferences? The central importance of this question was underlined by the recognition that together the conferences set out a priority agenda for human development and a priority programme for human investment in Africa's advance over the next century.

Experience of the last five years in mobilizing towards the goals set at the World Summit for Children has been instructive, including the important lesson that it is possible, as many African countries have shown, to implement and successfully achieve many of these ambitious goals. Some 28 countries have prepared National Plans of Action (NPAs) to implement the goals for health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation agreed upon in 1990, and a further 10 countries have NPAs in draft or outline. More significant, progress towards these goals is considerable, though inevitably uneven. The countries of northern Africa are likely to achieve most of the goals, and probably half of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa will achieve half or more of the major goals and at least half of the mid-decade goals set for 1995. The countries in conflict lag the most, though some progress can be reported.

From this and other experience, the North South Roundtable identified the following key priorities:

The need to prepare NPAs in all areas of commitment and to convert them into implementable national policies

- The need to mobilize civil society groups, including NGOs, women's associations and professional groups of many sorts, to participate in shaping these national policies and assisting in their implementation
- The need for keeping costs low and for restructuring budgets and reallocating resources in order to mobilize the required resources
- The need to establish monitoring systems, both to keep track of progress and to exert pressure where no progress is being made by governments

The eradication of poverty is a central goal, endorsed in Copenhagen at the World Summit for Social Development in March 1995. In many respects, this is the overarching goal, combining universal access to basic education, health, water, sanitation and housing and access to employment and household food security to ensure families a basic means of livelihood. Though poverty has many faces, its eradication is a meaningful goal, practicable for governments and the international community to adopt as a central focus for their human development efforts.

It was recognized that the international community of donors and, in particular, the United Nations family could do much to provide support to African governments in implementation of human development programmes. Support for women, for girls' education and for empowering civil society in general could be important, especially if such support involved commitments over a number of years. Particularly important in education would be some form of multi-year compact in which a small core of friendly donors would agree to support a country in major efforts to expand basic and secondary education. If possible, such a compact should include some provision by donors to assist the country to maintain the programme of expansion, even if unforeseen international set-backs should occur which threaten to blow the expansion off course.

Rethinking International Partnership: Trade, Aid and Debt

Industrialization is an essential aspect of long-run development. Every country that has achieved sustained growth has also seen structural transformation away from primary production towards industry. Industrial expansion is necessary to raise growth of incomes and employment to diversify exports and thus extend markets, avoid excessive dependence on a few commodities for foreign exchange and protect the economy from worsening terms of trade for primary products; for import substitution; and to enjoy the teaming economies of specialization and scale that are associated with industrialization. In nearly all economies, the manufacturing industry has been the critical agent of the structural transformation that marks the transition from a low-productivity, low-income state to a state that is dynamic, sustained and diversified.

Against this long-run need, Africa's performance has been disappointing in the extreme. The growth of value-added manufacturing from 1980 to 1993 has averaged only 3 per cent per annum and has been declining. The African economies remain the least industrialized in the world. And there is evidence to suggest that structural adjustment policies and the opening of African economies to the sudden blast of international competition have harmed rather than helped their industrialization.

Protection and subsidization is not the answer, at least not in the long term. Rather, the papers presented to the Roundtable made the case for a pragmatic combination of policies, adapted to the situation and stage of development of the African country and region concerned. Ownership patterns need to respond to the lessons of experience, neither clinging to inefficient, outmoded public ownership nor insisting on a rush to privatization, which has often proved enviable and failed. Markets need to be structured and incentives need to be sharpened and better focused. There are new regional opportunities for trade, finance and infrastructure but they must be actively pursued. Within countries, more action is needed on the supply side—skills training, technology support, development of infrastructure, special sources of financial support must be provided at both micro and macro levels. Reform and structural adjustment along these lines can build rather than destroy the industrialization and trade structures on which Africa's economic future will depend.

Aid is a second area where rethinking is required. With aid under pressure, there is a need to increase its productivity. Several approaches to this challenge were identified by the Roundtable.

One is for new forms of compact between African countries and a small core of committed donors and international agencies. The emphasis would be on support for reforms and initiatives led by the country itself—with the donors exploring ways to provide medium to longer-term commitments, provided only that the country remains committed to its self-declared priorities. Several donors have already declared a general interest in such an approach and the North South Roundtable in Ottawa explored possible ways in which it might be pursued. Compacts would be a particularly useful way to support educational expansion, where action by African governments will often be possible only with some assurance of long-term external support.

Technical assistance is another area where changes are long overdue. At present, the share of technical assistance in aid to Africa ranges from 15 to 60 per cent and averages about a quarter. The number of expatriates provided under such arrangements continues to grow, in spite of the many earlier objectives and commitments that national personnel, once trained by the expatriates, would be able to take over. New models for supplying technical cooperation need to be put in place and management of the whole process of technical cooperation needs to be put more firmly into local hands.

Also put to the Roundtable was a more radical proposal, for tackling the low salaries and weak incentives which underlie many of the inadequacies of African government structures today and account for much of job absenteeism and much of the migration of the more skilled workers to jobs abroad. Nothing less than a major reform of civil service structures is required, together with an increase in basic salaries to levels at least approaching that of what a family needs to survive. The Roundtable noted that in a number of countries, expenditure on technical assistance each year is three to seven times expenditure on the whole of a country's civil service. It was proposed therefore that some part of the technical assistance expenditures be channeled for several years in support of civil service reform, including local salary reform. The proposal suggested that not only would this approach be more in line with the needs of long-run development, but external support might be phased out after seven years or so.

Rethinking debt was the third area where major new international initiatives are required. Interestingly, this is an area upon which much of the international community and most of Africa are agreed

-at least in principle. The tragedy is that in spite of many proposals and some action, the total of debt owed by sub-Saharan Africa to the rest of the world has continued to grow at astronomical rates. Although there is some uncertainty about the exact figures, the World Bank estimated that in 1995 the total debt of sub-Saharan Africa was US\$ 210 billion. Although there is a consensus within and outside Africa that this sum considerably exceeds what Africa will ever be able to pay back, the measures proposed for action to date have fallen far short of what is required to make a serious dent in the situation. Although rescheduling amounts to some US\$ 34 billion excluding Nigeria (and a further US\$ 38 billion if Nigeria is included), actual debt forgiveness so far amounts to only US\$ 7.1 billion.

The Roundtable added its voice to the many which have called for more effective action. Although much of what is owed each year is not paid, debt-servicing costs continue to put pressure on

government budgets as well as on foreign exchange earnings, holding back education and social sector expenditure, savings and investment and thus economic recovery and human development for the long term. The Roundtable welcomed the recent initiatives by the World Bank to explore measures to reduce multilateral as well as bilateral debt. There are many ways in which this could be done. The need is for a more serious political action on the creditor side, recognizing that the impact of debt on Africa remains crippling even though the size and economic impact of effective action at the global level would be relatively minor.

Regional Approaches and Institutions

Institutional decay is currently of endemic proportion in Africa. In all sectors of the polity, the great institutions of the State have failed woefully. Evidence of institutional crisis abounds: in the political system, in the public service, in the management of the economy and even in the military. Even social institutions are in a crisis.

The Roundtable focused on three aspects of the large and complex question of what could be done. First, it recognized that strengthening and rebuilding societies so that they can meet the challenges ahead requires a broad perspective - especially to recognize the need for broader forms of participation in many areas of society. Virtually all the national institutions in Africa today are colonial and neo-colonial in origin. There is need for "institutional restitution, renewal and restructuring", as one of our number entitled the paper he presented to the Roundtable. The wave of democratization and the opening of the political systems to greater citizen participation provide an opportunity for rethinking approaches. This process must transcend the material. It must have a moral and psychological dimension; on the moral plane, this will involve the restitution of legitimacy based on moral and political accountability and of structures built on trust and respect. On the psychological plane, Africa must rediscover its self-confidence and self-respect and free itself from the sense of dependence.

The same paradigm shift is called for with respect to sub regional and regional institutions. The Roundtable noted that at present, there is a vast quantitative excess of such institutions - some 40 in western Africa alone. Rationalization is a vital need on one side - but strengthening the standing and effectiveness of those institutions which will remain is equally important. Many of the regional and sub regional actions identified elsewhere in this report as important for a more dynamic future for African development will require support from stronger and more relevant regional and sub regional institutions. The Roundtable recognized that this would require financing- many regional institutions are even more under-funded than national institutions, and much of the funding that is available comes from donors. Governments also need to give more serious attention to implementing the resolutions being passed.

As elsewhere, the picture is neither uniform nor uniformly bleak. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a good example of a sub regional organization that played a vital and successful role in both the struggle for liberation and the ending of apartheid, and has since been reformulating its mission to the new post-apartheid situation. The OAU, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Development Bank (ADB) are the three principal continental organizations and as such have their own need for major strengthening and reform, to set stronger regional action in the years ahead.

Regional action is another area where Africans must clearly take the lead and give the lead. At the same time, the Roundtable discussion made clear that the international and donor communities have vital supportive roles. There are many past examples where Africa has in fact demonstrated such leadership-only to find that in one way or another the international community spurned the lead offered and, instead, devised alternative plans or approaches of its own. It takes two to tango - and this will be just as true for dances to new African tunes as it was for earlier, internationally composed melodies.

A New Africa in the 21st Century: What Agenda? What Conditions?

On numerous occasions in the Roundtable, the emphasis was laid by Africans on Africans taking responsibility for the decisions that will determine Africa's future-for taking charge of their developmental destiny. There was no originality in the Roundtable making such a call. The point has been made many times in the last few years, and primarily by Africans themselves. Some of the most lively discussion concerned why this has become an international call at this time and what precisely is meant by it.

One important part of the message is that "Africans should cease blaming the international system for their difficulties. face realities and recognize that ultimately, they, and only they, are responsible for what they and their countries make of it". Another part is that Africans need to get their houses in order, deal with the abuses of corruption and non-democratic leadership, especially as they concern failures to use scarce resources or ran public enterprises to maximum efficiency. A third, more controversial interpretation is that it is now more readily recognized that international policies of adjustment, as pushed so strongly by the international community since the early 1990s, have often failed to deliver what was promised and expected. So the international community now wants it clearly recognized that Africa is in charge of policy-making and the responsibility it entails. A key part of a new approach must also be clearer and more committed ownership of the new policies by Africans themselves - which can come about only if African governments and leadership are in the driver's seat when it comes to both devising the new approaches and carrying them out.

There are important elements of truth in the different interpretations given above - and many other points could be added to them. And for all the areas of agreement an the need for a new approach, there are still important differences in the ways different groups present the points. At times, debate on these matters in the Roundtable released deep passions and revealed sharp differences between many from within Africa and those who tended to see African problems and issues from outside. However, there was a general agreement that the policy straggles of the last few years were finally yielding fruitful consensus, including at the senior most levels of the World Bank.

But as one Roundtable member put it, the question now is "whether this emerging consensus will be translated into operational strategies, policies and approaches". There is an urgent need for African countries to move with determination in the direction of taking greater control - but for this to happen, Africa's partners must "create space" for Africans to take effective leadership in development efforts and form effective partnerships with other African countries to support, in a coordinated and synergistic manner, the agenda of sustained human-centered development and structural transformation.

Creating this space will not be easy. In the context of high levels of debt, annually claiming large repayments and requiring frequent rescheduling, creditors are used to close involvement in the details of economic policy-making and, at critical points, insisting on their own interpretation of responsible action. For countries needing donor support with high levels of aid, each negotiation of such aid will be another occasion when donors will also be tempted- or required by what they see as the needs of their own accountability -to insist on their own approach, rather than to follow African leadership. In short, for Africans to take charge of their own policy-making, let alone their own destiny, new efforts of committed partnership must be pursued if such a new approach is to be at all possible. Yet a new approach is necessary and urgent. And the new changes and opportunities already identified give it a chance. It will be for the forthcoming Maastricht meeting, for the evolving United Nations initiative on Africa of the UN Secretary General, for the Bretton Woods organizations in their own rethinking, for donors in their own policy-making - and most centrally, for each of the African governments themselves and the people who elect them - to turn this vision of a new approach into reality.

Key Recommendations

At the end of the North South Roundtable, participants prepared a list of key recommendations to summarize their ideas and proposals.

• African leaders and their peoples need to develop a shared vision of Africa's future in the 21st century, developed through a creative interaction between civil society and democratic leadership.

• African people must be placed at the centre of all African development, through a massive investment in basic education, health and other social services and a political commitment to accelerated poverty reduction.

• Africa will need to display a new political resolve to find the necessary resources for human development strategies, both by mobilizing additional domestic and external resources and, in particular, by restructuring existing budgets, cutting down military expenditures, privatizing inefficient public enterprises and pinning non-essential development projects.

• Africa should devise specific strategies to improve the position of women. These include education and training and access to reproductive health, and, at the political level, the introduction of affirmative action' (as in South Africa) to ensure a critical mass of women at all levels of decision making in governmental and non-governmental bodies. Women should also be brought far more explicitly and actively into peace-making processes.

• Africa must renew its dialogue with the rest of the world in order to change the present unsatisfactory realities with regard to debt, aid and the process of globalization which has been marginalizing Africa for two or three decades. As shown in the recent Uruguay Round, trade liberalization is now projected to benefit every continent except Africa, which is already the most deprived.

• Africa should strengthen its relations with United Nations agencies, which, in turn, should deliver greater support for the programmes of action agreed upon in the recent cycle of global conferences (Rio, Cairo, Copenhagen, Beijing and so on). Relationships with the Bretton Woods institutions also need to be restructured to give more space for African initiative, leadership and policy formulation.

• Africa should develop a concrete programme of action to turn increasing economic globalization into a new opportunity for the continent by diversifying production and export patterns and acquiring new technical skills to break into new markets with new products.

• Africa should conduct a searching re-examination of the existing regional institutions to slim down their number and strengthen their mandates, activities and resources, particularly in the field of development and peace-keeping activities.

• African policy makers must assume full responsibility for their own problems - with or without an improvement in the external environment - and convey a self-confident message to the rest of the world: Africans are ready to develop Africa through their own determined efforts, regardless of the level of external support that might be made available.

• Africa should strengthen initiatives already undertaken to promote regional cooperation, to reduce conflict in a process of active preventive diplomacy and to promote peacekeeping as in the Mandela-Mugabe-Masire initiative under SADC auspices in Lesotho.

• To improve the effectiveness of government and government services (especially for health, education, water, agricultural extension services, and personal security) and to help stimulate a dynamic private sector, a more professional and productive public sector will be required. Often this will require a larger and not a smaller civil service and, almost always, one less inadequately remunerated than at present. There is a major opportunity to move towards this end if some part of current donor support was shifted from payment to the large numbers of technical assistant expatriates from abroad to support of improved incentives and salaries for nationals within a reformed civil service.

• The 21st century will be biology-based, just as the 20th century has been geology- and petroleum-based. Africa needs to protect its biological, animal and genetic diversity - all of which will be accorded increasing value in the next two or three decades. A preserved, enhanced and diverse environment could well be the basis for Africa, the cradle of humankind, to become a super-continent and a power to be reckoned with in the world of the next century.

Annex I:

List of Participants and Observers

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Ayodele Aderinwale

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Carolyn McAskie

North South Roundtable

The North South Roundtable, established in 1978 under the auspices of the Society for International Development, is an independent intellectual forum in which academics, researchers and policy makers from around the world come together to discuss global development issues. The Roundtable brings together experts from every continent in many fields, all sharing a commitment to orderly progress in human affairs, for the advancement of a constructive dialogue between North and South, developed and developing, rich and poor nations, in search of a more just and stable world order. In its various sessions, the North South Roundtable seeks to identify and analyze the mutual interest of North and South. The ideas evolved in the Roundtable process are disseminated to the general public, national decision makers, and national and international organizations through Roundtable publications and through direct briefings. NSRT activities are funded by Governments, international organizations and foundations; its policies are determined by a Steering Committee.

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