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My Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is a great pleasure, once again, to bring you an exciting issue which is replete with an enormous amount of information and cutting edge research about development matters in Africa. I am indeed very delighted to say that a lot of the work published in JSDA has findings which are echoed in the findings of serious research published in a few journals and magazines in the Western world. I call your attention to an article which was published in Fortune, March 22, 2010, entitled, "Africa's Changing Landscape (p. 91-107), in which it was stated that the governments of African countries are seeking a focus on sustainable ways of managing and harnessing their natural resources. It was clearly articulated that Africa is the next frontier for economic investments. The major players in the global economic marketplace have now begun to move into the continent and their efforts are not just to exploit the natural resources, but to grow the business sectors in African countries. Some papers in this issue have challenged the current development paradigm on the continent and they have called for responsible partnerships in order to improve Africa's economic development, which seems to be plagued by massive corruption, political instability, unemployment, and poverty. The current population of Africa, which is about 1 billion people, would most likely explode and this is a potential buying power. Industries and companies know full well that if this population is well trained and the majority can be gainfully employed by the private companies, as well as by the public sector, Africa would certainly live to the expectations of being the next frontier for global economic growth. To put Africa's position in future global economy, the article in Fortune notes:



The global business community, however, is not waiting that long. Many forward-looking multinational corporations already know that the economies of many African countries are on the verge of taking off. According to the African Development Bank, the GDP of the continent, which has been growing 5% to 6% annually, hit \$1.3 trillion last year. Much of that growth has come from burgeoning telecommunications and banking systems, plus

increased trade with China for both natural resources and manufactured goods. Today Africa's economy is larger than India's, and not far behind those of Brazil and Russia.

Africa has barely tapped into its potential as a major source of oil, timber, and ores. Consider that this enormous continent – into which could fit the U.S., Europe, and China – contains roughly 75% of all the Earth's strategic minerals. The Republic of Guinea, one of the poorest countries in the world, has, according to U.S.G.S. data, 30% of the world's bauxite, the raw material from which aluminum is extracted. Recent tests suggest the nation may actually have closer to 60% of global reserves, much of it easy – and relatively cheap – to recover (p. 52).

It is not just the natural resources of Africa that position the countries of the region for greatness, but the countries are investing in industries, such as mobile telecommunications, finance and agricultural production, that are sustainable. The papers in this issue emphasize this point, but some also provide caution. Health issues are still a concern for the countries of Africa. The eradication of such diseases as AIDS/HIV and malaria will be on the development agendas of many countries for decades; but with sound economic take off and education, the countries of Africa will be able to deal with these problems squarely. The protection of the ecological systems and socio-cultural systems of the countries of Africa are integral parts of the sustainability and sustainable development of the continent.

The path to sustainable economic systems of Africa must be holistic in nature. There must be respect for land and natural resources through conservation and protection. Africa must connect to the rest of the world economically. Africa has to be the new frontier for global economic growth that must be funded domestically and internationally.

The papers in this issue address matters that center on empowerment through information and education, protection and conservation of resources, economic development, resource management and allocation, community health, and agriculture. It is my hope that these articles will inform and act as the catalyst for sustainability and sustainable development throughout the continent.

We thank you for your support and look forward to your comments and reactions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Valentine James". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V" and "J".

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