

Kayizzi-Mugerwa, S., Olukoshi, A.O., & Wohlgemuth, L. (eds). (1998). *Towards a New Partnership with Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*. Uppsala, Sweden: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

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This book is a joint effort by various scholars and presents a concerted effort on how collaborative endeavors and partnership with the African continent could benefit the continent and its people. It is also a culmination of deliberations between African states and Sweden on how the latter could dispense aid to the continents, especially given the dire straits in which some states on the continent find themselves. The deliberation also reveals Sweden's foreign policy towards Africa in deliberations in which African participants were the main participants as they gave their side of opinion on how relations between Sweden and Africa could be enhanced. The deliberations also led to the formation of "Partnership Africa", an independent working group that was mandated to develop a framework paper for Sweden's Africa policy in the post war, post-apartheid era. Consequently, the deliberations fuelled about Africa in Sweden and Sweden in Africa.

Adebayo O. Olukoshi and Lennart Wohlgemuth, contributors in the book, criticize the cooperation between Sweden and Africa and expressed the view that such cooperation has been characterized by "...a failure to deliver meaningful and sustainable development" (p7). Furtherance to this, they maintain that as the scope and volume of development cooperation increased, its effectiveness tended to decline, a paradox which social scientists would not comprehend. In the end, the foregoing scholars bemoan the negative impact of aid to Africa as they found an issue with the aid to the continent. They note that problems, such as aid dependence in recipient countries, the failure of cooperation to foster the development of relevant local technical skills, the tendency towards total erosion of local initiative, and the reality of aid flows, have tended to reinforce local power relations that are obstructive of democratic accountability. The authors also noted that increasing dissatisfaction in the donor countries with the poor results of several decades of cooperation has been matched by an equally-felt sense of frustration and anger in the recipient countries. The situation has been exacerbated by the lackluster performance of the structural adjustment programs (SAPs) crafted by the Bretton Woods institutions in the 1980s for the same purpose of stemming the African economic crisis.

Part 1 of the book explores challenges encountered and opportunities presented by African countries in their endeavor to stem economic growth. The 1980s are presented in the book as having witnessed "... a resurgence of popular domestic pressures for democratization in various parts of the continent" (p15). The author notes that these pressures for democratization have been complemented by a series of interrelated developments in the international system which, on the whole, has created a

more conducive environment for political reform in Africa. With the coming to an end of the Cold War, meant the end to ideological rivalry and the creation of a political landscape with the propensity to create democratic institutions on the continent, it is noted, in the book, that in many countries popular pressure compelled single-party and military regimes to embrace multipartyism and create democratic spaces for their citizens. The role and place of opposition African politics became more pronounced and visible, with the media becoming active in the promotion of democracy on the continent. The judiciary and feminist movements came into the fore to democratize the continent as these were institutions that had been suppressed with the former having been manipulated into the ruling elite, while feminism had been dominated by the patriarchal society that African societies found themselves in.

In the book, the role of civil society in the struggle for human rights is given prominence as an institution whose tireless effort to bring about democracy has been unprecedented in the history of the continent. There is mention of emerging regional approaches to the promotion of democracy as different regions on the continent explored various ways to create democratic institutions within their constituencies and/or discourage military dictatorship within their environs. In his contribution, David Lush brings into the discussion of promoting democratic institutions the role of the media which he credits for having played a vital role in the decolonization process as well as in the post-colonial era when neo-colonialism had begun to rear its ugly head on the continent by African ruling elites. Another contributor, Tendai Laxton Biti, bemoans the manipulation of the Judiciary by the Executive in Zimbabwe as the courts became increasingly partisan and how this led to a breakdown of the rule of law and a political crisis, whose spill-over destabilized the economy of the country. Dominique Njinku's contribution in the book deliberates how the continent's economic development has been dogging barriers that beset trade expansion, leading to the continent playing second fiddle in global economic affairs. Health problems have also been cited in the book as having a debilitating effect on the continent's development, with the HIV/AIDS pandemic being given prominence. In their contribution, Rene Loewenson and Alan Whiteside have noted how catastrophic the AIDS epidemic has been the extent to which its socio-economic impact has affected all and sundry on the continent. With women being cite as the most affected with health problems on the continent, Pregs Govender's contribution indicates that there is a dire need for states to devote more financial resources for women in their budgetary allocations. With many African countries quantifying land as an economic asset, land policy in Tanzania and other African states has dominated Ringo Tenga's contribution in this book where he points out that land reform is a necessity and an attempt to address and redress colonial imbalances. In conclusion, the various contributors concur that if African is to make and progress, both economically and politically, there is need to build blocks for a new partnership as a way of creating a bulwark against any divisive forces.

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