

## **Towards a More Pragmatic Cooperation and Integration in Africa: Issues of Development and Conflict Challenges**

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### **Abstract**

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The paper proceed from a critical analysis, desire view that premise African's present situation i.e. the realities on ground in regards to cooperation and integration, suffer from a more pragmatic form. What as being the norms of cooperation and integration over the years evidently not a reflection of the desire goals and objectives of setting the pace for the continent. As findings of the paper, what we desire in terms of cooperation and integration have proved to be largely a minus to African development, as internal conflict inherent due to weak institutions and lacks of fundamentals of democracy, security instability, justice and economic imperatives. It goes further to look at the concept of cooperation, integration, development and conflicts that entails social, economic and political and of recent placing more emphasis on security. Also, a carefully identification and analysis of the overwhelming issues of development and conflict challenges in the African region, with a critical dissection and comparison, of the wordings of the O A U chartered and A U constitutive Act. The writer concludes by proffering some recommendations.

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**Keywords:** Cooperation, Integration, Conflict, Development, Security and Economic Imperative

### **Introduction**

There is now a global consensus that African time may have just arrived, it is imperative to analysis carefully the salient features of African cooperation and integration policy. Never has so much global attention been thrown its way, this time for the right reason namely, trade, economic growth and investment. This is germane because of the evident issues of development and mounting conflict challenges.

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The paper argues that, there is exigent need for a critical analysis of African region development agenda in relation to the massive conflict challenges and threat of security instability, to enable us make appreciable impact through our cooperation and integration polices.

It is instructive that the attempt of cooperation and integration in African is Africa union (A U) shared values of ensuring coherence and harmony in Africa thinking and action (The guardian, 19 Jan 2012, p 23). As the continent moves albeit slowly towards its development destination, it is noticeable becoming the next frontier for international business and investment point. According to IMF president, Christine Lagard "speaking with business leaders in several African countries in December 2012, reckons that seven of the world's top – 10 fastest growing economies over the next five years will be in Africa "(The Punch Newspaper feb12, 2012. p15)

In the light of the above, should these mean more deliberate action from the A. U strengthening African cooperation and integration through appropriate machinery, necessary institution framework and formidable mechanism to facilitate it? Africa is awash with old intentions, new possibility and fresh competition, colonial and post colonial problems have all pervaded her development, together with troubling political and socio – civil concerns. But whatever the case maybe, the startle benefit of African

Development and the cost of conflict resolution lie in the cooperation and integration of Africa from a more pragmatic perspective.

## **Objectives**

The African continent is backward. But then, its backwardness is caused majorly by African attitudes which are crucial in understanding the continent under-development and conflict ridden. Consequently this article attempts to demonstrate that building the right attitude through pragmatic cooperation and integration is essential to African development dreams and over coming conflicts. The ability of the African people to take responsibility for their continents destiny and future can be manifested only through the formation of cooperation and integration process, providing the leeway as Africa trade the uncertain roadmap of development and conflict.

## Theory

A theory is a body of paradigm which is logically organized in order to guide a research work. The framework for analyzing the role which cooperation and integration can play in fostering development and overcoming conflict in Africa is that of perception rooted in social psychology. Freedman, Sear and Carlsmith (1978) theory of perception is that people tend to form highly consistent impression of others on the basis of very little information. Using evaluative mechanism as an organizing principle, people easily form a first impression of others by expressing likeness, or dislike then ascribe pleasant or unpleasant characteristic to fit their preferred portrait. The crucial message of the theory is focused on the fact that:

“There are two rival point of view about how people process information about other people: The Learning approach, which has people essentially averaging (or adding) information in quite mechanical manner and the Gestalt approach, which has people thinking a new about a person after every fresh piece of information that incorporate everything they known about the stimulus person” (freedman et al, 1978:98).

Somehow, the impression formed of others or judgments of them are not very accurate. For instances, it is quit difficult to accurately judge peoples emotion from there facial expressions. While it is easy to observe emotions fairly accurately; it is relatively hard to tell whether observed emotions are positive or negative emotions.

This development is influenced by the fact that there are quite a number of perceptual bases that distort our judgments of others: The halo effect ( We tend to think a person we like is good on every dimension ); the positively bias (we tend to like most people, even some who are not so likeable); and assumed similarity ( we expect others to be like us ) Freedman et al ,1978

The final underpinning of the theory is linked with personality theory in the sense that we have some organizing principle for how people behave. This helps us organized the various different pieces of information we have about another person. The relevance of the theory to the developmental role of cooperation and integration may be accurate.

There is need therefore for the continent to demonstrate greater ability to appropriately fit together numerous and benefits available through these process, and to determine the extent to which the two process can contribute to stable continental economy ,political, social development and conflict abortion. It will enable the Africa states to bring about a radical turn around in there perception of the developmental opportunities inherent in cooperation and integration arrangement and agreements.

### **Conceptual Definition**

Before we make further theoretical journey academically, concepts have to be defined for proper discussion and analysis with respect to this paper.

### **Cooperation**

It is useful at this stage to consider what dictionaries tell us about cooperation. Webster's Third New International Dictionaries say this about "cooperation"

(1). To act or work with another or other to a common end, (2). To act together, (3). To associate with another or others for mutual often economic benefit. Collins Co build Dictionary defines "cooperation" thus: (1). if people cooperate, they work or act together for a purpose. (2). If you cooperate, you help willingly when they ask you for your help, acting or working together. The Common – Sense Dictionary noting, bases cooperation on collectively accepted goals and shared goals privately. It is a platitude that cooperation is collective activity: we speak of two or more agents cooperating in order to achieve their ends or their shares collective end.

Let us consider the social psychologist Argyle's analysis (1991) defined "cooperation as acting together in a coordinated way at work, leisure, or in social relationships, in the pursuit of shared goals the enjoyment of the joint activity, or simply furthering the relationship "Argyle's main thesis is that man is a social being in the sense that man are capable of cooperating with each other. On the other hand, it should be equally clear that given a suitable circumstances perhaps only of behaving in a conflict involving way toward each other. Hande and Groebel (1991) say the following about cooperation "cooperation occurs when two more individuals help each other to reach or obtain what is needed or sought". The essence of cooperation is that two or more individuals assist each other to reach the same end. If the same end here could be taken as collective goal other than as an accidentally shared end.

According to the social psychologist Feger (1991, p287) "cooperation is the behavior of at least two parties pursuing compatible or identical goals by coordinating their actions and establishing co-orientation towards their common target". This definition seem logical to the cause of African union worth of promoting cooperation in the region. African cooperation in such activity as economic, politic, security and social- cultural aspect intend to benefit the region.

It is imperative to state here that, genuine cooperation depends on trust and the idea is emphatically. Williams (1988) gives the following definition of cooperation as "when two agents engage in a joint venture for the outcome of which the actions of each are necessary, and where a necessary action by at least one of them is not under the immediate control of the other". I take it that we are here offered a sufficient condition of cooperation. The basic idea seems to be that agents who does not have control over the other's actions depends on the other, and because of this kind of dependence lie in successful cooperating, must trust that others does there part of the joint venture.

## **Integration**

Integration has often denoted a process. In this way, integration is portrayed as a process "involving identity – building or identity – formation" (Sbragia, 2005).Egeberg (2004:199) seem to imply that integration is "a process toward an end, whose programs can be measured using, for example, organizational theory as a 'yard stick for the degree of over all system integration.

The end goal of integration is often present as a polity, economic, social and cultural". Batora (2005:44) for example regards integration as "a process of institutional development of the European polity". Janssens (2006:171-190) defined "integration as a process which can be seen as an attempt to found a polity that is in many ways unprecedented scope". The view of integration as a process is more dynamic, multifaceted and multidisciplinary than other approaches considering the definition put forward by Borzel (2005:217) regarding "integration as the transfer or evolution of responsibilities, competencies and decision- making from state to regional level and the development of a new supranational framework, albeit with defined limitations".

This leads to a further theme in analysis of integration as a process of defining types of integration. It is certainly both useful and necessary to define types of 'integration'. Sbragia (1993) has discussed what she calls "asymmetrical integration, where legal integration advanced more rapidly than other types". In much of the contemporary analysis, political integration is regarded as a distinctive form, and somehow separated from economic or other forms of integration (Murray 200:229). Lindberg (1963:149) provided definition of political integration as the process "whereby nations forgone the desire and ability to conduct foreign and domestic policies independently of each others, seeking instead to make joint decision or to delegate the decision making process to new central organs; and the process where political actors in several distinct national setting are persuaded to shift their expectation and political activities to a new center", Ernst Haast (1968:16) has this to say," political integration as a process is whereby political actors in several distinct national setting are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectation and political activities toward a new center, whose institution possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states, the end result of a process of political integration is a new political community, super imposed over the pre-existing ones".

Economic integration refers to trade unification between different states by the partial or full abolition of custom tariff on trade (Free encyclopedia). Also, economic integration denote the elimination of tarrif and non –tariffs barrier to the flow of goods, services and person (Business Dictionary). There is another dimension to the conceptual definition of integration given by Diego Castaneda (2006) as "international integration is a process by which countries remove the barriers to free trade and free movement of people across national borders, with the goal of reducing the tensions that can lead to international conflict".

International integration is an institutionalized process in which states incorporate multination institution in their decision and create common rules that integrates each other. The study of integration as a process is further evident in the examination of European Union enlargement. For example Boucher(2005) regards "integration as the enlargement , underpinned by the commitment of member states to shared principles ; human rights democratic institution and the rule of law". Finally, a key challenge is that the concept or term "integration" is not always clearly defined even though justification has been done to define it most important as a process by most scholars.

It is used by scholarly literature enterprise and pronouncement is quite distinctive, and imperative to this paper. In all, integration is a process whereby the governments of states voluntarily enter into agreement to work together to solve common problems.

## **Development**

Development is a concept which is contested both theoretically and politically, and is inherently both complex and ambiguous... recently it has taken on the limited meaning of the practice of development agencies, especially in aiming at reducing poverty and the Millennium Development Goals (Thomas, 2004:1,-2). The above quotation is writing to set the scene.

Development as a social science concept does not have a precise meaning. As a social science construct, development means different things to different people. Writing at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, V.I Lenin (1968), a leader of the great October 1917 Russia revolution defined "development as a progressive movement, an ascension from lower to higher stage; and from simple to complex situations. The simple / lower stage (s) refers to the state of nature in which society finds itself in the process of social evolution. Division of labor at this level was rudimentary. Nearly every member of the society performs similar roles and functions. The transition to the complex stages results from certain needs which arise from society. Division of labor was raised to a higher station with every member of society assigned a specific role and function in the stratification (Altaki, 2004).

Development is also the ability of a man to conquer his environment and utilize it to his advantage. The process involved the development of tools, skills and the mobilization of required resources for development purpose (Rodney, 1972).

Again development implies increase in output per head, but which transcends individual level. Because development is a broad and multidimensional concept, it is better appreciated at all levels. Before proceeding further, a working definition of the concept as contained in the Longman Dictionary defined development as "the act of developing or the process of being developed: to develop is defined in the same dictionary as is relevant to us as to bring about the full possibilities of (especially land or Natural substances).

In the cause of defining development there are those who have taken development for; (1) development as a long term process of structural societal transformation ;(2) Development as a short-to-medium term outcome of desirable targets (3) Development as a dominant discourse of western modernity (Sumner, 2007).

The first conceptualization is that 'development' is a process of structural social change. Thomas (2000, 2004) refers to this meaning of development as a process of historical change. Gore (2000:794-5) notes that in the 1950s and 1960s a vision of the liberation of people and peoples dominated, based on structural transformation of societies and Economics. The key characteristic of this perspective are that it is focused on process of structural societal change, it is historical and it has a long – term outlooks. This mean major society shift in one dimension, for example from a rural or agricultural based society to an urban or industrial – based society (what is sometimes called the shift from traditional to 'modern' characteristic), would also have radical implication in another dimension, such as social structural changes in the respective position of classes and groups within the relations of production for example, by which we mean the relationship between the owners of capita and labor. This means that development involves changes to social economic structure, including ownership, the organization of production, technology, the institutional structure and laws (Deane, 1965). In this conceptualization; development relates to a wide view of diverse socio - economic changes. The process does not relate to any particular set of objective and so is not necessary prescriptive. Equally, it doest not base its analysis on any expectation that all societies will follow approximately the same development process.

All countries change over time, and generally experience economic growth and society change. This perspective on development is not necessary related to intentional or good change.

As Sumner (2007) put it "in some case development Involves decline in crisis and other problematical situations but all of this, can be accommodated within this wide perspective of, socio-economic change".



A second perspective on development as a short to medium-term outcome of desirable targets can be seen foremost. Thomas (2000, 2004) characterizes this second approach as 'a vision or measure of progressive change' and Gore (2000:p794) relates it to 'performance assessment'. This view is narrower in definition and is technocratic or instrumental – indeed, some might argue that it is too technocratic. At its most basic level it is simply concerned with development as occurring in terms of a set of short – to medium- term ' performance indicators' – goal or outcome which can be measured and compared with targets (for example changes in poverty, income levels, school enrolment, and employment). It therefore has a much more instrument element which is likely to be favored by practitioners within the development community notably international development agencies such as the Organization for the Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Development Assistance Committee (2001), The United Nation Development Programme (UNDP), The World Bank (2000) or the Bilateral Aid Agencies (DFID, drivers of change).

The key features of this second perspective are that it is focus on the outcome of change, so that it has a relatively short-term outlook. Leading definition by Nnoli (1982) defined development as a "checklist of technical artifacts. To him, the availability of schools, hospitals, road network, electricity, boreholes and other infrastructural facilities are indicators of development. Even though the schools, hospital, electricity and road network etc do not provide qualitative service to the target audience. This is some how problematic to many of the more academic members of development community because it presupposes a set of (essentially bureaucratic or government) goals or objectives which may not be shared by many of the people who are supposedly benefit from development. This means that there is a paternalistic assumption as what is good for people's well being based on a set, of universal values and characteristic. This raises the question of ownership not so much in the context of governments or of countries but more in the context of peoples, and the poor in particular. As argued by Sumner (2007:13) "that there is an issue over whose objectives and values are expressed within the context of this second approach to development and whether the articulation of the objectives is in any any sense democratic or involves the effective participation of civil society".

There is a concern that this short-term and instrumental view of development loses the (grand) vision of societal transformation that Gore (2000) highlighted, and separate the conception of development from socio-economic structure, social relation and politic. Harris, for example, argues that the separation of analysis from the social process of the accumulation and distribution of wealth... (Lead to depoliticisation ... (what is required is a shift)... explanation of individual deprivation to explanation of inequalities, the distribution of power, wealth... and opportunity (Harris 2006:5). On this wise, Seer (1972, 1969) for example raised some critical question as key to understanding development he maintains that, the question to ask about a country's development are three; (1) what has been happening to poverty? (2) What has been happening to unemployment? (3) What has been happening to inequality? According to Seer, if all these three have declined from higher levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. While there other perspectives that believe, development for the conceptualization should not be one sided, research can act to depoliticizes development by taking a technocratic approach Sumner (2007:14) on his own argued that a focus solely on poverty, employment, economic growth, early-time period, will lead to neglect of other important and inter-related dimension of development.

The third definition of development as a dominate discourse of western modernity is based on the view that development has consisted, of 'bad' change and bad' outcomes through the imposition of western ethnocentric notions of development upon the third words. This is the post – modern conceptualization of development (one might also refer to this as the 'post development, post colonial or post-structuralist position' (Sumner, 2007:16). Post-modern approaches see poverty and development as socially constructed and embedded within certain economic episteme which value some assets over others. By revealing the situations of such interpretation of economy and poverty, post modern approaches look, for alternative value system so that the poor are not stigmatize (Hickey and Mohan, 2003:38).

This third perspective emerged as a reaction to the deliberate efforts at progress made in the name of development since World War II and was triggered in particular by the 1949 Declaration by the US president Truman that:

"We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of undeveloped areas". (Cited in Esteva, 1992:6)

The 'post-modern' approach is not so much a conceptualization of development as a frontal onslaught onto the 'development industry' (including researchers, practitioners and aid institutions). The key element of this approach is that for post modernist, development are social construct that do not exist in an objective sense outside of the discourse (a body of ideals, concept and theory) and that can only know reality through discourse. In this approach there are no such things as objective reality. Such a discourse approach might be said to: examine how people use particular types of language and imagery to represent themselves and others in particular ways. The focus is in how these images are underlain by, and reproduced through power relations and on what their social political and economic effect are, rather than whether or not they are true. The power to define reality is a crucial aspect of power and one of the major means which certain groups ...are silenced and suppressed (Booth et al,2006:12-13).

Post modern conceptualization as put forward by Escobar, (1992:413-4,419; 44-5) "Development has been a mechanism for the production and management of the Third World ...organizing the production of truth about the Third World.... Development colonized reality, it became reality ... instead of the kingdom of abundance promised by theory and politicians in the 1950s, the discourse and the strategy of development produced its opposite: massive underdevelopment and impoverishment, untold exploitation and oppression....Development was – and continues to be for the most –a top down ,ethnocentric, figure to be moved up and down in chart of progress....The discourse of development actually constitutes the problems that it purports to analyse or solve". Sachs (1992:1) the idea of development stands today like a ruin in the intellectual landscape. It shadows our vision....Delusion and disappointment failure and crimes have been steady company of development and tell a common story: it did not work .... But above all, the hopes and desires that made are now exhausted: development has grown obsolete!! Alvares (1992:1) "development is a label for plunder and violence, a mechanism of triage. Poverty a construct and the invention of a particular civilization (Rahnema, 1997:158). Cultural perceived poverty need not be real material poverty: subsistence economic which serve basic needs through self provisioning are poor in the sense of being deprived. Yet the ideology of development declares them so (Shiva, 1988:10).

The post modernity view would suggest that those who construct the concept or the discourse (as, for example, in the perception of the backward of some rural communities in terms of agricultural production technology) have in mind this inherent element of inferiority-superiority. Indeed, central to the post – modernity which is presented in the discourse as a superior condition (Willis, 2005:2-3). This goes to the heart of the post modern theorist condemnation of development as a discourse is socially constructed and places values on certain assets which the south does not have. Thus, it is argued, the south is viewed as inferior. For example, traditional of society are perceived as inferior (Sumner, 2007:15”17). Edward (1995:3) argues that western political-intellectual representation of the Third World have been integral to subordinating the Third World the conception of orientalism. Orientalism is the “systematic discipline by which European culture has been able to manage and even produce the orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively (Edward, 1993, 1995).

Our first conceptualization of evelopment includes a broadd view of structural changes with two strands one tending towards being prescriptive and the other non-prescriptive. The more prescriptive strands can be associated with development theories which includes the concept of modernization (i.e. having an idea type to which most countries are expected to developed to in the long-run) with significant contribution from political science (Apter,1967) and from economic or economic history (Rostow,1960). It is the first of these two strands (including an element of prescription) with our first conceptualization and our second conceptualization, which post modernists would argue imply that some people and countries are inferior to other more developed people and countries.

## **Conflict**

The conflict model of society is grounded on the conflict theory developed by sociologist. It involves a reflection, conscious or other wise, of the ideals that society is best understood as a contractual or agreement made between equals to secure common goals as in social contract. The conflict theory is founded on the argument that in human society, people typically seek to improve their outcome with regard to those things they desire worth while and desirable.

Where two groups of people both view themselves as having exclusive and legitimate claim to certain good things, so that each can realize what defines as a rightful outcome only at the expense of the other, conflict results here, and conflict entails a struggle over claims to wealth, power, Status or territory, to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals (chukwura et al, 2006).

Conflict has been defined variously depending on the cause and or subjectivity of the definers. Traditionally, conflict is regarded as a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponent are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rival" (Caser, 1956:8). This impliedly means that, conflict may be conceptualized as a way of settling problems originating from opposing interests and form the continuity of society. To Duets, (1973:156). Conflict exists "wherever in compatible activities occurs and may result in a "win- lose "character. Conflict theory explained the rational of dispute, disagreement, wars in the society, Interest and expansion of business in any given society (Abba etal, 2009).

Conflict according to Awe, et al (1995)" is a universal human experience" it does not come as something peculiar to a set of people or person. And as Ihejirika, et al (2001) put it "our background, attitudes, perception and environment among other things influence our response" anybody can be part of it. Faleti (2006) has observed that conflict is a phenomenon that is an important part of human existence and a natural part of our daily lives!

### **The Vocabulary of Conflicts**

There are many synonyms for "conflict" which describes its varied manifestations, such as war, battle, strife, feud, collision, a skirmish, and combat, chaos and anarchy. All of these words imply some form of physical violence. On the other hand, there are words in the relationship that actualize human society. In this respect the words discord, protest, debate, dispute, disagreement, dissention, argument, confrontation, a quarrel or a difference of opinion and prejudice- suggest conflict using spoken or written words with different intensities of dealing which may escalates into physical violence or may be settled amicable (chukwura, et al, 2006)

## **A Critic of O.A.U Charter and A.U Constitutive Act in Regards to African Integration**

In 1963, the oldest expression of the desires for cooperation among African Nation culminate in the formation of the organization of African union (O. A. U ) and the eventual transformation of same into African union (A. U ) in 2002. But a critical dissection and comparison, of the wordings of the O. A U chartered and A.U. Constitutive Act, will reveal Africa was and still not legally, socio - politically and economically set for a pragmatic cooperation and integration. Generally, three broad objectives can be read into the defunct O. A. U charter viz: (a) the promotion of cooperation, unity and solidarity among African states (b) the defense of the sovereignty and integrity of members and (c) the complete eradication of all forms of colonialism from Africa. The broad objective logically gave birth to the guiding principles of the organization. Under article iii of the charter, the following principles were enunciated : (i) the sovereign equality of all member states(ii) non – interference in the internal affairs of states (iii) respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable right to independent existence (iv) peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration (v) unreserved condemnation, in all its forms, of political assassination as well as of subversive activities on the part of neighboring states or any other states(vi) absolute dedication to the total emancipation of the African territories which were still dependent and (vii) affirmation of a policy of non – alignment with regards to all bloc. (Akinboye, 1999). According to Akintayo (2012) “of the seven (7) principle, three (3) were dedicated to emphasis the sovereignty of all members states. This sovereignty obsession reveal itself in the wordings of the preamble of the charter where it was provided, inter alia, that; the Heads of African states and Government assemble were determined to safeguard and consolidate the hard won independence as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our state and to fight against neo – colonialism in all forms “. Provision six (6) and seven (7) of the principles, relating to absolute dedication to the total emancipation of the African territories which were still dependent; and the affirmation of policy of non-alignment with regard to all bloc. Is what Akintayo called “the fears and deep – seated desire to protect the hard earned sovereignty from being dismantled by influences from outside Africa.”

Now it is hardly surprising the O. A. U never and could not achieved Africa integration. Akintayo reaffirmed this “the organization was not formed for that purpose.

It served more to emphasize the distinction, independence and sovereignty of all African members states than any practical integration purpose. The principal institutions of the organization were themselves made subject of the sovereign states ". For instance, while article X provided for decisions making two – thirds majority vote of the members state, such decisions were made subject to the exercise of the sovereignty of the members states for implementation or other wise (Leslie et al, 1974) .In practice and not surprisingly, a major fetter on the implementation of O.A.U decision, through its existence, was member states unrestrained penchant for manipulating there sovereignty to frustrate continental aspiration. Curiously, even interpretation of the charter were made subject to member states unrestrained right to plead their sovereignty, to pick and choose which could have helped engender socio – culture integration, were never provided for or more function as part of the working languages of the defunct O. A. U.

The foregoing reveals the O. A. U was not on organization designed for the purpose of African integration or more of are cooperation. The O. A. U thus existed for about thirty – nine (39) years and save decolonization, which was assisted by clash and rivalry of western powers then any concerted work of the organization. In the words of Akinbobola (1988) "Although the O. A. U has always been quick to recognized areas of discontent and conflict in Africa, the instability in many Africa states virtually frustrate genuine intervention on the part of the O. A U in this regard". While. Akintayo (2012) identify 'sovereignty centric' approach adopted by member states fuelled the dismal performance of the organization ".Now , the encroachment of globalization and the dynamics of rapidly changing world order precipitated the inevitable expiration of the O.A.U and the formation of the successor, Africa Union (AU) in 2002.Thus ,while at the inception of the Africa Union (AU) the expectation of promoting a symbolizing broader platform for the actualization of African integration and cooperation, the objectives analysis expose the organization as a mere adulterated clone of its predecessor- the defunct O.A.U .

A look at the constitute act revealed Africans leaders response to world changes and their realization that their much cherished old conservative "states centric" ethos may no longer be viable.

The constitutive Act declared the African leaders gather were inspired by the noble ideals which guided the founding fathers of our continental organization and generations of Pan Africanist in their determination to promote unity, solidarity cohesion and cooperation among the people of Africa and African states (Okechuku, 1965). The urgency provided the heads of states and government to establishing the African economic community in order to promote the socio – economic development of Africa and to face more effectively the challenges poses by globalization.

On the basis of the argument put forward by Akintayo (2012) “that the first appearance of the word integration in the African union constitutive Act was not accompanied with determination or committing words”. This is perhaps a reflection of the same sovereignty obsession that hampered the defunct O.A.U’s progress. He went further to buttered his argument that the constitutive Acts preamble failed to unequivocally state the essence of the African union to pursue and achieve African integration. Thus, the ‘state centrism’ which plagues all African integration effort also reveals itself in the drafting of the A. U constitutive Act. However, at least theoretically, the AU constitutive Act appears like a declarative advancement for the cause of integration than it predecessor the O. A. U charter. A dissection of article three (3) of the A. U constitutive act for proper grasping containing the union’s objectives, appeared more like a declaratory deviation from narrow objectives of the defunct O.A.U charter. According to the A.U constitutive act fourteen (14) objectives in all, among which are (a) to achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and peoples of Africa (b) defense of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its member states (c) acceleration the political and socio- economic integration of the continent (d) to promote sustainable development economics and also the promotion of cooperation in all fields of human activity, to raise the living standards of African peoples (e) strengthening of regional economic communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the union.(A.U. constitute act, article 3).

An instructive observation and careful study show that there were sixteen (16) principles in all. According to Akintayo (2012) “four (4) Of the principles were cunningly drafted to emphasize the sovereignty of members of the union – their cosmetic allegiance to the A.U notwithstanding. For an organization whose declared objectives is the acceleration of socio political and economic integration, it is a discomfoting in its entire working principles”



The first two principle of the constitutive act give affirmation of full sovereignty of member states not with standing their membership of the A.U article 4 (a) provide for the sovereign equality and interdependence among member state of the union article 4 (b) provide for the respect of borders existing on achievement of independence, Article 4(g) provide for the non – interference of any member state in the internal affair of another (A.U constitutive Act Article 4)

A critical analysis of the forgoing in relation to harnessing integration in Africa goes beyond a declaratory adoption and the state centric and sovereignty obsession of the O.A.U days. Arguably, according to Akintayo (2012) is that “it is beyond debate that functional economic and socio – political integration require the surrender of part or whole sovereignty, depending on the level of consensual commitment and complexities of hurdles to be crossed. It is thus, difficult to omit the illogic of declaring an objective for accelerated integration in one breath and yet, predicating the guiding principles, for the attainment of the declared objectives in another breath on a foundation akin to an unwilling to water down sovereignty. This is the kind of paradoxical duplicity the A.U constitutive act embody in it current form”. However, since so much primacy has been given to sovereignty of state and the state right to exercise power accruing from the same. A situation were decision of the assemble are made subject to consensus failing which the two thirds majority approach is to be adopted. Even the implementations of the Pan African parliament’s decision have been made subject to the exercise of the right of states to invoke their sovereignty on whether to comply or other wise. Arguably, all the so called decision is still to be subject to the exercise or other wise of the international legal guarantees of state sovereignty save.

A.U constitutive act must be described by what it truly represent this is not to say there are no obvious “decelerator “improvements albeit few (African monetary fund establishment which would lead the way in the harmonization of the continent financial system and trade policies in order to achieve collective macro-economic stability and financial integration of the continent, The Guardian march, 2012). But were lies the feasibility of this cooperation and integration, consider many available “state centrism” that the A.U is clone.

Against this background, the process of cooperation and integration of Africa has so far been regrettably but understandably slow because A.U members – government continues to oscillate between the interests of their individual countries and the need to fast track and make success of the union. We however expect that decision and resolution on a loss of sovereignty should not be the yard stick but on a pooling of sovereignty, on its exercise jointly in the common good, rather than its exercise separately. As one analyst noted “the right reaction to the to issue of sovereignty, is not blind opposition to progress but a determination to be in where the action is, to play a full and constructive part in the development of policies to the common good, recognizing that at the end of the day, we all depend upon one another and that what is to the common good will in the long run be for our individual good as well “(The Punch Newspaper, Feb. 7. 2012, p16). The whole argument about the loss of national sovereignty is largely misconstrue, as the creation of European Union (EU) has clearly shown the economic integration and cooperation does not necessarily lead to loss of sovereignty.

### **Issues of Development and Conflit Challenges in Africa**

In spite of the several development strategies which have been formulated and applied by many Africa countries it is obvious from the available evidence that real and sustained development has so for elude Africa. Poverty, conflict and under-development remains unabated. The standard of living has continued to be abysmally low. The distribution of income is evidently more unfair than previously, while the delivery of social service to the generality of the people is becoming increasingly poor and unavailable in good quality and insufficient quantity. The poor performance of Africa’s economies and political life has varied greatly between sectors and countries .The basic structure, political and economic problems persists. As Usman et al (2009) put it “in the continuing search for the appropriate development paradigms to apply to cope with African’s development problems it is important that considerable care should be taken to understand the economic, political and social conditions of the people to which development is to serve. The political and historical economic setting should also take into consideration “. While Tomori (1995) as this to say about that development should be seen “... as a process of self-reliant growth achieved through the participation of the people acting in their own interest as they see them and under their own control. Its first objective must be to end poverty, provide productive employment and satisfy the basic need of all the people, any surplus being fairly shared.”

To this end, a fundamental rethink of development strategy in Africa and a new vision of development cooperation and integration within this context are long over due.

Meaningfully development through cooperation and integration in Africa cannot flourish amidst conflicts. Now besides intra-African problems (see example from North and south sudden, Nigeria's – south – religions – cultural apprehensions Liberia, congo,zimbebewe,ivory coast, Rwanda's Tutsi – Hutu suspicious, Burundi, ECOWAS Anglophme -Francophone polarization and several other deeply ingrained tensions and divisiveness pervading Africa), there is still no peace in many parts of Africa. From the Horn to the Great Lakes to West Africa, conflict is endemic. New threats continue to undermine political stability "(African Union-United Nation Panel 2008). While Mbeki (2010) posit this "The cost of conflict manifest itself in the deaths of million. In addition, general insecurity inhibits economic development as well as creating an enormous financial burden for the international community. Associated problem of destruction of infrastructure, environmental threat, displacement, diseases and injury mean that the aftermath of conflict is more damaging and long lasting than the conflict itself". But the reasons for Africa's high ranks in conflict as well as challenges of development are not difficult to discern. The continent share of crises around the world is certainly high; there are just too many conflicts over such tangibles as land and other natural resource; and over such non-tangibles as political power and religion. Political crises turned armed conflicts have sent millions of citizens to the great beyond, while others fleeing their homes and sources of livelihood into internal exile where they must, for no fault of their live unproductive lives and survive on aid from foreign countries. It is no exaggeration that Africa is highly prone to instability and this situation generate and compounded there development.

It is pathetic that many Africa countries have been short on governance unlike other politically advanced climes of the world. Worse still the leaderships have failed to learn from the experiences of others. They are yet to imbibe the essence of true service to the people. It is said that a nation, or in this case a continent rises and falls on its leadership. Most of the leaders of post-colonial Africa have displayed an unbelievable combination of incompetence and self-seeking in running the affairs of their countries.

The consequences of their actions and inactions are to aggravate and exploits the problems inherently in the way and manner that African countries were structured by the colonialist.

Ethnic affiliation and difference, religions differences, intra communal disaffection and inter-communal disagreement say, over land, water, oil and mineral resource have come handy as tools to pursue power or stay in power. Inevitably, disagreement is poorly managed and that snowball into grievance that, in degenerate into armed conflicts. As submitted by Ake (1996):

The so-called state is not able to rise above struggle and conflict of contending social group. It becomes itself a contested terrain where contending parties vie for the appropriation of resources including the power of the state!!

Mbeki (2010) highlight these following as causes of conflicts in Africa "A scramble for and mal-distribution of resources; concentration of political power in the hands of a political elites which abuses its power to accumulate wealth for it self and particular sections of the population; use of repressive measures by this elite to maintain itself in power; the absence of the processes and institution which would enable the people freely to express their views, up to including the possibility free to elect government of their choice; and persisting imbalance in the distribution of global power and wealth". This exposition are quite evident in Africa political leadership style, the situation breeds corrupt government, human right violation, populace emasculation and the failure of central planning that could engender rapid development for the continent. The issues of ethnicity and corruption are very much part of the narrative about what causes conflict, instability and development challenges in Africa. According to Kwasi (2004) "it is misleading as is often the case, to suggest that mass society in Africa is fundamentally prone to tribalism even when the rules of the game of modern politics forbid such practices The case rather is that in the competition for resources, under condition of steadily diminishing availability of resources, rival elites employs ethnics sentiments as mobilizing instrument to gain power, control access to resources and resources management. For these same reasons that corruption has become such pandemic problem in African societies. Nyong'o (2002:101) has suggested that, "I do not think that what is really ruining Africa chances for development is simply corruption. Corruption is the end result of a trait that is pathological in the culture of the ruling elite.

It begins with the endemic impulse to want to escape poverty through the use of political power and the exhibition of a culture of richness that must be displayed in ostentation and consumption. The more ostentatious one becomes, the more one wants to improve on the artifacts of ostentation this propels a never ending consumer culture that, of necessity, must appropriate public goods and misuse public power. Improvement in the well being of the African people can come from economic growth and development. Unfortunately, domestic forces expected to promote standards of living in Africa manifested unfavorably or negatively some of these factors are democracy, good governance, accountability, justice, security and human rights etc. All these are relevant psychologically and undeniably to human survival. While the resolution of Africa's development and economic difficulties requires cooperation, the continent must be fully aware of the crucial role that must be played by domestic reforms in order to turn "African development situation around. For Africa to be in charge of its development agenda, Andrianrivo (2000:18) said Africa must strive to create conditions for a genuine development benefiting the countries of Africa, otherwise, African under-development situations are likely to remain unchanged in the future, even with massive fund and bank loans".

Sen. (1999:1:18) defined Development as consist of the removal of various types of unfreedom that leave people with little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency.....Development can be seen.... As a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy.... The expansion of capabilities of persons to lead the kind of lives they value- and have reasons value. The argument from this definition is a broad condition that constitutes wellbeing. While the capabilities includes; political participation freedom / civil right (e.g. Freedom of speech free election ) economic facilities (e.g. opportunity to participate in trade, and production, labor) social opportunities (e.g. adequate education and health facilities ) transparency guarantees (e.g. openness in government business and social trust.); protective security (e.g. law and order social safety net for unemployed) sen.1999:38.To greater extent these above elements are far from the reach of majority African people. Present Development in Africa at this level are mirage, that issue of conflict outbreak, corruption and bad governance pose Challenging as this might be, it is possible to draw some conclusion about the root cause of conflict, hindering development of our continent, in many instances therefore the matter turns on the objectives of transforming our continents into a wellbeing and peace through pragmatic cooperation and integration. Cooperation and integration that goes beyond 'rhetoric 'but with in depth.

## **Recommendation and Conclusion**

The responsibility for changing the continent for tune rest primarily and decided with the African government and people. In the regard, through the African union the peoples of Africa have made the firm and unequivocal statement that the exercise of power on our continent should not be allowed to perpetuate violent conflict and war in Africa. The seminal constitutive act of the African Union says that we, Africa government, shall be “guided by a our common vision of a united and strong Africa and by the need to build a partnership between government and all segment of civil society in particular women, youth and the private sector, in order to strengthen solidarity and conclusion among our people.....” (AU constitution act, article). While the legal instruments approved by our elected parliaments, the African state have also bound themselves to involves the African masses not only in the struggle to make Africa a continent offence, but also in the historic effort to achieve development and rebirth of Africa. One of the first things we will have to do is to strengthen the peace and security architecture of the Africa Union, which includes the AU commission; the peace and Security Council; the Africa standby force; the panel of the wise and the continental early warning system. There is need to under take an honest assessment of the functioning of these institutions with a view to their improvement to ensure that they respond adequately and in a timely fashion to Africa peace and security challenges. The fact of the matter however is that preventive intervention to stop the outbreak of costly conflicts and intervention to address the root cause of conflict where these have occurred required that the Au makes a conscious effort to be their sovereign and exclusive. It is also vitally important that in it work to transform African into a continent of peace with itself, the Africa union will have to pay particular attention to the maters of impending conflict and address the root cause of each and every conflict it strives to prevent or resolve.

Given the African situation the article recommends further that pragmatic cooperation and integration in African is paramount so as to overcome issues of development and conflict challenges. The case in support of the argument it is through cooperative and integration that Africa countries can succeed in containing and protecting their narrow domestic markets and in building up viable industries on an economic and political basis there by ensuring an optimum use of national and regional resources. To build a political economy that focus on equitable sharing of wealth and opportunity and development for all.

Development at this point is an intersection between human and material development with logically rationally pursue of human development the result benefit will in the long run ensure that the right intersection-point between human and material development is attained it is important therefore that Africa state should follow polices that will promote human development, because human development represents a priority tool for maintaining attitude changes, social stability, Deeping democracy, and enhance transparency and good government. Also it helps to promote social and national cohesion based on a sustained straggles against discrimination and inequality on ground of race ethnicity, gender religion belief or geographical dispersal. Human development will enable Africa state to meet the daunting challenges of social and economic development is vital to Africans advancement, as Curle (1970: p156) suggest:

..... in order to develop a country must have a very considerable proportion of trained educated citizen not only to act as doctors, engineers, teachers, agriculturist, scientist and the like and hence sufficiently strong to establish its own value of justice selection on merit, flexibility, empiricism and efficiency.

However in the words of Rodney (1979) when Africans 'increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment ... Understand the laws of nature (science) put that scientific understanding and knowledge: into practice by devising tools (technology), and on the manner in which work in organized; this is social relation of production that is very significant to the cooperation and integration of continent.

It is very important to emphasis that advancing the cooperation and integration of African pragmatically is at the at of the unity, peace, stability, economic growth prosperity and sustainable development of the continent .For the cooperation and integration of Africa will engender growth demand, out put and trade in the religion. It for this reason AU government must direct their policies towards increasing borderless economies and trade regimes with large amount of freedom for business men and women entrepreneur and investors in the region and ensure to create favorable economic conditions and an enabling business environment, including a stable currency without which there cannot be true economic freedom.

Toward this end Oluwa (2012) suggest that "A.U member-state should begin to perfect economic co-ordination in budget matters harmony in monetary polices adopted by the central banks or even the publication of fluctuation bands for exchange rate and general co-ordination and approximation of economic policies of members states: considering the fact "an African free trade could increase GDP across the continent by an estimated \$62 billion more than the world gives sub-Sahara Africa in aid. Backed by investment in people and infrastructure sound government and effective tax system new jobs on offer families on the top, living stander transformed (The guardian newspaper, July 19, 20011:79).

African leaders should learn from the experience of Europeans integration and cooperation in order to develop capacities of bridging over many of our perceived problems or consequence of the "African challenges and be able to make informed decision on achieving the ultimate goal of integration process. Just as Oluwa (2012) posit "in Africa I see no reason why we cannot have a singe market and a single currency, even if we cannot have a single language". We need political leadership and will from all African leaders achieve this. Let Africa leaders resolve to develop the continent. There is also need for shared values and principle as a basin for good government and strengthening of democracy in Africa. We all accept that corruption is the cancer killing the continent, Africa will not develop and conflict will never stop, unless we genuinely resent it and prepared to vent our anger.

The plundering of African wealth and stashing them in Europe while poverty persists in the continent. Let our leaders stop profligacy, corruption and planlessness.No doubt, the problem of Africa is fundamentally leadership. For the content to develop we must enthrone responsive and exemplary leadership.africa needs selfless and nationalist leaders who will rule with the interest of the continent at heart. We should be reminded that only Africa can develop the continent met. We cannot depend on other continent to do it for us.

Finally this challenge falls to our generation of leaders. For too long, 55 nation's borders have been allowed to hold Africa people back. I believe it in time to make Africa cooperation and integration the common purpose of the continent. African leaders must both lead with the high sense of selflessness, policies that are conceived and implemented on the basis equity and justice in the polity must go with utmost sagacity and statesmanship to condemn the incident of conflict.



To set Africa on a path to prosperity and stability would be a wonderful legacy from our generation to the next. As Mbeki(2010) put it “to transform Africa into a continent of peace is that we need to organized, mobilize, and unite in all-Africa people movement for peace to fight to achieve the objective that no power whatsoever whether from within or from outside of Africa will impose on the Africa masses the scourge of violent conflict and war”. As Africans we do not need any body to educate us about the anti-human consequences of the destructive fury of conflicts to our development., notwithstanding there are rationale for greater cooperation and integration of Africa against the global political economy evidently skewed in favour of the political and economical ideas and aspiration of the current giant (the west and now emerging Asia).

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