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Participatory pluralism and pervasive poverty:
some reflections

PARTICIPATORY PLURALISM AND PERVASIVE

POVERTY: Some Reflections

By Reginald Herbold Green

The small boy who breaks a pot goes to tell his mother 'It got broken'. Not 'I broke the pot' but 'It got broken'...
And who did this? We did. We broke the pot.

- Jerry John Rawlings
President of Ghana

Opportunities should be given to women for greater participation in the nation's political and decision-making processes at all levels, especially at the national centres of power. Where necessary, appropriate training should be given to them to ensure this...

There should be greater openness in the process of designing the adjustment package, both within government and beyond. In particular, employers, trade unions and other relevant groups should be closely associated with the process both to improve the design of the programmes and to ensure their fuller understanding and support...

In making the protection of the poor an integral part of adjustment, the primary strategy should be that of enhancing their productive capacity through better access to productive resources and assets...

- Khartoum Declaration

Pluralism Revisited

Pluralism is a less than satisfactory term of art for use in respect of SSA unless specifically defined for that purpose. The reason is its near monopolisation by a specific formulation related to the conditions of a particular secular/Christian, industrial, high incomes, bourgeois democratic society/polity (the USA). That formulation is clearly not very relevant to Africa either in its institutional assumptions and tests or probably in a number of its more basic tenets.

Participatory pluralism is defined for purposes of this paper as including:

- a. participation in proposal, preparation and dialogue leading to decisions; in their articulation and implementation and in monitoring, review and modification;
- b. ability to, and practice of, self-organisation at levels ranging from basic community (village, neighbourhood, workplace) to national;
- c. accountability of leaders and officials to the people who directly or indirectly choose them and to those they are intended to serve/lead.

This definition does not define specific structures. For example a single party system does not per se mark a polity/civil society as non-plural if a variety of organisations with participation - ability to act and to speak on behalf of their members - leadership accountable to those members exist. Indeed, if these conditions are met, the affiliation of such organisations to the single party may be consistent with pluralism.

Some Qualifications

Clearly the definition presented is in the form of an "ideal type construct". No civil society/polity is or ever has been fully participatory pluralist. The issues in analysis of any actual case are how wide and deep are participatory pluralist practices and what (both in form and in substance) and of what kind (e.g. legal, political, informational, real resources, political economic) are the main obstacles to broadening and deepening?

All three elements are required to define a civil society as participatory pluralist. Genuine participation's absence clearly prevents pluralism as defined even if there are multiple, autonomous organisations. But genuine participation can be practised within monolithic structures with at least substantial accountability. If these structures either englobe and control or forbid the existence of other structures and institutions then they are clearly not pluralist however participatory, accountable and majority supported they may be. (i.e. a democratic civil society which is not pluralist is, at least in principle, possible).

Similarly, ability to effect and practice of effecting self-organisation - unless defined to include membership participation, selection of and accountability of leaders - is not enough to demonstrate participatory pluralism. The organisations might be quite hierarchical with largely self-perpetuating leaderships to a substantial extent accountable only to themselves or to reference groups other than their members. Religious bodies and heavily state or party directed trade unions often partake of these characteristics.

Pluralism In Africa

There is a tendency in Western - and perhaps not only Western - scholarship to see both past and present African societies/polities as neither participatory nor, in particular, pluralist. This appears to result partly from rather superficial study (especially of the pre-colonial period) and the use of competitive, multi-party electoral systems as a litmus test.

Many pre-colonial African polities were participatory to a substantial extent. In some at least particular interest groups or sub-classes were self-organised and had spokesmen within the political process. (That others were excluded - e.g. slaves and to a greater or lesser degree usually women demonstrates limits on the practice of pluralism but not its absence.) Many organisations, e.g. age groups (often parallel but separate ones for females and for males), religious bodies, economic groupings (including what could be styled merchants and artisans guilds) usually existed, had powers and functions of their own and were to some degree accountable. The hereditary principle was in practice by no means totally inconsistent with participation and accountability - albeit it limited both. Unsatisfactory heirs could be (and often were passed by) - the selecting in most cases had a range of candidates who could be picked without being seen to violate the hereditary principle. Further recall - a fairly draconic form of accountability - was frequently institutionalised e.g. "destooling" and "deskinning" in most coastal, forest and savannah Ghanaian polities. In any case except for political leadership the hereditary principle was far from universal - e.g. it does not appear to have applied with any frequency to age groups.

Present African civil societies and polities do have multiple organisations albeit their number, diversity, freedom or space to act and degree of outside control vary widely. The area of political parties is the only one in which this is rarely true - mainland Sub-Saharan Africa has no competitive, multi-party systems in which a transfer of power by a victory of the opposition parties is a credible, present possibility (albeit in two cases opposition parties with considerable room for manoeuvre do exist and do participate in elections and legislative bodies but are most unlikely to win majority support at national level).

At national level the main organisations with societal functions are usually religious, labour (more specifically trade unions), women's and - less uniformly - co-operatives. Peasant organisations with broad bases and significant functions/influence are quite uncommon. A range of other bodies - e.g. St. John's Ambulance Society, Red Cross - usually exist but are largely urban and narrowly middle class/Westernised in their memberships. Others - e.g. National Red Cross Societies - are common but vary from substantial participatory, accountable and self-defining as to programme (e.g. Mozambique) to de facto statal entities. Locational or home origin groups appear to be less significant than in the past especially beyond mobilising support for (or from) their home districts or localities. In that sense they are becoming less national and more regional or local.

The range at regional level is probably analogous to national. But at local (basic community) level there is usually a greater degree of complexity and more organisations. Some are more or less adapted forms of traditional organisations (e.g. age groups and in some cases formally superseded hereditary political groupments). Others - e.g. peasants, co-ops, womens groups - for one reason or another lack any real connection to broader organisational structures.

Persistent Poverty

Sub-Saharan Africa has never had a high level of achieved productive forces per capita nor a particularly egalitarian income distribution. Therefore, poverty has been both persistent and widespread.

The degrees, immediate causes and forms of poverty were neither uniform nor stable before, during nor after colonialism. With very few exceptions the achieved productive forces per capita declined and the proportion of the population in absolute poverty (and, much less certainly or uniformly, the gini coefficient measure of inequality) rose from 1979 through 1983. In many, probably a majority of cases, this process of immiserisation and/or distintegration has continued to date. In others it may have been halted but not reversed and in a - perhaps increasing - minority it has, at least tentatively, been reversed and some ground won back.

The basic causes of the decline vary as to nature or date and as to severity. External economic environment worsening is present in almost all cases albeit its onset varies from the mid-1970s (base metal and sugar export dominated economies) through the turn of the decade (beverage buoyed economies) to the mid-1980s (where petroleum sectors had fuelled growth). Drought has been another red thread running through most. Gross domestic economic (usually paralleled by political) mismanagement outside or verging toward a civil war context has been dominant in some cases, e.g. Ghana (1972-1981) and Zaire (1960---->) respectively. External aggression (notably in Southern Africa) and civil or civil cum regional wars (notably in the Horn, Morocco/Saoura Democratic Republic and Uganda) have been the dominant cause in several cases (e.g. Angola, Mozambique, Malawi since 1985, Uganda, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan and - albeit both appear to have achieved trend reversals - Zimbabwe and Tanzania). Failure to react to other factors with adequate speed, degree and flexibility is a pervasive characteristic but whether dominant in any case is arguable (Zambia, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon and Nigeria are possible examples).

In most cases more than one factor has been present and it is their cumulative interaction which has led to the deterioration. For example, Tanzania had extreme terms of trade shocks over 1978-81; major external aggression and consequential costs over about the same period and again from late 1986; drought over 1979-1985; major policy mistakes (notably premature and overdone import liberalisation and grossly lax fiscal policy) over 1977-79 and an initial lag in policy response over 1978-79 which clearly was not fully (or at any rate substantially) overcome until 1984 even though that process began in 1980.

Poverty, Production and Distribution

Poverty exists personally and at household level (e.g. entitlement to an adequate diet); communally (e.g. access to basic health and education services); regionally (e.g. marginalisation from the national economy which, however weak that economy may be is rarely advantageous to the marginalised one (e.g. Upper and Northern Ghana albeit Senegal's Casamance is arguably an exception); infrastructurally (e.g. transport and communication) and nationally (e.g. low GDP/capita and inability to sustain increases thereof).

Therefore in any assessment of policies institutions or societal patterns their productive efficiency matters. Without GDP, food production and export growth higher than that of population few - or no - SSA economies can attain either stable, strong economic structures and processes or substantial, sustained reductions of the number of persons living in absolute poverty.

Distribution is also relevant. The dominant impact on distribution comes from levels and specific structures of production. For example, the strength of trade unions and the institutional patterns of the labour market dominate real wage levels and trends given output levels whereas the pattern, support for and trends in agriculture among small, middle and large peasants (in the Maoist sense), capitalist form enterprises (corporate or otherwise) and state or cooperative sub-sectors is likely to dominate rural income distribution (as well as levels, trends and makeup of agricultural output).

However, the production impact on distribution may be indirect. The clearest example is the Botswana diamond sector. 75% of gross surplus (itself about 75% of gross output) goes to the state and a substantial portion is used to broaden wage employment, provide near universal access basic services and provide part-time employment and personal consumption supplements to members of 'poverty focus groups'. More generally communal, infrastructural and regional poverty (as defined above) require a catalytic initial and usually a dominant subsequent central government role if they are to be addressed and redressed on a rapid and sustained basis. The implications of this for fiscal policy (on both revenue and expenditure side) including levels relative to GDP and to allocation are presumably evident at least in general terms.

Development Without Growth?

Nominally absolute poverty reduction - especially personal and communal and, still more nominally, regional - could be pursued within a constant per capita (albeit that means a 3% absolute trend growth rate, well above SSA's average since 1980). However, the social and political constraints on such a redistributive process out of fixed total resources are usually (perhaps always except in the context of total revolution or the immediate aftermath of decolonisation or civil war) such as to prevent its being very far-reaching. Radically altered allocations of additional resources (relative to the existing pattern) are much less difficult to attain and - especially - to sustain. Further, for lower, and probably most lower middle income economies the room for manoeuvre from redistributing what exists is very narrow to negative especially where (as in Tanzania) substantial anti-poverty and egalitarian redistribution had previously been carried out under more buoyant economic circumstances.

Therefore, while it is certainly true that growth without development is all too possible the inverse, development without growth, is very unlikely to be attainable except briefly, to a limited extent and in special circumstances. No very evident case exists in SSA.

Poverty and Pluralism

It is not valid to argue that poverty either reduces the case for/value of pluralism nor that it absolutely prevents its existence. But it does create barriers to its vitality and breadth.

For example, poor, uneducated rural women usually have quite good perceptions of their own needs and goals and of what would be required to satisfy and make progress toward them. However, crushing time burdens, gaps in knowledge and skills, negligible resource availability above survival requirements and limited information on how to acquire what is missing (or how to organise groups to perform certain functions) often prevent the effective exercise of participatory pluralism.

A second strand is a narrowing - especially but not only in national and provincial level organisations - of who is able to participate fully and who can afford to be a leader. Both require knowledge and time. Those with a resource margin above absolute poverty are more likely to have both. As a result they can be more effective leaders and their choice by poor members need not be either manipulated or subservient. Equally they may desire and try to be accountable. Nonetheless, the breadth of pluralism is narrowed and accountability rendered voluntary and optional which is inherently dangerous. (For example, Mwalimu Nyerere and his successor President Mwinyi are both committed to accountability but it would be hard to argue that the state constitution is adequate to require it albeit arguably the Party one comes closer. Therefore, a subsequent president with different values would have substantial scope for abridging accountability.)

At a somewhat different level economic decline increases tension. States and major organisations find themselves less able to serve their members, less able to buy support (or buy off opposition) and less credible. At the same time they face rising levels of complaints (at least as long as their good intentions and ability to do something to act on them retain some credibility), of demands requiring resources to meet and of challenges to their authority and/or legitimacy. It is possible - and sometimes happens - that the response does include seeking greater mobilisation and participation (to offset losses in other resources) and greater accountability (to demonstrate that the palpable non-successes do not, or do not primarily, relate to lack of good faith or competence). What they are almost certain to include are limitations on expression - and more particularly on organisation - of dissent and caution in respect of autonomous organisations especially if they seek to broaden their scope of operations or to express dissent. Repression - at least episodically - is likely. Certainly these strands of constraint on an always limited, licensed and scrutinised pluralism in Kenya under president Moi have grown more severe as national poverty has worsened.

It certainly can be said that there are countervailing factors. Survival is a great mother of invention. There are probably more autonomous rural organisations of poor people at local level now than in 1980 in most SSA countries. The reasons are the erosion of state capacity (which does create operational space and of margins above survival. Equally some existing organisations have been strengthened. This can be somewhat ambiguous. For

example, the long established Accra market women's organisational structures have become tighter in terms of self-protection against economic adversity and a state which - notably in 1979 but - less vociferously or repressively also since 1981 is at best sceptical of their role. But because these are oligopsonistic structures which are increasingly (and on occasion increasingly violently) exclusionist the net impact on poor consumers, producers and would-be marketers is negative.

Other positive developments including broadening of roles - e.g. of churches into direct social action and organisation - and transformation of traditional structures. For example in Accra while extended family systems weakened with too many members needing solidarity and too few having resources to provide it, new neighbourhood, food seller/processor linked and savings/credit social groups emerged to fill some of the resultant gaps.

These trends are evidence of the viability and serviceability of pluralism in contexts of increasing economic and social stress. But they should neither be romanticised nor exaggerated. On balance the trend has been negative and while survival is a necessary priority by itself it is hardly an adequate one.

Pluralism and the Road Ahead

Looking per contra at pluralism and rehabilitation, recovery and economic transformation a relatively strong case can be made for its functionality in a "right to development"/"human condition" strategy albeit (somewhat ironically) not in a neo-liberal ("free markets make free men") one. Indeed the British experience since 1979 strongly suggests that neo-liberalism is inherently corrosive of pluralism, participation and accountability even in the context in which the elaboration of pluralism as an analytical conceptualisation and a normative goal was first carried out.

If production by poor people matters, the effective reach of the state is limited even in fields in which it should be present and decentralisation with substantial operational autonomy is likely to be productively and distributionally efficient then participation, accountability and parallel (hopefully complementary) institutional actors are important. That is in functional terms a substantially more than marginal case for pluralism.

Pluralism - Right To Development - Human Condition

To suppose pluralism - at least under that title - to be a widely supported goal, a conceptual focus or even much discussed in SSA would be a mistake. Traditional human rights, the interlocking right to development and the parallel "human condition" perspective or strategic focus are both more widely discussed, more operationally formulated and more often perceived to embody normative goals. Indeed whether pluralism - taken apart from participation and accountability which can be embodied in it but also, at least in principle, in alternative patterns of social and political organisation - is better viewed as an end in itself (normative goal) or as a functional means is an open question. In practice the question may be most since in the actual resource context of SSA multiple organisations and organisational linkages are almost certainly crucial both to economic rehabilitation and absolute poverty reduction and to increasing participation and accountability.

Before exploring this topic further it is useful to explore the emerging foci broadly describable as "right to development" and "human dimension"/"human condition" of discourse, rhetoric and, to a lesser but not insignificant extent, action in SSA. In addition a quick sketch of the economic context and trends is needed before considering more fully what, if any, is the portion of the answers which pluralism can be expected to provide.

Emerging Foci and Divergences

The basic convergence is among basic human needs (the right to development) as an over-riding target and universal access to basic services combined with more production by/fairer payment to the poor as the main (and economically consistent) ways to achieve them with the human investment for productivity approach (itself originally neo-classical and associated with a fraction of neo-liberalism).

This approach has been designed to refute the claims that while poverty and misery (up to and including premature death) may be deplorable "There Is No Alternative". In the process it has created a politically saleable message (vide the response to Band Aid and its extended family or at both grassroots and establishment level to UNICEF, the only UN agency able to finance steady

and rapid expansion of existing and new programmes) and, potentially, a way to convert immediate emotional human concern into longer term backing for rehabilitation, recovery and redevelopment after survival.

There is not complete synthesis of the approaches nor tactical coherence. Production by the poor has encountered much more resistance (intellectually and by, e.g., the World Bank) than universal access to basic services - apparently because the latter can be formulated more generally, elegantly and econometrically and is consistent with some strands within traditional neo-classical economics. Similarly "human investment" - as a result of its origins and of the fact that middle and higher level personpower who (at least once trained/educated) are not/will not be poor - is not always clearly or self-evidently related to the short run human condition of poor majorities and of fractions within these majorities.

The initial tactical concentration was on the situation of people made poorer or more vulnerable by stabilisation and adjustment programmes. This did have the advantage of putting the Bank - and to a lesser extent the Fund and some bilateral agencies - on the defensive. (Rising malnutrition and, a fortiori, infant mortality linked to ones own programmatic advice are somewhat difficult to defend even if one is certain they are unavoidable.) At that level, at least verbally (and to a lesser degree programmatically), the battle is being won. Virtually all relevant bodies say that the human condition effects of stabilisation and structural adjustment measures must be seen as important and if otherwise sound policies cause deterioration additional programmes/measures to offset them must be undertaken. As the Bank collaborated in raising \$70-80 million for the initial phase of Ghana's PAMSCAD which was marketed as such a programme, even if designed with a broader human condition backdrop, it is not all rhetoric.

However, three limitations confront any approach focused primarily on the "victims of stabilisation and adjustment" (or even the poor among them - bankrupted formerly rich parallel marketeers, more pungently describeable as "two-legged wingless vultures", presumably worry few other than themselves and their close associates but ex-middle income clerks and managers are prominent beneficiaries of some adjustment amelioration programmes including PAMSCAD):

1. it is very hard to link most general human condition deterioration to

stabilisation/adjustment programmes per se as separated from the crises which led to these programmes especially as the counterfactual progression in the absence of the programmes is often very hard to formulate credibly except as a downward path. The exceptions relate largely to certain types and levels of fees - notably in the health sector and to general budgetary deterioration impact on social services more generally;

2. no programme designed solely to offset costs of adjustment can be expected to address the basic requirements of all poor and/or vulnerable people nor to be more than an "add on" (or Christmas tree decoration);
3. if the human condition is the key test, then how it changes for all people (especially all poor and vulnerable people) - whatever the reasons for their initial poor condition - is the central justification or damnation of any applied economic strategy and the means to passing the test are necessarily integral to strategic design, not add ons.

The Human Dimension and Human Rights

Any approach to development (or any other branch of applied political economy) inevitably has a positive or negative human rights component. Any approach centering on the human dimension has an inherent commitment to human rights. Whether to all human rights, with what priorities and to what extent is a more complex (and ultimately contextual) question.

The standard divisions between individual and communal, socio-economic and civil, hortatory and enforceable, resource expensive and no resource cost and unifying or divisive human rights are distinctly unhelpful in examining the human dimension approach in relation to human rights. Indeed attempting to do so strongly suggests that these supposed distinctions are objectively misleading and serve the subjective purpose of selective opposition to human rights and regimes opposed on quite different grounds not of supporting or enhancing human rights holistically defined.

Virtually all human rights are both individual and communal, basically for the moderately self-evident reason that human beings live in societies and

interact with each other. Freedom of speech is usually categorised as individual. Yet it has meaning only in a community context (of auditors and interactors). Food security is usually classified as communal but eating enough to avoid hunger or starvation is equally surely a very individual need.

Similarly, socio-economic and civil rights inter-penetrate. Poverty and lack of education have a very negative impact indeed on ability to exercise civil liberties. Prevention of freedom of speech, of organisation and of political participation frequently cripple socio-economic programme design, mobilising power, implementation and error correction feedback even if objectives are genuinely related to socio-economic human rights. In this case the categories are not meaningless but the assumption of inherent contradiction rather than of basic (even if not total) complementarity is wrong.

Whether rights are hortatory or enforceable is a contextual question and one with both political economic (resource availability and allocation) and socio-political (political and legal norms and institutions/processes) aspects. In most countries freedom from hunger/food security is in principle enforceable and in practice hortatory with uneven backing to putting the rhetoric into reality. The resource problem is one of priority in allocation plus practicable delivery (Subsidy or gift? Access to earned income? Capacity to grow more?) problematics. The socio-political may either be of norms (how repugnant is the hunger of others? How strong the commitment to a right to eat for each and all?) or of institutions and laws (i.e. of effective accountability). But the same is true of effective freedom of speech, i.e. the resources and mechanisms for most individuals actually speaking so that their desired audiences can hear and respond to them either do not exist or are otherwise allocated. Similarly the norms against and structures to prevent communications oligopolisation or monopolisation appear rather weak in almost all countries even if the precise nature of quasi-accepted monopolists or oligopolists varies.

The resource cost distinction is a variation on the preceding one. Again it does not hold up. Freedom from torture is regularly cited as no cost. In fact very often that is not the case. Properly equipped, trained and remunerated police, judicial and prison systems are expensive. So is unresolved and unsanctioned crime. Torture (no matter how morally unacceptable nor, for that matter, how ultimately dysfunctional) can be seen

as a low resource cost shortcut and not infrequently one to which poor victims of crime have no objection so long as they perceive it as directed against clever criminals who terrorise witnesses and buy up lawyers and the legal process. Similarly, if freedom from hunger in a given context requires low cost means to enable poor farmers to produce, eat and sell more food and urban workers to earn more and buy more food the macroeconomic results can be very resource positive (i.e. more resources generated than used) even in the quite short run.

In principle all human rights are ultimately complementary. In practice all are both unifying and dividing. Most do entail losses for at least some present holders of power, prestige and/or wealth. Others do lead to a tension of right versus right, e.g. small indigenous minorities' land and culture rights can conflict with the need to earn a livelihood of poor indigenous majorities as well as with the greed of elites, the drive for homogenized nationalism of political leaders and the procrustean rule of rules of bureaucrats. Similarly ecological protection of the "wildlife heritage of mankind" which leads to opposing tsetse fly control even when the latter is vital to preserving the livelihood of poor cattle raisers and to preventing the re-emergence of human sleeping sickness as a major (and extremely nasty) killer, does - at the most charitable reading - raise conflict of rights issues. More generally, moving toward fuller empowerment to exercise rights costs real resources. Because these are scarce, quite genuine issues of prioritisation, timing and initial beneficiaries do arise. For example, if inability to import - say drugs and paper - cripples basic health and education services while average calorie availability is satisfactory, promoting production for export (hopefully with attention to broadening effective entitlements to existing food flows) is not irrelevant to attaining greater effective human rights.

The human dimension approach has not systematically addressed human rights questions under that rubric. But it has made specific propositions which demonstrably go beyond the caricaturisation of "bread and circuses" sometimes applied by critics of poverty reduction oriented strategies:

- a. the identification of actual groups of actual poor people;
- b. on regional, occupational and gender bases as well as in terms of

specific unmet needs (which may vary from group to group and place to place);

- c. the repeated insistence on participation linked to self-organisation and expression by poor people;

As even the opening quotations from the Khartoum Declaration show, there are certain problems. The increased participation is sometimes viewed as "given" (a noblesse oblige not a rights approach) and there is evidently a perceived need to sell participation and organisation on productivity (avoiding errors, increasing mobilisation) rather than normative grounds and to smuggle accountability in without actually using the word.

But the contrast to the "modernisation" development conceptualisation and declamation is marked. Still greater is that with the "neo liberal" (whose human rights concept is that free markets make free men). Participation, women, identifiable poor people communally and individually are all to the centre of the agenda and at least in principle perceived as having the right to speak for themselves and to be listened to.

It is worth pointing out that the human dimension approach has evolved quite independently of formal human rights dialogue. Even the relevant African Charter and still less the UN Declarations or Conventions (especially but not only the Right to Development) are virtually never cited; the ILO Conventions are, albeit rarely. This is not a desirable situation but it is a factual one. One can argue that the economic-political-social condition and process oriented contributors to the human dimension approach should pay more attention to the human rights stream. However, the most serious gap would appear to be for human rights workers to build concrete interaction with real people in real contexts and how they could be empowered to broaden and deepen their rights and especially the components of the right to development. It is true that among African states there is a correlation between operationality of the human dimension approach (or at least key elements in it) and respect for human rights entitled as such but the concerns seem to be largely parallel and the interactions implicit and subliminal rather than articulated and expressed.

This is not because human rights is a Western concept in substance, as opposed on occasion to particular verbal and contextual formulations. That argument does not really imply respect for cultural pluralism - it is inherently either racist or a defence of valuable wrongs flowing from the denial of human rights. African societies and traditions do have clear commitments to the duties of rulers and the rights (including participation and self-organisation) of subjects. Doubtless particular formulations - e.g. Locke's version of the social contract or multi-party systems as the only way to ensure accountability - are foreign to Africa, but the affirmation of the underlying human rights of which they are particular embodiments is not. What are perhaps Western are: a.) the separation of rights and duties (which is inherently as incompatible with Locke's social contract as with any other social compact formulation) and, b.) the isolation of the individual from human (social) contexts leading to a binary individual/state nexus (curiously inconsistent with actual human contexts, pluralism or civil society conceptualisations). It is not accidental that the African Charter encompasses both rights and duties and also the rights of peoples as well as of persons in their inter-relationships with other persons.

Before addressing accountability, external agency roles and the scope for legal processes and personnel it may be useful to set out a more articulated presentation of the human dimension conceptualisation and strategy as it has emerged and evolved in the African context. The African focus is not meant to imply that there are not parallel trends elsewhere in the South (or for that matter the North) but that contexts are important, and to acknowledge that the author's contextual expertise (or at any rate experience) is primarily Sub-Saharan African.

An African Overview

The human condition - the social fabric of people's lives, the state of their cooking pots - is the ultimate test of development. It is also among the vital means to achieving it. The malnourished, the sick, the illiterate, those worn out carrying wood and water cannot work long, hard or very productively. To waste much of Africa's basic economic factor of production - the work of its women and men - by allowing them to remain locked in vulnerability, enforced overwork or enforced idleness and poverty is not just

a human and social failure. It is also gross economic inefficiency.

But the reality of what is happening today is starkly summed up in a 1985 UNICEF poster of a young African girl. "What do you want to be when you grow up?" "Alive". For millions of our infants and young children over the past decade it is a plea which has gone unanswered. They are prematurely dead. Unless the right to live can be made real no other human rights are possible. For the dead there is neither a future nor future access to other rights.

The average human condition of our fellow Africans - women and men, the young and the aged, peasants and urban slum dwellers, the ill and the crippled, displaced victims of drought and of war - is appalling. Worse, it is not improving - as in most countries it was, however slowly, prior to 1980. It is worsening. The rips in the social fabric are lengthening, the cracks in the pots are widening.

These facts are statistically known from a wide range of indicators: infant mortality and life expectancy, malnutrition and food supplies, access to pure water and to sanitation, illiteracy and access to education, income per household and environmental degradation. They are sharply illustrated by the tables and figures annexed to this paper. The stark reality is that the fabric of many African societies - national, regional and local - has been wrent. The cooking pots of millions have been broken. To pretend otherwise is to deceive ourselves and to betray the poor and vulnerable people; the women, the children, the displaced victims of drought and war, the poor peasants and the equally poor urban slum dwellers.

People As Actors - And Scriptwriters

No nation can be great and prosperous the majority of whose people are poor and miserable. Those words of Adam Smith set out a central truth which many of his disciples now preaching sermons in Africa and at Africans would do well to ponder on and to use as a test of their own proposals.

The human condition of individual people, of families, of communities and of societies is - as Mwalimu Julius Nyerere has put it - the only ultimate objective, justification and validation of development. Human beings are ends

not objects, actors not things to be manipulated. Of course increased command over material resources - gross domestic product to use macroeconomic terminology - matters for a nation as well as a household. Food and health, education and water, sanitation and environmental protection all require real resources. Of course balancing income and expenditure - closing external and fiscal imbalances - matter nationally as well as individually. Crushing debt and demeaning begging damage the human condition of persons, of peoples and of states. Of course choices and sacrifices need to be made by states and societies as well as by families and individuals. The need to provide for tomorrow and the duty to the rising and future generations are central to African thought and society. But these things matter because of what they mean for human beings - and especially for poor and vulnerable human beings - not in isolation from, or worse yet instead of, their impact on the human condition.

But if people are actors - participants - then they are also in a basic sense means. Means to achieving improvements in their human condition through economic recovery and development. Labour and land are two of the three basic factors of economic production. From work applied to natural resources the third - capital can be won. Created and embodied in productive assets: tree crops and transport systems, improved fields and power plants or dams, hospitals or health posts and factories, houses and shops, schools and mines. But the poverty, the malnutrition, the inadequate access to education of a majority of the people of Africa increasingly weaken their ability to work long, hard and productively. Their poverty increasingly forces them to abuse and destroy the land so the bone white of ruined, dead and dying land creeps wider across earth satellite pictures like the destroying cancer it is. By rending the fabric of society, growing immiserisation is equally surely breaking the cycles of production, of reproduction and of surplus generation and creating contexts in which all human rights - however defined - are always in danger of erosion or extinction.

To regard nutrition, health services and education as the fruits of development to be deferred until after high production has been attained is self-defeating. Only the well nourished, healthy and literate can consistently and increasingly be efficient productive workers. To see access to pure water, reduction of women's workload and child survival as goals for after economic recovery is to ensure that there will be, at best, delayed and

stunted recovery. Women worn out carrying water for miles, tending sick children and bearing replacements for those prematurely dead are not merely denied their rights as human beings but drained of the time and energy to produce more.

Similarly to restore and to expand output requires the fuller participation in production of the poor - not their exclusion from it. To provide tractors and large irrigated farms for the few and to ignore machetes and jembes (cutlasses and hoes) and improved seeds for the many is economic madness. Not only will it not solve malnutrition (the poor will have no means to buy food); it will usually not even restore a viable trend rate of growth of agricultural output. To make this case against large public sector agricultural units and ignore its applicability to private is to become trapped in ideological tunnel vision.

Of course there is a need for balance. Production matters. It requires exports as well as textbooks; lorries as well as basic drugs; efficient factories as well as (indeed to produce) jembes and machetes; taxes as well as protected wells. Of course for some crops, in some places, under some conditions, large units and mechanisation do make social and economic sense. The point is not to argue for basic services instead of production or production by the poor instead of by the not so poor. It is to point out that most present stabilisation and adjustment plans do the reverse: they fail to recognise the vital role of basic services and of production by the poor without which recovery will be limited and development (even in narrowly economic terms) virtually unattainable.

Stabilisation, Adjustment: And or Instead of Restoring The Human Condition?

Economic malaise, crises and decline have weighed most heavily on poor and vulnerable people. There are several reasons for this - none of which is surprising but, equally, none is inevitable.

When government resources are reduced, provision of basic services and maintenance of infrastructure are cut back. They are usually cut back from the periphery - the feeder roads first, the capital city highways last. When health services face resource crisis usually rural health posts and clinics

are hit first and central reference hospitals last. It is to the credit of some African states, medical services and communities (and their external cooperating partners) that there are exceptions to that pattern - in some cases the basic rural and low income urban health services have largely been sustained or even, in some respects, strengthened. But in general the greater the distance - geographic, gender, indigenous ethnic, social, economic or political - from the centres of power, the greater the cutbacks.

Similarly when production falters it is the vulnerable who lose their employment, see the product of their self-employment fall, have their entitlement (income) to food torn away. They do not have the resources to ride out a crisis nor to give the flexibility to adjust to new ways of earning a decent livelihood. Most have indeed adapted - without that they would have died. But millions could not adapt; they (largely infants, children and victims of drought and war) have died. For the poor and vulnerable people of Africa death is very close - their margins above survival are often very narrow. As the proverb puts it - give a rich man less food and he will grow thin; give a poor man less food and he will die.

The crises of falling export earnings and import capacity; of eroding government revenues and inflationary deficits; of inefficient policies and under-utilised capacity are very real. But they are not more real nor more important than the crises of rising numbers living in absolute poverty with rising infant mortality; of the re-emergence of killer diseases like yaws and yellow fever virtually eliminated by the end of the 1950s; of school systems near collapse and peasants without tools or seeds. Indeed they are part of the same human crisis. The first set of crises exacerbates the latter and reducing the latter is a necessary condition for humanly acceptable ways of addressing the first.

Therefore, one basic test of all economic recovery and development programmes is whether they will improve the human condition - make poor people less poor and vulnerable people less vulnerable by making it possible for them to produce more and by increasing their access to basic services as well as their control over programme and policy formulation and ability to hold decision takers and professionals accountable. If a programme cannot pass those tests in prospect, and also in operation, it is fatally flawed and itself in need of structural adjustment or total redesign. This test is stronger than that

sometimes proposed of whether the stabilisation and adjustment programmes are the basic cause of poverty (of course they are not) or of whether they address the problems of poor and vulnerable people directly injured by some of their components (important but inadequate). It is also a test of present, short term rehabilitation as well as future, long term development results. Human condition recovery must go step by step with production recovery or neither is likely to be either efficient or sustainable.

Because the plight of the poor and vulnerable is the most desperate and urgent it is useful to indicate more specifically who these people are. Most fall into seven groups:

- a. victims of prolonged drought and/or ecological degradation whose previous sources of income have been wiped out;
- b. poor - often female headed - households pushed by land shortages onto marginal or sub-marginal land - the pioneers and victims of the "rural sponge" effect which has to date limited the rise of open unemployment;
- c. households in isolated or peripheral (to main centres) areas who are physically and institutionally at the end of the line for all goods and services (whether public or private sector) and usually suffer first and most severely from decreased flows;
- d. small producers - usually primarily engaged in self-provisioning but also selling food even when they have a nutritional deficit, because it is their basic cash income source - who are unable to increase or even sustain output in the face of declining access to inputs and static relevant technological knowledge;
- e. victims of war who are dislocated, like those of drought, with loss of access to health, education and water as well as of land, herds, homes, tools, seeds and foodstocks and plunged into a context of physical insecurity and psychological trauma while government resources and physical capabilities are debilitated by war bills and destruction;

- f. "informal" urban sector members whose numbers have risen even as the incomes of the formal sector they served and supplemented fell and whose slum or exurb areas have become ever more crowded and ever less well provided with basic services;
- g. urban wage earners - formerly above the absolute poverty line - whose real wages have plunged so sharply they and other household members have had to add on "informal" sector economic activities to limit the vertiginous fall in their living standards, indeed in many cases to survive at all.

The Slippery Slope Revisited

How the economies of most African states and the human condition of most African people came to be so debilitated as they are today matters. It matters not primarily to win debates or to apportion blame but to understand how to win clear and "to look our mistakes squarely in the face lest we fall into repeating them" as Rector Rui Balthasar Santos of Eduardo Mondlane University once put it.

The radical, general worsening of the situation dates to 1980. After very low growth over 1970-75, most African states made fairly rapid economic progress over 1976-79 and human condition indicators showed some - even if limited and unequally distributed - advances. Since then all but a handful of Africa's economies have been on a declining path in terms of per capita output while poverty and vulnerability have been growing. Why?

One major answer - probably the dominant one so far as output per capita declines in the majority of African states are concerned - is the 1979-1987 evolution of the international economic environment confronting Africa. The 1979-82 recession and slow 1983-87 recovery in the industrial economies have had a disastrous impact on Africa's exports valued in terms of import capacity. Over 1976-81 a World Bank study showed several African economies - e.g. the Cote d'Ivoire and Tanzania - as among the worst affected. Many primary products' real values (import purchasing power per unit exported) are at 50 year lows and the recent slight recovery in metals and virtually all projections give little promise of significant change. At the same time

protectionism and industrial economy dumping have hampered export diversification. The financial flow position has also worsened. Real net concessional finance per capita (grants and new soft loans less interest and repayment on old) declined sharply from the mid-1970s to early 1980s and - at best - have been stagnant since. Non-concessional flows have gone negative. Africa has a debt burden relative to exports greater than that of any other region. Payment on present terms is not possible and the attempt to sustain it is dramatically limiting imports, choking off recovery and worsening the human condition. That is not the view of African governments, the ADB, the ECA and the OAU alone, analyses by the World Bank, the US Secretary of the Treasury, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer and a banker majority UN expert group come to the same conclusion.

Drought - on a virtually continental basis - has exacerbated the already unsatisfactory food production trend. After good years in 1985-86, 1987-88 have again seen several localised droughts. Until food production levels in normal years - especially by poor peasants - are much higher, vulnerability of output to drought is reduced and holding of reserves (especially at peasant household level) augmented, this scourge will regularly derail recovery efforts or put them into reverse.

For many African economies the macroeconomic and human costs of war are greater than those of any other exogenous shock. Nowhere is this as brutally clear as in Southern Africa. Mozambique and Angola production (excluding oil) is about half what it would be had South Africa not waged war against them - directly and by proxy. As detailed in UNICEF's Children on the Front Line by the end of 1986 1,000,000 human beings were already dead as direct or indirect results of the war, up to 12 million driven from their homes, up to 8 million in danger of starvation. By the end of this year the toll will be at least a third higher.

Other wars equally destructive of the human condition - including life itself - are less exogenous. The wars of the Horn of Africa and of the Sudan and the disintegration of Uganda into a Hume (not a Locke, still less Rousseau) "state of nature" have roots which are deeply indigenous and in some cases centuries old. But even in these cases external action and inaction has greatly raised the potential for destruction and made resolution of the conflicts harder. The external actions include those of other African states as well as of great

powers - e.g. Libya in Uganda, the mutual destabilisation of the Horn states by each other and a fortiori Morocco's colonial conquest of the Sahara Democratic Republic's soil.

Not all causes of economic and human condition decline are exogenous. African governments have made policy mistakes and have been too slow in responding to the worsening external context. In all candour, however, it should be noted that many of these decisions were taken on external advice and are now attacked by those who once pushed them. However, with the adoption of APPER and of national rehabilitation, recovery and renewed development programmes by a majority of African states, there has been substantial improvement on the economic policy front. That again is not the judgement solely of the OAU or the ECA; the World Bank and the United Nations General Assembly have said the same.

However, these economic policies to date frequently do not give adequate attention to the human dimension nor enough priority to improving it, not simply to increase human welfare but also to sustain and accelerate economic growth. That is not a new weakness - it typified most development plans and programmes of the 1960s and 1970s. Then, however, with less constrained resources and a less hostile international economic environment, the old export led, dependent, central city and high income group focused model was consistent with some improvement in human condition indicators in general and in basic services extension in particular. Today and tomorrow no such compatibility is likely to be within the grasp of most Africa states. Either the nature and priorities of development will be re-thought and acted upon on new premises or what economic growth there is will march hand-in-hand with rising levels of inequality and poverty, misery and instability.

One concrete example is health. Life expectancy is much lower and mortality much higher in Africa than in the industrial North. The largest single difference is in infant and under 5 mortality. These are 30% of all deaths in Sub-Saharan Africa but only 2 to 3% in most industrial economies. The main causes are neo-natal tetanus, five epidemic diseases (including measles, tuberculosis and polio), malaria, impure water related morbidity (including diarrhoea), and malnutrition linked diseases and/or loss of resistance to disease. For older children and adults malnutrition and impure water related diseases, malaria, a handful of epidemic diseases and accidents treatable by

first aid are the dominant killers.

Urban hospital care is largely irrelevant to reducing these death tolls in Africa - as it was in Europe. Yet it engrosses 60 to 70% of the typical African health budget. Primary health care (including first aid), basic drug lists and supplies, extended immunisation programmes, oral rehydration and simple health education (including sanitation) are of proven low cost effectiveness. But they receive 10 to 15% of the majority of African health budgets. The case for rethinking and reallocation is clear technically as well as in human rights terms. The warning of Cheik Amidou Kane is even more timely now than when he first made it in 1985:

Frustrations and failure will mount if we do not immediately summon the courage to revise the ways we think and take action.

What Is To Be Done? Roads Back and Forward

To will an end is - if serious - to will a means or a set of means adequate to achieve that end. To make the human condition integral and central to Africa's economic recovery and development requires a comprehensive political and socio economic strategy encompassing at least eight elements:

- a. recognition that people matter and are both the subjects and ends of and the main means and actors to attaining stabilisation, recovery and renewed development;
- b. understanding that throwing away much of Africa's most basic factor of production - the labour of its people - as many modernisation and narrow stabilisation strategies do by excluding the poor and vulnerable, is economically wasteful and inefficient;
- c. acting on the reality that marginal rates of economic as well as social return from enabling poor people to produce more are often high. The real problem often is making small, contextual, poor people centred projects visible to central decision takers and credible to bureaucrats and analysts - and then altering regulations to be compatible with implementing them;

- d. comprehension that health, education and pure water are not merely human and social goods (basic as that point is) but are important to maintaining present and raising future economic productivity and to making possible fuller participation in production by women who are the chief victims of illiteracy and the human beings on whose backs falls the burden of fetching water and caring for the sick;
- e. focusing on employment and production, not subsidies and relief; e.g. through public works programmes to relieve drought or seasonal income losses;
- f. articulation of short term priorities to lay foundations for long run sustained development; e.g. in applied, field tested, peasant user friendly, producer cost effective agricultural research begun now to make it possible to sustain 5% agricultural growth in the late 1990s. Until then input restoration, infrastructural rehabilitation and generalisation of best known farmer or (more rarely) off-the-shelf research techniques can restore 4 to 5% output growth - but not beyond;
- g. political as well as economic awareness that participation in production by poor people is crucial to underpinning their survival and the improvement of their human condition. Without it their social and political participation will remain limited and perpetually at risk;
- h. comprehension of the extreme economic inefficiency of rending the fabric of society - strikes and riots, go-slows and loss of morale, steadily growing grinding poverty and recurrent economic disasters without human rehabilitation are devastating in narrow economic as well as social, political and human terms.

The poor and the vulnerable are not amorphous masses; they are groups of human beings. To fail to see what their needs are as perceived by themselves is to exclude them. To suppose their needs and capabilities are uniform is to render many people invisible. In no case have these errors and blindnesses been as common or as persistent as in that of women. Most African women are excluded or invisible but also over-burdened and under-assisted. The basic barriers to economic as well as human development posed by the excessive

workload most African women bear are rarely recognised clearly. The implications of the gender division of labour in agriculture are yet to be taken account of by agricultural research and extension. These are central elements in any serious effort to improve the human condition. After all over half of our people are women and they care for our children, tend our sick, collect our water and fuel and produce most of the food we eat. How to address them is not simple and varies from context to context. But three elements are crucial:

- a. universal access - to literacy, to basic education, to primary health care, to pure water, to agricultural inputs, to fuel - is disproportionately beneficial to women because when access is limited they are disproportionately deprived of them;
- b. serious attention must be addressed to reducing women's workload - e.g. by closer water and health facilities, by programmes (e.g. immunisation) reducing child illness, by improving technologies relevant to female tasks (e.g. food processing, moving water and fuelwood as well as food production);
- c. women should be centrally involved in planning and taking decisions about projects and programmes which will primarily affect them, e.g. rural water supply and maintenance, sanitation, food crop research and extension.

To will a strategy should lead to addressing questions of method. To cross a river requires a bridge, a raft, a boat, a tunnel or a ford (or perhaps a very good swimmer!). The same is true of economic recovery and development strategies giving central priority to the human dimension.

It should be made clear that the three goals of standard stabilisation and structural adjustment strategies do matter. They are incomplete rather than irrelevant or inherently in the wrong direction. More production is crucial. But in addition more of it must be by poor people. Reduced external and fiscal imbalances are necessary - but priority should go to increasing supply and not cutting uses important to the poor and vulnerable. Bad policies and restrictions inhibiting production and especially poor people organising to better their own human condition should be done away with, but not in any

false faith in the perfection of markets or universal goodwill of the powerful and rich.

But those elements are not, by themselves, enough. More are needed. These include priorities in government expenditure which include and move toward universality, e.g. more primary and preventative health care relative to hospitals and more food availability to poor people (through their own production or earning incomes adequate to buy it). That in turn requires much more emphasis on increased productive employment and self-employment.

The importance of moving to universal access to basic services has already been underlined. With it goes development of basic survival, disaster period support and rehabilitation mechanisms. Disasters will recur; the question is how to minimise their human damage and to speed the progress of rehabilitation - neither of which national nor (a fortiori) international disaster relief mechanisms have done very well to date. Again closely linked is acting on the perception that environmental and ecological protection is vital to the future human condition of poor Africans. Millions are being condemned to life sentences of poverty and to early deaths by the present pace of environmental degradation and destruction.

These priorities require both production and government spending. Budgetary balance should be restored and sustained primarily by increasing revenue. Domestically more production can allow more tax revenue and more efficient and progressive tax systems. But in the short run Africa needs additional external support. Additional support which meets the tests that accepts the primacy of African goals, respects the knowledge and judgement of Africans can be used to meet African requirements for improving their human condition through their economic recovery and development and is provided in a context within which African peoples and states can hold its agents accountable.

This conceptualisation is not - especially in this full-blooded and consistently articulated a form - dominant in Africa today. But neither is it absent or simply the importation of an external intellectual fad. In fragmentary forms, diverse formulations and different degrees of comprehensiveness and forcefulness it is both widespread and gaining ground from farmsteads to capitals, from the excluded to the intellectuals, from the marginalised to the powerful and in commitment and praxis as well as principle

and prose. The Khartoum Declaration of March 1988 on the Human Dimension does embody priorities and perceptions which were not equally prominent even three years ago and however wide the gap between affirmation and action the movement is on both fronts not just affirmation.

Accountability - Reconstruction - Pluralism

Accountability is used here in the sense of being able to select, sanction and remove leaders or major institutional actors. The second half is normally indirect via accountable organisations, e.g., but not only, state or party structures. The first half to be reliable and efficient requires adequate data from the leaders on their actions in a form allowing independent evaluation/judgement and a capacity for such evaluation/judgement by the recipients (either alone or with the assistance of professional/intellectual supporters or support groups).

The case for accountability is not that all choices/decisions will be normatively just or even functionally desirable for those holding the leaders to account. That is an extension of the broader reality that democracy neither needs to be nor can be defended on the basis that under it all decisions are just and/or functional in respect to the goals which led to their being taken. The case is that without it democracy is at best voluntarily given by leaders - as is participation - and selection in and out is likely to be even less efficient from human condition/human rights perspectives. That case, like the one for participation, is evidently a mixed normative/functional one.

The immediate relevance of pluralism is that independent/autonomous organisations (or sub-organisations) provide channels through which to route and bases from which to press for accountability. Which organisations depends on contexts, e.g. trade unions and religious groups have been the most evident and general actors in these roles.

Some Practical Issues in Accountability

Accountability nationally is fragmented, uneven and usually incomplete and feeble in SSA. Formal structural examination does not help understand many cases because the actual processes and accountabilities vary widely, e.g. the single Party states in Tanzania and Kenya afford very different degrees of power to enforce accountability to peasants absolutely and relative to other groups. Similarly ombudspersons, where effective at all, usually tend not to provide not primarily access to the poor who would otherwise have none but improved access for diligent middle class members who often could have used political or formal legal alternatives.

Further, severe processual problems arise especially among levels. For example, a structure in which a political structure is relatively open and accountable from the base up and is explicitly superior to the governmental structures officially, should, on the face of it, guarantee accountability. But problems arise:

1. if each Party level can call each government level to account incoherence and wide divergences in praxis are likely but otherwise the base up then across and top down way of holding accountable is very cumbersome and agonizingly slow to base community level;
2. contextual differences and direct local accountability and national coherence are hard to reconcile and it is not safe to assume either that the latter is trivial or that the closer to the base political or governmental institutions/personnel are the greater their concern with the human condition or feeling of responsibility to poor people (if anything the reverse seems to be the case on average though with a very wide scatter of particular cases);
3. acceptance of accountability and perception of responsibility does not lead automatically to meaningful acceptance of base level participation in operational policy articulation, formulation and decision taking still less to a guarantee that policies will in fact serve their intended beneficiaries well, cost efficiently or even at all.

Especially for External Agencies

External agencies have very genuine problems in respect to accepting and operating client accountability. They already have accountability structures to their governing councils and/or parent ministries. These are usually along standard inter-governmental organisation or national institutional lines. They do not (even when the council does include South governments) result in real accountability to any particular client on any specific issue even at national level. At best there is an openness to listen to client critiques and to try (on at best a voluntary normative responsibility basis) to respond to them. More rarely there is also involvement of clients in programme design and results monitoring.

It is much easier to criticise this pattern than to suggest alternatives. Multiple lines of accountability leading to very different institutions and groups will lead to conflicts and conflicting demands. How these can be minimised, guidelines for weighting different obligations devised and a workable conflict resolution procedure created is by no means self-evident even in principle let alone in the context of an external agency in any one host setting and least of all across any array of widely divergent host settings. Yet to make the attempt for some agencies in some host contexts is essential if operational progress is to be made.

Promotion, Empowering, Enjoining, Sanctioning

Achieving progress toward greater and broader effective access to human rights and a fuller and less precarious human dimension to rehabilitation and development require complex processes. The failure to realise and to articulate that realisation is partly the result of the parallelism rather than interaction of the human dimension and human rights approaches. Advocates of the former stress rational explication and normative campaigning to promote change and resource allocations to empower it. They are less prone to considering structures to forestall and procedures to enjoin deviations from stated goals and still less to consider how offenders (or at the least offences) could be sanctioned and grievances redressed. Human rights lawyers tend to stress sanctioning and enjoining (by court cases or public pressure) plus a different style of normative promotion with less attention to

institutional means to prevent or limit harm and still less to resource provision to empower states, and societies as well as persons, smaller communities and enterprises, to achieve, to provide and to exercise human rights. Logically the two approaches are complementary but with so little interaction to date this is not obvious and they are often misconstrued as alternative or antagonistic.

Promotion (or consciousness and coalition building) is a first step toward realising change. People - including groups with substantial cumulative actual or potential power - need to be convinced:

- a. the change is desirable;
- b. as well as practicable;
- c. and will serve their needs and/or interests.

Without that base the only way to achieve change is top down imposition (or small scale quasi-anarchic parallel system construction) which is not very compatible with human dimension/human rights concerns.

Empowerment involves: first, identifying what specific resources (by no means only financial or even only material resources more generally) are needed to achieve what goals, by (and for) whom over what time span and second, devising ways to mobilise additional or reallocate existing resources to those ends. This is not a trivial matter - Damascus Road conversions are not always necessary (some governments and leaders, as well as many poor people, do believe in human rights and do give priority to the human dimension) and are rarely sufficient. It does no good to seek to sanction a very poor country for not instantly providing universal literacy, universal access to primary health care and universal adequate dietary entitlements (especially as no state has actually achieved any of these fully). Persons and small communities (or enterprises) need political space to organise and to act, access to knowledge, trained personnel and genuinely supportive expert assistance in specialised areas, as well as material and financial resources. Will alone is not enough. Societies and states need the same. The political space may be international (it is dangerous to be a radical democratic socialist near the USA or a quasi-capitalist pluralist near the USSR) or national (entrenched indigenous elite minorities and less inherently elitist bodies such as some trade unions and student or intellectual caucusses can

destabilise radical or even not so radical reformist governments - vide the road to the assassination of Thomas Sankara). The other resource needs are very similar in type albeit on a different scale and with different particular parameters from those of persons and small communities. True states and societies often have more space to reallocate than poor people and their organisations/support groups but the need for more usually remains.

Promotion and empowerment are not enough. Both genuine mistakes and hostile intentions (including vested interests in lethargy and an easy life as well as in enjoyment of exploitative profit or non-accountable power) do exist and will continue to do so. Therefore it is crucial to avert, prevent and enjoin actions or inactions which hamper, halt or reverse progress toward fuller attainment of human rights.

Prevention not redress after damage is done and structures leading to appropriate initial actions not procedures for enjoining wrong ones are the basic institutional and processual goals. Institutional structures which build in participation and accountability (as well as ones which ignore or prevent them) can be devised and operated. Resource allocation criteria in favour of the human dimension approach can be articulated and prospective policies, ongoing processes and retrospective evaluation of results monitored in the light of these criteria.

Institutions can facilitate and create a normal pattern of acceptable conduct. They can limit the number and degree of but cannot avert deviations. The processual goal at that point is to identify and to enjoin (socially, politically and legally) such deviations promptly and effectively before major harm has been done. That requires grievance raising, conciliation and injunctive relief procedures genuinely accessible to all (including poor people and their organisations as well as to weak minority peoples and communities) and able to provide prompt, equitable and effective resolutions of real or potential conflict.

Finally, there will be violations of human rights and debasement of the human condition. Need, honest error and greed combine to ensure that. To create incentives to avert their multiplying and to make public the challenges and threats to human rights/human dimension there must be laws, legal processes and accessible procedures to sanction these offences. Compensation for damage

done is sometimes an equally important component of effective redress as, most people would contend, is the imposition of criminal as well as civil penalties on gross offenders.

There is a need to pay attention to causation. Need based offences do not - with very rare exceptions - justify criminal sanctions. Hanging every peasant who cuts down trees or bushes for fuel or house poles in ecologically at risk areas is neither an equitable nor a conceivably effective way of halting erosion, desertification (strictly speaking neo-desertification) or deforestation. (Indeed the wood requirement of gallows would be so great as to have the reverse effect.) Empowerment (in this case by silviculture education plus relevant seedlings, by state or community reforestation and erosion control, by alternative fuel provision and/or by selective, voluntary, assisted resettlement) is a precondition for halting need based erosion of the human condition (often especially that of the violators and their children). When empowerment is in process, civil regulations are needed as is their enforcement - fining those who chop down genuinely community planted and tended trees is hardly unreasonable and may be essential to their survival without the use of less desirable vigilante tactics.

Honest error should also not be confused with greed or malice. Indeed honest error after careful study of the issue and evaluation of options in a participatory, accountable context should rarely be sanctioned at all. To do so is to create an incentive never to decide but always to postpone or to refer and never to risk an innovation. What needs to be sanctioned is negligence. Within negligence there are degrees. For example, the "ship of weevils" case cited above is gross and culpable negligence (analogous say to reckless or even drunken driving) while failure to check in detail how an oil well would affect a twenty family fishing village on the same islet (or how their boats would affect well platforms) may well constitute a much less serious offence (analogous say to careless driving).

Severe sanctions should apply to violations related to greed - for power, for non-accountability, or material gain. The first goal is to stop the offence and the broader to avert (or at least reduce) its repetition. If major damage has been done, securing redress (from the offender if possible, otherwise from more or less innocent parties - in practice likely to be taxpayers or users of other public services if the state reimburses - more able to bear the cost

than the initial victims) is important but limiting future damages to future victims is always of at least equal importance. For example, the dead of Bhopal cannot be compensated; a crippling judgement against Union Carbide (and any judgement adequately materially compensating the living victims and the heirs of the dead would be crippling) would go far toward saving tens of thousands of lives in the future. Because the exposure to public opinion of a high profile sanctioning process is seen as costly and the real risk of sanctions are perceived as good economic reason to allocate resources to avoid being sanctionable, the process matters by itself in addition to the impact of its outcome. Union Carbide has been shaken (almost to pieces) by the Bhopal case (and its less dramatic West Virginian analogue) and other chemical companies appear to have decided that, at least to some extent, prevention and safety pay. Whether the extent is adequate to date is a very different question, the shift has begun and pressure now is for continuing and broadening it not against an unyielding wall of denial of risks and responsibilities.

Sanctioning institutions and structures matter. The law's delay is proverbial - Bhopal is already beginning to make Dicken's Jarndyce and Jarndyce look like an understatement rather than a caricature. Thought (and action on it) as to what civil and criminal remedies are needed for human rights violations/human condition debasement is needed. The issues are complex - criminal law processes often do not cover redress to victims; in civil cases procedures other than standard gladiatorial court contests may offer effective redress faster, especially if criminal procedures are not needed. But access is crucial no matter how appropriate the institutions and procedures. Access to specialist personnel (lawyers but also social and economic damage 'quantifiers'/analysts) and to financing the costs of the process (ideally from a state or society provided source available to those demonstrating that they appear to have a genuine, serious grievance). Poor people do not and in any practicable and equitable legal system cannot, argue, finance, win major court cases by themselves. They need specialists to support them and money to pay them - both of which are often unavailable in Africa (or indeed to a greater or less degree in virtually all countries).

Pluralism - Potential Relevance

The role, if any, of pluralism as defined in this paper relates to its ability to increase the probability that persons - especially poor persons - will be able to organise themselves to act, to influence the actions of others and to hold other major actors to account.

At the national provincial and basic community level three clusters of issues or topics appear to be central: a.) civil society and its room to organise and to act; b.) accountability and, c.) access to channels designed to protect empowerment.

Civil society is used here as a shorthand for freedom of self organisation, self expression and self operated action initiatives especially but not only at base level. It need not mean pluralism in the North American sense and is no more inconsistent (or at any rate antagonistically contradictory) with decentralised, democratic single mass (or just conceivably cadre) party systems than with bourgeois democratic structures.

The necessity of room for manoeuvre for civil society rests on two legs:

1. people in base communities or action groups have knowledge of their own needs and potentials no one else does or can have;
2. unless poor people and marginalised groups are able to participate - in production, in mobilisation, in decision-taking and in calling decision-takers (including their own leadership) to account there will be no objective and especially not institutional power base to protect their interests from counter-attacks by other interest groups who are organised (especially from bureaucrats, a sub-class ubiquitously part of governing coalitions whose interests in orderliness and a quiet life posit cooperation with civil society if and only if it is well organised, significant to the economy and able to inform, or at least to influence substantially, the political process).

In practice room for manoeuvre requires self-organisation and control over organisations. While this could in principle be done through single channel institutional structures, there is good logical (as well as historic

experience) reason to doubt its practical adequacy:

1. some aspects require immediacy and operational autonomy. Even with local level freedom of action (presumably within limits or quite dysfunctional disorder is likely) within nationally integrated single channel structures it is doubtful whether this can be achieved or sustained and reasonably certain it can be achieved more easily and sustained more securely with multiple organisational structures;
2. the cases for specialisation and division of labour and for competition are not negligible nor are inherently capitalist much less neo-liberal (as Comrade Gorbachev now seems to agree - albeit his case for quasi-pluralism is both purely functional and within a control frame which is arguably too rigid for the quasi-pluralism sought to have adequate vitality and impact or even much staying power). The most evident cases are religious and cultural organisations. However, almost equally strong ones can be made out for economic interest (or sub-class) based organisations, for informational channels and for gender and age based groups. Finally it is simply untrue that all local level organisations or actions need to be consolidated into provincial and national structures so long as certain coordination and frame information and some mechanisms to correct damaging inconsistencies exist.

Accountability has been sketched above as has the potential contribution pluralism can make toward strengthening it. There are, however, two very real problems. Multiple channels and organisations do not guarantee internal accountability of any. Lack of accountability in SSA is frequently pervasive not limited to central political institutions. Indeed on the whole there appears to be a correlation between political channel non-accountability and non-accountability of other organisations. As it is by no means 1 to 1 this should not be cause for despair but it is cause for further reflection as to the conditions and contexts appropriate/conducive to achieving and sustaining accountability in various types of organisations, especially ones large and complex enough that direct, face to face accountability to all the members is impracticable and indirect mechanisms are needed.

The second problem is that the practice of accountability takes time. This is not advanced on the basis that it need slow down action so much as to be

disfunctional. Rather more basic is the observable fact that while most members want accountability to be available, so long as leaders and officials deliver what are broadly viewed as acceptable results, only a small minority of members are willing to devote much time to enforcing and operating accountability. Unfortunately unless a certain ongoing base level of accountability praxis exists it is wishful thinking that it can suddenly be turned on when things go wrong (not normally the time at which officials or managers are most likely to welcome it!).

A final, more specialised, problem affecting a number of countries is that war is inherently a less or less fully accountable process than most others. This is not true of all aspects but it is valid for a range of strategic and tactical decisions, actions and reviews of results which in civil analogues would (or at any rate should) be much more open to scrutiny and review. If war is a central factor in a polity/economy this accountability gap tends to broaden and to become pervasive even in sectors which in peacetime would (or at any rate might) be accountable. However, on the face of it (and rather sketchy observation of a limited number of cases) this problem is unique to central political institutions and bodies under their control (or purporting to be so) so that the spread effect might be checked or limited by participatory pluralism.

Protecting empowerment - especially of poor persons and groups (sub-classes) which are predominately poor or vulnerable - is central to genuine adoption and, more especially, evolution and survival of a "human condition"/"right to development" oriented strategy and praxis. The impact of pluralism is unfortunately, distinctly problematic. This is not an inherent element in pluralism but rather of the probable results of partial pluralism in societies in which resource distribution (including time, knowledge and influence on/power over central political institutions) is radically unequally distributed.

For example, trade unions are historically - not only but perhaps especially in SSA - most effective at organising employees with above average skills and wages. Their interests are unlikely to be identical (even if they may be complementary) to those of workers with lower skills and wages and a fortiori to those unemployed and/or potential employment entrants. In any case in SSA non-wage predominantly labour incomes - i.e. peasants, other household

producers, small scale enterprise operators - are central to far more households (and in a majority of countries are larger even in absolute magnitude) than are middle and large employer wage payments. Their interests are in some areas analogous or at least compatible with those of trade unions but in others they really are competitive. Strong trade unions with no significant analogous peasant, co-op, artisanal or small commercial groups may be a step toward pluralism but it may also be a step toward greater, not lesser, marginalisation and disempowerment of most poor persons, households and communities.

The answer does not lie in suppressing or co-opting trade unions. It lies in building up equally strong analogue organisations in other labour income sub-sectors. But until that is achieved the view that trade union strength and freedom of manoeuvre may not serve the interests of the majority of poor households without political constraints (government or party) is by no means simply or necessarily disingenuous or intended to mystify.

The same point can be made in respect to professional organisations. Professionals usually find it relatively easy to organise (as do university students). Their roles in spearheading changes of regime are frequent and well documented. In at least a majority of cases - e.g. Sudan 1985 - they are fairly unproblematic. But their subsequent role is problematic. Professionals do constitute a sub-class with fairly easily definable and often quite clearly self-perceived interests. These are at best partly compatible with those of poorer sub-classes and in many areas do conflict (e.g. professionals' enthusiasm for accountability is, if anything, less pervasive or all-encompassing than that of political leaders!).

Constitutions, Constitutional Orders and Pluralism

In SSA the average gap between constitutional orders defined as basic political/civil society goals and operating principles and constitutions is exceptionally wide. The standard points that constitutions:

- a. do not comprehend important parts of the constitutional order;

- b. exhibit substantial gaps between constitutional (in either order or document sense) goals and practice; and
 - c. at least procedurally tend to lag behind praxis
- may well be true generally but are the basic issues only in a handful of cases.

Nor is the criticism that there is a rhetorical gap between constitutional goals/stated praxis and reality so wide and permanent as to bring the constitution into discredit, by itself, an adequate critique. Even the argument that constitutions are used to mystify and to manipulate by dominant decision taking coalitions (often quite narrow ones) which have very different goals and preferred operating principles may well miss the bottom line in a majority of cases.

Many African constitutions are simply irrelevant. They do not in any meaningful and even potentially operational sense represent the goals or operating principles of any significant interest groups/sub-classes, are not seen as relevant to the constitutional order and exist because it is believed that, like national anthems, coats of arms and flags, constitutions are something that states have to have for ceremonial and formal symbolic purposes.

Historic Burdens

The reasons for this situation are by no means obscure. Pre-colonial Sub-Saharan African polities did not have written and often did not have formally codified oral constitutions. (The exceptions to the first rule were almost without exception both transitory and cases of pre-colonial neo-colonialism, e.g. the Fanti Confederacy and the Rehoboth Kaptaincy.) They certainly had constitutional orders and frequently evolving, disintegrating or structurally changing ones but formal constitutions of the Western type played negligible roles in them. The colonial states also had constitutional orders and praxis to match. In many cases they literally did not have constitutions and where in some sense they did these were primarily pieces of administrative and organisational law which at most were incomplete formats of some basic (or

less basic) operational procedures. Nor can it be asserted that the constitutions of the metropolitan states were the actual constitutions of the colonial states - very much au contraire.

The first round of independence constitutions, virtually without exception, were imposed and formed by the departing colonial state with quite limited input from the emergent domestic constitutional order. This did less than nothing either for their contextual appropriateness and ability or for commitment not simply to them but more generally to constitutions as documents of real significance. The exceptions include Ethiopia but in that case the Imperial Constitutions were luxury consumer goods import rather like the Western liberal/philosophy elements used as Christmas tree ornaments on the Tsarist state by Peter and Katherine the Great while the Ethiopian-Eritrean Confederal Constitution was a foreign imposition (even if one which may well have expressed a desired constitutional order so far as Eritrean civil society was concerned) and was eroded, abridged and finally abrogated by the dominant Ethiopian 'partner'. The other two exceptions are Angola and Mozambique where revolutionary movements drafted and enacted them. While idealistic (in the technical sense of that term) despite their Marxist-Leninist form they were seen as more serious documents and might have been so had both states not been engulfed by wars of resistance to external aggression. Indeed arguably Mozambique has had an evolution of its constitutional order at least in part organically linked to constitutional evolution (including as is necessary in this case the Party constitution).

Second Stage Limitations

Subsequent constitutions have rarely emerged from genuine reflective and participatory processes. This is fairly evident in the case of the products of coups and of elite revolutions but is of broader relevance. The post military government Ghanaian and Nigerian constitutions were in certain senses the outcome of reflection and of participatory processes. However, they focused so heavily on averting repetition of particular routes to breakdowns which had led to military takeovers as to be only formalistically concerned with many basic goals, non-operable (i.e. so many checks and balances that literal adherence would have prevented action) and remarkably open to new abuses and disintegrative tendencies.

This generalisation does have exceptions. The post independence Tanzanian constitutional reshapings (including the Party constitutions) do arise out of the evolution of the constitutional order. Whatever their limitations they are serious, related to reality and have a participatory and political power base grounding. The post Lancaster House Zimbabwean Constitutional amendments (here perhaps especially the ZANU-ZAPU merger modifications to the surviving ZANU constitution) may well represent the start of a similar process.

Constitutional Orders - And Their Imperfections

African states by definition have constitutional orders - as defined above. However, in respect to breadth of base (or more accurately narrowness), actual predictability of decisions, stability of procedures and scope or reach of the constitutional order many are objectively weak and/or eroding and a number are disintegrating or excessively hard to define as other than pathological except in terms of the interests of a narrow group of beneficiaries.

There are states which can be characterised - and analysed - as authoritarian kleptocracies in which the purpose of public office (however acquired) is private gain and the chief means of securing political (or military) support is fairly literally buying it. The most frequently cited cases are Zaire, Sierra Leone and Liberia but despite its origins and initial democratic patina the actual nature of the last Nigerian civil state tended in that direction and Amin's Uganda was probably an example whose short life related partly to over-use of violence, under-use of coherent tactics and strategy and failure to maintain adequate relations with external patrons or protectors both capable of and willing to ensure survival.

Narrow self-serving decision taking coalition defined and enforced constitutional orders are common in Africa - as, historically at least, they have been globally. Evidently the degree of narrowness and the particular makeup of the sub-class coalitions vary but the basic nature of the constitutional orders seem similar. Kenya, the Cote d'Ivoire and (with a distinctly different coalition) Somalia are among the examples cited.

Regimes - usually but not always authoritarian - without very clear, broad or stable sub-class coalition bases are not uncommon, e.g. Ghana (1982 to date), Uganda today and in a very different way Malawi (at least until 1986) are examples. Fragility and real possibility of sharp change (from within the regime as well as by its mutation or demise) may be the only common features of such systems; certainly the substantive constitutional order goals of Flight Lieutenant (retired) J. J. Rawlings and Kamuzu Dr. Hastings Banda do not appear to have much in common.

A final strategy of limited, potentially pathological or pathological constitutional orders (in this case limited but in danger of more dire futures) is those which have had greater breadth, participation and scope but are disintegrating under external or domestic tensions at or near the level of organised, large scale violence and/or disintegration of the resource base actually mobilisable by the state and its most important sub-class supporters. Post Nimeiri Sudan and post 1975 Zambia illustrate this pattern.

This is not to deny the existence of healthier, more broadly based and arguably evolving/developing constitutional orders. Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Tanzania and Botswana are arguably all examples and a case can be made for including certain somewhat problematic cases like Senegal and Gambia.

Starting from a human condition/right to development approach the features of assent, participation, access, equity and operationality needed to develop constitutional orders can be fairly readily articulated. However, because the starting points diverge massively (Sierra Leone is not Tanzania, Cape Verde is not Equatorial Guinea, Sudan is not Mozambique, Uganda is not Kenya) as do the present dominant decision taking coalitions, the concrete possibilities for, requirements of and constraints on short term mobilisation and action vary widely.

For historic reasons sketched above, except in a handful of cases, constitutional order reconstruction and development is a precondition for constitutional reform to be effective. Seeking once again to substitute a legal engineering superstructure for a constitutional order infrastructure is no more likely to be productive now than it has been over 1957-1987.

Pluralism can play a role in building up the breadth and strength of the constitutional order. (It most certainly cannot be created nor to more than a very limited extent safeguarded by constitutional provisions.) However, to do so many parallel channel and other independent organisations in SSA need to look first at their own constitutional orders. These are often just as weak, disintegrating or pathological as those of states.

Envoi

Neo-liberalism and growthmanship both face rapidly waning credibility and legitimacy in SSA.

While by no means dominant right to development/human condition strategic and tactical approaches - the latter exemplified by the Khartoum Declaration (see Annex B) - have gained substantial intellectual, policy maker and operational credibility and support.

The substantial roles of participation, self-organisation, decentralisation and accountability in these approaches interact with the nature of participatory pluralism (at least as defined in this paper).

Where now on either the two development foci or on participatory pluralism and constitutional order is certainly a question subject to intellectual examination at varying degrees of abstraction and distance. However, from the point of view of those - predominantly Africans in SSA - whose well-being and in many cases literal survival depends on reversal of 1980s trends, the challenge is more akin to the Mara proverb cited by Mwalimu Nyerere in respect to the work of the South Commission:

Rabbit, where are you going?
I am going to kill the Elephant!
Can you really do it?
Well, I'll try and try again!

ANNEX A

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Table 1 | Selected Quality of Life Indicators: 1960 - mid-1980s |
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| Figure 3 | Malnutrition among children in Botswana and Ghana 1980-84 |

Principal Sources

World Bank, Comparative Analysis and Data Division, Economic Analysis and Projections Department (June 1984), World Development Report 1985; UNICEF, Statistics on Children in UNICEF Assisted Countries (April 1985); UNICEF Ghana: Situation Analysis of Women and Children (July 1984).

Notes

- a) 1960 data refer to a year between 1959 and 1961; 1970 between 1969 and 1971; late 1970s between 1975 and 1980; 1980s to 1982, 1984 or 1985.
- b) Defined in terms of location within a 5 kilometre radius. May overstate for urban population when facilities available are small.
- c) 1970 and late 1970s urban figures may be overstated by failing to relate number of water points to population.
- d) 1970 and 1978 figures for urban and possibly rural areas overstate by failing to relate number of drop-holes to supposed user population.
- e) Adjusted for length of primary cycle. () are unadjusted figures. Because of the primary/middle school division Ghana has a shorter primary cycle than most SSA countries.
- f) Estimate made by author based on fragmentary data.

TABLE 1
SELECTED QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS:
1960 - mid-1980s (a)

	<u>Ghana</u>		<u>Late</u> <u>1970s</u>	<u>1980s</u>	<u>Low Income sub-</u> <u>Saharan Africa</u> <u>(1982)</u>
	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>			
1. Average Life Expectancy at Birth	45	49	55	53	48
2. Infant Mortality Rate	132	107	86	107-120	118
3. Child Death Rate	27	21	15	25-30	24
4. Access to Health Facility (b)	-	-	-	30	45
5. Public Health Facility Visits Per Person Per Year	-	-	0.7	0.4	2(f)
6. Health Budget as % of GDP	-	1.2	-	0.26	0.95
7. Access to Pure Water (c)					
Rural	-	14	14	48	14
Urban	-	86	86	75	62
Total	-	35	35	60	22
8. Access to Excreta Disposal (d)					
Rural	-	40	40	30	25
Urban	-	92	95	65	69
Total	-	55	56	44	32
9. Average Calorie Availability as a % of requirements	92	97	88	68	91
10. Child Malnutrition (Moderate/Severe)	-	-	36	50-55	40
11. Primary Education Enrolment Ratio (e)	38(46)	64(75)	69(80)	-(80)	69(-)
12. Adult Literacy	27	30	-	35-45	44
13. Education Budget as % of GDP	-	3.9	-	0.85	2.81
14. Proportion of Population Below Absolute Poverty Line (f)					
Rural	-	-	60-65	67-1/2- 72-1/2	65
Urban	-	-	30-35	45-50	35

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TABLE 2

SELECTED QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS - SOUTHERN AFRICA 1984 AND SOMALIA

	Angola	Botswana	Lesotho	Malawi	Mozambique	Swaziland	Tanzania	Zambia	Zimbabwe	Somalia ^d
Population (millions)	8.5	1.1	1.5	6.9	14.0	0.6	22.0	6.5	8.5	5.5
Under-5 mortality (per 1,000 births)	325-375 ^a	100	145	280	325-375 ^a	185	185	135	120	174-210
Infant mortality (0-1) (per 1,000 births)	200 ^a	75	110	160	200 ^a	125	110	85	75	146-180
Infant and child malnutrition (%)	NA	32	NA	31	NA	NA	(50)	28	NA	16
Average calorie intake relative to requirements (%)	87	(94)	100	97	79	(108)	101	89	89	(105)
Access to health services	(30)	(89)	NA	80	(30)	NA	(70)	75	71	(20)
Access to safe water	21	(76)	(14)	(41)	(13)	48	(47)	46	(52)	33
Primary enrolment (%) (1982) ^c	66	76 ^b	71	46	46 ^b	84 ^b	87 ^b	94	131	15
Adult (over 15) literacy (%) (1982)	28	61	70	(36)	27	(61)	85 ^b	69	69	16
One-year-olds fully vaccinated (%)										
TB	40	70	91	72	(46)	95 ^b	(84)	87	88	31
DTB	8	82	59	66	(56)	79 ^b	(58)	49	68	22
Polio	55	77	64	68	(32)	60 ^b	(56)	47	63	22
Measles	62	75	63	64	(32)	51 ^b	(82)	56	55	36
Life Expectancy at birth	(41)	55	50	46	(45)	54	52	52	56	45-49
GNP per capita	490	960	530	180	(230)	790	210	470	760	(350)

() = 1980 (or nearby year). Somalia re-estimated to include unrecorded remittances.

^a Re-estimated on fragmentary data taking into account impact of war. Standard projections showing 245 under-5 mortality for Angola and 255 for Mozambique assume continuation not reversal of rapid 1975-1980 immediate post-independence period gains.

^b 1983

^c Net ratios except for Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

^d Includes estimates from various unpublished UNICEF studies at various dates 1982 through 1986.

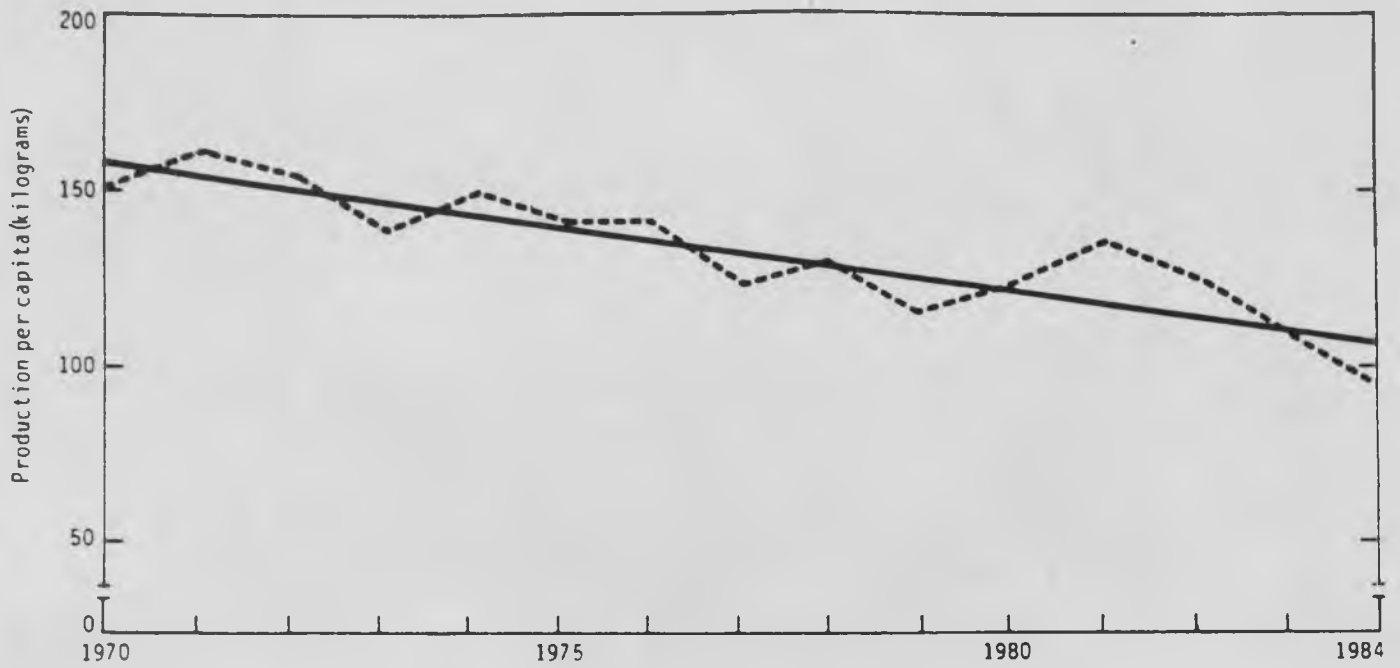
Source: Statistics on Children in UNICEF Assisted Countries, UNICEF, 1986, The State of The World's Children 1987, Oxford for UNICEF, 1987, except for GNP per capita taken from World Bank World Development Report 1986, OUP.

TABLE 3
RATES OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Countries	Sand dune encroachment	Deterioration in rangelands	Forest depletion	Deterioration of irrigation	Rainfed agricultural problems	General assessment
Benin	o	*	*	o	*	*
Burkina Faso	o	*	*	*	**	*
Cape Verdi	*	*	o	*	**	*/**
Chad	**	**	*	**	**	**
Djibouti	*	**	*	*	NA	*/**
Ethiopia	*	**	**	*	*	*/**
Gambia	*	*	**	**	*	*
Ghana	o	*	*	o	*	*
Guinea	o	o	*	*	**	*
Guinea Bissau	o	o	*	*	*	*
Kenya	o	**	**	*	*	*/**
Mali	*	**	**	*	*	**
Mauritania	*	**	**	*	*	*/**
Niger	*	**	*	**	*	*
Nigeria	o	*	**	o	**	**
Senegal	*	**	*	**	*	*
Somalia	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sudan	**	*	*	*	o	*
Tanzania	o	*	*	o	*	*
Uganda	o	**	o	o	*	*
United Rep. Cameroon	o	*	*	o	*	*
Zimbabwe	o	*	*	o	*	*

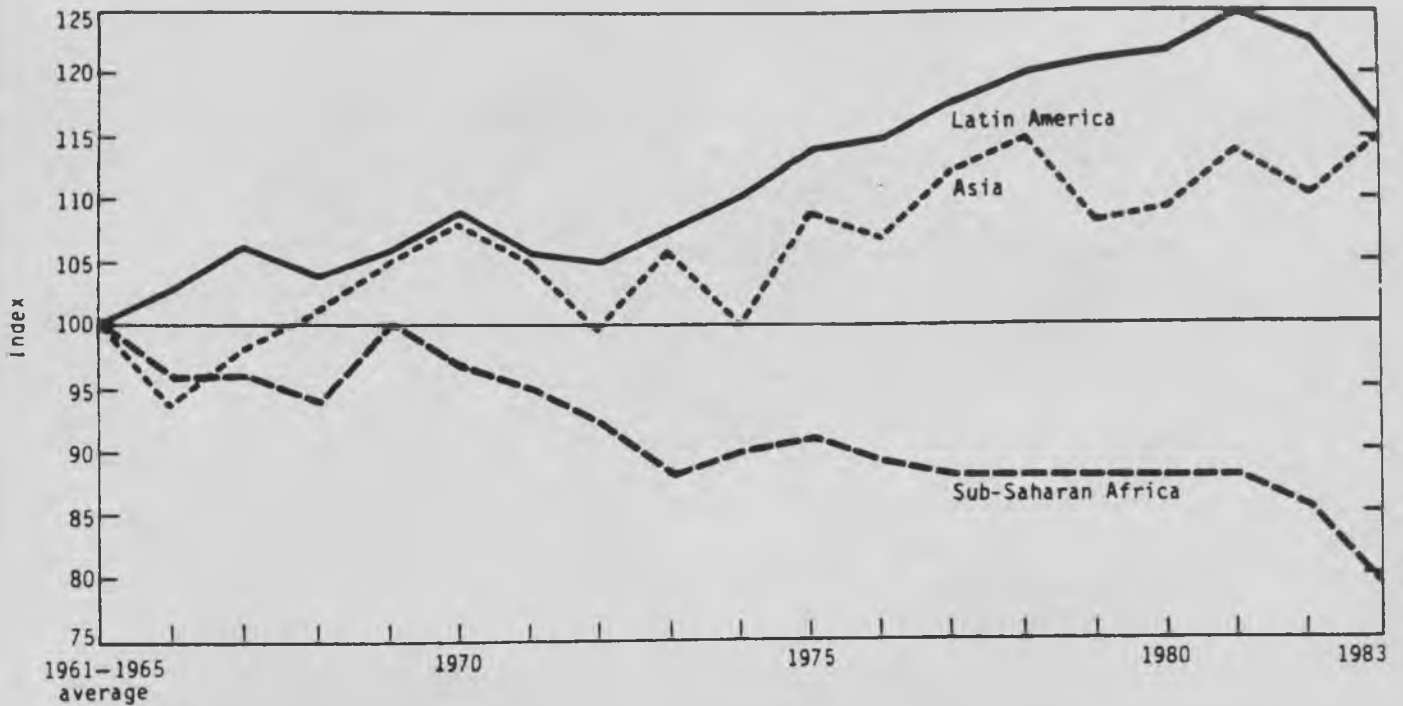
KEY: o = Stable, * = Some increase, ** = Significant increase, NA = Not applicable
 Source: (Adapted) "Desertification Control Bulletin", United Nations Environment Programme, Number 10, May 1984, p. 26 and national data.

Figure 1 Grain production per capita in 24 African countries affected by drought, 1970-1984



Source: World Bank, *Toward Sustained Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Joint Program of Action* (Washington, D.C., 1984), p. 14, based on data of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), except that the 1984 figure is a projection using data from FAO, the United States Agency for International Development and the United States Department of Agriculture.

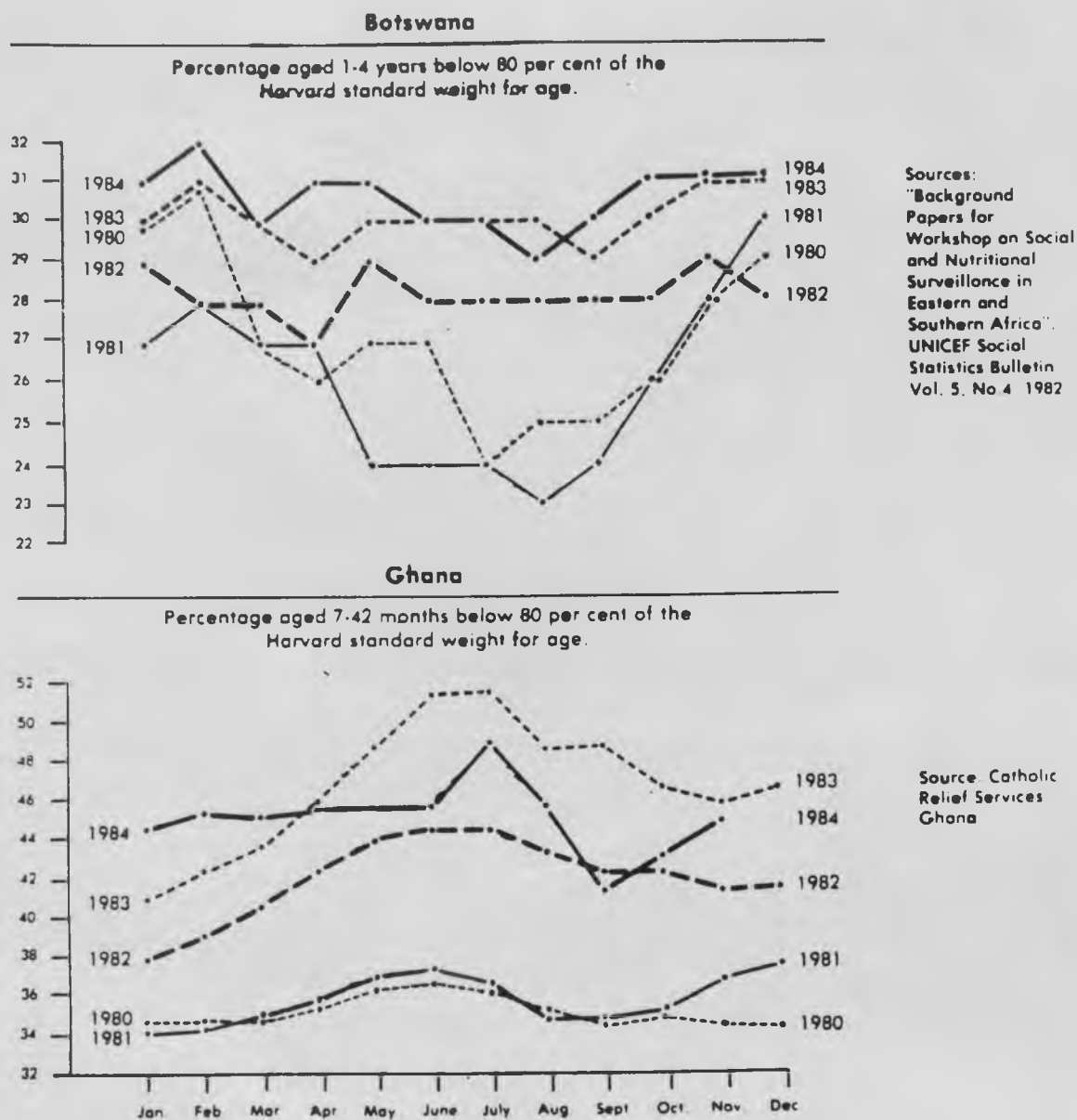
Figure 2 Index of food production per capita, 1961-1965-1983
(1961-1965 average = 100)



Source: World Bank, *Toward Sustained Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Joint Program of Action* (Washington, D.C., 1984), p. 15, based on data provided by the United States Department of Agriculture

Figure 3

MALNUTRITION AMONG CHILDREN IN BOTSWANA AND GHANA 1980-84



Source: UNICEF, Adjustment With A Human Face, 1985.

Annex B

Excerpts from The Khartoum Declaration

This declaration was adopted by the UN system sponsored, UN Economic Commission for Africa organised and led International Conference on the Human Dimension of Africa's Economic Recovery and Development in March 1988. It was subsequently endorsed by the conference of African ministers responsible for "human resources" and the 30th Anniversary ECA Council of Ministers meeting held in Niamey in April 1988.

The Khartoum Declaration

PREAMBLE

2. The Conference made a deep and detailed analysis of the African situation, particularly the current economic crisis and all its ramifications on the people of Africa. The Conference is unanimous in its conviction that the crisis that confronts the African continent is one that affects the total human condition of the continent and its people, men and women alike. It is a crisis that challenges the very survival of the African people. It is a crisis of Africa's environment as the desert rapidly overcomes the fertility of the land and the coastlines also recede. It is a crisis of the continent's natural resources exploited more for the benefit of external interests than to meet Africa's dire needs. It is a crisis of the rich cultures of the African people and the cohesion of families broken up by the desperate circumstances of the African reality. It is a crisis that threatens to overwhelm Africa and her people and, in extremis, to reduce them to the helpless gaze depicted in the starving faces of Africa's children in the international media. But it is a crisis that can and must be overcome through the concerted and determined action of the African people and their societies and States, as they develop a clearer understanding of the implications of the current predicament and fashion a decisive and coherent plan of action, with the assistance and understanding of the international community.

3. We are encouraged in this view by the fact that although Africa has been sorely squeezed by the pressures of recent years and millions of Africans have

suffered severely, no objective observer can fail to be impressed by the vitality, and human creativity which strive and flourish in spite of everything. The large cutbacks and constraints of government and urban production have stimulated communities to devise their own solutions to the problem of meeting their own basic human needs. Self-help groups abound in every country; the extended family, though strained, has often provided the means of survival of many of its members; examples of community action can be found in almost every village. It is important to recognize the enormous potential of the human energy and creativity and find ways to harness it rather than ignore it in the total process of national recovery and development. For these and other reasons we repeat that Africa's crisis, though dire, **CAN AND MUST BE OVERCOME**

4. As participants in this event, the overwhelming majority of whom come from the African continent, we are moved to place on record our collective voice on the issues we discussed and we accordingly make this **KHARTOUM DECLARATION**.

A. OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE HUMAN CONDITION IN AFRICA

5. Since the human being is the centre of all development, the human condition is the only final measure of development. Improving that condition is essential for the poor and vulnerable human beings who comprise the majority of our peoples in Africa. Africa's men and women are the main factors and the ends for whom and by whom any programme and implementation of development must be justified.

6. Regretably, over the past decade the human condition of most Africans has deteriorated calamitously. Real incomes of almost all households and families declined sharply. Malnutrition has risen massively, food production has fallen relative to population, the quality and quantity of health and education services have deteriorated. Famine and war have made tens of millions of human beings refugees and displaced persons. In many cases, the slow decline of infant mortality and of death from preventable, epidemic diseases has been reversed. Meanwhile the unemployment and underemployment situation has worsened markedly.

7. Acts of destabilization and aggression, being perpetrated against the

countries of Southern Africa by the South Africa regime, have also imposed massive human and economic costs, greatly in excess of military budgets or battle casualties. Of the approximately one million human beings dead in Southern Africa as a result of South African aggression over 1980-86 about one hundred thousand were war-dead, narrowly defined. Of the approximately thirty billion dollars in lost production, most relates to the creation of chaos and the loss of peasants' crops and national production.

8. Production and other economic aspects of development - especially distribution - are of crucial importance. Production by the poor is vital if they are to become more able to meet at least their basic needs. But it is just as important who produces what. Production of food, of basic consumer goods, of agricultural inputs and construction materials, of basic services such as health, education, and pure water, as well as of exports are central to improving the human condition. Unsustainable imbalances do matter.

9. Nutrition imbalances are as crucial as trade imbalances. High infant mortality requires just as immediate and as serious an attention as high rates of inflation or huge budget deficits. Ultimately the trade, inflation and budget imbalances are serious obstacles to development because they are barriers to enabling the poor to produce more; to the vulnerable to surviving and rehabilitating themselves; and to the state and the society achieving universal access to basic services.

10. Therefore, a basic test for all stabilization, adjustment and development programmes is whether they will improve the human condition from their inception or, on the contrary, worsen it. Social services and human resources development programmes have high short-, medium- and long-term payoffs on economic as well as on broader development criteria.

11. They are relevant to the reversal of unsustainable imbalances since survival and rehabilitation assistance to the most vulnerable groups - international refugees and displaced persons, disabled persons, youth, women and children - is an important element in reversing production losses. Similarly, the engagement of Africa's most basic resource - its approximately 250 million economically active people - in production, is essential to restoring growth as well as development.

12. The human-centred strategy to the implementing of the Lagos Plan of Action, APPER and UN-PAERD is vital for reaching out to the aspirations and needs of Africa's people and especially their poor and vulnerable majorities. It is deliverable through the appropriate mobilization, allocation and use of resources. To bring this about it will be essential to restore the strained and torn fabrics of our societies, make popular participation in decision-making processes effective, ensure the preservation of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms and eliminate policies that discriminate against minorities and vulnerable groups.

13. Progress in advancing the human condition in Africa depends on the structure, pattern and political context of socio-economic development. The problems and weaknesses in these areas must therefore be recognized and attempts must be made to tackle them in order to achieve the objectives of social and human development. This is also necessary because the economic crisis which Africa faced from the late 1970s found fertile ground in the structural and political weaknesses that bred the germs that hastened the intolerable deterioration in the human condition.

14. A fundamental problem is the fast rate of population growth and the uneven and uneconomic distribution of the population in the different age groups. The youthful population makes high demands on educational, medical and other social services while the large number of college graduates and school leavers that enter the labour market each year creates an imbalance between labour supply and demand.

15. A further structural factor is the urban bias and socially unequal distribution of critical factors and resources for human development such as employment, income, food and nutrition and health and education. As is well known, this distribution is biased against the majority of the population living mainly in the rural areas and in favour of the politically vocal minority in the urban enclaves. Economic issues have overshadowed social concerns and have prevented African countries from according the needed centrality to the human dimension and the human factor.

16. Finally, the political context for promoting healthy human development has been marred, for more than two decades, by instability, war, intolerance, restrictions on the freedom and human rights of individuals and groups as well

as overcentralization of power with attendant restrictions on popular participation in decision-making. In such a context, the motivation of many Africans to achieve their best in productivity and the enhancement of their own and society's well-being has been severely constrained. In times of economic crisis, the politically stronger social groups and individuals survive while the weaker ones go under in increasing deprivation, social dislocation, hunger, ill-health or death.

B. THE HUMAN DIMENSION OF STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMMES

17. From the causes mentioned so far flow the consequences of wretched misery, marginalization and - for millions - very literally premature death. The severity of the African crisis is such that country after country has been putting in place structural adjustment programmes in their effort to halt their economic degradation and achieve a turn-around. Unfortunately, far too many of these programmes - whether nationally conceived or in collaboration with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the donor community - are rending the fabric of the African society. Rather than improve the human condition, some Structural Adjustment Programmes have aggravated it because they are incomplete, mechanistic and of too short a time perspective.

18. Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) are incomplete because they are often implemented as if fiscal, trade and price balances are ends in themselves and are virtually complete sets of means to production increases. Human condition imbalances as related to employment, incomes, nutrition, health and education do not receive equal priority in attention to macro-economic imbalances. Unless and until they make the elimination of these human condition imbalances central targets, stabilization and adjustment programmes cannot provide Africa's growth and development dynamic.

19. They are too mechanistic in being inadequately grounded in, or sensitive to specific national economic, human and cultural realities. This is aggravated by an incomplete articulation which allows the gaps between macro models and contextual realities to remain largely unobserved. Nor can we evaluate how rapidly production can be expanded; where, by whom and of what. Thus their human condition impact remains inadequately projected instead of being at the centre of target-setting, policy formulation and programme or

project choice.

20. They are in too short a time perspective. Africa cannot wait for the attainment of external equilibrium and fiscal balance before seeking to improve the human condition, nor can long-term human investment to strengthen the institutional, scientific, technical and productive capacity operating in environmental balance be postponed. That is essential to attaining the more stable and less vulnerable economic position that we aspire to for the African continent.

21. Further, we must place squarely on record that the external context confronting Africa continues to deteriorate. The terms of trade losses of 1986 vastly exceeded net resource transfers to Africa. APPER is not receiving either the new concessional transfer support or the debt burden relief it projects as essential, or which UN-PAERD committed the international community to providing. This is not simply an African view - the World Bank has repeatedly said the same thing as has the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Financial Flow for Africa, a majority of whom are practising bankers.

22. We welcome the increased concern for the human dimension in stabilisation and adjustment programmes, broadly expressed within the international community. But this is far from being enough. The gap between the expression of concern and actual programme implementation remains wide. Human dimension elements are additions, often long after programme initiation, rather than integral parts of their overall design. Those poor and vulnerable groups to be served are often narrowed down to those who are the victims of the stabilization programme, rather than addressing the human condition of all the absolutely poor and vulnerable people.

23. In the light of all the foregoing, we do not hesitate to reiterate the central position that the human dimension should be accorded in the stabilisation and structural adjustment programmes, for we are convinced beyond doubt that no nation can be great and prosperous if the majority of its people are poor, malnourished, illiterate, miserable and perpetually vulnerable.

24. Overall, we identify five distinct areas on which greater awareness and action must be focused by the African governments, the international financial institutions and the international community at large. Firstly, all structural adjustment programmes in Africa must be designed, implemented and monitored as part of the long-term framework of Africa's development. These programmes must, therefore, be incontrovertibly compatible with the objectives and aspirations of the African people as outlined in the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos. Secondly, the human dimension must be the fulcrum of the adjustment programmes. Thirdly, the structural adjustment policies must incorporate the relevant adjustments of the social sector. Fourthly, considerations must be made of the consequences of macro-policies on the poor and vulnerable not only so as to design temporary and independent compensatory additional programmes but to make the alleviation of absolute and relative poverty and the elimination of gender biases integral parts and factors of the adjustment programmes. Lastly, the entire process of monitoring the stabilisation and structural adjustment programmes must incorporate the social aspects and criteria.

25. We regard it as the primary responsibility of African Governments to develop a richer articulation of the total macro-framework within which to reorientate these programmes.

26. Structural adjustment programmes must be made to complement the efforts of African Governments to attain their long-term development objectives. Consequently, they should, through their effects on the economy and the African social fabric, contribute to the preservation of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms and help to eliminate policies that discriminate against minority and vulnerable groups. Above all, the application of structural adjustment measures should restore, not corrode the dignity of the African as a human being.

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