

Research article

African Union Agenda 2063 Framework: Issues, Problems and Possibilities.

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The framework tagged AU Agenda 2063 is to focus it on 2063 by then, Organization of Africa Unity/Africa Union would have been 100 years in existence from its creation in 1963 as African states under the umbrella of OAU set its journey to be metamorphosed into another platform preparation of Agenda 2063 which is to include an extensive review of African development experiences, analysis of challenges and opportunities of today, as well as a review of national plans, regional and continental frameworks and technical studies, including drawing upon publications and research materials from institutions and organizations. The plan for structural transformation and a shared strategic framework for inclusive growth and sustainable development consist of three dimensions. The paper makes use of secondary source of data to elicit information as it x-rays the import of the Agenda 2063. It adopts integration theory as its theoretical framework for the study.

Key words: Capacity, Development, Continental Free Trade Area, Inclusive Growth, Sustainable Development Goats, Transformation.

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INTRODUCTION

It is based on the Africa Union vision and the seven aspirations emanating from the voices of the stakeholders consulted as to the picture of where Africans would like to see their continent in the next 50 years from now as the vision incorporates milestones which represent transitions in the journey towards the Africa we want, come 2063 (AU Agenda 2023, 2015:iii). The common and shared set of aspirations include: A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development that ends poverty, inequalities of income and opportunities, job creation, addressing the challenges of rapid urbanization; improvement of habitats and access to basic necessities of life; providing social security and protection; developing Africa's human and social capital (through an education and skills revolution

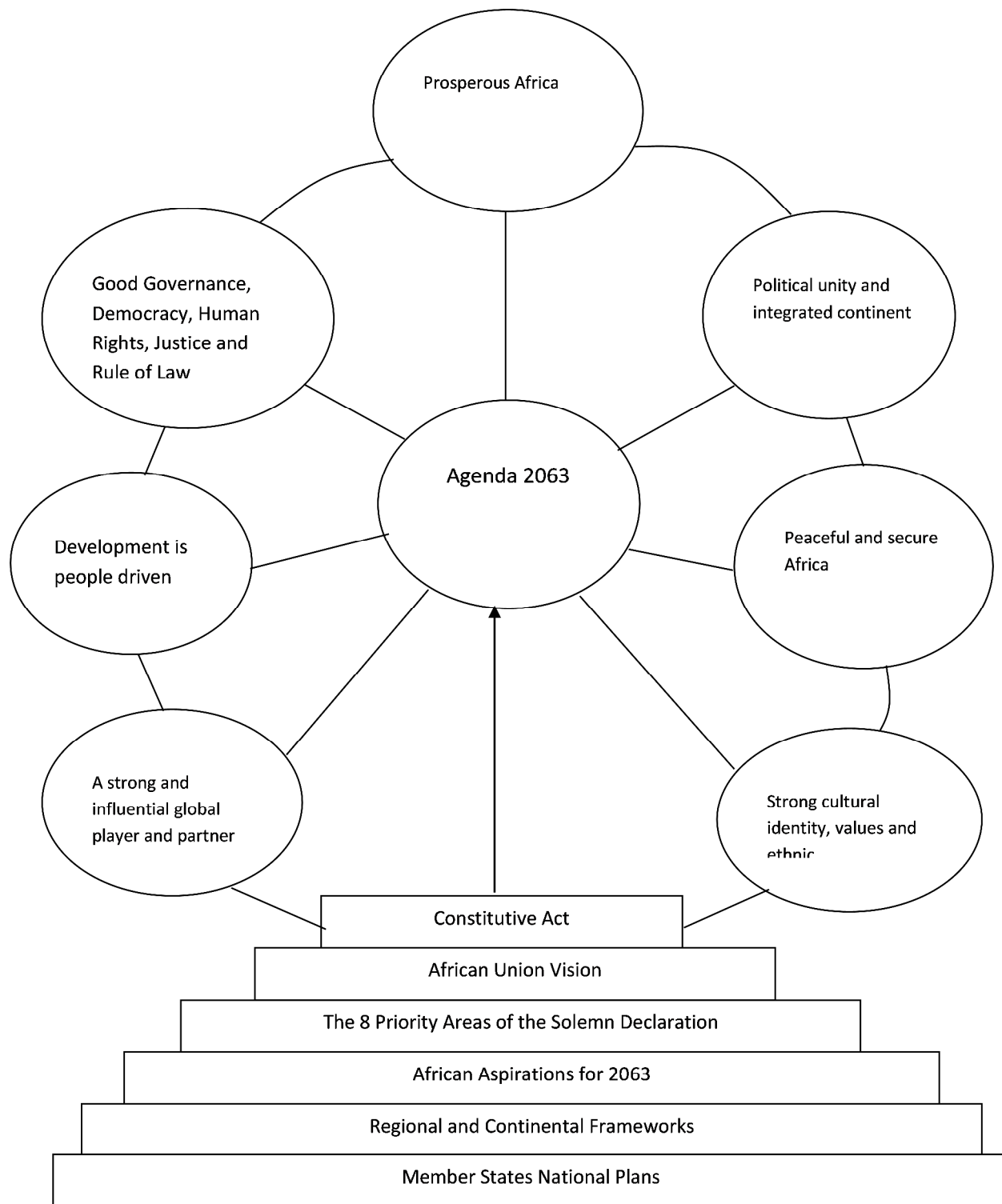
emphasizing science and technology and expanding access to quality health care services, particularly for women and gir(s), transforming Africa's economies through beneficiation from Africa's natural resources, manufacturing, industrialization and value addition, as well as raising productivity and competitiveness; radically transforming African agriculture to enable the continent to feed itself and be a major player as a net food exporter; exploiting the vast potential of Africa's blue/ocean economy; and putting in place measures to sustainably manage the continent's rich biodiversity, forests, land and waters using mainly adaptive measures to address climate change risks (AU Agenda 2063, 2015:8).

An integrated continent, politically untied, based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance accelerating progress towards continental unity and integrating for sustained growth, trade,

exchanges of goods, services, free movement of people and capital through: (i) establishing a united Africa; (ii) fast tracking of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA); (iii) improving connectivity through newer and bolder initiatives to link the continent by rail, road, sea and air; and (iv) developing regional and continental power pools, as well as ICT. An Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law-consolidating democratic gains and improving the quality of governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law, building strong institutions for a development state and facilitating the emergence of development oriented and visionary leadership in all spheres and at all levels. A peaceful and secure Africa: strengthening governance, accountability and transparency as a foundation for a peaceful Africa; strengthening mechanisms for securing peace and reconciliation at all levels, as well as addressing emerging threats to Africa's peace and security and putting in place strategies for the continent to finance her security needs. (AU Agenda 2063, 2015:10).

An Africa whose development is people's driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its

women and youth, and caring for children: strengthening the role of Africa's women through ensuring gender equality and parity in all sphere of life (political, economic and social); eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls; creating opportunities for Africa's youth for self-realization, access to health, education and jobs; and ensuring safety and security for Africa's children, and providing for early childhood development. An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethnics inculcating the spirit of Pan-Africanism, tapping Africa's rich heritage and culture to ensure that the creative arts are major contributors to Africa's growth and transformation, restoring and preserving Africa's cultural heritage. Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner; improving Africa's place in the global governance system, (United Nations Security Council (UNSC), financial institutions global commons such as outer space); improving Africa's partnership and refocusing them more strategically to respond to African priorities for growth and transformation; and ensuring that the continent has the right strategies to finance its own development and reducing aid dependency (AU Agenda 2063: 2015:12).



SOURCE: AU Agenda 2063, 2015:12

Figure 1: Schematic Presentation of the Foundation of Agenda 2063, the Aspirations and the Goals.

Integration Theory

The Integration theory attempts to explain why states choose supra-nationalism which challenges once again the foundations of realism (state sovereignty and territorial integrity). It refers to the process by which supranational institutions replace national ones, depicting the gradual shifting upward of sovereignty from state to regional or global structures. The ultimate expression of integration would be the merger of several (or many) states into a single state - or ultimately into a single world government. Such a shift in sovereignty to the supranational level would probably entail some version of federalism, in which states or other political units recognize the sovereignty of a central government while retaining certain powers for themselves (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2012:356).

Ernst Haas (1958), David Mitrany (1944) and Leon Lindberg (1963) viewed neofunctionalism as a concept of political integration process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over preexisting nation-states. It is primarily concerned with creating an inevitable gradual functional integration process. It assumes that states are not the only actors internationally, that regional integration starts in well-defined and less controversial sectors but inevitably spills over into more complex ways (Haas, 1961: 5).

Haas was primarily interested in international integration. He realized that traditional European politics could be dramatically changed by liberalizing movements of goods, capital and persons. Haas, the founder of neo-functionalism, recognizes the importance of nation states, but also stresses the roles of regional interest groups and the bureaucracy of regional organizations. The purpose of neo-functionalism is to utilize the pioneering European experience of integration to generate hypothesis for testing in other contexts. Neofunctionalism describes and explains the process of regional integration with reference to how three casual factors interact:

- i. Growing economic interdependence among nations.
- ii. Organizational capacity to resolve disputes and build international legal regimes.
- iii. Supranational market rules that replace national regulatory regimes (Rosamond, 2003:

Haas theorized the mechanisms that he thought would drive the integration forward:

- i. Positive spill-over effect is the notion that integration among states in one economic sector will create strong incentives for integration in

other sectors, in order to fully capture the perks of integration in the sectors.

- ii. Increased transactions and intensity of negotiations then take place hand in hand with increasing regional integration.
- iii. The mechanism of a transfer of domestic allegiances can be best understood by first noting that an important assumption within neo-functionalists thinking is of a pluralist society comprising the relevant nation-states.
- iv. Greater regulatory complexity is then needed, and other institutions at the regional level are usually required, for the integration to attain higher levels of decision-making processes.
- v. Technocratic automaticity describing the way in which integration proceeds, with supranational institutions set up to ensure that the integration process will itself take the lead in sponsoring further integration as the supra-national contrivance becomes more powerful and more autonomous of the member- states (Rosamond, 2003:7).

According to Sinaic (1992) and Galbralth (1962) cited by Balami (2011) that:

The core of integration theory at a general level is that, as a result of advancement in production, culture and science in the capitalist and socialist systems, countries enjoy common characteristics and are very similar to each other and that each has accepted the best parts of the other while attempting to remove their shortcomings and faults. The analysis of the future of industrial systems refers to increasing trend of integration and considers it the outcome of the perfection of technology preservation of independent institutions, demands of society and training of specialists (Balami, 2011:89).

Integration theory looks to the creation of new states by integrating existing states, generally on a regional basis and, possibly in the long run, a single world state (Brown and Ainely, 2005:122). It was only in the past half-century that international integration became the subject of research by social scientists. Economics and political science really began to deal seriously with the question only after World War II. International integration is defined as focused on the achievement of security within a region or among a group of states. The definition of security community was bound up with the conception of integration (Domonkos, 2010:2).

The great thinkers and proponents of integration theory include Joseph Nye, Karl Deutsch, Morton Kaplan, Georg Ritzer, Immanuel Kant, Roger Masters, David Mitrany, etc. The main characteristic of integration theory is that it

originated in the Western tradition of pluralists, interest groups politics and in the theoretical assumptions about the political impact of intensified economic interdependence based on liberal capitalist international policies and practices. By the mid-1960's, the application of the pluralist, neo-functionalist model was expanded to non-European experiences such as the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA), the Central American Community and the East European Commission (Kent and Nielsson, (eds) 1980:128).

Consequently, the merger of the French and German steel (iron) and coal industries into a single framework considered important to European recovery and growth. It eventually gave birth to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) which merged France and Germany with Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Those states worked through the ECSC to reduce trade barriers in coal and steel policies with the establishment of an authority to deal with companies, labour unions, and individuals, and to some extent, it could bypass governments (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2012:358)

The linkage and relevance of the theory to this study is to provide a framework for understanding the new impetus behind African Integration and unity. Its key organs, including the Assembly of the Union, the Executive council and the Economic Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOC), were granted defined mandates that aimed to create a more coherent and coordinated institutional structures, with a particular focus on the integration, mobilization of the input of African civil society, states and governments into the integration process of the AU.

Nevertheless, the theory has its shortcoming in these ways:

- i. Integration reduces states' ability to shield themselves and their citizens from the world's many problems and conflicts;
- ii. integration can mean greater centralization at a time when individuals, local groups and national populations demand more say in their own affairs;
- iii. the centralization of political authority, information and culture as a result of integration can threaten both individual and group freedom; and
- iv. tension between nationalism and supranational loyalties usually occurs. (Neilsson, 1980:129).

Issues Associated with AU Agenda 2063 Framework

1. The Transformation Framework: It presents the foundations on which Agenda 2063 is built, as well as the detailed milestones in the journey in the way of goals, priority areas, targets and indicative strategies. It features

in two matrices at national, regional and continental levels. It projects what must be done to achieve the vision for 2063. This involves the following:

- (a) Conceptual approach:
 - i. Recognition of Africa's diversity.
 - ii. Building upon existing initiatives.
- (b) Foundation of Agenda 2063.
- (c) Goals, priority areas, targets and indicative strategies.
- (d) The Agenda 2063 flagship programmes:
 - i. The integrated high speed train network.
 - ii. A Pan-African E-university.
 - iii. Formulation of a commodities strategy.
 - iv. Establishment of an annual African forum.
 - v. Fast track the establishment of the continental Free Trade Area by 2017 (Now in place for proper implementation after 54 states in Africa have signed the agreement)
 - vi. The African passport and free movement of people.
 - vii. Silencing the Guns by 2020.
 - viii. Implementation of the Grand Inga Dam Project, aims to boost Africa's production of energy.
 - ix. The Pan-African E-Network designed to boost services.
 - x. Outer space.
 - xi. A single African Airspace.
 - xii. Continental financial institutions (AU Agenda 2063:2015:99).

2. Making it Happen outlines how to realize the Agenda 2063 and treats aspects related to: implementation, monitoring and evaluation, principles and responsibilities, financing partnerships, capacities for implementation and communication outreach. It involves in the following ways:

- (a) Implementation, monitoring and evaluation arrangement
 - i. Objectives and principles.
 - ii. Subsidiarity.
 - iii. Accountability and transparency.
 - iv. Participation/inclusiveness and integration.
 - v. Diversity.
 - vi. Leveraging existing institutions and systems.
- (b) Financing Agenda 2063
 - i. Agenda 2063 financing needs.
 - ii. Strategy for financing Agenda 2063.
 - iii. Financing and domestic resource mobilization

- and intermediation strategy.
 - iv. Access to finance.
 - v. Implementation of Agenda 2063 financing and Domestic Resource Management (DRM) strategy.
- (c) Partnership for Agenda 2063
- i. Preparing a comprehensive AU policy framework and articulating a partnership strategy for all high-potential partners around two to three core areas of interventions.
 - ii. Maximizing Africa's potential of all five major strategic partnership.
 - iii. Deepening transformational benefits of the partnerships.
- (d) Capacity Development for Agenda 2063
- i. The need for holistic and effective capacities.
 - ii. Types of capacity and needs of Agenda 2063.
 - iii. Key stakeholders of Agenda 2063 and capacity needs.
- (e) Communication strategy for Agenda 2063 (AU Agenda 2063:2015:107-122)

Problems Related to African Union Agenda 2063

There is recognition within Africa that the continent needs to tap into its own wealth to finance its development agendas most especially the African Union's Agenda 2063. A range of issues related directly to financing (costs, accessibility) need to be addressed. It requires what strategies should Africa pursue to promote domestic resource mobilisation to finance its development (El Fassi & Aggad, 2014:6).

Within the African continent, due to the differences in national contexts of research like resources institutions, research culture etc, the status of management research differs also in linguistic and perceptions which are problematic to the Agenda 2063 (Deghetto, Gray & Kigundu, 2016:114).

Other problems are health issues, political economic ecological and legal issues could affect the Agenda 2063 (Ibrahim, 2016:7). As the African Free Trade Area (AfcFTA) comes in effect in July, 2020. It has been noted that it faces big hurdles especially protectionism policies and poor transport infrastructure in member states (BBC News, 2020:6).

Possibilities of Solving AU Agenda 2063

It is important to note that the only inclusive economic

growth and development and the establishment within each African country of governance system that guarantee the rule of law, including respect for human rights can deal fully with terrorism and other types of violent and destructive mobilisation. To facilitate economic integration, address poverty and inequality, respond effectively to pandemic and provide leadership for Africa to develop into a much effective competitor in the global economy and full participant in global governance (Mbaku, 2016:8).

The Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfcFTA) is projected to midwife the Agenda 2063, to improve and boost trade amongst Africa Unions (BBC News, 2020:5).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

African Union Agenda 2063 represents a window opportunity for Nigeria and by extension African countries to promote intra-African trade, diversity which structurally will transform the continent's economy and pursue important human rights and anti-poverty goals. It represents an avenue for Nigeria and African member states to work together for mutual benefits and growth with all the priorities come 2063.

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