

Address

By

***H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni
President of the Republic of Uganda***

At the

Nelson Mandela Memorial Lecture

Theme: Nelson Mandela the Legend – Lessons to the Youth

31st August, 2017

- Makerere University

We are gathered here to remember the work and contribution of the late Mzee Nelson Mandela, Madiba (*Amaziba, eiziba-singular-in* Runyankore). We cannot, however, talk about Madiba without talking about Africa. We shall understand Madiba better, if we talk about Africa first.

Africa is a huge continent with a land area of 11.7million sq. miles, which makes it twelve times bigger than India, 4 times bigger than the USA and China each and more than two times the size of Russia.

Africa is the origin of Man. About 4 million years ago, man first evolved from the lower primates, right here in East Africa, to become Homo Sapien Sapien. Indeed, according to Dr. Diamond, human beings did not leave this continent until about 100,000 years ago. It is Africa that pioneered civilization. The Egyptian civilization came into existence around 3000-3500BC. All the major modern religions were succored by Africa at one point or the other. The Jews, through Joseph, whose brothers had sold into slavery, were saved from starvation by Egypt. This was around 1500BC. Baby Jesus was hidden in Egypt when Herod was looking for him to kill him. This is found in the gospel of Mathew, Chapter 2, verse13. Mohammed, when his Arabs were seeking to kill him, took refuge in Ethiopia in the year 613/615AD.

Africa, however, has suffered repeated calamities in the last 500 years and is now at the bottom of the World, her great potential notwithstanding. The afflictions on Africa have included slave trade, genocide, colonialism, neo-colonialism, marginalization and self-alienation (loss of confidence in oneself).

How did this come about? How could the first be the last and for so long? In my view, the answers lie in two words: Latitude and terrain. Africa lies between Latitude 37 degrees North and Latitude 35 degrees South. Much of Africa is around the Equator. The climate around the Equator is warm. The warm climate is good for man but also good for many of man's enemies: the tse-tse flies, the mosquitoes, the microbes, the worms etc., that cause numerous diseases. With a low-level of technology, these enemies of man kept the population of the Africans low so much that by 1400AD, the population of the whole of Africa was 42 million people while the out of Africa population was 308 million people. Remember that man only stayed in Africa until about 100,000 years ago. Nevertheless, the out of Africa population grew much faster than the in-Africa population for the reasons I have mentioned above. Therefore, the question of latitude should be borne in mind.

To the issue of latitude, add the issue of terrain. Much of the terrain of Africa is comprised of huge impenetrable forests, huge deserts (the Sahara and the Kalahari), un-navigable rivers, thick vegetation and swamps and high mountains. I will, for instance, quote for you the statement of an Imperialist army officer that was engaged in the colonial wars right here in Uganda. Lt. Vandeleur of the Scots Guards Regiment of the colonial British Army wrote as follows: *"Passing through one of those swamps is a most tiring experience. Now clutching hold of the papyrus at the side, now stepping from one bit of floating vegetation to another, one tries in vain to save oneself from sinking deeper than necessary, until at last a treacherous root gives away and down one goes into a quagmire of evil-smelling mud and water, only to recommence the whole process again."* This is on page 61 of the Book entitled: "The King's African Rifles" by Lt. Colonel Moyse Bartlett.

This consternation with the vegetation of Africa had also been expressed by H.M Stanley when he journeyed through the huge Congo forest between the years 1874 and 1889. On page 241 in his Book entitled: “Darkest Africa”, he writes as follows: *“The great forest in which we had been so long buried and whose limits were in view, appeared to continue intact and unbroken to the North East, but to the East of it was an altogether different region of grassy meads and plains and hills, freely sprinkled with groves, dusters and then lines of trees up to certain ranges of hills that bounded vision and whose base I knew must be the goal whither we had for months desired to reach. This, then, was the long promised view and the long expected exit out of gloom! Therefore, I called the tall peak terminating the forested ridge, of which the spur whereon we stood was part and that rose 2 miles East of us to a height of 4600 feet above the sea, Pisgah – Mount Pisgah, – because after 156 days of twilight in the primeval forest, we had first viewed the pasture lands of Equatoria”*. Stanley continues: *“The men crowded up the slope eagerly with enquiring open-eyed looks, which, before they worded their thoughts, we knew meant ‘Is it true? Is it not hoax?’ Can it be possible that we are near the end of this forest hell?”*

This difficult terrain made communication among these ancient peoples difficult and did not easily allow for the emergence of large political units (kingdoms, etc). Many communities remained isolated from one another. On page 77, for instance, Stanley captures the conversation he had with some captives of Engwedde. The conversation went as follows: *“I asked them if they were in the habit of fighting strangers always. Said they: “What do strangers want from us? We have nothing. We have only plantains, palms and fish”*. However, Stanley continued as follows: *“But supposing strangers wished to buy plantains, palm oil and fish from you, would you sell them?”* The people answered: *“We have not seen any strangers before. Each tribe keeps to its own place until it comes to fight with us for some reason”*. Then Stanley asked them:

“Do you always fight your neighbours?” They answered: “No, some of our young men go into the woods to hunt game, and they are surprised by our neighbours, then we go to them, and they come to fight us until one party is tired, or one is beaten”. Then Stanley said: “Well, will you be friends with me if I send you back to your village?” He continues: “They looked incredulous, and when they were actually escorted out of the camp with cowries in their hands, they simply stood still and refused to go fearing some trap. It seemed incredible to them that they should not be sacrificed”.

Relatively strong kingdoms and even empires did emerge mainly in the grasslands e.g. Bunyoro, Buganda, Ankole, Rwanda, Karagwe and other groups in West Africa. Even there, however, movement was not easy. The quote above by Lt. Vandaleur of the Scots Guards of the British Army was in one of those grasslands. Even those grasslands, if devoid of human activity of agriculture, are not easy to move in. If you read my essays on this issue during the Resistance wars or in the anti-terrorist operations, you will find that, from a totally different corner, I confirm what the foreigners noticed one century before. Even the modest kingdoms that emerged, did not sustain themselves. There was the issue of mentality of the actors. This mentality was influenced by the phenomenon of a small population living in the midst of a huge continent with a lot of natural resources – water, forest products, etc. – that permitted subsistence in a self-contained way at the local level.

You did not get the strong compulsion to build large empires in search of natural resources. This was so much that, for instance, when the fairly large kingdom of Bunyoro faced a rebellion by one of the sons of the King, Kaboyo, in 1830, separating Tooro from Bunyoro, the King, Nyamutukura Kyebambe iii, did not permit the army to go and attack him in

order to restore order. Hence, Tooro was able to secede from Bunyoro until the more vigorous Kabalega came on the scene in the year 1869 when it was re-conquered by Bunyoro. Shaka, in the grasslands of the South, rather belatedly, united some of the Ngoni clans into the Zulu nation which covered a land area of 11,500sq.miles. This was, of course, no comparison with the Chinese Empire of 3 million sq. miles or the Russian Empire of 8.3 million square miles.

Therefore, Africa, by the Renaissance time in Europe, the 1400 AD, when Europe re-emerged from the Dark Ages following the collapse of the Roman Empire in 450AD, was a continent of either small kingdoms or scattered communities, the high sounding titles of the vain-glorious local kings notwithstanding. In Ankole, we had a little king but with a high sounding title of “Rubambaansi” – “the controller of the whole world”!!

Nevertheless, the societies themselves were very advanced. Indeed, the European travellers through Africa were amazed by the great civilization of the grasslands of Africa: Karagwe, Buganda, Bunyoro, Ankole, Bunya area of Congo, etc. Indeed, our great friend, Stanley who was a pedantic keeper of diaries, did not let us down in capturing what he saw in the 1880s when he went through these areas. He writes: “*A march of an hour and a half in the afternoon, apparently not very far from the river, brought us to the populous district of the Babusesse. The banana plantations were very extensive, reminding me of Uganda and their deep shades covered a multitude of huts. Fields of millet and sesame, plots of sweet potatoes, occupied the outskirts of these plantations and there was ample round about the land was thickly peopled and industriously cultivated*”.

Apart from agriculture, the African societies had advanced technology for iron (*ekyooma*), copper (*ekikomo*), brass (*emiriinga*), ceramics (*eibuumba*), medicine (*emibazi*), etc.

The problem, therefore, were the small units of governance (small kingdoms and chiefdoms). Yet, this problem of a politically fragmented Africa is curable precisely because these Africans are either similar or linked, although the people themselves think they are different from one another and some of their traditional and political leaders try to tell them that they are very different from one another. Paradoxically, this complete stranger, Stanley, was able to see that these Africans were very much similar or linked. Indeed, he writes on page 76 as follows: “*All the tribes from the Atlantic Ocean to East Longitude 30 degrees in the equatorial region have a distant resemblance of features and customs, but I should place East Longitude 18 degrees as the divisional line of longitude between two families of one original parent race*”.

Furthermore, on page 366, Stanley writes as follows: “*By a gradual rise from Amranda southward, we escape after a few miles out of the unlovely plains to older land producing a better quality of timber. Before we were 100 feet above the lake a visible improvement has taken place, the acacia had disappeared, and the myombo, a tree whose bark is useful for native cloth and for boxes, and which might be adapted for canoes, flourished everywhere. At Bwanga, the next village, the language of the Wahuma, which we have heard continually since leaving Albert Nyanza, ceases, and the Unyamwezi interpreters had now to be employed, which fact the skeptical Zanzibaris hailed as being evidence that we were approaching Pwani (coast).*”

What Stanley calls Albert Nyanza is the Ituri region of Congo and what he calls the “Wahuma language” are the inter-lacustrine Bantu dialects of these areas – Runyoro, Luganda, Runyankore, Runyambo, Ruhaya, Rujinja, Rukerewe, Lusoga, Lugwere etc., etc. That “Wahuma language” Stanley was able to notice, is spoken from longitude 30 degrees, west of Bunya, to longitude 33 degrees near Mwanza. Bunya in Congo is latitude 1°:65′ North and 30° East longitude. Mwanza is 2°:31′ South and 33° longitude East. In the territory between these geographical points, Stanley found all the people were speaking the “Wahuma language” – the inter-lacustrine Bantu dialects. Of course, even the Runyamwezi-Rusukuma are linked to the inter-lacustrine Bantu dialects. It, however, needs a knowledgeable person to see the linkages. Stanley was only seeing the very obvious.

This weakness of Africa was soon exposed by a confluence of events in Europe. The Europeans, ever since Marco Polo found an overland route for them in the year 1292, had become dependent on Asia for spices and silk. Spices were important for them in preserving meat in winter, while silk was important for wear. Then in 1453, Ottoman Turks captured Constantinople and blocked the overland route. The Europeans had now to find a Sea route to the East. The problem was the huge African continent, stretching from Latitude 37 degrees North to Latitude 35 degrees South. In air-miles, it is a distance of 4,500miles/7,240 kilometers and on the ground, from Ras ben Sakka in Tunisia, to the most southerly, Cape Agulhas in South Africa, it is 5,000 miles/8,000 kilometers.

Furthermore, the European ships of those days were not suitable for Sea journeys. They were flat-bottomed and had broad fronts. They could not easily cut through the heavy water of the oceans. Europeans, including Henry, the Navigator, of Portugal, quickly developed ships of a new type – V-shaped in front and at the bottom. This shape helped the ships to cut through the waters. They also improved the sails because wind was the only means of powering the ships other than rowing.

By the year 1462, a Portuguese man by the name of Pedro da Cintra, reached the coastline of Sierra Leone. Indeed, Sierra Leone is a Portuguese name meaning “the Mountain that looks like a lion”. By 1482, a Portuguese man known as Diego Cama, got to Angola. By 1487, another Portuguese man called Bartholomew Diaz, got to Cape Town, saw the Table Mountain and noticed that the Coast was turning East. He named that point: “Cape of Good Hope” – the hope of, at last, rounding the massive continent of Africa in a boat. After 11 years, another Portuguese known as Vasco Da Gama, went beyond Cape Town, was blown far off course by the wind, but turned North when the wind stopped and, on Christmas day, 1498, landed on the Indian Ocean side of South Africa and named the spot: “Natal” – which means “birth” in Latin, referring to the Christmas day. Vasco Da Gama landed in Mombasa and continued to India.

The more organized Europeans had arrived on the continent of Africa, a continent of small kingdoms and scattered communities. Paradoxically, the African population is either similar or linked. It is divided in only four linguistic groups: the Niger - Congo; the Nilo-Saharan; the Afro-Asiatic; and the Khoisan.

The Niger-Congo is comprised of the Bantu and Kwa groups of languages and the Nilo-Saharan is comprised of the Cushitic, the Nilotic and the Nilo-Hamitic groups. Besides, these linguistic groups have linkages among one another.

However, all these were fragmented into numerous political units governed by ego-centric rulers that could not see the danger coming and were only bent on fighting among themselves. Although the Europeans arrived at both the East and West African coasts within 50 years of the Turks controlling Constantinople (1453), they were too weak technologically to penetrate the continent with its natural defences of terrain and disease. However, the incompetent kings could not use the interim period to protect our destiny. By the time the first European, Hannington Speke, arrived in Uganda in 1862, a whole 364 years from 1498 when Vasco Da Gama had passed at Mombasa, these incompetent traditional leaders had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing of their old bad ways of pitting brother against brother. On the other hand, the Europeans had used almost 400 years of wasted time at the African Coast to develop anti-malaria drugs (Quinine), to improve their weapons (breech-loaders vs muzzle-loaders) and they had even invented the steam-engine to power the ships and pull the train wagons (away from the sails and the horse).

The only defences of Africa – the mosquitoes, the deserts, the forests etc., – could no longer stop an adversary who was ever improving while Africa, under the incompetent kings, was stagnant. Under the leadership of Bismarck, at the head of a recently united Germany (1871), the Congress of Berlin now partitioned the defenceless Africa. By 1900, the whole of Africa, except for Ethiopia and Liberia, had been colonized.

The total colonization of Africa by the Europeans by 1900, except for Ethiopia, was a vote of “No confidence” in the incompetent ego-centric traditional leaders of Africa. The traditional chiefs, comically putting on ostrich feathers, tried to fight. They were defeated everywhere – in many cases using Africans to fight one another. The total conquest of Africa was a big risk for the survival of our people.

That is how we now come to Nelson Mandela and his colleagues. Having reached India in 1498, the Europeans started scrambling for Asia – the Dutch, the Portuguese, the English, the French etc. In Asia, it is only China and Japan that defeated the attempts by the Europeans to colonize them. All the others were either colonies or semi-colonies (Thailand, Afghanistan, Iran etc). Since European technology was not yet developed in spite of the progress, even the improved ships needed stop-overs to replenish supplies.

I think that is how the Europeans took interest in South African points, such as Cape Town. The first group of European settlers were the Dutch who landed in the year 1652. By this time, new continents had been discovered by the Europeans – the Americas and Australia. These were continents populated by primitive indigenous peoples – the American Indians and the Aborigines of Australia. These peoples were exterminated by the Europeans and their lands were taken over by other peoples. In Africa, we do not easily get extinct. What saved us? Our cattle, our goats, our chicken that stay with us in our huts.

They had long inoculated us against the diseases the Europeans brought. Our advanced agriculture played a role in defending us against extermination. The traditional leaders having failed to defend us, the mosquitoes of Africa having failed to defend us, the geography of Africa having failed to defend us, the Africans now came up with a new form of fighter – the African freedom fighter – not traditional, not tribal but modern, Inter-tribal and Pan-African in outlook.

That is how the ANC was born in 1912 – modern, supra-tribal and Pan-African. The ANC was founded by Saul Msane, Josiah Gumede, John Dube, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Sol Plaatje, Chiefs, People's representatives and Church organizations. The Nelson Mandelas came up in the 1940s as the Youth Wing of the ANC. Initially, it had been using peaceful means of struggle. However, over the years, it metamorphosed into a Liberation Movement using modern arms. That is how the Umukhonto we Sizwe was born in 1961. Avoiding the strategic incompetence of the traditional chiefs, who tried to fight conventional wars against better armed enemies, the ANC opted for a guerilla struggle, including urban warfare. The incompetent management of the traditional warriors was, for instance, shown at Isandhlwana, in 1879. Having scored a brilliant tactical victory, relying on secrecy, speed and surprise, they squandered the victory by proceeding to attack the fortified position of the Whites at the Ncome River where their victory was turned into defeat. ANC provided inspiration, subsequently, to other anti-colonial Movements in Africa. Some were, indeed, even called ANC, such as the one of Zambia.

The anti-Colonial Movement of Uganda was called UNC (Uganda National Congress) led by I.K. Musaazi, starting in 1953. All over the continent, similar groups came up: TANU in Tanganyika, KANU in Kenya, ZANU-ZAPU in Zimbabwe, FRELIMO in Mozambique, MNC in Congo, MPLA in Angola, CPP in Ghana, SWAPO in Namibia etc., etc. Those were, mainly, non-traditional, inter-tribal and Pan-Africanist. Others, however, sought, again, to exploit identity (religion or tribes) such as the DP and the KY in Uganda, Kasavubu's Party in Congo, Tshombe's Party in Congo, KADU in Kenya, UNITA in Angola, Inkatha in South Africa etc., etc. They had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing.

These nationalist political parties now spearheaded the resistance of the people against colonialism. Some even took up arms against colonialism. This was one factor that, eventually, brought about our freedom.

There were, however, other two factors. The onset of the Socialist Revolution in the Soviet Union in 1917 and the victory of the Communist Revolution in China in 1949 was the second strategic factor that assisted us to be free. These big socialist countries, right from the beginning, opposed colonialism by word and by action. They, in particular, armed the Liberation Movements and trained them. The defeat of France in Vietnam, at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, the defeat of Portugal in Mozambique and Angola in 1974 etc., were, partly, on account of this support by socialist countries on top of the efforts of resistance movements.

The third factor was the mutual weakening of one another by the imperialist countries on account of two huge wars propelled by greed – the so called First World War and 2nd World War (1914-1918 and 1939-1945). These wars were about us: Africans, Arabs and Asians. Germany, which, as already pointed out above, had been unified, against the wishes of France, in 1871, was a late-comer in the business of sharing us – the colonized peoples. At the Congress of Berlin, in order to appease them, the other colonizers had offered Tanganyika, Rwanda, Burundi, Namibia and Togo to her. However, Germany was not satisfied. She felt that this was “unfair”. How could their cousins, the British, the French, the Dutch and the Portuguese etc., have all the huge prizes in colonization of much of Africa, India, Indonesia, Indo-China (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos), the Americas, the Caribbean Islands and Australia and you only allocate Tanganyika and a few others to Germany? The colonies must be re-divided more “fairly”. There were, of course, other contradictions in Europe about the Balkans and also in the Middle East involving Turkey, Austria-Hungary and Czarist Russia. Nevertheless, we, the colonial possessions, were part of the arguments between a recently unified Germany and the other European colonizers – the “fairer” division of colonial possessions – us, the Africans, the Arabs and some of the Asians, plus the Americas and Australia. Fortunately, the colonizers bled themselves so much that, by the end of the two wars, they were so weak that they could not re-assert their control. Indonesia declared Independence after the Japanese surrender in 1945. India got Independence in 1947. The French were defeated with the support of the Socialist Camp, in 1954, in Indo-China. There was the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya. There was the Algerian war of Liberation in 1954, etc., etc.

To recapitulate, the four reasons for our, eventual, liberation were:

- The continued resistance of our People, this time led by the more modern nationalists like Mzee Mandela;
- The support of the Socialist Camp, especially the Soviet Union and China;
- The fortunate mutual weakening of one another by the Imperialist countries in their wars of greed;
- And the fourth and bigger reason is that, by the strength of our genes and our advanced civilization, we had not perished like the American Indians and the Australian Aborigines and had withstood all the horrors of the slave trade, colonialism, land confiscations, neo-colonialism, genocide, etc.

With this background, we can now look at the personal role of Mzee Mandela. He was born in 1918 among the Xhosa of South Africa. He was born in the traditional Royal clan of the Aba Thembu. Even today, one of his grandsons, Mandla Mandela, is the traditional leader in that area. He was, however, far-sighted enough, not to be lured into the mistakes of tribal chauvinism which was the original sin in terms of the causes for our enslavement. After his studies in Law, in the year 1943, he joined the Youth League of the ANC. The young Youth League members like Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu, etc., contributed to the ANC by adding African Nationalism. By this time, the leader of the ANC was Anthony Lembede. The ANC took two historically correct positions apart from its formation in 1912.

In the year 1960, they took the decision to wage the armed struggle in addition to the peaceful methods they were using since 1912. Secondly, in the Freedom Charter of 1955, they clearly laid it out that the struggle in South Africa was not a racial one, but it was a struggle for democracy regardless of race. In that way, the ANC was able to avoid the land mine of isolating the majority Black people from the Coloureds, the Indians and the progressive Whites. Mzee Mandela was part of all these decisions.

I personally, started following the activities of Mzee Mandela in 1964 during his trial. He was being tried for taking up arms and fighting the apartheid regime. In that trial, he accepted that he had, indeed, done military training in Algeria, in 1962. The exact words he used here were: *“In Africa, I was promised support by such men ... Ben Bella, now President of Algeria ...It was Ben Bella who invited me to visit Oujda, the Headquarters of the Algerian Army of National Liberation, the visit which is described in my diary, one of the Exhibits”*.

Unfortunately, he was arrested on the 5th of August 1962. All in all, he spent 27 years in prison. It seems he was communicating with the ANC structures outside the prison. In spite of the arrests of the activists and killing of some, including Mzee Albert Luthuli who, at 70 years of age, was allegedly knocked down by a train in his area of confinement, the ANC leaders outside and inside South Africa continued to prosecute the struggle. I linked up with some of them in 1967 in Dar-es-Salaam, with Pilliso, who was heading their office.

The Apartheid regime, like all oppressors, was good at divide and rule. One of the ruses they used was the policy of Bantustans-Kwazulu, Transkei, etc. Some of the African elite were lured by that trick. In effect, the oppressor was trying to revive the technique of tribal fragmentation that was responsible for Africa's enslavement in the first place. Mzee Mandela, in prison, resisted completely these tricks. That is why he was kept for so long. Some people would break down in prison and be turned into collaborators; not Nelson Mandela. He was adamant. That was one of his contributions.

When we are talking about these struggles, we should not forget the international and Pan-African dimensions. In 1974, the traitors in Vietnam led by one Nguyen Van Thieu, were defeated by the Nationalists. In 1974, on the 25th of April, our brothers and sisters in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Bissau, caused the collapse of the fascist, imperialist Government of Marcello Caetano in Portugal. I remember this day very well because Muhoozi (my son) was born on the 24th of April, 1974. The following day, the 25th of April, 1974, I rang my comrade, Samora Machel, to give him my personal good news. He told me, on the phone, that I excuse him because he could not talk to me at that time because he was on the Radio listening to events in Portugal where a military Revolution was over-throwing the fascist government that was responsible for the colonial wars in Africa by claiming that the African countries of Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Bissau were "Overseas Provinces of Portugal" and that the African peoples there, were supposed to become "*assimilados*" – Africans that would become Portuguese in culture. By 1975, all the three of them were independent. It seems these events had a big impact inside South Africa because in 1976, a volcano erupted.

The young people rose up in rebellion, the immediate spark being provided by the Whites insisting on imposing an additional burden of learning Afrikaans, the language of the Dutch settlers, in addition to the English. The ANC, I am sure can inform all of you that recruits into the Umkhonto we Sizwe simply flooded in after the 1976 uprising. Meanwhile, on the Christmas day of 1972, while I was here in the underground against Idi Amin in Kampala, I heard on the news that Zanu fighters, working with Frelimo from the parts of the Tete – Zambezia Provinces of Mozambique, had attacked armed White farmers in Zimbabwe. By 1980, Zimbabwe was Independent.

The Independence of Angola in 1975, paved the way for the Independence of Namibia in 1990 although that freedom was preceded by some drama that I do not have time to go into here. Finally, South Africa gained majority rule in 1994. The century of shame for Africa – 1900-1994 – when the subjugation of Africa was almost total – had come to an end, with partial success.

In order to determine whether the success was partial or not, we need to ask ourselves one question: “What were the strategic aims of the African Resistance and what were the Africans resisting”? Let us start with the second half of the question. The Africans were resisting what we have enumerated above: subjugation (loss of Independence), extermination, slave trade, a wretched life and disunity that had rendered us vulnerable in the first place. Therefore, in the anti-colonial struggle, our strategic goals were 5: regaining our independence; this time, achieving democracy because we had no democracy under the Kings or under the colonialists; ensuring prosperity of our people for the first time in 4½ million years since our people had missed the industrial

Revolution that had emancipated other peoples from underdevelopment; ensuring the strategic security of the African peoples that would guarantee that the afflictions that befell us in the last 4½ million years will never occur again – i.e. working to achieve the strategic insurance of our long suffering people; and ensuring that we protect our identity and heritage.

No doubt, by 1994, all the African countries had got “Independence”, at least on paper. Secondly, democracy took long to attain for all the countries, especially in the 1960s and 1970s; but today, most of the African countries are democratic – they have regular elections, etc. It is the other three strategic goals that are still eluding us: prosperity, strategic security and guarding our identity and heritage.

On the issue of prosperity, we have made some progress in many African countries. There are more educated Africans, more telephones, some electricity, some industries, etc. However, the measurement of prosperity that is normally used, that of GDP per capita, shows that Africa is still far behind other continents. Here below are some examples:

| | | |
|--------|--------------|----------------|
| (i) | USA | US\$ 57,466.79 |
| (ii) | UK | US\$ 39,899.39 |
| (iii) | Germany | US\$ 41,936.06 |
| (iv) | South Korea | US\$ 27,538.81 |
| (v) | China | US\$ 8,123.18 |
| (vi) | India | US\$ 1,709.39 |
| (vii) | South Africa | US\$ 5,273.59 |
| (viii) | Kenya | US\$ 1,455.36 |
| (ix) | Tanzania | US\$ 879.19 |
| (x) | Rwanda | US\$ 702.84 |
| (xi) | Burundi | US\$ 285.73 |
| (xii) | Nigeria | US\$ 2,177.99 |
| (xiii) | Uganda | US\$ 775.31 |
| (xiv) | Chad | US\$ 664.30 |

This is not surprising; in fact, what is surprising is that so much has been achieved so many bottlenecks notwithstanding. One of the stimuli for prosperity is a big market that would encourage the producers of goods and services to produce more and more. By producing more and more, the entrepreneurs earn more and more money, create more jobs and expand the tax-base of the country, which helps in service delivery. After groping in the dark for more than 23 years since Ghana's Independence in 1957, the African leaders woke up to this serious gap of a fragmented African market. That is how they started looking at the Lagos Action Plan – i.e. integrating the African Markets. That is how the ideas of COMESA, ECOWAS, the Mahgreb Union, the Central African Market, etc., came up. Some of the Regions did not bother even after this. They had more “important” things to attend to!! However, without a big market, prosperity is not possible. If you need examples, you have China and India. Each of those countries has a population of 1.3 billion people. They, indeed, tried to develop depending only on their huge respective internal markets. They found that they were not developing at the required speed. China opened up in 1978; and India in 1991. They are now both super-powers. The internal market was not enough. However, they need a huge internal market to bargain with the others in terms of reciprocation. *Ija turye kumwe biri aine ekyakurebireho* (the one who invites you for dinner, expects some things in return). Big markets attract investments and reciprocal trade arrangements.

The greatest failure, however, is on the issue of strategic security, ensuring that Africa is not threatened by anybody ever, both internally and externally. Since the onset of these “independences” by Ghana in 1957 (not to forget Sudan in 1956 and Egypt in 1922), we have witnessed numerous

security break downs — *coup de tats*, civil wars, terrorist campaigns, mercenary invasions, invasions by foreign armies, etc., etc. Africa has no strategic centre of gravity. Africa has no insurer of her stability, sovereignty and survival as an independent continent. None of the 53 countries can guarantee, at the strategic (global) level, our freedom. They are too small even when they are developed.

How did this come about? It came about with the ideological mistake of arrivism. The ruling elites, once they took over the 53 colonies that the imperialists had organized for ease of exploitation, they judged that they had arrived. The idea of Pan-Africanism was thrown through the window. The idea of political integration so as to create more viable units is not mentioned at all. Many actors in Africa are busy with all sorts of issues, including following the performance of European football clubs, but very little time for the political integration of Africa. This is suicide. Economic development per se, which Uganda will certainly achieve, cannot provide strategic security. In the 2nd World War, the first victims of aggression were the highly developed but small countries of Belgium, Holland, Demark, etc. Even France was occupied. It is the mighty Soviet Union, still in its infancy as far as development was concerned, that decisively defeated Hitler long before the USA entered the European theatre of war in the summer of 1944, eleven months before the end of the war in Europe. South Korea is a highly developed country. It is the 12th richest country in the World. However, in the Asian theater of giants, South Korea survives in the shadow of the USA. Whose shadow shall we rely on to provide relief for Africa? In the anti-colonial struggle, we benefitted from the support of the USSR and China. Today, however, those countries have their own interests to look after. They cannot always be there for us.

There is no logic in worshipping the existing 53 African States. They are inter-tribal and that is good. If Uganda is better than the “Republic” of Ankole, why shouldn’t East Africa be even better? The British, which act I salute, united the four colonies of the British and the Dutch into one South Africa in the year 1909. These were Natal, the Cape, Transvaal and the Orange Free State. We are saluting the British for this. Why can’t the Africans do better than the British?

Unlike Mwalimu, I did not get time to discuss in detail the issue of political integration with Madiba. I, however, gave him the write-up. It was kept by his White Secretary. Madiba, however, did not get enough time outside Prison. He did his part – to fight when he could and to be stubborn in prison when he needed to do so. Madiba and his colleagues sacrificed so much to achieve independence, democracy, international recognition and solidarity and even a level of market integration. They did not get time to deal with the issue of strategic security and the issue of guarding the future of our identity and heritage. It is us and you, the youth, to deal with this. I will say more on this on the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation function in Dar-es-Salaam in the coming months.

Uganda, when it came under the management of the Pan-Africanists, in 1986, played its own modest role in the struggle for the freedom of the people of South Africa. When the ANC fighters were to be relocated from Angola in order to facilitate the Independence of Namibia, we were approached by Thabo Mbeki and the ANC Treasurer whose name I do not remember, but his face is in front of me.

There was no hesitation on our part. Some external forces tried to arm-twist us, but we were resolute. The only time we did not go with our Southern African brothers was when they turned SADC into a common market. We refused to join SADC because we did not see the value addition involved. There is economic integration which we were already striving for under COMESA. SADC did not aim at Political integration. What, then, was the value addition? We are part of EAC because it also aims at the Political Federation of East Africa.

In conclusion, I propose that we forgive the traditional authorities of Africa (kings, chiefs, magicians, fore-tellers) prior to 1498 because they were not aware of the danger of sustaining African political fragmentation.

Secondly, after giving a probation period of maybe 50 years, we must condemn all the traditional authorities in Africa for persisting in maintaining political fragmentation in the face of the new dangers from outside, of aiding and abetting the slave trade, enabling genocide to take place in a number of places as well as causing the whole of our continent to be colonized by 1900 except for Ethiopia.

Thirdly, we should salute the commendable work of the African nationalist freedom fighters for founding supra-tribal political organizations, such as the ANC, founded in 1912, that were able, taking full advantage of favourable global events (e.g the emergence of the socialist Bloc and the wars among the imperialists), to launch coordinated struggles for our emancipation from colonialism and gaining our democratic rights.

Fourthly, we must congratulate the African peoples for, on account of their strong genes and advanced civilization, being able to survive the horrors of the slave trade and colonialism unlike the indigenous peoples of the Americas and Australia who perished.

Fifth, we should note that out of the five (5) strategic goals of: emancipation from foreign rule; gaining our democratic rights; creating an architecture for durable and self-sustaining prosperity through market integration; ensuring Africa's strategic security through political integration by ending or reducing the phenomenon of the original sin of the political fragmentation of Africa; and preserving the heritage and identity of our people; we have achieved only two – independence and democratization. We are somewhat working on economic integration through the Regional Economic Communities; although we should be more religious on this issue and focused.

On the issue of political integration, a vital requirement for the survival of the African people as a free people if survival at all, the post independence African leaders and the elite are in danger of being like the tribal chiefs who betrayed Africa between 1500 and 1900 by failing to unite our people for their own salvation. The political leaders should not be condemned alone. We must include the whole elite. The elite to be condemned include: professors, journalists, religious leaders, cultural leaders, magicians, teachers, etc. All these *“have left undone what they ought to have done and are doing what they ought not to have done and there is not truth in them”*, as the Church of Uganda Prayer Book says.

The only two people who escape this condemnation are Mwalimu Nyerere and Sheikh Amani Abeid Karume who united Tanganyika and Zanzibar to create Tanzania. Madiba must be exonerated from this disapproval because he gave the entirety of his life to achieve the first two strategic goals: Independence and Democratization. He did not have enough time to do more. I spoke to him about this once and I gave him a document on the matter which the tall, big white girl, that was his secretary, may not have drawn his attention to because he never brought it out again in our discussions. In any case, he had a lot of tactical issues within South Africa and the Region to deal with.

Madiba was born on the 18th of July, 1918. He was educated by his uncle because his father died early, when he was only 12 years old. He was expelled from Fort Hare University because of being involved in the political struggle. He later studied Law at another University that is always difficult for me to pronounce because they write “W”s which they pronounce as “V”s. In 1944, they formed the ANC Youth League. The Youth League drafted the 1947 Action Plan which culminated in the “Defiance Campaign” that came to be referred to as the “roaring 1950s!!”

On account of these activities, Mandela dropped out of his studies; but later completed his Law course from Prison from the University of South Africa. He, then, started a Law firm with his friend, Oliver Tambo, which specialized in defending political activists. This was the first Black Law Firm.

Most importantly, in 1955, at a Conference in Kliptown, Soweto, the ANC authored the very accurate diagnosis and prescription regarding South Africa’s problems in the form of the “Freedom Charter” which stated that: *“South Africa belongs to all who live in it, Black and White, and no government can unjustly*

claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people". This was a strategically correct position because, as already said earlier, it avoided the landmine of isolating the Blacks by donating the Whites, the Coloureds and the Indians to the enemy. The Blacks were the majority, all right; but all the others were welcome in South Africa.

By 1959, it was clear that the ANC had to metamorphose again. In the 1940s, it had metamorphosed from petitioning to activism. It had to now metamorphose from activism to armed struggle. Hence, in 1959, the Deputy President, Oliver Tambo, left South Africa to establish the ANC Mission abroad. In 1962, Mandela left South Africa secretly to go for military training abroad. Albert Luthuli was the President - General. With Oliver Tambo, they attended the founding of the OAU in Addis Ababa in 1963.

In 1961, following the massacres at Sharpeville and Langa, where 69 unarmed people were massacred, the ANC started the liberation army, the Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) – the Spear of the Nation. The MK was launched on the 16th of December, 1961. Nelson Mandela was the first Commander-in-Chief of MK. After training abroad, he came back and, working as a driver to his White comrades, executed operations against the system. Their secret headquarters was, at this time, at the Lillies Farm, in Rivonia, Johannesburg. Unfortunately, he was arrested at a roadblock and sentenced to five years for leaving the country illegally. It seems, initially, the regime did not know about the sabotage programme until they raided the secret headquarters at Rivonia. That is when Mandela made his famous speech where, among others things, he said: *"I have fought against White domination and I have fought against Black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free*

society in which all persons will live together in harmony with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and see realized. But, my Lord, if need be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die". This was in 1964, by which time I was following these events closely.

On the 12th of June, 1964, Mandela and seven others were sentenced to life imprisonment. That is how he spent 27 years in jail. Indeed, it was life-imprisonment because by the time he came from jail in 1990, he was 72 years old. His Mother and son died while he was in prison. He was not allowed to bury them.

Therefore, Mzee Mandela gave his all for Africa. He has no debt with Africa. He contributed to the achievement of emancipation, democracy and some steps toward economic integration in the form of SADC. I am sure he would have done more if he had had more time. It is you and me to do what Mwalimu Nyerere, Mandela, Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, Modibo Keita, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Thambo, Patrice Lumumba, IK MUSAZI, etc., did not do to insure Africa from the threats similar to the ones we have just gone through or worse.

I always say that when you do God's work, He does yours. In spite of the turbulent life he led, God gave him children and some of his off-springs are here with us today. The opportunists who, therefore, put self before Africa are not necessarily good planners.

God rewards the selfless, either directly or indirectly.

Long Live the Memory of Nelson Mandela.

Thank you.

31st August, 2017

-

Makerere University

