

YOUNG AFRICANS  
WRITING CONTEST 2021

MY AFRICA, MY FUTURE

#YAWC21 ESSAY COLLECTION



**An ECOSOCC Publication, September 2021**

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## Message of **Mr. William Carew** Head of ECOSOCC Secretariat

The African Union Economic Social and Cultural Council (AU-ECOSOCC) is an advisory organ of the Union, mandated among other things, to translate the AU's objectives, principles and policies into concrete programs. The relocation of ECOSOCC from the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa Ethiopia, and the establishment of a dedicated secretariat in Lusaka, Zambia in 2019, has provided ECOSOCC with the ability to muster the necessary workforce to function, and has significantly augmented its capacity to execute its programmatic initiatives.

The Young Africans Writing Contest (YAWC), is an initiative crafted to give effect to Aspiration 6 of the African Union's strategic framework for socio-economic transformation of the continent, formally known as 'Agenda 2063'. Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 aims to actualize "an Africa where development is people driven, unleashing the potential of its women and youth..." It is in view of this aspiration that we initiated the 2021 Young Africans Writing Contest, with the theme "My Africa, My Future". The initiative acknowledges the innovative thinking of African youths, and therefore seeks to encourage them to reflect on the crucial role they play in the developmental advancement of Africa. The theme "My Africa, My Future" especially aims to provide ample latitude to the youths at secondary school level, to articulate their aspirations and ideals for the kind of future they want for the continent.

It is with utmost delight that I acknowledge that the #YAWC2021 participants, through their essay entries, demonstrated nothing short of brilliance and academic excellence. One impressive quality that we took notice of was the ability of the participants to take an imaginative journey into the future of our dear continent, and pen down developmental desires in a manner that provokes a vivid imagery of the Africa they want. This therefore underscores the importance of promoting an understanding of Agenda 2063 among all members and across all levels of our society. From the entries it could be gauged how ECOSOCC has reached some very remote villages on the continent even though internet connectivity is a challenge in the mentioned places but ultimately the perseverance of the African youth overcame challenges on the way.

On the premise of understanding, I believe that Africans will naturally exert the ownership and leadership required to actualize the aspirations of the continental Agenda. Furthermore, I am also of the view that the aspirations of Agenda 2063 should be incorporated into our teaching curriculum, especially at the primary and secondary levels of education, as a way of driving its popularization among our young population which represent the next generation of African leadership. This exposure is envisaged to birth an early alignment with the developmental goals and objectives of Agenda 2063, and would enable the youths conceptualize practical initiatives to translate its aspirations to societal realities.

Finally, as the organ of the African Union that represents the voices of African citizens, ECOSOCC has committed itself to sustaining the YAWC initiative, and to upholding it as a platform to encourage young Africans to continuously express their vision for the future of Africa within the framework of Agenda 2063. Without any doubt, we are confident in their capacity to conceive ideas that will stir the Agenda towards its eventual actualization.



Message of **Ms. Joana Bannerman**

Managing Director, Access Bank Zambia

### ***Why as Access Bank, we decided to partner with the Economic, Social and Culture Council of the African Union in the Young African Writing Competition in this edition?***

In our vision to become the World's Most Respected African Bank, Access Bank seeks to add value that will yield economic relevance that has a global impact and in tandem put a positive image about Africa on the world map. Access Bank has a growing presence across almost all regions of the African continent, as well as the United Kingdom, Dubai, Lebanon, India and China.

Our belief in the youth of Africa and positive image about the continent are the reasons we jumped at the opportunity to partner with the Economic, Social and Culture Council (ECOSOCC) of the African Union on this journey.

Access Bank is passionate about empowering Africans, especially the youth who are the leaders of tomorrow. The Young African Writing Competition is a great opportunity to harness the thoughts and ideas of Africa's youth.

The importance of this competition is not just that it is a writing contest, it is about our future leaders and the future of our continent. Our people, especially the youth are the greatest resource we have. It is our responsibility and duty to the next generation to provide leadership that works, programmes that grow skills, nurture our youth and show them what a confident and successful Africa should look like.

This competition is a magnificent example of how vital platforms, such as this one are to giving the future leaders of our country an equal playing field in the world today. It is a reminder of what we should do to help develop young Africans and to give them a chance in this world.

Many of our young people although vibrant and energetic, unfortunately have little or no confidence in future prospects in Africa. They look to other places for the direction and opportunity to be front and centre because they do not believe that their home land can provide them with the prospects that they need and deserve. This sad state of affairs has to be changed.

As Access Bank, we look forward to a long partnership for years to come with the Economic, Social and Culture Council (ECOSOCC) African Union to grow this competition into one that is even more life changing, by helping our youth to see the positive things in Africa and help them harness and take advantage of same.

We aspire that the average African youth will believe in the possibility of a bright future in Africa, curated by Africans; a land of plenty where there is equal opportunity; a reality where Africans will not play second fiddle to any nation but will stand at par as equals in whatever indices are being measured. The future belongs to the African youth, and the African youth have to take their tomorrow today.



## Message of **Mrs. Jane Obuchi**

Chair of the Jury Panel

*“Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.” (Chinua Achebe).*

I sincerely thank Collaborative for the Renewal of Africa (CORA) through African Union – Economic, Social and Cultural Council (AU-ECOSOCC) for the opportunity to serve as Chairperson of the Young Africans Writing Contest 2021 (YAWC 21) Jury, a platform to engage the creativity of young African writers. Through AU, the African youth are now able to voice their ideas by telling their own stories as African children, from an African setting, about African issues.

YAWC 21 is, indeed, a great initiative to bridge the gap between the youth of Africa and AU. The theme of writing for YAWC 21; My Africa, My Future, provided a chance to the young writers to display their innovative thinking and expression of themselves freely. With this undertaking, the child's right to freedom of expression to impart information and ideas of all kinds through writing is being honored. The young writers hope for an Africa free of disease, an Africa that is able to handle such challenges as COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, environmental degradation, youth unemployment, gender-based violence, education for all, poor healthcare system, insecurity and war, loss of indigenous knowledge and folklore, among others.

Personally, the YAWC 21 essays have enriched me with the themes that I need to give emphasis to, as a writer of, among other works, children's literature. Reading through the more than 800 essays, the young writers' call is: Let us all join hands and roll the film for Africa! We cannot afford to be like sheep running away from the hyena only for them to be devoured by the shepherds.

Through YAWC 21, AU's agenda 2063 on transforming the African Continent socially and economically through appreciation of the potential of the youth has been given attention. The youth, whom I can liken to the roots of a tree, hold the future of a better Africa. The roots, thus, need to be watered. By keeping the roots firmly fixed in the soil, our continent will enjoy the fruits!

At this juncture, allow me to make recommendations to AU for the next YAWC: So as to salvage our African languages from extinction, we can identify literature written about African issues in European languages and our youth can translate them into Kiswahili, Yoruba, and other African languages.



Our African folklore and History have to be rewritten. From experience, having translated into my mother tongue, Ekegusii, Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, Ngugi wa Thiong'o's I Will Marry When I Want and The River Between, and Walter Rodney's How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, I can confess that it can be done. We have the ability to build a better Africa for ourselves. **And we must begin now!** The neglect of African languages, Kiswahili, for instance, is a challenge that needs to be addressed. I observed that there was one participant who wrote in Kiswahili, a language not listed among the languages in the YAWC hence could not be evaluated along with the others.

To AU and all the stakeholders of YAWC 21, let us not stop here but rather keep on mentoring these young writers, and through their pen, we will understand what they need so that all together we can realize the dream of "My Africa, my Future". There is no single day that the kite charted flight paths for the hen. To be sure of its safety, the hen did that for itself.

I, with the YAWC 21 Jurors; Ms Preeya Mohitram, Prof. Koulsy Lamko, Prof. Boubacar Boris Diop, and Dr. Yazini April, seize the moment to congratulate all the young participants of the contest. All the essays were creatively narrated hence very difficult for the jurors to arrive at the top 10. I encourage the young writers to keep up the good work that they have started. We are all committed to working with AU towards the realization of its Agenda 2063 in as far as youth empowerment is concerned. With the implementation of the ideas of YAWC 21, doubtlessly, we will realize our dream, **My Africa, My Future**.

Asante sana!

**Jane Bosibori Obuchi, Chair, YAWC 21 Jury.**

## #YAWC21 Team



**Kyeretwie Osei**  
*Competition Director*



**Raj Chintaram**  
*Project Manager*

## Collaborators



**Bright Sefah**



**Muloshi Mutale**



**Carol Jilombo**



**Emmanuel Njoku**

## Support Staff



**Andile Handa**



**Bob Mwamba**



**Janet Naluyele**



**Lulu Nkole Lesa**



**Mainza Chobe**

# Media Analytics - African Union Member States

## Media Outreach

In order to promote the contest and encourage participation in African Union member state, the following media channels were used



Digital



Radio



PR



OOH



Television



Activations

## Digital Campaign Geo Target



**Locations:** African Union Member states (African Region)



**Languages:** English and French



**Gender:** Men & Women



**Age:** 13 - 65+



**Placement:** Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, Twitter & LinkedIn



**Interests:** Education, Literature, Africa, etc.

## Digital Campaign Analytics



**728.7k**  
Audience Reach



**52.0k**  
Engagement



**12.5k**  
Link Clicks



**248**  
Shares



**388.9k**  
59.11%

9.80k Link Clicks  
2.53% CTR



**106.6k**  
16.2%

1.3k Link Clicks  
0.59% CTR



**98.0k**  
14.9%

492 Link Clicks  
0.50% CTR



**53.1k**  
8.07%

233 Link Clicks  
0.44% CTR



**11.3k**  
8.72%

122 Link Clicks  
1.08% CTR

## Participation Analytics

**8 5 2**  
Total Entries



**359 Boys**



**42.14%**

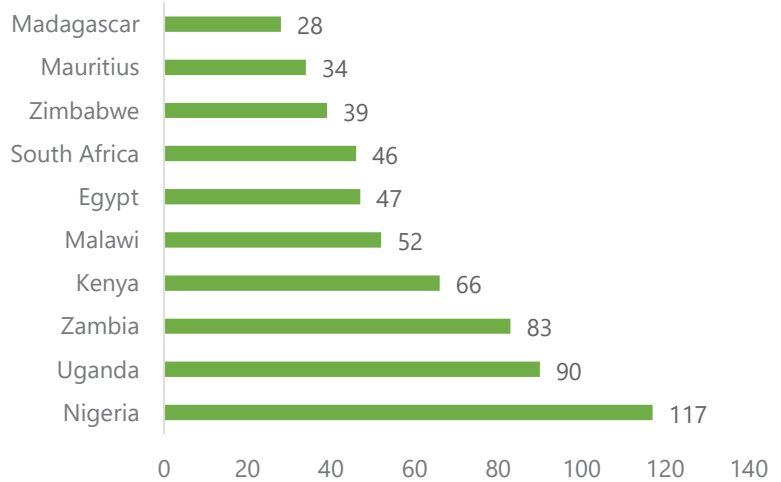


**493 Girls**

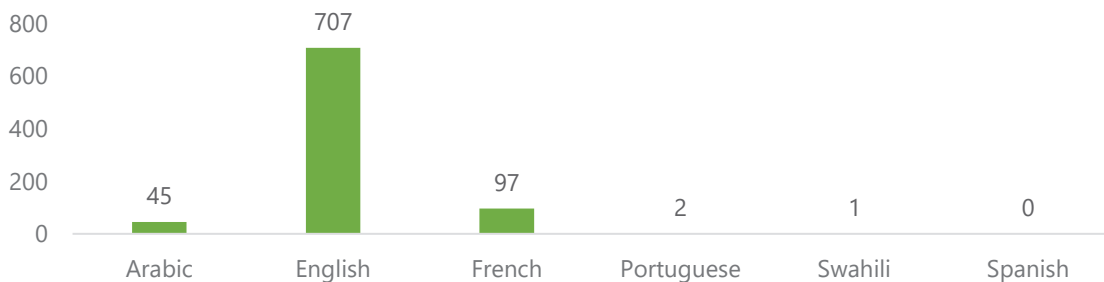


**57.86%**

### Top 10 Participating Countries



### Participation by language



## JURY PANEL



**Mrs. Jane B. Obuchi**

*Writer/Researcher  
Kenya*



**Dr. Koulsy Lamko**

*Writer-Dramatist  
Lecturer (General Education,  
Hankili So Africa) - Tchad*



**Mr. Boubacar Boris Diop**

*Journalist, Writer, Teacher,  
Editor - Senegal*



**Prof Yousra Abourabi**

*Assistant Professor of Political  
Science Université Internationale  
de Rabat (Kingdom of Morocco)*



**Ms Preeya Mohitram**

*Head of Department /Educator  
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**Dr Yazini April**

*Coordinator, BRICS Research  
Centre, Human Science  
Research Council (South Africa)*

# #YAWC21 Achievers

**Disclaimer** – *The following essay entries have not been altered in any way, they reflect the original views of the authors*



1

## Blueprint for the Future

Odong Daniela

*Mt St Mary's College Namagunga (Uganda)*

And as she walks into a museum, her eyes focus on an aisle with numerous art pieces up on the wall. They are paintings of stories and past journeys in intricate detail. This thing they call the future is nothing without the past. The past is a map that carefully charts out each possible motion to arrive at the distant future. It is a blueprint.

The first painting your eyes linger on will influence your perception of everything else after. This is a rule of thumb in art museums.

Her first painting is a Baobab tree or as referred to in her grandfather's folk tales, an upside-down tree. The longer she stares at this painting the louder the voices of ancient Ghana become. They whisper, "Knowledge is like a Baobab tree; one person's arms cannot encompass it." That is her first lesson of the day. Just like one person's arms cannot encompass knowledge, one person's mind cannot either. For that same reason, African governments need to encourage inclusive governance. This sharing of ideas presents the opportunity for young people to make relevant decisions towards creating more viable societies. Thereby creating a more sustainable continent. Before her thoughts drive her out of the museum, she proceeds.

As she approaches the next painting, her phone buzzes through a denim pocket. On the lit-up screen, she sees the new trending hashtag on social media, "March for peace." Peace? Has something else happened? Her heartbeat sounds like a steady string of bullets. Thump, thump, thump, pop!

Her mind runs to places of Africa's undermined conflict. She thinks of Ethiopia's Tigray crisis, Nigeria's northeastern conflicts, the intensity in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado, and even South Africa's novel political tensions.

However, there is one fault in her perception. The fault lies in the apostrophes she has used to describe each of those problems. She has labelled each country's problems as their own. Why should the civil unrest in Libya be Libya's problem alone? Isn't Africa meant to stand as one? All these problems belong to a continent with a young generation of creative minds. If the Ghanaian quote proves correct, then Africa has more than enough young people to battle it out for peace. Whether that means using hashtags like the one she read one painting ago, or carrying out peaceful demonstrations. There is so much that young people can do. Not to solve Uganda's conflicts or Morocco's conflicts alone but to collectively solve Africa's conflicts.

Enough of these thoughts, she has come to the museum to appreciate art and nothing more. Yet, the next painting disagrees with her agenda. To the untrained

eye, it is a mere jigsaw puzzle but to her it is a carefully pieced-together melange of numerous objects. All these objects connect to a single brushstroke that began the painting.

The idea of "smart cities" crosses her mind; stretching out like lazy syllables. She is realizing that future cities, like the pieces of this second painting, will need to be interconnected. In smart cities, everything links to a central system. Sensors in parking spaces, garbage cans, and all sorts of monitors collect data. In the end, all the data returns to a central system and weaves itself into the matrix. Weaving the education.





## 2

### Conflit et violence

Touoyem Ngouegheu Joyce Fortuna  
*Collège F.X VOGT (Cameroon)*

#### Point de départ

De manière générale, le terme conflit désigne une opposition de sentiments, d'opinions et d'intérêts entre deux ou plusieurs entités. Le monde a de tout temps et en tout lieu été un théâtre de conflits de diverses sortes. En Afrique précisément, depuis l'époque coloniale, l'on assiste à une succession de conflits autant idéologiques que racistes et tribaux ; les uns encore plus violents que les autres.

Ces confrontations énoncées ne se situent qu'entre des États ou du moins entre des entités bien établies défendant une certaine idéologie. Un regard synoptique sur nos sociétés ainsi que sur les liens qui structurent nos relations individuelles, indique que la violence et les querelles multiples sont notre apanage quotidien.

Décimant les populations africaines et de ce fait ralentissant les économies nationales, les actes de violences et conflits érigés en règle de conduite depuis les indépendances modifient profondément la psychologie de l'homme noir. En un siècle, l'on a observé une décrépitude sans pareil des mœurs sociales et culturelles africaines si chères à nos aïeux, laissant place à une Afrique dépravée en proie à toute sorte de maux.

#### Quelques figures totémiques de l'Afrique

C'est donc dans la logique de redonner à l'Afrique sa noblesse et d'inspirer les africains à des aspirations nobles que les théoriciens du devenir s'exprimèrent. Nous avons là Nelson Mandela grâce à qui l'apartheid pris fin en Afrique du Sud, Nkuame Nkhruma et le panafricanisme qu'il prône, Thomas Sankara aspirant à une Afrique libre et decomplexée, Cheik Anta Diop le savant africain pour qui « L'africain doit s'armer de connaissances jusqu'aux dents ».

#### Question de dignité anthropologique

Mais hélas, l'homme noir reste inerte face à ses appels et supplications pacifiques. Cela s'observe clairement de nos jours face à la persistante dégradation des valeurs si chères à l'Afrique et l'émergence de nouvelles tares sociales. Revendications sécessionnistes par-ci, guerres tribales, égoïsmes nationaux par-là, sans parler de la misère ambiante entretenue par la mal gouvernance, bref tant de maux qui nous poussent à affirmer que l'Afrique ne peut se défaire du joug de la violence et donc, de l'ignorance qui l'engendre. D'un point de vue personnel, l'égoïsme est la souche de tous ces maux car pour la plupart, notre liberté personnelle (bonheur) prévaut sur celle d'autrui. Non pas tant qu'on méconnaisse la liberté d'autrui, mais l'on se comporte comme si le bonheur n'était destiné qu'à certaines personnes. C'est à se demander à juste titre si le conflit n'est pas consubstantiel à la nature humaine.

Ainsi, dans une logique d'éradication du mal par la source, question d'impulser un développement pacifique de l'Afrique, plusieurs réformes peuvent être envisagées.

### **L'urgence de la pensée**

Tout d'abord, il faudrait favoriser l'avènement d'un siècle de lumière africain qui passerait par une révolution des mentalités africaines et une réforme de l'entendement. Pour atteindre cet objectif, l'on devrait favoriser et encourager en chaque individu l'éclosion de la pensée. Puisque la réflexion critique peine à être perçue objectivement par le commun des hommes. Dans l'antiquité africaine et notamment égyptienne, l'émergence de la pensée a permis de bâtir les pyramides, symbole d'une civilisation rayonnante. Aujourd'hui, cette modélisation des mentalités passerait par la promotion de l'éducation authentique et fonctionnelle. N'entendons pas par là une éducation servilement copiée sur le modèle occidental, mais de son ajustement à l'Afrique. On parlera alors d'une éducation afro-centrée ouverte au monde. Seul le décentrement heuristique permettrait à l'africain de s'interroger sur les réels enjeux de la vie et de poser des questions existentielles notamment : quel développement authentique pour l'Afrique ? Ou du moins quel serait notre apport commun à la construction d'un Eden africain et d'un vivre-ensemble au service de la paix et du développement ?

### **Les voies de sortie : vers l'Agenda 2063 de l'Union africaine**

C'est ainsi que pour les citoyens africains, il ne s'agira plus d'exercer un patriotisme à l'aveugle, à partir de la mentalité du colonisé qui est celle de la dépendance et de l'asservissement de l'Afrique. Il s'agit donc là d'apprendre à l'Afrique et précisément aux pays en proie aux querelles intestines, de tourner le dos à la mal gouvernance, à la corruption, au favoritisme, au tribalisme, sources de conflits. L'amour du prochain, la solidarité, le sens de l'effort collectif, l'entraide, s'offrent dès lors comme des valeurs à promouvoir.

Vaincre les égoïsmes nationaux qui freinent le développement pacifique entre nations africaines pour réaliser l'idéal continental est une autre voie, d'ores et déjà tracée par Nkrumah. Restons fidèle à nos valeurs africaines authentiques et à la sagesse égyptienne édictée par le sage Ptahotep. Cultivons la fraternité dans un souci de consolider le panafricanisme en vue de faire naître cet idéal indiqué par le penseur camerounais Engelbert Mveng et par le chantre de la négritude Aimé Césaire, dans sa théorie pour une « civilisation arc-en-ciel ».

« L'Afrique que nous voulons... », thème de l'Agenda 2063 de l'Union africaine se présente donc comme une invite à bâtir une Afrique reconciliée avec elle-même, par la mise en vacances définitive des conflits et autres violences qui affectent si durement le décollage de l'Afrique. Ceci passe par un investissement humain et dans l'humain. Aussi le retour aux sources prôné par Engelbert Mveng, Jean-Marc Ela, Mongo Beti, Cheikh Anta Diop et bien d'autres en sont les ferments ; car, identités africaines retrouvées, c'est l'Afrique rassurée face aux défis du Troisième Millénaire.



3

## African Soil for a Sustainable

Wisunzintumwa Jean Paul

*Petit Séminaire Saint Pie X (Burundi)*

It is on the Christmas 'eve 2019, in the evening. My sister, Divine Keza, freshly enrolled at Africa Leadership Academy in Johannesburg South Africa, has joined us for Christmas holidays. As I ask her how she found food in South Africa, she tells me that she missed "Akamaramasenge", the sweetest banana in Burundi a lot.

This banana is quasi-exclusively found in some parts of the East African Community. It is famously known for its most succulent taste, and it has traditionally been used to produce local beer "Isongo." Nowadays, "Akamaramasenge" serves as a dessert. The same banana attracts foreigners. One of our teachers, who studied in France, told us that Europeans enjoy it and every time they visit our country, they ensure they buy some to take home.

As we continue conversing, she tells me that she missed "Nyongera" – a sorghum beer brewed by Brarudi from local white sorghum "Amasaka yera" in Burundi.

I then start imagining why she can't have those products in her host country – South Africa yet we live on the same continent. As I ponder, I remember the mother to Hounghlah, one of my classmates from Ghana, whose National ID and Passport were not enough for her to open a bank account in Burundi. All of these unanswered questions push me to rethink about the African Continental Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA) our Economics teacher talked about.

A wave of joy shakes me as I realize that the AfCFTA enforcement would open up the free movement of goods, services and people, and build the capacity of African businesses through establishment of a single market. But then a wind of disappointment disrupts my delightful mood as I recall that border trade barriers, irregular customs procedures, poor infrastructures, costly transportation, high transactions and erratic trade policies still hold back AfCFTA's full implementations.

In Africa, agriculture is the predominant economic activity and generator of national revenue. However, despite its fertile soil, favorable climatic conditions, rich flora and fauna, and large agricultural potential, Africa continues to import food and agricultural products, ranging from cereals, animal, vegetable fats, oils, sugars, confectionary, meat, to edible offal.

According to one report "Supply and Market Outlook" published in 2018 by FEWS NET, "Democratic Republic of Congo imports significant quantities of maize grain from Argentina as well as maize flour from the United States of America, Brazil and Italy." One impactful way to boost agricultural sector in Africa is to enhance trade and commerce between economic regional blocks by establishing a well-organized and working continental market to attract large investments in a dynamic and commerce - oriented agriculture.

As a leader, I would remove all tariffs and quantitative restrictions so that agricultural products and related-knowledge can freely move across the continent. This measure would foster the culture of intra-trade between Africans and ensure that the single market creation becomes a success. Furthermore, I would remove the costs of obtaining Visa and work permits, and authorize National IDs as the only identification document to allow agrobusiness men and women to participate easily in the African-intra trade.

Furthermore, I would remove the costs of obtaining Visa and work permits, and authorize National IDs as the only identification document to allow agrobusiness men and women to participate easily in the African-intra trade.

Given the fact that declaring free movement of goods and people across the continent in itself is not sufficient for people to exchange agricultural products and other commodities without difficulties, I would build rigid roads, railways, airports, and provide adequate transport means at affordable price so that I connect countries and regions and empower African citizens to run their agrobusinesses comfortably.

“The future of food in the world will depend on what Africa does with agriculture,” said Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, the President of Africa Development Bank.

With the same aim to revitalize agriculture through trade, I would put in place a “Made in Africa” program. I would run this programme through the agricultural industrialization where different commodities such as cocoa, coffee, tea, cotton to name a few would be processed and value added in order to be competitive on continental market and global market.

Manufacturing our local agricultural products would allow Africans to reach the top of global food chains, and be price deciders for their commodities.

In the same way, I would create an “African Chocolate Company” either in one of cocoa seeds producer countries or in any other agreed upon region in Africa.

This company would essentially transform cocoa seeds into chocolates and give cocoa farmers better prices. Furthermore, considering the fact that many African farmers are smallholders and live in rural areas, it would be incumbent upon me to ensure that they have fertilizers and high-quality seeds and that they can access local, regional and continental markets without difficulties.

I would create some agrobusiness manufacturing industries in their areas and connect their localities to other regions via streets, railways, airports, and internet facilities.

As today technology shapes our world and we live in era of e-commerce where transactions, marketing and advertisements are done online, I would ensure that farmers have access to technology devices, benefit from internet and information literacy, and can use them effectively to run their businesses efficiently. I would launch a campaign to train them on e-commerce, and thereafter provide them with smart devices while ensuring that they access electricity and internet connectivity. In the same way, I would launch an official YouTube channel that promotes different dishes found in Africa and encourages people to taste.

Moreover, I would implement the common currency policy as a pillar of the single market. This currency would facilitate, reduce transactions costs and increase our competitiveness on global market. In the same way, I would create a unique African Central Bank that guides all transactions and empower our economies. Beyond that, I would enact an “African Preference” policy which would favor African products over imported products. This policy would guarantee that imported products are more expensive than African products to protect the value of our products and ensure that our farmers’ needs are served.

Lastly, all of those policies in line with promotion of African-intra trade to unlock agricultural potential would fully come into force through interregional and continental integration and cooperation. Incorrupt, transparent management, and joint mobilization of funds either in form of budget allocation, aids, grants or loans would be of the highest importance to fully implement all programmes. Together, we shall enjoy the taste of African soil and make Africa the Breadbasket for the world.



4

## L'amour de la Patrie

Kholoud Kamel

Abdullah bin Masoud High School (Algeria)

### أفريقيا مستقبلي

#### مقدمة:

أفريقيا ستبقى وإلى الأبد عنواني عندما يرفض كل للعالم استضافتي، فهي الوطن هي الحب والفؤاد. حب الوطن ومستقبله كلمتين منفصلتين كتابيا متحدتين معنويا، فمن أحب وطنه بذل عرق الجبين ليحقق له مستقبلا زاهرا. فالحب الفطري ليس كافيا بل الحب الجنوني لتراب الوطن هو من يبني المستقبل ويرسم طموحاتنا لوطننا، ويجعلنا نحولها من مجرد فكرة معنوية إلى أشياء ملموسة على أرض الواقع. حبي قارتي وصل عنان السماء، وجعلني مؤمنة برؤيتي لدولها بين دول العالم الأول. وأفضل بكثير حقيقة محتمة سوف نصل إليها ولو وقف العالم كله ضدنا.

#### تعليم يساوي 100% متخرجين:

الكل مدرك أن التعليم يعتبر أهم وسيلة لتطوير أي بلاد، من خلال إنتاج أجيال صاعدة ومتعلمة لتطويرها، ولكن الأهم هو تطويره هو في حد ذاته. أن ينعم أي طالب بمحيط تعليمي جيد يعطيه الرغبة في إنهاء ما بدأه، ويمنحه فرصا أفضل، وأحلاما أكبر للمستقبل. إن توفير الدراسة الالكترونية باستعمال الأجهزة المتطورة ( كالأجهزة اللوحية والحواسيب المحمولة) يعمل على توفير الوقت وتسهيل الدراسة. كما أن وفرة النشاطات الفنية، الرياضية وحتى الأدبية والعلمية يفتح مجالا للطلاب لممارسة هواياتهم واستغلالها في سن صغير، ولا ننسى أن هذه الحصص ستمثل حصص استراحة للتلاميذ تساهم في تعزيز إرادتهم للعودة للدراسة، بالإضافة إلى أنها تكون حصصا إنتاجية في الوقت ذاته. سيكون من الرائع أيضا أن ننظم منظومتنا التعليمية حملات تشجع فيها الطلاب الأُميين على الالتحاق بالمدارس مهما كان سنهم، وهذا سيكون همزة وصل بيننا وبين نمو الأجيال الصاعدة. ولا ننسى أن وفرة المؤسسات التعليمية وإحافها بالمرافق الضرورية وجعل جودة الدراسة عالية ونتائج المتدرسين مرتفعة، سيتمنح أفريقيا المرتبة الأولى عالميا في القطاع التعليمي.

#### أفريقيا قارة الصحة العالمية:

يحترق الفؤاد عندما أرى الألفا من مواطني قارتي يموتون بسبب أوبئة استطاع اغلب العالم القضاء عليها. أفريقيا قارة الصحة العالمية، حلم كبير يراودني، صعب المنال صحيح لكنه ممكن، إن تعاوننا جميعا على ذلك. تعرضي للعديد من الولوجات الصحية جعلني أفهم معانات الطبيب والمريض، سواء كانت هذه المعانات نفسية، جسدية أو بسبب عدم توفر المرافق اللازمة. اتحادنا ووضعنا لأيدينا يدا بيد يجعل منا قارة الصحة العالمية، أين يوجد العديد من المستشفيات المجهزة بمختلف المرافق الطبية بجميع أنواعها، من تصميم جيد لهيكل المستشفى مروراً لنظافته وتوفر الأدوية المختلفة، لا ننسى أهمية سيارات الإسعاف فلا يمكن الاستغناء، عنها ولكن توفر هيلكوبتر الإسعاف في كل مستشفى مهم أيضا. إن توفير كل هذه المرافق سيجعل من قارتنا قارة الصحة العالمية دون منازع. توفر الأطباء الكفاء الذين هم نتاج للتعليم الكفاء أيضا عامل لا يجب الاستغناء عنه، قارة الصحة العالمية يعني قارة 0% من الأوبئة، قارة تعتبر وجهة كل مريض في أنحاء العالم للعلاج فيها، قارة توفر لك الصحة النفسية والجسدية وتراعي ظروفك المعيشية. هل يوجد أجمل من أن تنطق هذه الكلمات على ألسنة الشعوب الدولية عن قارتك. نحن نتحدث عن صحة الآن أي أغلى ما يملكه أي إنسان على وجه هذه الكرة الأرضية، بل هي شيء لا يقدر بثمن.

#### مدن ذكية وفرص عمل أكثر:

قد لا تتوافق فكرة المدن الذكية مع فرص العمل الكثيرة حيث في هذه المدن تحتل الروبوتات مكان الإنسان في جميع مجالات العمل، فتجعل من الأغلبية الساحقة عاطلة عن العمل. ماذا لو وفرنا جهودنا لوضع خطط حول توفير الأمرين لنصل لأرقى أنواع التطور. ولكن يجب علينا ألا نحدد مفهومنا الخاص لكلا الأمرين، أو أن نحدد رؤيتنا المستقبلية عن كيفية الجمع بينهما. مدن ذكية تعني مدن تتوفر بها جميع أنواع التكنولوجيا حيث ناطحات السحاب، البيوت وجميع أنواع الأبنية قادرة على تغيير مكانها. حيث السيارات الطائرة في كل مكان، والروبوتات تعمل على تسهيل حياة الناس، فمثلا تقوم بأعماله المنزلية وتسدّد فواتيره وغيرها من الأعمال الأخرى. ونجعل منها آلات تسهل علينا الحياة كغيرها من الآلات السابقة، حيث لا تشغل مناصب العمل. أما فرص العمل التي يتمناها أي شخص تتمثل في الذهاب للعمل مباشرة فور تخرجه من الجامعة، إذ تستغل الجامعات الذكاء الاصطناعي للبحث لنا عن مناصب العمل في المدن الذكية التي تساهم فيها الروبوتات في تسهيل الحياة، كما ذكرنا من قبل تسهيل وليس استغلال مناصب العمل، وقد نصل لتطور عالي يصبح فيه الجميع يعمل في المنزل كما هم رواد التجارة الالكترونية الآن. وهكذا سوف نجمع بين وفرة المناصب والتطور. مدن ذكية تحافظ على نسبة 0% من التلوث، ونسبة الأرياف الغير المتطورة 5% فقط والكل يشغل منصب عمل حيث نسبة الفقر 0%، مستقبل يطمح إليه كل إنسان، لهذا يجب علينا الوصول إليه.

## الخاتمة:

قد يكون من أسوأ أنواع الخيانة و الأنانية أن تضمن لنفسك مستقبلا زاهرا وتنسى نصيب قارتك منه، فلا جميلا رددته لها لعونها لك من مأكّل ومشرب، وأنت ومن أرواح سكانها اكتسبت روحك، ومن جميل أراضيها امتلأت بطنك. تحتر ممن يهرب من قطران بلاده ( أفريقيا ) إلى جنات البلدان الأخرى دون رد الجميل لأرضه، والأسوأ انه يعلم أن جنة الغرب كانت جحيما، لولا أنهم اقتطفوا من جنتنا أشجارا وزرعوها في بلادهم لتغدو أراضيهم جنات وتغدو تراضينا جحيما بالنسبة لأهلها الهاربين. أصبحنا نقلد ولا نفتدي لماذا لا نفعل المثل ونقطف من جناتهم أشجارا نزرعها في أرضنا وبهذا تغدو الأرض كلها جنة. نحن فقط بحاجة للمزيد من الحب والعطاء لهذه الأرض الرائعة المسماة بأفريقيا لنضمن لها مستقبلا زاهرا.



# 5

## A United Africa

Samuel Mogusu Machora

*Murang'a High School (Kenya)*

My Africa is a continent full of diverse natural resources, with people and their culture in its abundance. History shows the exponential loss my Africa suffered at the hands of alien slave traders who violently robbed us of our best brainy and energetic young people against their will. Adding injury to this wound, these aliens come back to loot all they can in the name of religion and colonization. This historical injustice has led to a great deficit of patriotic visionary leaders. Consequently, my Africa is behind in technology to exploit readily available resources. As a result of this, my Africa is lagging behind in comparison with other continents. I wish to outline a few ideas that can improve my Africa economically, socially and politically for my future.

Education is the key factor to developing my Africa. The ancient Egyptian civilization, the Sankore University in ancient Mali, and the Ethiopian writing are clear evidences that education has existed here with us for a long time. But we Africans still stick with the colonialist's way of education. Even after every country in Africa gained political "independence", we haven't formed our own authentic way of education that is innovatively creative with cognitive thinking. We still rely on memory as the key to success in education. We need to rise up from this way of memory based education to creative thinking brains for my Africa for my better future. My African governments should also invest in providing good standard facilities to all schools equally and pay good salaries to teachers. They should make deliberate and mandatory continuous training of its teachers during school holidays. Teacher training should be at its best and performing students should be given incentives to join teachers' colleges. My African governments should revise and reconstruct their national education philosophy to address the human resource needs of their countries.

My Africa has many economic challenges which have worsened overtime. Many countries have mismanaged their revenues, international grants and loans due to corrupt practices thus leading to inflation of their currency. Encouraging imports instead of manufacturing our own goods has negatively affected my Africa. Policies that support development of local industries and businesses should be enforced. The more the industries and factories we have the more the jobs and employment for our people and that will secure my prosperous future. Incentives to encourage establishment of such enterprises and lower taxes shall see my Africa raise and compete with the rest of the world for future self-sufficiency. My Africa should discourage imports unless they cannot be manufactured within our continent. That shall protect local industries from Chinese industrial invasion. Regional trade should be encouraged without restrictions that shall strengthen my Africa's economy as a whole for my good future and generations to come.

We the youth command the largest population in my Africa. We should be given greater political space and be given support for education and training. In my Africa we have many physically and mentally challenged members of our society, the less fortunate, refugees, slaves, widows, single mothers, orphans and the oppressed. My Africa should rise up in support and defense of these suffering groups.

My Africa should sensitize everyone on epidemics and pandemics and how to prevent them for my future. Certain values from my pre-colonial Africa should not be eroded by western culture but to be upheld continuously for my future. My African values such as solving disputes like involving elders and appreciating my African proverbs, my African languages, my African traditional practices and my African culture should be shared and encouraged for my future.

My Africa should take environmental matters into consideration for my future and generations after me. Planting trees and educating people more on the value of conserving the environment is what needs to be done for the environment now for my future. Each country in my Africa should have national botanical gardens or national forest parks to protect and to conserve our indigenous plant life which has traditionally served as a source of our traditional medicine. Using renewable and clean energy needs to be practiced for the better of the future. Let us remember the words of the Nobel Prize laureate the late Professor Wangari Maathai, 'if we continue to destroy the environment, the environment will destroy us.'

My African states should give democracy space to flourish. My fellow Africans should elect corrupt free patriotic leaders who are visionary and have my Africa at heart, elected in free and flawless elections. Botswana has given us a blueprint on this. It is time for my Africa to rise up and cut off the chain of horrible corrupt regimes for the better of my future Africa. I wish to see my Africa peaceful, prosperous and free from armed conflicts, corruption, terrorist groups, poverty and diseases. I wish to see Nkwame Nkrumah's dream come to pass. I wish to see my Africa transition to the United States of Africa as one nation with one federal government under one national flag and one military command. The government with one President with five regional deputies representing North Africa, East Africa, South Africa, West Africa and Central Africa. I dream to see my Africa with one currency, one Senate, one Parliament, 55 governors one for each state, 55 police departments one each state, 55 National Universities and 55 State Universities one for each state. I wish to see my borderless Africa with one African Passport. I wish to see my Africa with super highways and high-speed railway system interconnecting all African states. My United States of Africa, strong enough to stand on its feet against the United States of America or Russia or China on matters of international policy if contrary to African interests. That is my dream Africa and my dream future for Africa.





6

## Minds First, Borders After

Prince Bashangezi Bishogo

*United World College of Southern Africa Waterford*

*Kamhlaba (eSwatini & Democratic Republic of Congo)*

Dear Present Self,

Do you still doubt that a United Africa is possible? Do you still wonder that Africans can still live the dreams of our pan-Africanist fathers? Do you still question the power of an African education to change Africa? Here is your answer. Africa did not continue using the education system inherited from colonizers. Instead, it developed its International Curriculum which takes the continent's historical, cultural, and socio-economic context into much more consideration. It is framed for Africa's needs first before the world's needs. We no longer have countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo where kids are taught their history when they cannot retain much of it. Instead they are soaked into European history at a time when they are more engaged and keen to understand their own story. Our International Curriculum and national ones make it possible for our youths to know their past, hence having a harmonized present and an assuring future. The African Union created a commission that monitors also assesses national curricula to make sure none of the governments is carelessly leaving fatal discrepancies in their education systems.

I know you have not stopped blaming the quality of education offered to your African counterparts and the resultant mentality. Be aware that governments have absolute power to shape and foster their people's mindsets. I am aware that you all still conclude that your main problem is your mindsets. Help me tell your leaders that by just changing what they offer to their people at schools, they will get the resultant mentalities they are claiming, to not have to make changes happen. For the Africa we are living in today to be real, tell them to stop challenging you only in math or sciences or by tests to decide whether you are cognitively smart. Tell them that having 100% in exams does not equate with the types of true leaders we have today. Today's African schools challenge youths in ways that help them have emotional intelligence and take risks in safer ways. They are places of leadership development. I know you have such schools there. But do count them. They are called elite schools. They only target a negligible portion of youth and we all know what steps those youths take next. They go to the west and become their families' sponsors, becoming useless to the mother continent. Such elite schools have ceased to be the sole institutions expected to have the brightest minds of our countries. We no longer have countries where people protest for lack of infrastructures and the same people are the ones who would be stealing materials bought by governments to construct the claimed infrastructures. Thanks to the current African-oriented education systems, people now clearly understand that their state interests and assets are intrinsically linked to them. What a continent of mindful citizens!

Our international curriculum and national education systems are of the love of Africa and Africans, a teaching which has immensely contributed to sustainable peace across the continent. Not an education that is leading you to dream about deadly crossings of the Mediterranean Sea for an El-dorado. Not an education that shouts out evil in the face of your indigenous knowledge system which is necessary to connect to your nature. Not an education that confuses kids with foreign languages in their first school years, killing their academic curiosity, engagement and commitment.

Not a divisive education that does not bridge acceptance and collaboration with tribalism and fatal competition. Not an education that encourages students to study just to pass but to not know, leading some of them to bribe or buy fake certificates just to show that they have finished school. Buried are those university admissions based only on original or fake certificates and parents' job positions.

We have systematically been massively locked in intercultural ways by education, paving a way to the ever-needed mutual coexistence of our diverse and beautiful cultures and tribes. Our education is no longer the passion killing one, making us believe there was a traditional way of succeeding (primary and higher school-university-job-car, houses-startup-companies). Today's African youths are aware that they can become successful at any point in their lives. They are therefore more creative and aware of following their passion. They are not studying for jobs or any well-paid careers. They are studying for a passion that helps them create value on the continent.

Our education is the one of knowing ourselves then our communities and ways we can make them better. An education that has been centered on intercultural understanding and pan-Africanism. Our leaders are no longer blamed for everything wrong that happens. Youths have understood that those in power are not the causes of everything that happens. They now understand the roles we, the ruled, also play in bringing changes to happen. Hence youths no longer feel powerless in the face of those in power. Our education no longer leaves the understanding of politics to a group of those who think they are the only ones who could understand it better. More than ninety percent of the African population have been inculcated with the political knowledge that they need to make decisions. Gone are the days when youths could have chosen their presidential or parliamentary representatives only because the latter have given those salty fish, oil, T-shirts, and hats. Forgotten is that mindset of engaging in one's country's politics as a career, paramount to make a living.

Education has now proven to be the most effective tool we needed to start the true unity of Africa. Warn your leaders that before thinking of uniting your borders, currencies, and powers, they should first assure your mentality's effective unity through education. That is the only way you will get to live in your dreamed Africa here.

Your Future Self.



7

## Une Afrique forte et Credible

Aden Djama Abdirazak

*Lycee de Djibouti (Djibouti)*

Je rêve d'une Afrique forte et crédible. Une Afrique démocratique et qui pourra nourrir et éduquer tous ses enfants. Une Afrique qui ne sera pas la risée des autres continents. Une Afrique intégrée, uni sans frontières où chacun de ses fils et filles pourra se déplacer muni de son passeport UA. Je rêve d'une Afrique qui ne fera plus la une des journaux avec les titres suivants : famine, guerre civile, coup d'état, épidémie. Je rêve d'une Afrique fraternelle qui saura trouver dans ses traditions ancestrales, la sagesse de l'entente et de l'Union. Je rêve d'une Afrique interconnectée avec des autoroutes reliant Johannesburg au cap et Djibouti à Dakar. Je rêve d'une Afrique avec des dirigeants jeunes éduqués et honnêtes. Je rêve d'une Afrique dont les femmes ne seront pas traitées comme des chiffons mais dignement comme des reines ! Je rêve d'une Afrique semblable et à la fois différente de l'Europe, une Afrique intégrée économiquement mais plus humaine où l'être humain ne sera pas considéré comme un bien marchand mais comme un être précieux doté de raison et de conscience. Je rêve d'une Afrique fière avec ses 54 pays unis et qui pourra s'asseoir dans le concert des Nations confiante. Je rêve d'une Afrique qui ne sera plus esclave des influences extérieurs. Je rêve d'une Afrique pacifiée sereine et qui se sera débarrassée des plaies qui la rongent depuis les années 60 : gabegie, clanisme, tribalisme, guerre de religion, corruption. Une Afrique qui prendra conscience qu'elle est riche non seulement en ressources naturelles et minières et qui saura exploiter ce riche potentiel humain de jeunes aujourd'hui désespérés et à l'aboi !

Je rêve d'une Afrique avec des responsables politiques conscients, honnêtes ayant le souci du bienfait de leur population respective. Je rêve que l'Afrique ne soit plus désormais synonyme de désespoirs, de tragédies et de mendicité. Je rêve d'une Afrique où pour les jeune l'avenir ne soit pas seulement le désespoir et l'immigration. Je rêve d'une Afrique où pour nos jeunes le seul horizon ne soit pas un voyage clandestin périlleux à travers les dunes du Sahara et ses passeurs dévoyés et inhumains. Je rêve d'une Afrique dans laquelle des milliers de jeunes ne songeront plus à traverser à leurs risques et périls la méditerranée qui a englouti tant de leurs frères. Je rêve d'une Afrique aussi performante que la Chine avec des cadres bien formés, capables de construire ses propres machines-outils et ses satellites. Je rêve d'une Afrique qui pourra nourrir suffisamment et décemment ses millions de jeunes. Je rêve d'une Afrique débarrassée de l'image tant véhiculée par les mass médias internationaux de ces cohortes d'enfants faméliques et squelettiques avec leur regard désespéré. Je rêve d'une Afrique où le mot noir ne sera plus désormais synonyme de malheur. Je rêve d'une Afrique laborieuse avec des villes bidonvilles où il fait bon de vivre, avec une multitude d'espaces verts. Une Afrique avec une monnaie unique et devenue l'usine du monde et qui essaiera à travers le monde sa façon de vivre, sa sagesse proverbiale et son humanisme ; différente en cela du mode de vie européens où on parque les vieux pour mieux s'en débarrasser, dans des maisons

de retraite. Je rêve d'une Afrique unifiée où chaque habitant du continent ne subira plus le joug d'un régime oppressif et pourra circuler à sa guise, s'établir et travailler sans contraintes dans le pays de son choix. Je rêve d'une Afrique où au lieu de se taper dessus, l'ensemble des pays coopère pour exploiter en commun leur ressources agricoles et minières et leur cours d'eau.

Je rêve d'une Afrique sans problème d'énergie, capable de dompter les énergies renouvelables et dotée de grand barrages hydrauliques irrigant chacune des 5 régions de notre continent. En un mot sans demander la lune, je rêve d'une Afrique métamorphosée, unie, fraternelle avec des citoyens laborieux, libres, riches et heureux. Est-ce trop demander ? Je ne le crois pas mais d'abord discutons avec sincérité, libérons tout le potentiel de notre continent et unissons-nous pour que ce rêve devienne réalité ! En 2050, 4 jeunes sur 10 dans le monde seront africains, ce seul chiffre doit suffire à interpeller nos responsables politiques, il est temps d'amorcer des changements radicaux pour que la face de notre continent change. Et optimiste, reprenant le slogan d'Obama, je dis : « yes we can ! ».



# 8

## The Solution

Precious Verla

*GBHS Bayele Nkwen (Cameroon)*

As Fonyuy sat on the table waiting for his food to be served, he began analyzing the series of events that have been happening in his village and the neighboring villages. He also wondered why his country has been termed the poorest in Africa despite having abundant rich resources. While thinking, he realized that the problems of his village and those of other villages were very common. They had many rich resources but the major problem was unsustainable growth. What could be the cause of this predicament if villages were so rich? Fonyuy wondered. His wife interrupted him when she brought his food to the table. Fonyuy was unable to eat and when his wife realized this, she asked him what the problem was. So Fonyuy asked his wife for help in analyzing the reasons why their villages and country could not achieve a sustainable growth despite having these rich resources.

After deep thoughts, Fonyuy's wife was able to bring in some points which she felt were the reasons for their economic and social backwardness compared to their white colonizers. In the first place, she mentioned the fact that their country was deeply relying on the agricultural sector for growth. When they both analyzed this, they realized that their country was fond of selling their raw material to the white at cheap prices while the white sold their manufactured goods at very high prices. As their eldest child was entering, he gave an example which was very glearing. He explained that; the cocoa produced in the village is sold at very low prices to the whites but after manufacturing it into chocolate it is sold at very high prices to them. They also realized that, the rich resources they have are highly exploited for the whites who colonized them instead of using it for investment in the country. An example is the crude oil which is taken to Europe, manufactured to petrol and sold to them at undesirable prices. Was this going to be the case? When is this going to end? Can't we the blacks seek measures to these problems ourselves?

After all these intensive thinking and analyses, Fonyuy decided to call for an emergency meeting the following day with all the quarter heads in his village. At the meeting, he laid down the problems he had seen and asked them for solutions. Many proposals were made to ensure a sustainable development in the village. At the level of education, they proposed that many technical schools should be made available for the students to improve on their material knowhow rather than grammar schools which are teaching their children the art of cram work. This will encourage industrialization in the country and therefore limiting their level of dependency. This is because their children will have more knowledge in innovating and inventing thereby rendering them industrious. At the political level, they proposed that leaders who were more interested in the well being of the citizens should be elected to power rather than those who were ready to let the country down so as to satisfy their selfish ambitions. This would

ensure the exploitation of resources in a manner that will ensure sustainable development in the country. At the religious level, they encouraged the religious men and women to preach about peace, unity, love and solidarity. So that with such an atmosphere, community work will lead to a sustainable growth.

After this meeting, Fonyuy together with all the villagers put these ideas into practice. Soon the village began to develop. Other villages copied this and soon the country which was termed the poorest was booming. When Fonyuy grew old, he was pleased with not only the sustainable growth in his village but in the country as a whole. On his sick bed, he advised his children to never blame anyone for their problems but always to seek solutions. Looking back at his days, Fonyuy realized that his African continent has given his country a bright future. His children therefore worked harder, with the notion that their Africa was their future.



# 9

## The Africa We Want

Prosper Orhorhaghe

*Jakande Estate Comprehensive Senior College  
(Nigeria)*

Africa as a continent has a great opportunity and potential, because about 70% of its population is under the age of 30. The African youths have the possibility to improve their future and should imperatively take actions that will positively impact both their own generation and future generations to come.

Young Africans must come together to take ownership and responsibility for the existing problems and challenges in order to make Africa a better place to stay; because of the unstable economy in Africa, youth unemployment, mismanagement of government institutions and resources, young Africans are leaving the shores of the continent to other countries to seek for greener pastures. This has led the continent to suffer acute brain drain over the years, as a result of these they are forced to live as second class citizens in other continents instead of making waves in their father land. For the past ten years now it has been said, and I believe that too, that for the continent to be a global powerhouse in the future it requires young people to also rise and drive their agenda, but before we do so, young Africans need to ask themselves what that agenda is and how they are doing to shape it.

With reference to the 2017 edition of Africa development report, by 2050 Africa will be home to over 35 of the 40 youngest countries in the world, with median population of under 25 years of age. This will result in an estimated 10-12 million number of new people joining the labor force each year. With this information it has been stated that the permeable amount of the financial interest must go into human development to develop socio-economic interest. This now leaves young Africans with a question, what is our plan for the future? And what are we doing concretely to shape that plan?

With the upcoming Fourth Industrial Revolution before us, the world is changing due to the influence of technological advancement across the globe. For us to be able to keep abreast of such tendencies, our educational institutions need to update their curriculum in order to align themselves in the direction in which the world and Africa are going. As an advocate for the sustainable development goals, I am trying to impact my community in Nigeria by orientating my peers and adults in my community and school in order to create and seek knowledge on how we can curb climate change problems and make our environment a better and a safe place for us to live. But if I am the only one, it is not going to be enough.

With the report gotten from African economic outlook 2017 report, Africa's growing population is expected to generate a rise in consumers spending from \$680 billion in 2005 to \$2.2 trillion by 2030. Though Africa still lags behind in forms of technological advancements and other aspects of life, we as a continent

have a great opportunity for innovative ideas to be put in place regarding the rapid increase in the continent's population.

Even though it is mostly up to our governments to create a right environment to encourage these ideas and for young entrepreneurs to be supported in order to become large corporations, I believe the African youths of today can imbibe the culture of collaborating, influencing, managing and thinking collectively to create solutions to problem in all its forms everywhere.

Finally, for us to achieve the Africa we want we must work hard in meeting the expectations of Agenda 2063 together, as this agenda does gear towards increasing investment in key infrastructures, in improved agriculture practices and better management of our natural resources as well as access to quality health and education. This will enable Africans to unlock their full potential and with a well-educated society and empowered people, all African communities will thrive as Africans to actively participate in decision making to promote good governance, democracy, respect for human right and a right to live in a stable and peaceful societies, because a peaceful and secured Africa will provide the right environment we desire for growth and development, productive employment and decent work for all. We can build more world class infrastructure, sustain industrialization and foster innovation as we invest in the blue ocean economy of our dear continent.





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## My Africa, My Future in the face of COVID-19

Chavinee Ramloll

*Manilall Doctor SSS (Mauritius)*

Since their liberation from colonial hands, many African countries have economically and socially moved up the ladder of progress. Although colonialism drained our resources out of the continent, it somehow helped shape the political structure of African colonies and inculcated in us a drive to fight for our identity and independence. Today, many African countries have undergone progress, but we still have to juggle with the remnants of colonisation which tend to hinder our development. With the Covid-19 pandemic currently impacting economic growth and vaccination being mostly accessible to the elites, the continent seems to be faced with yet another major challenge. As a young Mauritian girl, I reflect on themes such as Education, Economy and Women Participation which are the three main pillars that should be at the centre when discussing the future of Africa. While placing them in light of the current pandemic, I articulate my views on how they are important in guaranteeing the continent a promising future.

### Education:

As a young African, it would be encouraging to witness the field of education undergoing optimistic transformation. At the dawn of independence, Africa's primary school enrolment rate was above 80% on average, with the continent recording some of the biggest increases in the elementary school globally in the last few decades. Yet, despite the successes in primary school enrolment, inequalities and inefficiencies remain in this sector. Hence, since young people are the ones who will shape our future political and economic arenas, it is vital that both girls and boys acquire the same academic knowledge with better resources for a better future.

Moreover, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many children have received no formal education for months across the continent due to school closures. Education is fundamental and is the key to success. It is essential for governments to ensure that all students have access to education when schools re-open. At a time when the whole world is embracing virtual classrooms, parts of the African continent remain untouched by technology. Therefore, as part their Covid-19 response packages, governments should invest more in internet-related facilities and provide financial support to offset technology-related expenses for children whose families suffered economic hardship. In countries where girls' enrolment is lower than boys, governments should prioritise girls' education via online platforms and ensure that not only male participation is favored.

### Economy:

African countries are more vulnerable to the effects of the pandemic than other countries as they tend to have weaker health and social safety nets. Many African countries encounter difficulties in mobilizing resources necessary to fight the pandemic. In addition, it is likely that containment measures will have a greater economic effect on the population due to the large proportion of people working in the informal sector. To be able to tackle the issue, it has become more than ever important for African countries to address corruption. In such trying times, many officials and government members are seizing the opportunity to allocate exorbitant contracts or usurp wealth in the name of promulgating steps to address the pandemic.

Debt vulnerability in some African countries has become untenable, requiring urgent action because they divert much-needed resources from growth-enhancing initiatives. A healthy and educated working age population is the cornerstone of sustained and inclusive economic success and we should definitely educate our youth on the latter. My country, Mauritius, is a tourism-dependent country. The country is bearing the negative impacts caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and has to live through the deterioration of tourism on the island. Hence, for the economy of Mauritius to gain momentum again, young employees should be trained on methods to prevent the propagation of the virus. The aim is to target that part of the population, which is relatively literate, and to apply precautionary measures at workplaces. This will not only help contain the spread of Covid-19 but also inspire others to follow suit. The objective should be to make the country as Covid-19-safe as possible so as to enable local people to carry out their daily businesses, without further plunging into poverty or depression. In this way, despite the dire situation, Mauritius' economy can shift towards a better future. Besides, the country has shown enough efforts to demarcate itself in the way in which it has handled the pandemic. It is something from which the whole African continent can draw lessons.

### **Women Participation:**

Female participation in all fields has long been overlooked throughout the African continent. As a girl, I feel that I am not as marginalised as women in the previous generations. However, even if women are responsible for 60% of work done globally, they earn just 10% worth income and property. Statistics show that in Africa, 70% of women are excluded financially. The continent has a US\$ 42 billion financing gap between men and women. Women work for hours and get paid less. My dream is to live in a world where women are fully able take stand for themselves and articulate their aspirations. If both genders, that is, women and men contribute to the economy together, it will indeed drive the continent on the path of progress and equality. Non-discriminatory education and labor laws which favour equal participation of both males and females are essential to achieving this aim.

### **Conclusion:**

Nelson Mandela has rightly pointed out: "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead." Hence, as a young girl, I wish to become the torch-bearer of positive change in our society and influence African youngsters to aspire for a future in which each of them contribute in enhancing Education, the Economy and Women Participation throughout the continent. If this point of view is shared by all young Africans, our future can only be prosperous.

# #YAWC21

## Jury's Commendations

**Disclaimer** – *The following essay entries have not been altered in any way, they reflect the original views of the authors*



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## Afrika Ya Kesho

Githungo Nevil Mwangi

*Iruri Secondary School (Kenya)*

Afrika kama bara ina uwezo wa kuendelea mbele na kung'aa kama bara nyinginezo duniani. Ili hili liweze kuafikiwa lazima tuiweke mikakati mwafaka ambayo itaongozwa na vijana. Kufikia mwaka wa 2050 inatarajiwa kwamba vijana wa Afrika ndio ambao watakuwa wengi zaidi kote duniani. Ningependa kupendekeza mambo ambayo natumai kwamba yatatiliwa maanani na kuwekwa kwenye mipangilio ya kila taifa Afrika kuhakikisha kwamba malengo haya yameafikiwa kiujumla.

Kwanza, ningependekeza kwamba masomo ya afya na matibabu mwafaka kuwekwa kwenye mitaala ya shule za upili. Hili litahakikisha kwamba wanafunzi wanapata ujuzi wa kukabiliana na baadhi ya magonjwa na ajali amabazo hutokea ghafla na kupelekea kufa kwa wagonjwa kabla ya wao kufikia hospitalini. Kijumla hili litapunguza idadi ya vifo amabvyo vinawaangamiza vijana wengi ambao tunawategemea katika kuendeleza bara letu mbele.

Uwekezaji katika maswala ya afya. Hili litahakikisha kwamba idadi ya hospitali pamoja na zahanati zitakwenda juu mitaani pamoja na mashinani. Idadi ya ambulensi pia itakwenda juu. Usafirishaji wa wagonjwa kwa kupitia ndege pia ni faida nyingineyo ambayo inatarajiwa tukiwekeza katika afya. Kwa kuangazia faida hizi tutaweza kuiokoa mioyo mingi mno na kwa upande wa uzalishaji uchumi, Uchumi wa Afrika utakua kwa kiwango cha juu zaidi.

Napendekeza pia kuwa Serikali za Afrika zitenge kiwango cha juu cha fedha ambazo zitatumika kujenga viwanda, ambavyo vitatumika kutengeneza dawa kwa matumizi ya hospitalini na vyo vya utafiti ambavyo vitaongezeka. Nani ambaye hangependa kuiona Afrika ambayo inaweza kutafiti magonjwa ambayo yanaathiri wananchi wake? Magonjwa yataweza kutambuliwa kwa haraka na kutibiwa kabla hayajaathiri watu wengi na kusababisha janga.

Kozi ya Udaktari ina gharama ya juu sana katika vyo vyote kote barani Afrika. Napendekeza serikali zipunguze gharama hizi ili kuhakikisha kuwa vijana wengi ambao wanahitimu wanapata fursa ya kuisoma kozi hii. Mwishowe tutapata kwamba tuna madaktari wa kutosha kukabiliana na upungufu wa madaktari katika bara hili. Serikali za Afrika zihakikishe kwamba vifaa vinavyohitajika wakati wa kusoma kozi hizi vipo na vinafanya kazi kwa usawa.

Ni pendekezo langu pia kuwa serikali iongeze mishahara ambayo inawapa madaktari na wafanyakazi wote wa hospitalini. Hili lina faida mbili. Kwanza litahakikisha kuwa madaktari na wafanyakazi wa hospitalini wanapata motisha wa kufanya kazi na Pili idadi wa madaktari wanaotorokea nchi za ng'ambo kutafuta pesa itapungua. Tutakuwa na madaktari wa kutosha kukabiliana na matitizo ya magonjwa yanayolivuta bara hili letu nyuma.

Usawa wa kijinsia ni swala lingine ambalo ningependa liangaziwe kwa undani. Kwa muda mrefu wanawake wamedunishwa kwa njia nyingi mno kwenye bara letu la Afrika. Wanawake wana uwezo sawia au hata zaidi ikilinganishwa na wanaume. Tunafaa kuhakikisha kuwa tunawapa wanawake nafasi sawa kwa njia zifuatazo;

Katika sekta ya uajiri tunafaa kuwapa watu wote nafasi sawa. Wanawake wanakisiwa kutokuwa na uwezo wa juu kama wanaume,swala ambalo si ukweli hata kidogo.Wanawake wapewe nafasi sawa za kupata kazi. Mishahara yao pia iwe sawa kulingana na uwezo walio nao. Wapewe fursa ya kuendeleza ujuzi wao kwenye sekta ambazo wanafanya kazi na kama wanataka kuondoka wasizuiliwe bali waruhusiwe.

Kwenye Afrika ya kesho ningependa kuwaona wanawake wakiingia kwenye sekta za uwekezaji. Sekta hizi kwa muda mrefu zimewachiwa wanaume kwa misingi duni eti wanawake hawawezi kukimu uwekezaji. Wanawake ni wakujifungua watoto tu na kubaki pale nyumbani?Uwezo na maoni mazuri walio nao yatakwenda wapi?Wanawake wapewe fursa za kuanzisha biashara zao na serikali zitenge pesa za kuwekeza kwenye wanawake amabao wataweza kuwaajili vijana wengi na kupunguza tatizo la ukosefu wa kazi kwenye bara hili la Afrika.

Maamuzi mengi ya kuendeleza mataifa ya Afrika hupitishwa kwenye bunge. Asilimia kubwa ya bunge za Kiafrika zimetawaliwa na wanaume. Tuwape wanawake nafasi nao wachaguliwe waingie kwenye bunge au hata uongozi mkuu wa taifa wapeleke gurudumu la maendeleo mbele. Tukibadili dhana hii ya uongozi wa wanaume tutapata fursa ya kuchagua watu wenye nia ya kuendeleza bara na wala sio nia ya kujiendeleza wao binafsi .

Elimu ya wasichana hadi viwango vya juu ni swala ambalo ningependa lipewe kipaumbele. Jameni, wasichana wasiozwe wakiwa wachanga. Tuwape fursa ya kusoma hadi pale ambapo watakuwa katika nafasi ya kupata kazi za kujitegemea kulingana na kozi zao. Serikali zihakikishe kwamba vijana wote wanapata elimu kwani kesho ya bara hili inategemea kila mmoja wetu.

Naishukuru sana ECOSOCC kwa fursa hii na natarajia kuwa mapendekezo haya yangu yatatiliwa maanani ili kuijenga Afrika itakayopendeza.



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## Minha África, Meu Futuro

Manasés Evaristo Ucuahamba  
Colégio Anaximandro ( Angola)

A África que temos e a África que queremos, ambas são minhas: vamos construir. Não escolhemos aonde nascer, a vida é feita de vários acasos, e nascer em África, foi o maior e melhor acaso da minha vida. África, berço da humanidade, o alfa, e prevejo nela o ômega, ou seja, o fim. Actualmente, África, é o continente mais jovem do mundo, o que representa, face aos seus mais variados problemas, uma luz no fundo do túnel no que o desenvolvimento diz respeito. África ainda é um continente subdesenvolvido, isso é refletido na pobreza extrema de muitos filhos seus, desemprego no seio da juventude, fome, guerra nalgumas regiões, sistema sanitário em estado ainda debilitado e sem capacidade de reposta aos desafios impostos, o acesso à educação ainda com muito por se fazer, degradando cada vez mais o estado social dos seus cidadãos.

África também é palco de uma imensa e maravilhosa diversidade cultural, manifestada nas suas formas específicas de vestir, festejar e na língua. Ainda, é possui um mosaico de imensa escala no que os recursos naturais dizem respeito.

África só será e terá o futuro que todos nós, africanos sobretudo, queremos, se mais uma vez se afirmar e reconhecer sua grandeza, para usufruir de sua independência. Para isso, é também conveniente que se engajemos no âmbito daquelas que são as agendas de ação global, mormente à Agenda 2030 das Nações Unidas, essencialmente à Agenda 2063 “Agenda For Africa”, para que nestes prazos, realmente ninguém fique para trás. O futuro que queremos para África, por sinal, o Meu Futuro para Minha África, só serão alcançáveis se se combater de forma acérrima as causas dos males que nos enfermam: guerras, corrupção, ganância, roubo, etc. Depois disso, um forte e grande investimento na Educação, para que todos os jovens e crianças e adultos sejam instruídos. Na sequência, a par do investimento na educação, segue-se um investimento no sector da Saúde. África faz-se com homens e mulheres, então, é hora de se colocar mais mulheres em posições de altos escalões e com poder de decisão. É, igualmente, necessário que as mulheres sejam tidas e achadas, principalmente no campo político.

Os jovens são peças fundamentais para o Meu Futuro na Minha África. É necessário que a estes sejam dado espaço e oportunidade. E não se deveria falar de jovens sem emprego, por tanto, o empreendedorismo, deve ser visto como solução para que mais jovem estejam empregados. Sectores como turismo e hotelaria e agricultura com a inclusão das novas tecnologias de informação e comunicação, dariam numa boa fonte de renda, a semelhança de outros cantos do mundo, uma vez que temos vastas extensões de terras aráveis e vários pontos turísticos por explorar. Os 55 países de África, agora com a zona de comércio livre, devem intensificar as trocas comerciais; para que isto seja um facto, para além das discussões diplomáticas que podem culminar exatamente com as isenções de vistos e outros impostos que se pressupõem em entraves nas trocas comerciais, as ligações terrestres e aquáticas deveriam ser fortemente exploradas, dando aqui ênfase na construção de infraestruturas sustentáveis.

Somos África, somos o Futuro. Temos tudo para dar certo. O poder político detém, na prática, o poder de decisão dos caminhos de (quase) todos os países africanos, portanto, estes não devem ser teimosamente cegos aos tempos e surdos as opiniões da Sociedade Civil.

A Sociedade Civil, deve se constituir num parceiro direito dos governantes, na formulação, implementação e/ou materialização de políticas públicas. Um dos aspectos muito importante no desenvolvimento de qualquer nação é a inclusão, e em África, nenhum africano deve se sentir estrangeiro; do mais necessitado ao mais abastecido. Definitivamente, o nosso futuro, em que só reinará a inclusão e a harmonia, fará com que, a violência e os conflitos conheçam definitivamente o seu fim, pois as diferenças, serão respeitadas. E, não se fala de desenvolvimento com um povo em pobreza extrema e com fome, e como faz referência o primeiro e segundo objectivo de desenvolvimento sustentável, “Erradicar a pobreza” e “Erradicar a Fome”, respectivamente, devemos encarar com elevado nível de preocupação, ainda mais nesta década 2020 - 2030, Década de Ação, no sentido de que seja um facto. A melhor forma de se combater a fome é com a produção de alimentos localmente, e não há fonte melhor que a terra, portanto, a agricultura deve desempenhar o seu papel e que seja uma prioridade nos investimentos do governo; a par disso, a sua industrialização, para haver proveito dos seus derivados. Só com a industrialização dos produtos agrícolas, estaríamos automaticamente a criar e a promover vários postos de trabalho para os jovens, pois não se combate à pobreza sem que haja emprego para àqueles que são a maioria. É necessário que nessa luta da criação de postos de trabalho e fomento à agricultura industrializada, esteja também alinhado às infraestruturas para facilitar também o seu escoamento dos campos para as cidades, bem como a inclusão digital, pois o mundo está cada vez mais digital, e é necessário acompanhar esta dinâmica, e nesta, fomentar o empreendedorismo.

É também necessário que se crie em paralelo, uma vaga de jovens Líderes habilitados, competentes, resilientes e compromissados com África. A Agenda 2030 e os seus 17ODS e a Agenda 2063 “For Africa” devem ser encaradas como oportunidades de dar a volta por cima. Nesta empreitada, a União Africana, enquanto plataforma congregadora dos países de África, deve assumir o seu papel de mediador e impulsionadora para que estas metas sejam alcançadas. Todos esses pontos, interligados e interdependentes, estaríamos rumando à Minha África, Meu Futuro;

Aspiramos uma África em que justiça impera, onde o calar das armas sejam efetivas, onde os jovens não precisam emigrar por péssimas condições de vida por cá; desejamos que a fome não seja a principal causa de morte, que a desnutrição não seja tão comum; a que educação seja de qualidade, equitativa e acessível; que as mulheres também tenham espaço, vez e voz; queremos uma África próspera e desenvolvida. SOMOS O FUTURO!



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## The Africa of My Dreams: Musings of a 9-year-Old

Okeoma-Ihunwo P. Amarachi

*Word of Faith Secondary School (Nigeria)*

Dear President Felix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo,

Africa is a wonderful place. There are over 54 countries in Africa such as Nigeria, Ghana, Egypt, and many more. These countries host beautiful cities like Lagos, Accra, Johannesburg, Cairo, and Nairobi. The continent, in its finest, is rich in culture and mineral resources but, unfortunately, is disadvantaged in many areas.

### The Challenge

In 2020, I watched in the news how millions of people died across the globe because of the COVID-19 pandemic. My teachers tell me it is worse when most African countries have to rely on the western countries for a solution—the vaccine. The COVID-19 pandemic showed us that there is trouble in our health care sector. I have read in my Basic Science textbook how some parts of Africa still suffer avoidable health challenges like yellow fever and meningitis because there are not enough hospitals. My teachers say hospitals in towns and cities are asking for help because of bad infrastructures, inadequate medical equipment, and incompetent medical professionals. That this is why the rich travel abroad for medical treatment and the poor are left to fate.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene practices are also low in many African countries. Bottles, rubber, plastic wastes, nylons, cartons, and papers are found lying in streets and in major roads in cities. This causes blockage of drainage systems, death of living things in water, and also pose health problems to humans and animals like malaria.

In mineral-rich countries like Nigeria, my country, where crude oil is mined in fields and transported to refineries, the refining capacity is low. The Nigerian government, for instance, transports crude oil to countries in the western world for refining. This increases government expenditure. Millions of dollars are lost due to gas flaring. Humans, plants, and animals suffer environmental issues like flooding which results from unchecked pollution from oil and gas exploration.

The world has gone digital. I know this because I have been able to learn a few information and communication technology (ICT) skills online from Harvard University from the comfort of my home in Warri, Nigeria. But we still have a long way to go because when I tell my classmates in school about the digital skills I have acquired or am learning and they look at me as if I am saying something strange. I think we children still have a lot to learn in school.

Yet, child education is not universal. I see children my age range looking hungry and walking long distances to hawk goods when I am going to or returning from school. My parents and teachers at school tell me that many children are unable to go to school because their parents/guardians do not have the capacity to pay their tuition fees. This is very sad.

### The Africa of My Dreams

Sir, I am 9 years old and it is my dream to see a transformed Africa. I believe that children are the future leaders of tomorrow, but we can start to put in the work today.



And I know that everyone, including the girl child like me, has a role to play. As I read about the changing roles of women in Africa, I am inspired to also be a woman leader when I grow up. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo Iweala of Nigeria, and my mother, Edna Chizoba Okeoma-Ihunwo, who works hard at her workplace to complement my father's efforts in raising me and my siblings, are women who inspire me. I understand these women have one thing in common: good education. Good education is the first step in solving some of the challenges about Africa I listed above. With free education in government schools, every child can be better equipped to plan his future. Digital learning would become popular amongst children at all levels.

If I am elected a female President like Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was, I would help to fight for gender equality. My mother is proof that what a man can do a woman can also do—and, maybe, even better. And men, too, should not be ashamed to play the role of teachers to children. When I was six, my father exposed my immediate younger brother and I to the computer system. He started by teaching us the basic operations of a computer. I am nine now but I am proficient in over 10 programming languages, including JSON, Linux, JavaScript, jQuery, and Python. African men need to understand that children do not have much to worry about. That if they teach their child one step at a time, from foundation to foundation, as my father is doing with me, the child will catch the learnings easily and progress more.

In my future, mineral-rich countries like my country would have working refineries to refine mineral resources. Wasteful practices like gas flaring would be history, as we would have gas plants that can convert the gas to electricity and domestic gas.

Germs are everywhere, but practicing cleanliness would help to reduce many diseases. I see a new Africa where there would be no more malaria because all gutters are clean and recycle bins are available on streets for trashing of nylons and plastics. An Africa where my children will not read only about diseases and sickness but also read about those poor people who did not die because of the good doctors, nurses, and hospitals that we Africans have.

Sir, the future of my great continent, Africa, is bright. I want to make Africa proud by finding solutions to our problems. I know that you, my parents, and the rest of Africa would be proud if I secure scholarships on merit to attend the best schools and learn from the best teachers. If other children have this same opportunity, Africa's future is guaranteed. I only pray that leaders of the African continent take a chance on us African children and believe we are worth it all.

Sincerely,  
Princess Amarachi Okeoma-Ihunwo.

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