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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

REFORMS AS THE PATHWAY TO INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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Abstract

The essence of this paper is to interrogate reforms as a potent element in African integration drive. It x-rays Africa's integration experiences and the efforts of African states to initiate reforms for integration at the regional level. While the study employed a historical narrative approach for data collection, it utilizes primary sources mainly archival materials obtained from the Council of Europe archives and secondary sources such as books, journal articles and internet sources, as well as content data analysis. This paper argues that because of the dynamics of the global system, Africa continues to grapple with emerging trends and challenges within the context of regional conflicts, economic and political quagmire, as well as digitalization necessitates African integration process to align with the changing realities of global best practices and the acceleration of democratic culture. The expansion of trade liberalization across the globe has made it necessary that reforms be taken seriously in the process of building integrative institutions in Africa.

Keywords: Africa, Development, Reforms, Pathway, Integration.

INTRODUCTION

The search for development strategies in the post-independent period had provoked integration process for socio-economic and political advancement of the African continent. Accelerated growth through integration becomes necessary due to the horrendous historical experiences that setback developmental trajectories in Africa. Thus, Africa faces an economic downturn and is finding a workable development model. The integration strategy appears drives growth and development, as well as pillar of continental unity. It's because integration is meant to fast-track economic advancement in Third World nations, especially to boost commerce and wellbeing of the citizenry. Similarly, Africa's quagmire in the global economy is pushing her to take concrete steps to initiate a modest economic

collaboration as part of enhancing the unity of Africa. Therefore, integration is indispensable for the transformation and growth of African economies and for her incorporation into the orbit of the global economy. African integration was meant to unite African nations without ideological differences towards directing their efforts and energy to continental growth and development that is in pair with the developed parts of the world.

Hence, "Integration is at the foundation of Africa's future. A future that will be forged by its citizens and growing young population; a future of opportunities with a marketplace of fifty-four countries and growing consumer purchasing power; and a future where Africa is open for business with the rest of the world, competing in higher value goods and services." African efforts at integration are reinforced by increasing volume of common dominions and meeting needs of the people economically and politically. The philosophical underpinning of the African integration is the pursuit of development across all sectors of national economies. African integration is for Africans taking charge of their own affairs. The fact that African States have continued to be susceptible; profound cooperation is the only approach to African development, firmness and significance in an inclusive global system. Although regional integration, however, is not an end in and of itself. Through integration, African nations are propelled to tackle problems of growth confronting them; the utmost grave is to attain sustainable development. To surge ownership and the amount of closeness of African people, regional integration paved the way for productive forces at work.

Integration is either at the sub-regional or at the continental level. In fact, effective regional cooperation needs active administration by States to hasten the course of growth. Therefore, integration initiatives are main preoccupation of groups of states conscious of their mutual personalities, scope and separate flaws. Meanwhile, African states are slow to advancement and fragment the strong sagacity of continental harmony articulated by Pan-Africanist ideologies; it is expected that the continent should nurture a set of cooperation schemes aimed at reuniting state and continental agendas owing to the prevailing perplexing anxieties and prospects in Africa.

Regional integration has both political costs and benefits. Integration ventures boost efficient exchange of goods and services as the basis of industrial development and the establishment of a regional marketplace. Regional integration increases trade through the incorporation of lesser markets, thus supporting economies of weighbridge and enhances competitiveness, leading to smaller prices and an extended provision of imports and amenities. Thus, partnership among regional allies is indispensable to guarantee supportable administration.ⁱ African integration is the firm confirmation that there is rival global commercial scheme, subjugated by world powers such as the United States and China as well as influential regional commercial entities, meaning that African countries ought to redirect their resources for sustainable development ventures.

The pursuit of the integration process within the above rationales has been hindered by several challenges bedeviling the continent such as political instability, military coup d'état and wars have slowdown the wellbeing, learning, public services, and integrity and safety and communal structures of African nations. That is why reforms are important towards ensuring that the goals and objectives of Africa's



integration are fully realized. Therefore, for regional cooperation to be effective organizational change is required on the continent via the acceptance of a realistic method to integration. Reform packages can tackle these quagmires through cooperation and the formulation of national frameworks.

This paper is structured into three segments to drive home the gains of reforms as the pathway to integration and development such as the European Union (EU), among others. The first segment analysis various integration experiments in Africa while second discusses reforms as a panacea to an effective integration in Africa. And the third segment takes a snapshot of journey thus far.

African Integration and Experimentation: A Historical Analysis

By the late 19th century, most parts of Africa were colonized by European powers. The urgency to serve the commercial interests of these external forces was the major reason for the European colonial occupation of Africa. As a result, Africa was divided and different ethnic nationalities, with wide-ranging experiences and values were fused into one administrative unit called nations. This created divisions and cultural allegiances within and among the states with greater obstacles to national integration across the continent. Pan-Africanism as a freedom association in the 1950s intensified the awareness for African unity. Pan-African concepts ran from the practices of a numerous inhabitants of African origin who saw themselves either materially through denial or bondage or communally, economically, politically and mentally through colonization, to have missed their fatherland. There was assent by African leaders that the unity of African countries has to be stimulated for the overall freedom of Africa. However, the campaign for African unity was championed by African leaders like Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Sekou Toure of Guinea who promoted the political unification of the African continent as a strategic variable in the fight for the cultural and social advancement of Africa.

During the 1950s, the course of integration that was let loose in Europe via the Treaty of Rome in 1957 swayed the campaign for Africa's integration. France had pioneered the African integration in the 1950s. While leading the creation of the European Economic Community (EEC), France persuaded other European allies to offer technical support, and commercial favorites to its previous colonies under the Yaounde Agreements of 1963 and 1969. Together with these treaties, France spurred ideas amongst its past colonies for the development of novel regional partnerships like the Union Douaniere de L'Afrique de l'Ouest (UDEAO) and the Union et Africaine et Malgache de Cooperation Economique (OCAM). Significantly, French backed regional loyalty in the post-colonial era resulted to rival interest between Kwame Nkrumah and Sekou Toure.

They had canvassed for native methods to African integration. While championing Pan-Africanist principles, Nkrumah advocates that like the EEC such formation would dash hopes of a continental integration. Rather, Nkrumah opted for Continental Union Government to curb colonial excesses, encourage political unification by lessening control, and assist economic advancement. Some identifiable efforts at the continental level were made to achieve inter-African cooperation and unity. These were largely political and they concerned the activities of the Casablanca powers, Brazzaville powers and Monrovia powers of African states, and ultimately the formation and role of the OAU.



The Organization of African Unity (now African Union) creation in 1963 provoked the African States to choose continental organization for political cooperation hinged on sovereignty and territorial integrity for strategic socioeconomic development. The main initiators of the OAU were all enthused by the Pan-Africanist principles of supporting collaboration through accord and political harmonization.ⁱⁱ The 1980 OAU Lagos Plan of Action was articulated in retort to acute problems confronted by the African States and supported the policy of communal resourcefulness, sub-regional and regional collaboration. The idea, however, did not meet global best practices to amend the inadequacies of the LPA and discourse growing matters in the continent, African leaders sign up the Abuja Treaty launching an African Economic Community (AEC) in 1991.

Amid these energies was the African Leadership Forum (ALF) structured by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo to restructure the OAU philosophies to redirect varying necessities and primacies. In the 1990s, the ALF enunciated go-getting plans under the heading of the Conference on Security, Stability, and Development Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) to direct prospects of continental institution-building. The outbreak of conflicts in Liberia, Somalia, and Sierra Leone reinforced the drive for institutional reforms to enhance African ability to mediate in internal wars. Giving the ineffectiveness of the OAU on the long run to achieve its goals and objectives it was now ripe for Africa to board a change to sturdier harmony. As a last resort, African leaders endorsed the Sirte Declaration, which accepted the change of the OAU into an African Union (AU). The Sirte proclamation was the forerunner to long talks among African leaders about the institutions that would undergird the AU.

Following years of discussions, African leaders agreed on the Constitutive Act of the AU in Durban, South Africa in July 2002. Accordingly, building on the declaration and decision of Algiers, the 4th Extraordinary Summit of our organization in Sirte, Libya in September 1999, took a number of additional step to reinforce continental unity addressing the political and economic challenges. Specifically, they accepted to launch an African Union in tandem with the decisive purposes of the OAU and the necessary requirements of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community and to quicken the procedure of applying the Treaty.

Relying on the long-standing aim of assisting to nurture African economic integration, the AU Constitutive Act promised to leverage on the preceding Abuja Treaty to use sub-regional organizations for the conception of an African Economic Community (AEC). Furthermore, accentuating Africa's resolve for growth and integration, the continental strategic framework and vision for Africa's renewal, the New Partnership for African Economic Development (NEPAD), was formed in 2002. Since its establishment, the AU has concentrated on handling numerous wars on the continent mainly in Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Somali, Sudan, and Togo.

Besides continental organization established to achieve the dream of uniting Africans for optimal growth and development there were equally regional associations formed to attain the same goal in line with regional peculiarities. ECOWAS was formed in 1975 by the Treaty of Lagos (Nigeria) and it is composed of fifteen Francophone and Anglophone States. These are Benin; Burkina Faso; Cape

Verde; Côte d'Ivoire; Gambia; Ghana; Guinea; Guinea-Bissau; Liberia; Mali; Niger; Nigeria; Senegal; Sierra Leone and Togo. ECOWAS aims are to build a big West African marketplace via liberal commerce and a financial unification. Based on these goals, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), a sub-regional bloc of ECOWAS, was created in 1994 under the Treaty of Dakar (Senegal). This is an alliance encompassing eight West African nations that share the same currency, the CFA franc, and French as an official language; these are Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo and Guinea-Bissau. WAEMU's objective is to encourage regional economic integration and a common market. Since its creation, ECOWAS has been at the forefront of instituting reforms across different areas of human endeavor in West Africa. This became important following the changing socioeconomic, political and security landscape of the sub-region.

The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) was created in 1980 by nine Member-states, namely, Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In 1992, SADCC was exchanged by the Southern African Development Community in Windhoek (Namibia) with the adoption of the nine SADCC pioneer members and newly independent Namibia. South Africa entered later after apartheid in 1994 followed by other members like Mauritius, Comoros, DR Congo, Madagascar and Seychelles. Originally, SADCC was created to diminish economic dependency on South Africa and assemble funds to execute intra and interstate programs. Later, SADC's objectives were restructured to include economic development, peace and security, poverty reduction and improving the standard and excellence of life of the people of Southern Africa.

Later, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) was launched in 1994 under the Treaty of Lilongwe (Malawi). This treaty substituted the Preferential Trade Area of Southern and Eastern Africa which existed since 1981. COMESA is a union of 19 countries mainly from Eastern and Southern Africa; namely Burundi, Comoros, DR Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The alliance was founded to eliminate hindrances to liberal market between associates and collaborate to increase its natural and human resources. While the regional economic alliances were formed to fast track continued economic expansion among member countries, they also deal with the resolution of conflicts and other security matters for peace and security are an essential precondition to stability and economic development.

Though, African governments never jettisoned political determination to attain continental integration objectives, cooperation continued to be a burning issue of their development agendas at regional and continental levels. In this regard, several African ideas validate the continent's desire in integration issues, as revealed by the formation of NEPAD.ⁱⁱⁱ NEPAD was developed to show the collective vision and commitment of African leaders in their development efforts with its African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) instituted in 2003. APRM tries to address the governance structures of member-states of the AU to strengthen and reform African institutions. APRM has ultimately compelled African countries to execute development with respectable organizations and restructure diverse subdivisions of their economies.



Reforms and African Integration

Integration involves a complex combination of interstate formal processes relating to the formalization of trade agreements and performances, governing instruments, macroeconomic policies, manufacturing and agrarian plans, and countless arrangement and other schemes. Nations and their allies are progressively giving more consideration to national and regional developmental issues, chiefly those connected to health, education, people and the environment. In light of these key priorities reforms and restructuring has become paramount for the economic and political transformation of Africa.

Trade and development of industry reforms is essential in Africa's integrative process. The reorganizations include facilitating access and permitting precincts for both domestic and external companies in the services sectors, encouraging rivalry, coordinating and solidification of rules and engagements, and limiting the movement of expatriate's workers on the continent.

The reason for reforms in these two sectors is because of the staggered nature of trading arrangements and the slow pace at which industries are developing on the continent. Since independence, African states cannot boost viable manufacturing industries compared to other parts of the globe. Inadequate presence of industries in Africa constitutes an obstacle to its developmental projections. However, notwithstanding certain equality of progress in sub-Saharan Africa, the problem to fast-track it persists. Similar to other emerging regions, Africa's economic growth in the past years has not resulted in any substantial fundamental transformation, endangering the continent's prospective development. Amid the absence of vigorous alternative plans, there is slow expansion of the local and regional trade. Therefore, a structural transformative reform that promotes and ensures progress in trade and industries forms part of the direction that African integration is to take for the maximum development of the continent. Structural transformation coupled with trade reforms enhances trade and impacts the growth of the continental economy.

The new thinking is that African integration can pursue reforms in trade and industries through the promotion of digital technological best practices. Given that no aspect of the continental economy could survive without the efficient use of digital technology integrative, processes both at continental and regional levels can strive to achieve maximum reforms by helping national governments to increase the campaign for digital compliance in industries and trade for the efficient production of goods and services. Leading-edge digital know-hows such as artificial intelligence are gradually corroding the relative benefit of small labor-cost regions, including Africa. This thus needs African nations to clinch on these technologies to boost their effectiveness in manufacturing.

With satisfactory assets in connectivity, appropriate improvements, care to plan dialogue and technical support; Africa can be able to fast-track development strategies, letting the digital economy to sway all segments of the economy and society.^{iv} African integration can advance reforms into developing high-technology-intensive supply chains to open the frontier for the growth of Africa. Extra context on the automotive, electronics, artificial intelligence, renewable energy technology and medical device industries and supply chains, as these segments needs spread more



ways to confirm undisrupted admission to dealers and consumers. Africa can deliver such substitute admittance to contributions and mechanisms for these technology-intensive delivery fetters. The motorized manufacturing is chiefly susceptible to resource manacle disturbances as a result of instability on the continent. Car manufacturing is controlled by South Africa, Morocco, Algeria and Egypt in that order, while other African countries have comparatively minor meeting shrubberies with nominal significance in accumulation to Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mozambique and Namibia. While African countries persist mainly reliant on the delivering of motor parts from other countries out of Africa, there is still greater optimism for stronger continental integration for accelerated economic growth.

Another important area that requires consistent reforms is the healthcare sector. Part of the contemporary challenges facing African countries is the outbreak of diseases and other health quagmires made possible by the high rate of poverty and conflicts. Given the fact that many poor families and even the middle class cannot afford access to basic health resources, Africa has experienced an increase in the health crisis across regions. Numerous African Indigenous communities are currently besieged by diseases and sicknesses such as air and water-borne diseases, cholera, monkey-pox, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. Therefore, reforms through strategic investments in healthcare sectors and human capital development are highly required with the view to create a sickness-free African society.

The best health reform in Africa is first, the development and renewal of the primary healthcare systems for poor rural communities and less-earning households across Africa and secondly the building of sophisticated power plants for the production of vaccines for treatment of diseases. The reason for thorough reforms in health sectors is that it goes beyond providing health services that address the drivers of disease but the cause of its capacity to empower people to take charge of their health. Though, progress has been made in Africa in making healthcare and diagnostics available to the people in villages via use of technologies and state-of-the-art results. Nevertheless, changing state health schemes is the greatest way to actualize the worldwide health schemes and health safety. A health structure that is initiated on the ethics of primary healthcare can better guard and assist groups by giving individuals when they are sick and aiding to avert ailments by tackling the outward influences that disturb healthy living. Such a scheme is significant to the long-standing spirit of well-being.

Healthcare sector reform acknowledges that the public and private sectors have distinct but corresponding responsibilities and attempts to utilize their relative benefits. The national government's action in the health sector reform is to establish the idea and way for the health system, plan primacies, and generate strategies to attain its dream. Through the integrative process, African governments come together to harmonies their health reforms towards boosting the provision of medical care to their teeming population. The main feature of the continent's trade is agriculture. It is the main basis of income and explanations for about 25 per cent of the continent's Gross Domestic Product. However, Africa's agricultural output and harvests are between the bottommost in the world. The enormous popular agricultural actions are at the lowest level with plantation scopes outstanding lesser than land holdings. These mainly subsistent smallholder agriculturalists use elementary farm tools and insufficient levels of modern inputs.



The capricious climate changes, varying forms of diseases in produces and animal production, reduction of vestige hydrocarbons and resultant surge in call for biofuels have led to severe plea for land, causing contentious sweeping land procurements on the African continent by external businessmen looking for other assets, as well as food. These problems and openings necessitate Africa to be prudence and develop a methodical policy for restructurings needed to cope with these expected variations in agronomy and food structures.

For instance, countries possess enough farms acreage and increase labor; growing agrarian output is a main precedence to ensure economic advancement in the initial stage of change and restructurings. Land and other influential reforms are particularly important in the early periods to startup food efficiency and make extras to enable essential transformation. Uniting these transformations with public ventures results to breakthroughs, predominantly once properly organized. No sole measure is adequate enough to make advancement. No nation prospers devoid of a mixture of guidelines and public investments that balance every other at a given juncture, especially the arrangement of expenditure on public goods are very essential.

Regional integration and its associated reforms are highly influential way of creating openings for farmers, on the basis of relative benefits and commerce among nations in case of scarcities. Its intention is to expand cross-border commerce whereas allowing African States to bond to healthier guard their stakes on the global stage. For long, in a situation where nations ensure vast business venture in agriculture they have ensured drops in famine and deficiency and surges in efficiency. This includes countries such as Ghana, Togo, Zambia, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Congo, Senegal, Ethiopia and Malawi. To improve investments and yield, intra-African business and regional agro-food value chains, ECOWAS, SADC, ECCAS and EAC have positioned regional farming policies while States frequently rank a countrywide dream of agricultural growth.

Electricity in Africa is a significant area that needs restructuring for enlarged manufacturing of goods plus digital products for efficiency and partaking in indigenous and international marketplaces. Electricity subdivisions globally have proficient market-oriented streamlining with radical, ethical, financial and scientific factors preparatory for many decades. Electricity sector rejig are intended to hosting energy guidelines, legislature, protocols and organizations to undo the control of public services and deliver openings for individual actors to engage in a viable commerce. Two main factors propel the need for power restructuring in Africa are; first is the necessity to draw newfangled ventures to advance the safety of resources and enhance forthcoming essentials. The second aspect is the imperative to advance the fiscal, marketable and methodological act of compulsory public-sector services in search of individual involvement in administration, deals and businesses. Fruitful electricity segment reorganization are to profit the underprivileged by opening entrance to power facilities, enhancements in price efficacy, perfections in further service areas such as health, education and communications; and spurring of economic growth and improvements in public capitals.

The energy transformation program builds innovative institutions for the sector that offer long-standing profits to the people and guarantee a suitable portion of



these aids is carried to customers via charges that imitate the well-organized commercial rate of providing power that replicate customer estimations.

The projections of a great actual charge for the goods offers spurs for consumers to privet this immediate price threat via a fixed-price accelerative bond and provider profits since ratification such an agreement as it has superior amount and income inevitability. African leaders need to speak with one voice and reach for common goals and offer priorities that address physical infrastructure needs like electricity.

The education sector is facing an existential threat in Africa and therefore requires regular reforms. Attacks on schools by non-state actors have necessitated the urgent need for African leaders to leverage their respective integration platforms to rethink education in Africa. They know that education is an important avenue in producing human capital needed to drive growth and development on the continent.

It is in Africa, that, many children leave school without completion. For the sake of provision of quality education, numerous African nations are focusing on the staffing of unreserved and often unqualified tutors. This poses a grave risk to the excellent scholarship, particularly once not attended by on-the-job exercise for educators. African administrations are dedicated to mechanical and professional learning and training, but the area is still weak. Insufficiency is one of the major problems facing education in Africa. Wars and uncertainty cause displacement of the people, plus youngsters in school. In West and Central Africa, terror attacks on students, teachers, and schools and, more generally, the weakening security situation, have resulted in school closures. Besides, security risks generate a change in financing apart from learning to other needs connected to peace and security. Above all, African learning methods are not adequately equipped to safeguard continuousness of scholarship separate from instructive services.

Transportation services are important to Africa's viable growth and so require reforms. Actual movement and apt acquisition of imported facilities need well-built, harmless, protected and reasonable movable network and utilities. But, Africa's carriage scheme has remained underdeveloped equal to the level of other emerging economies in Asia, Europe and America. The greatest problem plaguing the sector is the inability to translate plans and tactics to tangible deed.vi To address this situation, reforms in the transportation sector should take cognizance of full liberalization to attract companies, finance; solidify the governing and execution instruments to make fairness for groundswell venture and utilities and advance direction in the growth and enactment of regional and sub-regional treaties on transportation simplification and liberalization, and understanding of effectual establishments taking suitable orders and staff with extremely inspired and capable resources in the advancement of a safe, reasonable and naturally comprehensive transport system.

The growth of transport sector which sufficiently energies the movement and access to requirements of African nations and, equally, cut greenhouse emissions has been established, although in an incomplete manner, to be likely in Africa. Africa, although not by project, is a good example of the gains of low-motorized transport from an environmental point of view. Because of its low motor-powered carriage unlike other parts of the globe, Africa's role in global greenhouse gas emissions and the associated weather changes affects air pollution, land usage for



transport infrastructure, as well as on fauna and flora. Although, the continent is never in the categories of the giant emitters, if Africa remains on the lane of business-as-usual, its development will slow down significantly within the context of making contribution to the global problem of weather variation.

Security reforms have become a necessity in contemporary Africa and the main basis of continental integration. Outbreak of armed conflict in many African countries and regions amid the proliferation of armed non-state actors has fractured the regional security settings of African States. For instance, the Sahel region has become a hotbed of instability with increasing conflicts between the government forces and armed non-state actors. From Mali to Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad, and Nigeria, the security setting is characterized by the emergence of violent extremist groups that engage in arms trafficking and destruction of lives and properties. These countries are witnessing threats such as terrorist attacks against civilians, local leaders, and national authorities, gender-based violence, and difficulty in accessing healthcare centers, schools, markets, and places of worship.

The Arab Spring that started in North Africa and the Middle East which created sub-regional security quagmires that affected sociopolitical and economic activities of the region caused African States to rethink security along the line of institutional reforms of the sector. The reasons for these rebellions is comparable and principal to regular and occasionally enormous protests and claims for political transformation, as observed in Sudan and Algeria in 2018 and 2019. The war in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Ethiopian-Eritrea debacle has escalated the security situation in Africa. In Nigeria, security challenges have multiplied since 1999 that the country returned to democratic rule. In the North-East region, Boko Haram and Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) conduct deadly attacks on civilian and military targets. The upsurge of militia groups and agitators such as the O'dua People's Congress (OPC), Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in Southeastern and Southwestern Nigeria has created terrible security quagmire in Nigeria with great impact on other West African countries.

The porous security situation in Africa has necessitated the need for reform in the sector. Security sector reforms have become more popular exercises both at the national and regional levels which aim at rebuilding the security structure and operating in tandem with liberal standards and values. Security reform is hinged on a wider transformation in the connection between state security and citizens as governments instead of citizens remain the focus of security in most African states and communal interstellar for the people to involve in security subjects is exceedingly forced. Reforming security institutions is usually considered at the national level. However, the complexity of the security situations in Africa has made it necessary for security reforms to take continental and sub-regional approaches as virtually all African countries are facing one security challenge or another.

The fact is that security sector reform tends to stop countries from failing, degenerating into conflict, and safeguarding the occupations of a country's people. Therefore, the success of the security sector is characteristically based on the capacity of the armed forces to maintain peace and order, and by how efficiently the security sector is managed, supervised, and held responsible by the people.^{vii} The reason why reforms are constantly needed in the security sector is as a result of the



endemic corruption across the security institutions which have diminished the sense of patriotism of protecting the African nations against threats and forces bent on instigating crisis and terrorism. Corruption is visible in the army, police and security services in Africa. Corruption's impact on the effectiveness of security institutions is often detrimental and can threaten peace and breed instability. The central subject of restructuring is the formation of a proficient security sector on a suitable measure, founded on a proper distribution of assets, with an accurate instruction and theme to independent mechanism. A security subdivision thus planned can lead to the expansion of a country.

Finding the correct point, the precise organization and the proper list of responsibilities for the security segment, and assuring a consistently ideal provision of possessions is, therefore, a dominant undertaking of reorganization. Although committed to restructuring Mali, Senegal, Cape Verde, Benin, Ghana, and Niger, confronted with the contending anxieties of a novel radical indulgence need incapable to center on security modifications. Reform-related happenings are magnificent in variable steps in each of these states. This signifies the states Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, and Côte d'Ivoire that are probable given by the end of war that has classically not been exploited.

The AU recognizes prevailing strategic structures on safety segment restructurings, mostly those approaches developed by the United Nations and other multilateral actors. The AU has a distinctive obligation to advance an African oddity to and African possession of SSR practices in war deterrence, mediation, post-conflict rebuilding and peace-building situations in Africa. Thus, the AU should emphasize, composed with other segments, the security subdivision ought to focus on the systematic establishment appraisal once every ten years. Moreover, SSR should be part of a wider modification exertion and a vital component of war stoppage, conciliatory, early recovery, and peace-building and workable growth programs.

Securing the borders is an integral part of reforms in the security sector. There are border management systems that are effective and efficient when it comes to protecting state security but fail to promote trade and human mobility. Borders are mechanism to encourage harmony, safety and permanence and as regions of easing of regional cooperation and viable growth. Within this context, the dogmatic, economic and strategic adoptions of the national governments to dominate must express a boundary system capable to associate national, regional and continental interests. As a result of the adequate political will of the countries involved in running collective boundary zones and common operation of cross-border planned possessions, secessionist groups that drive conflict and territorial instability would be eradicated.

Concluding Remarks

African integration is meant to drive the growth and development of the continent. This is because integration processes thrive based on policy-making that captures reforms as the keystone of governance and leadership provisions. That is why reforms are important towards ensuring that its goals and objectives are fully realized. Reforms inspire new vision and reenergize goal settings for better accomplishment of great tasks. Africa still struggles to catch up with the global



realities. For Africa to be regarded in the global geopolitical arrangement Africa must ensure that institutions are restructured in line with contemporary realities. Therefore, it has become pertinent to maintain robust reforms by taking cognizance of dynamic changes in socioeconomic and political conditions on the continent. The utmost direction that African integration ought to take in these changing and difficult times is that of consistent reforms in different sectors such as security, agro-economics, digital technology, energy, transportation, education, healthcare, poverty and infrastructural.

Many countries across the world are fast moving to digital systems by developing technological tools that can be used to solve problems confronting their societies. Africa cannot be isolated from the ongoing global digital transformation that is becoming a sure driver of integrative efforts and cooperation across regions in Africa. Reforms are meant to facilitate the ease of performing tasks in banking, education, government, corporate services and even in military and security services compliances. Reforms are carried out by institutions saddled with the responsibilities of facilitating the African integration process as these institutions continue to be threatened by the socioeconomic and political realities in the continent. These institutions are to beam their searchlight on the changing socioeconomic situations in Africa to able to identify critical areas that require thorough reforms and policy rejig.

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