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**Issue No. 75**

**September 2004**

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# **NEPAD – A Blueprint For Total Surrender!**

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## NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The author of the article. “NEPAD – A Blueprint for Total Surrender” is Comrade Livingstone Mqotsi, a veteran member of the leadership of the Unity Movement and APDUSA.<sup>1</sup> In keeping with his approach to politics, Comrade Mqotsi does not pull his punches. The present article is hard-hitting and the author has very strong views on this subject.

We fully agree with the contents of the article and the manner of its presentation. In this we are not alone. Increasingly thinking persons are questioning and attacking the basic premises of the thinking and approach behind the “African Renaissance”, NEPAD, the African Union and the Pan African Parliament. The stated intention of those who are propagating this approach is to revolutionize Africa into a continent of states where there will be democracy, accountable governments, ruling parties which are open and transparent; where corruption and dishonesty will not be tolerated and where the government will show care for its vulnerable citizens. While these are all noble objectives with which no civilised person can disagree, the rub comes in when we examine the methods proposed to get the governments of Africa to adopt, and far more importantly, to practise and implement that which has been adopted. There are two main trends. One is to appeal to the sense of pride at the achievements of countries in Africa before the advent of colonialism and imperialism. The other is the prospect of massive investments from imperialist countries (like US, UK, Canada, France and Japan) if the abovementioned objectives are implemented.

This approach and thinking flies in the face of history and the struggles for qualitative social change. It looks as if all the vital lessons learnt have been discarded. But this is not the time and place to deal with those issues. A considered and detailed analysis is necessary. The present article on NEPAD is the commencement of that analysis.

Members of “social movements, trade unions, youth and women’s organisations, academics, Non Governmental Organisations and other popular civil society organisations from the whole of Africa” held a meeting in Port Shepstone, Natal from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2002 and discussed NEPAD in the context of the struggles for Africa’s development and emancipation.

We annex to the main article a summary prepared by Professor Dennis Brutus, of the **“African Civil Society Declaration”** on NEPAD.

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<sup>1</sup> A detailed biographical note on Comrade Mqotsi is to be found in APDUSA VIEWS No.72.

## **New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) – A Blueprint for Total Surrender.**

There is nothing new about this scheme of collaboration, nor is it African. It is, on the contrary, a stratagem devised and designed to dupe the Africans to agree (or seem to agree) to their continent being mortgaged permanently and irrevocably to imperialism. To this end, a carefully and strategically selected section of the African elite has been assembled to spearhead this strategic move by imperialism to reposition itself at this point in world history. The history of Africa is full of examples of zig-zags of opportunism by self-proclaimed leaders of the masses and that is one of the reasons why Africa today is writhing in agony under the crushing effects of underdevelopment, a deliberate policy fostered by imperialism in its own global interests.

The authors of the NEPAD document, a blueprint for the total surrender to international finance capital, ought to know even from their training in bourgeois economics, political science and from common sense, who controls “the resources, technology and human skills”. But they don’t seem to. The entire history of imperialist swindle and rapine seems tragically closed to them.

How can one begin to change “the relationship that underpins” Africa’s plight without first extricating the continent from the clutches of imperialism? These self-appointed saviours of Africa are making a fervent plea for even closer collaboration with the beast that has kept the oppressed people of Africa in bondage for centuries. They are calling for a partnership between leopards and lambs with the horrendous and foreseeable consequences of such a relationship. The claim:

What is required to mobilize these resources (of Africa) and to use them properly is bold and imaginative leadership that is genuinely committed to a sustainable effort of upliftment and poverty eradication as well as a new global partnership based on shared responsibility and mutual interest.

This tawdry claptrap amounts to a naked plea for unmitigated collaboration with global finance capital and rampaging imperialism. The “interest”

referred to here is bourgeois interest, not the interest of the majority of humankind. This appeal by the representatives of the new bourgeoisie signals the total and final betrayal of the social base that brought the authors into prominence. For them it is also a card of admission to the backyards and kitchens of capitalism, thus raising hopes for final induction into the front stoops and parlours of that discredited system of social engineering. They have already secured the smell of this hoped for El Dorado as evinced by the plaudits this “initiative” has won from the enemies of the oppressed with promises of funding for this project. Always, of course, with the caveat that the victims themselves must demonstrate readiness and willingness to pay substantially for their own oppression!

To underscore their role, these latter-day Bandas, Tshombes and Matanzimas etc. make it clear that they as reliable agents, are available and keen to be pressed into service. Gleefully, they claim:

There are already signs of progress and hope. Democratic regimes that are committed to the protection of human rights, people-centred development and market-oriented economics are on the increase .....

These developments are, however, uneven and inadequate and need to be further expedited.

This is a recipe for perpetual dependency on indebtedness to world capitalism, the God-father of these new recruits. The so-called “new relationship of Africa and the international community” is in actual fact a call for the continuation and tightening up of an already existing and unequal relationship between international finance capital and imperialism’s “independent” states in Africa. It is an apology for intensified neocolonialism in the guise of an equal partnership. The analogy here is apartheid’s bantustan system. The authors of this strange project would like to see Africa bound even more tightly to the apron-strings of Japan, America, France, Germany and Britain together with their friends, satellites and institutions in the global economic network.

There is no way one can, even with the magic wand supplied by some illustrious Professor Tikoloshe perhaps, “overcome the development chasm that has widened over centuries of unequal relations” within the ambit of the capitalist system which is predicated upon these ghastly inequalities and whose *raison d’être* is profit. Such a possibility can only be contemplated in the utopian reaches of the mind of these ardent and eloquent advocates of bourgeois reformism. These agents of imperialism (which is what the

authors of this blueprint for capitulation are in effect) are determined to market the African continent abroad. Look at this treacherous euphemism:

(Africa) is an indispensable source base that has served all humanity for so many centuries.

In plain language Africa has been exploited by imperialism in a shameful, criminal way for centuries. And yet these scribes, these apprentices in the fine art of hypocritical diplomacy, would like to see this continent drawn even more tightly into the lethal tentacles of this gargantuan octopus.

The NEPAD document embodies a plea for the total absorption of Africa into the imperialist orbit. The sweeping, sometime grandiose, language in places such as paragraphs 1 and 2 is calculated to disguise a sinister agenda by a pack of collaborators who have the audacity to arrogate to themselves the leadership of the African continent and who are looking for appropriate plaudits from their promoters in the Western capitals. Like their mentors, they are mortally worried about the possible effects of a revolutionary change on the stability of economic globalism under capitalism, and so, ostrich like, they warn their masters:

The continued exclusion of the vast majority of our peoples constitutes a serious threat to global stability.

This is an expression of concern for the safety and security of capitalism. The masses may resort to revolutionary solutions in seeking to improve their lot. Africa, according to this club, must not be consigned to “limited integration into the global economy” if capitalism is to be saved and its hegemony unchallenged. It needs a mask to hid its ghostly visage.

The basic document that is the subject of this analysis is issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs of the ANC Government without any demonstrable evidence of consultation or consent or both of the people either of South Africa in particular or the continent in general. It is titled: A New Initiative: Merger of the Millennium Partnership for African Recovery Programme (MAP) and Omega Plan. Its paragraphs 1 and 2 referred to above read as follows:

- (1)  
This new African initiative is a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place

their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy and body politic. The Programme is anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalised world.

(2)

The poverty and backwardness of Africa stand in stark contrast to the prosperity of the developed world. The continued marginalisation of Africa from the globalisation process and the social exclusion of its peoples constitute a serious threat to global stability.

As I have already said, this document often has recourse to flights of florid language in order to conceal the real motives of its authors and to bemuse the gullible.

Take paragraph 17:

In the new millennium, when humanity is searching for a new way to build a better world, it is critical that we bring to bear the combination of these (African) attributes and the forces of human will to place the continent on a pedestal of equal partnership in advancing human civilization.

This is a glittering generality that is designed to disguise the truth rather than elucidate it. Stripped of its hypocritical verbiage, this is an invitation to Africa to join these personages in a pledge to continued dedication and commitment to collaboration with the forces of imperialism despite the well know ravages and ruination that system has demonstrably wreaked upon millions as indicated in paragraphs 18, 19 and 33 of this unique document:

(18)

The impoverishment of the African continent was accentuated primarily by the legacy of colonialism, the Cold War, the working of the international economic system and the inadequacies of and short comings in the policies pursued by many countries in the post-independence era.

(19)

For centuries, Africa has been integrated into the world economy mainly as suppliers of cheap labour and raw

materials. Of necessity, this has meant the draining of Africa's resources rather than their use for the continent's development. The drive in that period to use the minerals and raw materials to develop manufacturing industries and a highly skilled human base to sustain growth and development was lost. Thus, Africa remains the poorest continent despite being one of the most richly endowed regions of the world.

(33)

On the other hand, greater integration has also led to the further marginalisation of those countries that are unable to compete effectively. In the absence of fair and just global rules, globalisation has increased the ability of the strong to advance their interests to the detriment of the weak, especially in the areas of trade, finance and technology. It has limited the space for developing countries to control their own development. The conditions of those marginalised in the process have worsened in real terms. A fissure between inclusion and exclusion has emerged within and among nations.

This dedication and commitment to the forces, the politics and the economics of the market place is expressed again and again by these counsellors of capitalization, collusion, compromise and collaboration. Paragraph 41 is a typical example:

What is needed is commitment on the part of governments, the private sector and other institution of civil society to the genuine integration of all nations into the global economy and body politic. This requires the recognition of global interdependence in respect of production and demand, the environmental base that sustains the planet, cross border migration, a global financial architecture that rewards good socio-economic management, and global governance that recognises partnership among all peoples. We hold that it is within the capacity of the international community to create fair and just conditions in which Africa can participate effectively in the global economy and body politic.

The model for the stance advocated in this document is, of course, South Africa itself. It is a resolution much favoured by the adherents of the politics of rainbowism; of peaceful co-existence; unity of opposites and the

like. The projected partnership between imperialism (the oppressor nations) and neocolonialism (the oppressed nations) is a grander version of the co-partnership we saw not so long ago in this country (and still continuing in a variety of forms) between a people's organization, the ANC, and the diehards of the apartheid system and ideology, the National Party of Verwoerd, Malan, Vorster, Botha etc. It was that partnership that made it possible to avert a revolutionary change when the time was ripe in favour of "a negotiated settlement" that left capitalism and racism in South African social formation intact and strengthened. The vision is to bring about a similar "solution" to the rest of the African continent behind the vast collaboration scheme with a capitalist ANC government in the vanguard and using, to full advantage, its membership of the African Union and its collaborationist credentials. In this sense South Africa will act as a veritable fifth column within the community of African nations struggling for self-determination on its own terms. The bandwagon of collaboration will roll on amid a razzamatazz of publicity and euphoria extolling the virtues of the uniqueness of the African personality and the sanctity of the Millennium that is ushering in the splendours of the African Renaissance, part of the rainbow dreams of painted Utopia, the syndrome that feeds psyche of this new breed of collaborators and which they weave into their stock-in-trade of banal spells and incantations.

So, it makes a lot of sense, from the point of view of capitalism/imperialism, to anoint the present South Africa as the foremost leader of this essentially extraneous and malignant enterprise. We have to remember that South Africa continues to be the bastion of imperialism in Africa. And, in the interest of "global stability", it must stay that way. With an ANC Government in office, this is assured. There will continue to be peaceful co-existence between freedom and slavery!

The so-called new African initiative is, in fact, a diabolical strategy to legitimize, promote and perpetuate capitalist expansion and dominance. It is a conspiracy by imperialism and its agents to avert the possibility of a socialist alternative in South Africa in particular and in Africa in general. I hope that by now the oppressed people in the region are getting sick and tired of seeing their sweat and toil being spent extravagantly on celebrating illusions.

In our country we have pressing and continuing problems – problems of poverty, disease, unemployment, homelessness, poor education and inadequate social security; the scandal of the ever-widening gap between the undeservedly rich and the teeming millions of the undeservedly poor;



we have serious problems in the area of public transport and public services generally; and so one could go on. In the face of this grim reality and these challenges, we must resist seduction by diversion and red herring even though these may be draped in the grandeur and finery of an African Initiative, an African Millennium, and African Renaissance, or an African Renewal Programme. The more pretentious and flowery the language, the more suspect the intent and the more we have to be on our guard.

The closer I look at this package, the more I am reminded of I.B Tabata's description of the African intelligentsia. This is what he says in one of his many and enlightening writings on the liberation struggle in South Africa:

The new generation of African intellectuals were self-seeking imposters who inherited the prestige and traded on the good name of their predecessors. They knew that the narrow margin of privilege separating them from their more unfortunate brothers was granted them at the price of collaboration with the white agents of oppression. The whole process of reducing the Blackman to his present position would have been impossible without the help of these intellectuals. It was they who shackled the minds of the people and led them into bondage.

We've been warned, Beware the unctuous overtures of this burgeoning, slimy and serpentine comprador class of hawkers and purveyors of cheap and tattered capitalist goods. Donning their borrowed flashy vestments and already established as dependable junior partners within the imperialist camp, their assignment and their duty now is to deliver Africa up to the beast. The belief is that "the South African experience", that is, the dexterous reshuffling of personnel under cover of transformation, can be exported to the other countries within the umbrella of the African Union (the OAU by another name), thus leaving the capitalist status quo ante intact and hegemonic. I hope they will be unmasked and given their marching orders. Even at this hour I hope the oppressed people of Africa will refuse to be party to their own enslavement. In matters of national and class interests the lumpen bourgeoisie can have no independent initiative of their own. Their role is essentially that of agents.

L. Mqotsi  
July 2004

## APPENDIX

### **AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY DECLARATION ON NEPAD**

**We, members of social movements, trade unions, youth and women's organizations, faith-based organizations, academics, Non Governmental Organizations and other popular civil society organizations from the whole of Africa, meeting in Port Shepstone, South Africa, from the 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2002, on the threshold of the launch of the Africa Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in Durban, critically examined NEPAD in the context of the struggles for Africa's development and emancipation.**

**While conscious of the important of joint endeavors for the development of Africa, this 'new international partnership' initiative ignores and sidelines past and existing programmes and efforts by Africans themselves to resolve Africa's crises and move forward from programmes such as the Lagos Plan of Action (1980), and others.**

**In contrast to such programmes, NEPAD is mainly concerned with raising external financial resources, appealing to and relying on external government's and institutions. In addition, it is a top-down programme driven by African elite and drawn up with the corporate forces and institutional instruments of globalization, rather than being based on African peoples experiences, knowledge and demands.**

**During our deliberations and wide ranging discussions on NEPAD we focused on the following key aspects and reached the following conclusions:**

#### **I. NEPAD, DEMOCRACY AND 'GOOD GOVERNANCE'**

**WE NOTED THAT:** NEPAD ignores the way the state has, itself, been undermined as a social provider and vehicle for development, particularly under the World Bank's tutelage.

**WE CONCLUDE THAT:** While we are committed to good government in Africa, we do not accept the interpretation and content that this has been given in NEPAD, including questionable economic policies that we do not accept embedded in 'good governance'.

## **II. NEPAD, PEACE AND STABILITY**

**WE NOTED THAT:** The conflicts on the continent have their sources in the legacy of colonialism, economic exclusion, political intolerance, social polarization, artificial borders and unequal access to resources, and that NEPAD approaches these problems mainly as technical peace-keeping operations.

**WE CONCLUDE THAT:** Peace based on guaranteeing human security requires an environment that fulfills people's needs, and livelihood needs free from all forms of discrimination.

## **III. NEPAD AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**WE DISCUSSED** with great concern the longstanding denial and abuse of human rights in most of the countries in Africa.

**WE COMMIT OURSELVES** to continue our struggle for human rights in the fullest meaning, including political, civil, economic, social, women's, cultural and environmental rights.

## **IV. NEPAD AND STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMMES (SAPS)**

**WE ANALYZED** the policies and effects, and our direct experience of World Bank SAPs over recent decades in our countries. We noted that, despite the negative economic, social, political, and environmental effects of SAPs, NEPAD accepts the fundamentals of the neo-liberal and gender-blind SAPs paradigm which has been largely responsible for the deepening of the Africa crisis, including the feminization of poverty.

## **V. NEPAD AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION**

**WE NOTED THAT:** Examining the challenges and problems of resource mobilization for development, NEPAD ignores the question of people's ownership and control of African resources, and disregards the people as the most vital resources and purpose of development.

**WE CONCLUDE THAT:** The whole NEPAD ‘fundraising’ project is a non starter, and we will focus our efforts on appropriate resource mobilization, including African financial resources now legally and illegally outside of Africa; we relate all such resources to alternative development strategies based on collective self-reliance.

## **VI. NEPAD AND DEBT**

**WE EXAMINED:** the nature, sources and causes of Africa’s ‘debt’, which is a fundamental cause of underdevelopment, poverty and inequality.

**WE NOTED THAT:** NEPAD accepts the obligation for Africa to repay this illegitimate debt to the further prejudice of fundamentally important social services and development needs.

**WE DEMAND:** Total and unconditional debt cancellation.

## **VII. NEPAD, TRADE AND GLOBALIZATION**

**WE FULLY DISCUSSED** the role of trade in Africa and the current global system, and noted that indiscriminate trade liberalization has led to de-industrialization, increased unemployment and growing poverty.

**WE NOTED THAT:** NEPAD ignores experience and the huge body of evidence and analysis discrediting the theories that trade leads to growth, which leads to development.

**WE CONCLUDE THAT:** We need to continue our efforts to create different types of local, regional and inter-regional trade, and a different role for trade in our economies.

On the basis of the above, we do not accept the NEPAD plan, as a process and in its content. We are committed to joint efforts for Africa’s development and emancipation and call upon all African people’s organizations and movements to continue their longstanding efforts to produce sustainable, just and viable alternatives that will benefit all the people of Africa.

**ANOTHER AFRICA IS POSSIBLE!      ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE!!**

**WE DO NOT WANT NEPAD!!!  
SALE!!!!**

**AFRICA IS NOT FOR**

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(Summarized from the original by Professor Dennis Brutus, acting General Secretary of Jubilee South Africa. Johannesburg. Tel: 011 403 7624 or Jubilee Eastern Cape 043 743 0601.)