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Reconceptualizing Africa's Regional Integration for Peace and Sustainable Development: A Summary Analysis of PhD Dissertation

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Abstract

This essay summarizes the PhD dissertation for Prof. Thomas Kaydor, Jr. from the Faculty of Government and European Studies, New University, Slovenia. The topic for the PhD research is 'reconceptualizing Africa's regional integration for peace and sustainable development'. Chapter five of the UN charter focuses on peace, and security; and Chapter VIII on regionalism. The dissertation investigates how AU utilizes its authority to mitigate conflicts on the continent. The research evaluates how regional integration leads to economic growth and development in Africa. The research has established that unless the continent engages in economic integration, regionalism will not lead to regional development. It recommends how Africa might alleviate extreme poverty and attain sustainable development in the 21st Century and beyond. Its' four specific objectives are to: a) identify the benefits and challenges of Regionalism in Africa. b) ascertain why extreme poverty is widespread in Africa and propose what should be done through regional integration to alleviate the extreme poverty in Africa. c) find out the impact of ODA on Africa's regional development and propose ways to strengthen the impact of aid on poverty alleviation and economic development in Africa, and d) propose what Africa should do to Achieve Sustainable Development. This research is Qualitative. Researchers use this method to explore meanings; investigate and study social phenomenon; or unpack meanings ascribed to activities, situations, events, or artifacts; and build a depth of understanding about some dimension of social life with detailed information from a small sample. Qualitative research is appropriate when one's primary purpose is to explore, describe, and explain. For a peaceful and sustainable continent, the AU needs to implement the 1991 Abuja Treaty; fully arm, equip and support the African Standby Force to make and keep peace; Africa needs a United States of Africa under one army, border, government, foreign policy and one currency; the AU needs to ensure that 80% ODA in African states goes towards infrastructural development; constitute an AU sovereign fund for all Africans to contribute a dollar for infrastructural development on the continent; and appropriately manage the environment. AU should focus on agricultural productivity, value addition and provision of safe drinking water to address the extreme hunger, malnutrition, water issues, hunger, and poverty on the continent. Finally, the AUC needs to become a Permanent Member of the UNSC.

Key Words: Africa, Peace, Regionalism, Poverty Alleviation, Sustainable Development.

1.0 Introduction

This part of the dissertation summarizes the entire research and has been translated into Slovenian Language, the Official Language of the country for Prof. Kaydor's PhD studies. The introduction is being published as a peer-reviewed essay in the English Language

in which Prof. Tom Kaydor, Jr. wrote his PhD dissertation. It constitutes at least 10 percent of the entire text or pages of the final PhD dissertation (from introduction to conclusion) and includes definition of research area, problem and research objectives/questions/hypotheses; the purpose and goals of the



research; Definition of basic terms; theoretical starting points and review of previous research; description of research methodology; summary of the chapters in the dissertation, the expected results and contribution to science, the usefulness of the results, and the recommendations in Chapter six of the dissertation. All researchers are encouraged to obtain a copy and read the dissertation after it is published and shared as a book.

1.1 Definition of the research field or problem

The PhD dissertation topic is "reconceptualizing Africa's regional integration for peace and sustainable development". It provided the researcher an opportunity to examine regional integration as an international relations theory. The researcher defined and discussed theoretical aspects of regional integration as a process or an event and examined whether the process or event impacts peace and sustainable development in Africa or elsewhere. Also, this topic permitted the researcher to analyse the benefits and challenges of regional integration in Africa.

The researcher assessed and evaluated Africa's regional integration processes using the African Union (AU) as a case study, and the AU member states as the unit of analysis to find out whether the continent's integration processes have enhanced or hindered poverty alleviation and promoted sustainable development on the continent. The research concludes that the AU does not enhance peace and economic regional integration in Africa. For instance, Somalia has defiled all peaceful solutions thus far. Other African states are caught in circular conflicts.

Additionally, the topic provided a continuum through which the AU integration process has been examined to ascertain its capabilities to advance the continent's continuous efforts to alleviate extreme poverty on the continent and advance the achievement of sustainable development in the 21st century and beyond as expressed in the Africa Agenda 2063.¹ Articles 52 and 53 of the United Nations Charter make direct reference to regional arrangements. Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 state that: "nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action, provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations (UN)."²

The Members of the United Nations entering into such arrangements or constituting such agencies shall make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies before referring them to the Security Council; and the Security Council shall encourage the development of pacific settlement of local

disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies either on the initiative of the states concerned or by reference from the Security Council; and that this Article in no way impairs the application of Articles 34 and 35."³

Article 53, section 1 particularly states that:

"The Security Council shall, where appropriate, utilize such regional arrangements or agencies for enforcement action under its authority. But no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council, with the exception of measures against any enemy state, as defined in paragraph 2 of this Article, provided for pursuant to Article 107 or in regional arrangements directed against renewal of aggressive policy on the part of any such state, until such time as the Organization may, on request of the Governments concerned, be charged with the responsibility for preventing further aggression by such a state."⁴

1.2 Assumptions of the research

The research has four assumptions about Africa's regional integration. First, the researcher assumes that regional integration in Africa has had some benefits and challenges. This research has confirmed this assumption. Second, the researcher assumes that regional integration has not helped Africa to address the widespread poverty on the continent. This research has also affirmed this assumption. Third, the researcher assumes that ODA has positively impacted Africa's regional integration processes but has not led to sustainable development on the continent.

Equally, this research has confirmed that most parts of ODA is being corrupted by African Leaders. Finally, the researcher assumes that Africa can achieve Sustainable Development in the 21st Century and beyond through effective economic integration and peace on the continent. This research proposes how Africa could achieve peace and sustainable development.

This sought to address the first assumption of the research. This also fills a gap in knowledge about this research topic. Second, the research uses the descriptive method to describe the AU, its activities, groups, events, or situations, et al. Descriptive research aims to generate what is referred to as "thick descriptions" of social life (those that provide details, meanings, and context), typically from the perspective of the people living it. This method is used to describe the poverty situation and find out how widespread poverty stated under assumption two can be addressed on the continent.

Third, because the researcher wishes to assess the effectiveness or impact of a program or policy, Africa's regional integration, an evaluation of the AU has been done to determine how effective and efficient this regional body is, and how it could lead to ensuring

¹ Africa Agenda 2063, 2005. This agenda indicates that Africa will achieve sustainable development by 2063.

² UN Charter, 1946.

³ Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice, 1945.

⁴ Ibid.

Africa's sustainable development. Doing a review of Africa's integration involves historicizing what has been obtaining on the continent in terms of regional integration. Hence, the historical research method is applied in this context. This means the researcher combined historical method and an evaluation method in this component of the research. The two methods equally involve explanation and or narration; hence, these various methods were interchangeably used.

In addition to the above, firmed comments in the UN charter focused on regional integration, peace and security, and the assumptions in this study, this research also investigated how the African Union has used its authority to mitigate conflicts on the continent to sustain peace and stability especially where several African states are locked in deep seated socio-political and economic conflicts that promote state fragility and prevent investment in economic growth initiatives and sustainable development. Thus far, the research has found out that development cannot obtain without peace and security; hence, the need to promote economic regionalism in Africa and make it to advance peace, security, and development on the continent.⁵

Last, the analysis from the research provided normative insights on how the AU could advance its regional integration processes for peace, economic growth, and sustainable development on the continent. This final dissertation constitutes the ultimate outcome of the researcher's independent research work for a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in International and Diplomatic Studies (with security aspects) at the New University in the Republic of Slovenia. This topic was proposed by the researcher, and accepted by his Mentor and Supervisor, Professor Dr. Gorazd Justinek. The research topic is grounded in the technical and scientific field of International Relations Theory of regionalism.⁶

1.3 Purpose and objectives of the research

The general purpose of this research is to explore, examine, and evaluate the extent to which regional integration has led to peace, economic growth, and sustainable development in Africa⁷. It also recommends how Africa might curb extreme poverty and attain sustainable development in the 21st Century and beyond. The research has addressed four specific objectives:

- To identify the benefits and challenges of Regional Integration in Africa.
- To ascertain why extreme poverty is widespread on the African continent and propose what should be done through regional integration to alleviate or reduce such widespread extreme poverty on the continent.
- To identify the impact of ODA on Africa's regional development and propose ways to strengthen the impact of aid on poverty reduction and economic development

⁵ Africa Agenda 2063, 2013.

⁷ Cresswell, 2018.

in Africa.

- To propose what Africa should do to Achieve Sustainable Development outcomes.

Because of these, this research seeks to answer to certain questions that have not been answered so far and the answers depend upon human efforts. Hence, the researcher has used several methods to conduct this research. According to Patricia Leavy, the "five approaches to social research are quantitative, qualitative, mixed-method, community-based participatory and arts-based research".⁸ For his part, John Creswell asserts that quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method can surface for any type of research⁹. For this dissertation, the qualitative research design and a case study approach are utilized.

1.4 Definition and focus of the research

Regional integration is a branch of International Relations (IR) Theory focused on political, economic, social, or environmental cooperation amongst group of states located in a geographic region or sub-region. Based on such argument, one can conclude that regional integration is a function of international cooperation¹⁰ amongst a group of states within a particular region. This entire research is focused on the AU, a continental regional organization that incorporates all 55 African states that serve as the unit of analysis in this study.

Therefore, this research is a single case study. A "case study is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, an event, activity, process, or one or more individuals"¹¹. The research uses the normative method that would unsettle, evoke, and provoke the African and global audience of this research because the learning would like to "jar the target audience into thinking about or seeing something differently" and the researcher intends to promote new learning, and create an awareness campaign for change and transformation regarding Africa's regional integration. Research has "two main functions: to contribute new knowledge in Social Studies, and to improve the Social Studies practices".¹²

Africa's regional integration was initially conceived as a political mechanism to fight against colonialism. Established on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,¹³ the Organization of African Unity (OAU) espoused that "all Africans must control their own destiny and that freedom, justice, equality and dignity are essential for the advancement of Africans".¹⁴ The new regional inter-governmental organization took the responsibility of "harnessing

⁸ Leavy, 2017.

⁹ Cresswell, 2018.

¹⁰ Kaydor, 2022.

¹¹ Cresswell, 2018.

¹² Leavy, 2017.

¹³ Organization of Africa Unity Charter, 1963, p.11.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 1.

the human and natural resources of the continent for the advancement of the people”.¹⁵

In view of the foregoing, the purpose, and objectives that the OAU Charter set out to achieve were

“to promote the unity and solidarity of the African States, coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa; defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and independence; eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa; and promote international cooperation, having due regard for the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”.¹⁶

The organization committed member states to coordinate and harmonize general policies on “political, economic, education, health, sanitation and technical as well as security and defense cooperation”.¹⁷ Up to the transformation of the OAU into the African Union (AU) on 11 July 2000 in Lome, Togo,¹⁸ and since the coming into being of the AU, the organization has only fully achieved the decolonization of the continent, international cooperation amongst member states and has ended apartheid in South Africa. Most of the other objectives and commitments of the AU remain unfulfilled. For instance, there is still widespread extreme poverty, disease, insecurity, and instability, as well as food insecurity on the continent. The protection of human rights is not guaranteed by all African states.

Simply put, this research comparatively concludes that the European integration was first an economic one, whereas now it is evolving as a political union; having this in mind, first the OAU and now, the AU, started as a political union, and it is presently trying to become an economic integration. It is anticipated that the AU will achieve economic integration because this is the magic bullet to achieving peace, economic growth, and sustainable development on the continent.

Although the AU commits to “promoting sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels, as well as the integration of African economies”¹⁹, the continent’s regional integration has not achieved this commitment. Article 33 of the AU Constitutive Act transitioned the OUA Charter into the AU Constitutive Act.²⁰ However, the regional organization has not achieved key elements of this Act. For instance, the African continent is plagued with corruption, disease, poverty, etc. Similarly, Article 4, ‘Principles of the Union’, promised to “respect democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance”²¹.

However, these principles are under threat in all African States. In fact, membership in this regional body is merely based on state sovereignty rather than adherence to the principles like democracy, human rights, market economy, free and fair elections, and freedom of media that are embedded in its Constitutive Act. For its part, the European Union (EU) has “set such rights as aspects of prerequisites for admitting member states into the European Union.”²²

During the development of the early theories of integration, most of the literature focused on how to define the concept. On the part of the OAU, now AU, regional integration began as a political process. Later, it is being metamorphosed into a regional economic integrated body, something that is yet to be fully operational. Bayne and Woolcock argued that “economic diplomacy is not just a subject for academic study, but an activity pursued by states and non-state actors”.²³ This means that there are many actors beyond the traditional state diplomatic structures.

This could be one of the reasons why the AU might not be making significant gains in this domain. Economic diplomacy is therefore a “process rather than a structure or an event”²⁴. It focuses on “how states and supra-national actors conduct their economic relations; how they make domestic decisions about this process and negotiate internationally, and how they reach mutually beneficial consensus”²⁵. As such, this dissertation comprises six chapters as listed below

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter Two; Literature Review

Chapter Three: Impact of regional integration on poverty reduction in Africa

Chapter Four: Presentation, analysis, and discussion of field data

Chapter five: Prospects of Africa’s attainment of sustainable development, and

Chapter Six: Summary, conclusion, and recommendations

1.5 Summary of literature reviewed

The most prominent regional integration theorist is Ernst Haas. He defined integration as “the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new center, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over preexisting national states”²⁶. This means that “integration is a process that leads to a certain state of affairs”²⁷.

In his ‘*The Uniting of Europe*’, Haas “observed and wrote about the integration process of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). He wrote about the logic of sector integration wherein he predicted that the ECSC would evolve into the European Economic

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Organization of African Unity Charter, 1963, p. 3.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ African Union Constitutive Act, 2000, p. 19.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 6.

²⁰ Ibid., p.18.

²¹ African Union Constitutive Act, 2000, pp. 7-8.

²² Milan, 2009.

²³ Bayne and Woolcock, 2003, p.3.

²⁴ Ibid, p. 4.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 3.

²⁶ Haas, 1968, p.16.

²⁷ Laursen, 2008, p. 1.

Community (EEC)”²⁸. According to Haas, “liberalization of trade within the customs union would lead to harmonization of general economic policies and eventually spill- over into political areas and lead to the creation of a new political community”.²⁹ Today, his predation relative to the spill-over concepts has come to reality in the European integration context. The ECSC became the EEC, and it has now become the European Union.

the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (‘The Abuja Treaty’) was adopted on 3 June 1991 and entered into force on 12 May 1994”. Leon Lindberg defined integration as an “ever-closer cooperation of states in a political field, or evolution of a collective decision-making system among states over time”³⁰. Lindberg argued in his ‘*Political Dynamics of European Economic Integration*’ that integration is the “process whereby nations forgo the desire and ability to conduct foreign and key domestic policies independently of each other, seeking instead to make joint decisions or to delegate the decision-making process to new central organs”³¹; and the process whereby “political actors in several distinct settings are persuaded to shift their expectations and political activities to a new center”³².

William Wallace argued that formal integration is a function of “deliberate political actions and includes the establishment of institutions, policies or legislations, while informal integration focuses on a process that has effective consequences without formal, authoritative intervention”³³.

Karl Deutsch is another integration theorist who jointly undertook research with other scholars on the European integration process. He and his colleagues viewed regional integration as the “attainment, within a territory, of a sense of community and of institutions and practices strong and widespread enough to assure dependable expectations of peaceful change among its population”³⁴.

In their study on regional integration and development, Maurice Schiff and L. Alan Winters argued that “regionalism has contributed to the political reconstruction of Europe through the creation of the Benelux Customs Union in 1947, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951, and the more far-reaching European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957.”³⁵

Regionalism is also desired by states to assist neighboring countries in stabilizing and prospering, both for altruistic reasons and to avoid spillovers of unrest and population. Equally, states fear being left out while their peers join regional blocs because it would be harmful to be excluded from the benefits of regionalism.

Schiff and Winters argue that for small and medium-sized countries, pooling sovereignty and undertaking collective action can “enhance the effectiveness of the state by helping solve economic problems; strengthening countries against third-country security threats; and by increasing international influence by lowering negotiation costs or increasing bargaining power in dealings with the rest”.³⁶

Huwart and Verdier argued that the world was fragmented from the post-war World II period to the 1990s. According to them, the global fragmentation was fostered by the “logic of the Cold War and decolonization and the Non-Aligned Movement of countries, a period during which governments experimented with political and economic models within their own borders or areas of influence”.

The foregoing analysis shows an increase in ODA, although, in 2014, Health Poverty Action indicated that “Sub-Saharan Africa received US\$134b each year in aid, but US\$192b was the value of resources exploited from Africa; hence, a negative ODA balance of US\$58b”.³⁷ How could a continent mostly renowned for aid dependence become the site for global exploitation? One might wish to therefore suggest that Africa should convert its resources into wealth creation mechanism so that the continent can use its resources within regional integration framework to enhance sustainable development of the continent, especially when aid is declining further due to the global COVID-19 pandemic under which the economies of all states across the globe were been ravaged, and other contemporary scenarios that are continuing to undermine global economic stability?

1.6 Data collection Process

The AU has a chairperson who heads the AU Commission and a Deputy Chairperson who assists the Chairperson. The Union also has six commissioners responsible for thematic areas. The six commissioners are elected by the AU Executive Council and appointed by the Assembly for a four-year term renewable once. These commissioners head thematic areas, including Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment; Political Affairs, Peace, and Security; Infrastructure and Energy; Economic Development, Trade, Industry and Mining; Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation; Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development.³⁸

Also, the two heads of the departments of women, gender and youth, and civil society and diaspora were interviewed. The six commissioners and two directors with the Vice Chair and Chairperson of the AU Commission were interviewed by the researcher to get their perspectives on the gains, challenges, and prospects of the AU, and gauge their insights on how the regional body would like to spark economic growth and sustainable development on the continent.

²⁸ Haas, 1968, p. 16.

²⁹ Haas, 1958, p. 311.

³⁰ Lindberg, 1971, p. 46.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Lindberg, 1963, p. 6.

³³ Wallace, 1990, pp. 9-11.

³⁴ Deutsch et al, 1957, pp. 5-6.

³⁵ Schiff and Winters, 2003, pp. 4-5.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 22.

³⁷ Health Poverty Action, 2014, pp. 5-6.

³⁸ Agenda 2063, 2013

Finally, every research that is being conducted amongst human subjects must abide by the ethical standards required under research procedures. Patricia Leavy argues that:

“research participants are viewed as people first, with the right to know the nature of the study they are participating in, including possible risks and benefits, and to voluntarily choose whether to participate, they must voluntarily consent. This is referred to as the ‘principle of mutuality’. Further, over time, a principle of mutuality, in which the research benefits both the researchers and the participants has become important to many practitioners (particularly those working with qualitative, and Community-based participatory research approaches). In this regard, an important question to ask regarding any project is Whose interests are being served?”

Given the above, the researcher got the informed consent of the 10 respondents at the AU Commission. He developed and used interview guides that were approved by the dissertation supervisor for data collection, recorded the research participants, took notes, and after that, the researcher transcribed the data and placed them under 11 themes that include detailed analysis done during the presentation of the data in the six-chapter PhD Dissertation entitled: ‘Reconceptualizing Africa’s Regional Integration for Peace and Sustainable Development’. The analyzed data was then interpreted and discussed, and conclusions with recommendations were drawn from the findings. This essay is therefore a summary of the PhD dissertation by Professor Thomas Kaydor, Jr. from the Faculty of Government and European Studies, New University, Slovenia.

1.7 Africa’s Commitment to Regional Development

The African continent is plagued with corruption, disease, poverty, etc. Article 4, Principles of the Union, promised to “respect democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance”. However, these principles are under threat in all African States. In fact, membership in this regional body is merely based on being an African State. The Africa Agenda 2063, the Africa we want is built on the guiding visions “to build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven and managed by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena”.³⁹ Accordingly, this “Agenda 2063 is a shared framework for inclusive growth and sustainable development for Africa to be realized in 40 years. It is a continuation of the pan-African drive over centuries, for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress, and collective prosperity pursued under Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance.”⁴⁰

The Agenda 2063 Framework Document covers three broad areas, including the vision for 2063 explaining (the Africa We Want) by 2063, transformation framework indicating what needs to be done,

and making it happen which is an implementation strategy”.⁴¹ They are presented in six chapters covering introduction; the vision and African Aspirations for 2063; Africa in the last fifty years; goals, targets, priority areas and indicative strategies for each of the aspirations; critical factors for success, potential risks and mitigation strategies as well as global megatrends likely to impact Africa’s future; and the last chapter six is on implementation strategy (the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan) that also includes resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation as well as communication strategies and partnerships.

Agenda 2063 seeks to: galvanize and unite in action all Africans and the Diaspora around the common vision of a peaceful, integrated, and prosperous Africa; harness the continental endowments embodied in its people, history, cultures and natural resources, geo-political position to effect equitable and people-centered growth and development; build on and accelerate implementation of continental frameworks, and other similar initiatives; provide internal coherence and coordination to continental, regional and national frameworks and plans adopted by the AU, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and all AU Member states plans and strategies; and offer policy space for individual, sectoral and collective actions to realize the continental vision.

The first 10 years plan of the Agenda 2063 (2013-2023) sought to achieve the following: “a). The African Integrated High-Speed Network; b). African Commodities Strategy; c). Creation of the Continental Free Trade Area; d). The Pan-African E-University; e). The African Passport and Free Movement of People; f). Silencing the Guns by 2020; g). Implementation of the Grand Inga Dam Project; h). Creation of an Annual Consultative Platform for policy dialogue; i). Single African Air Transport Market; j). Outer Space; k). Pan-African Virtual University and l). The Continental Financial Institutions.”⁴²

Additionally, the continent remains engaged at the periphery of the global economy, as is evident from the ‘continent’s declining share in global production and trade; hence majority of SSA 47 countries are small and least developed, according to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD’s) definition’.⁴³ Also, most African states have “low per capita income levels and small populations which result in small markets”.⁴⁴ For instance, in 2008, “12 SSA states had populations of less than 2 million, while 19 had a gross domestic product (GDP) of less than US\$5 billion, six of which had a GDP of less than US\$1 billion”.⁴⁵

Besides this challenge, 15 SSA countries are landlocked, thereby leading them to have high trade transaction costs as well as high costs of doing business on the continent. For example, shipping a

³⁹ Africa Genda 2063, 2013. This Agenda articulates the views of Africa and calls that continental policy “the Africa We Want”.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Agenda 2063, 2013.

⁴³ UNCTAD, 2007.

⁴⁴ Trubi, 2011, p. 3.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

car from Japan to Abidjan costs US\$1500 (including insurance); while shipping that same car from Addis Ababa to Abidjan would cost US\$5000⁴⁶. Also, cumbersome documentation requirements, stringent standards and inefficient road and rail networks cause time delays and increase the cost of intra-regional trade⁴⁷, and multiple border crossings for goods to reach land-locked countries add significantly to the transaction costs of intra-regional trade.⁴⁸

Worse more, the track record of regional dispute resolution processes is frustrating. For instance, when Southern Africa Development Community (SADC's) Tribunal found Zimbabwe guilty of breaching Article 6 of the SADC Treaty, Zimbabwe expressed its dissatisfaction with the decision, thereby leading to the suspension of the SADC Tribunal at the August 2010 Summit.⁴⁹ This scenario indicates that the several RIAs on the continent operate on weak rules that are mostly unacceptable to other African states and governments.⁵⁰

"Africa is making steady progress in building the critical ingredients for sustainable and resilient societies, but the pace is slow. Access to basic infrastructure such as energy, water and sanitation services is improving but falls well below the global average. Furthermore, the aggregate performance of the continent has wide cross-country disparities".⁵¹ Africa has 7 aspirations as enshrined in the Agenda 2063. These aspirations are indicated below:

Aspiration 1: A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development

"Africa achieved moderate progress for Aspiration 1 with an overall score of 37% against the 2021 targets. The relatively low performance can be attributed to a decrease in GDP per capita from USD 3,170 in 2019 to USD 2,910 in 2021 and high employment rates among Africa's populations. Although COVID-19 had a negative impact on jobs and incomes of most African economies, some countries showed resilience through measures such as providing economic relief and stimulus policy responses that were put in place prior to and during the pandemic".⁵²

Aspiration 2: An Integrated Continent Politically united and based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of African Renaissance

"Significant progress was made in the attainment of Aspiration 2 as evidenced by a strong performance of 84% of its targets. This is mainly due to progress made in the signing and ratification of the AfCFTA, which came into effect on 1 January 2021, as well as the establishment and operationalization of a well-functioning AfCFTA Secretariat in Accra, Ghana. Furthermore, the progress

made in operationalizing the Single Africa Air Transport Market (SAATM), coupled with the strides that the Continent has made in increasing electricity generation and boosting ICT penetration explain the strong performance. However, Africa registered weak performance in other areas such as the implementation of the Trans-African Highway Missing Link and the African High Speed Rail Network".⁵³

Aspiration 3: An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law

"The overall weak performance of 42% for Aspiration 3 targets are mainly attributed to low scores pertaining to capable institutions and transformed leadership at all levels. Nevertheless, a satisfactory performance was achieved with most Member States reporting progress in promoting good governance, democratic values, and practices, including the domestication of the African Charter on Democracy, Election and Governance".⁵⁴

Aspiration 4: A peaceful and secure Africa

"Good progress was recorded in the attainment of Aspiration 4 with an overall performance of 63% against the 2021 target, as evidenced in significant declines in conflict-related deaths emanating from armed conflicts and those arising out of disagreements and intolerances along religious or ethnic lines".⁵⁵

Aspiration 5: An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values, and ethics

"Moderate progress of 45% was made with regards to Aspiration 5 targets. This can largely be attributed to weak integration of indigenous African culture, values, and language into primary and secondary schools' curricula".⁵⁶

Aspiration 6: An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential of the African People, particularly its Women and Youth and caring for children

"The Continent realized an overall target score of 67% due to a slight increase in the proportion of women in total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, as well the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments, regional and local bodies. However, the continent did not meet youth related goals and targets, with unemployment rates among the youth reducing only minimally and an increase in children engaged in child labor or child marriage".⁵⁷

Aspiration 7: An Africa as A Strong, United, Resilient and Influential Global Player and Partner

"The continent achieved an overall commendable target performance of 58% evidenced by the proportion of public sector budget funded by national capital markets as well as the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) in national budgets. However, the Continent did not meet the 2021 target of increasing

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Viljoen, 2011.

⁴⁸ McCarthy, 2007.

⁴⁹ Afadameh-Adeyemi & Kalula, 2011.

⁵⁰ Erasmus, 2011.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Researcher's data, 2023.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

the contribution of total tax revenue as a percentage of GDP to ensure Africa takes full ownership of her development efforts.”⁵⁸

The AUC indicated “in addition to the progress registered under the aspirations and goals captured in Agenda 2063’s First-Ten Year Implementation Plan, the Continent made notable progress in the implementation of the 15 African Union Flagship Projects. Noteworthy was the progress made on operationalizing the African Continental Free Trade Area. To date, 54 AU Member States have signed the AfCFTA Agreement, 42 Member States have ratified it, and 39 have deposited their instruments of ratification, demonstrating a high level of political commitment to achieving market integration in Africa. The implementation of other flagship projects is also progressing, albeit at varied and, sometimes, a slower pace. All the other flagship projects remain work in progress. For instance, guns are still firing on the continent when they should have ended in 2020”.⁵⁹

To achieve economic development, Africa must achieve economic growth. To reduce extreme poverty, the continent must achieve economic growth that will avail the fiscal space for citizens to find food and meet their basic needs. Africa needs to tap into the widespread economic growth corridors on the continent. Such fiscal space will allow governments to invest in and implement the rightful pro-poor policies. Therefore, it is reasonable to agree with the key informant on Africa’s state of the economy who averred that “the aspiration of the continent is inclusive growth and sustainable development and as such the continent needs to grow its economy at a minimum 7 percent”.⁶⁰ When the continent’s economy grows at such level, it will attract investments, generate, and increase employment mainly amongst the youth and women and in return enhance savings.

Africa needs to transform raw materials into manufactured goods to reduce Africa’s importation of intermediate goods. This was also stressed by the Commissioner on the Economy. Simply put, Africa should be the one producing intermediate goods. Such value addition is essential for the realization of the protocol that the AU is pushing for manufacturing and agro-processing to meet about 52 percent of the goods produced on the continent. Once Manufacturing is improved in Africa, the desire to export raw materials will diminish thereby attracting foreign investments. Developed countries will begin to migrate their factories to Africa for production of goods and for cheaper labor because the continent has a youthful population that is largely unemployed and needs jobs.

Conflict in any part of Africa becomes a binding constraint to all of Africa because such conflicts have spillover effects. Although the Commission has reported that conflicts and deaths emanating from conflicts have decreased on the continent, one can contest this relative success because of the number of existing conflicts on the

continent. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia that hosts the African Union Commission has a its fair share of conflicts that are ongoing, though at a minimum level now. In these conflicts, displaced people, mainly women and children are mostly affected.

The conflicts increase hunger, homelessness, and poverty. And most importantly, some of these conflicts are an outcome of bad governance. Hence, there is a need for good governance on the continent. Good governance will fertilize the grounds for peace and stability without which the continent’s effort to achieve economic growth and sustainable development will remain a dream. Finally, without peace and stability, Africa will not achieve its regional development Agenda 2063. Dreams come when one is asleep, but dreams become concrete actions when one is awake. Therefore, Africa needs to wake up.

1.8 Summary of each section of the dissertation

Chapter one provided the research background, explained the research topic, discussed the research problem, and stated the research questions. It also contained the research aims, purpose and objectives. Chapter one further discussed the research methods used to undertake the research and described the chapters of the dissertation. It discussed other research already done on this subject matter. The chapter also indicates the anticipated research results and contribution that the research made to scholarship in general and specifically to international relations theory. It finally indicates the application of the research results. Narrative and explanatory methods were used in writing this chapter.

The second chapter provides the theoretical perspective of this dissertation. It evaluated additional research already conducted is in this chapter. This chapter discusses what other authors and scholars have written and published about regional integration in Africa and other parts of the world. It found the research gaps in these previous scholarly works reviewed. These pieces of research have gaps that the dissertation attempts to bridge. The methods used in this chapter were historical, exploratory, and evaluative.

Chapter 3 in the PhD dissertation constitutes the Review of Related Literature. This chapter reviewed related literature on regional integration in African and globally. In this literature review, each literature used in the PhD dissertation was summarized. The gaps on the related literature were determined. The relevance of each Literature to the PhD research was also indicated. All these components of the research utilized the narrative method.

Chapter 4 focused on an analysis and description of poverty and why poverty is so widespread and ingrained in Africa. This research noted that regional integration does not end hunger and help reduce poverty on the continent. It equally discussed ways and means through which poverty can be reduced within the framework of international cooperation and regional integration. The explanatory, descriptive and historical methods were employed in this chapter because it targets one of the key

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Researcher’s data, 2023.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

objectives of forming the AU. This objective was “to achieve sustainable development on the continent”.⁶¹

Chapter three and Chapter four presented, analysed, and discussed the data collected through key informant interviews at the AU Commission. Comparatively, integration theory argues that European integration was first an economic one, whereas now it is evolving as a political union, and as indicated in this research several times, the OAU and now the AU started as a political union, and it is only trying to become an economically integrated Union through the AfCFTA.

Chapter five focused on what the African Union needs to do to achieve Sustainable Development in the 21st Century and beyond. In this chapter, the normative research method was utilized to indicate what should be done and why certain actions must be taken by the AU to enhance economic growth and development for the attainment of sustainable development on the continent. In view all of these, the researcher has recommended the following so that the AU can implement them for the attainment of peace and sustainable development in Africa now and in the future.

Finally, Chapter 6 summarizes and concludes the PhD Dissertation. It proffers implementable recommendations for the realization of peace and sustainable development under the framework of Africa’s regional mechanisms generally under the aegis of the African Union Commission (AUC).

1.9 Anticipated Contribution to the Scientific Discipline

The dissertation explored and examined the theoretical debates, issues, and analysis of regional integration theory and how the African regional integration process is proceeding. The research documents key achievements that regional integration in Africa has produced and major impediments and major challenges militating against the regional integration process of Africa. Also, the dissertation explores and provides reasons why poverty remains widespread on the African continent. It is important for such evidence-based research and analysis to be documented so that the appreciable remedies for ending extreme poverty and hunger on the continent can be found. African governments need to create wealth in Africa so that Africans can enjoy their continent that is imbued with natural resources that can be used sustainably for economic growth and economic development.

The research proffers suggestions and recommend what the AU needs to do better to achieve sustainable development on the continent in the 21st Century and beyond. These results will be important because with such, the AU would have an additional Afrocentric academic analysis on African integration processes.

The UN acknowledged regional integration as an important part of international cooperation to foster regional peace and security as a

precondition to national and regional development. The AU is the biggest and significant regional body on the continent and there are several researchers that have written about African integration at regional and sub-regional levels. For instance, some scholars discussed the benefits and challenges of Africa’s integration, ODA utilization on the continent and poverty in Africa but none of them has focused on how regional integration of Africa can be used to achieve economic growth and turn the economic growth benefits into sustainable development outcomes for all Africans on the continent.

Equally, none of these studies has specifically addressed the issue of how the regional body needs to be reconceived to focus on ending widespread poverty and disease as well as promote peace and sustainable development as a development outcome in Africa. This is a key research gap that this study attempts to bridge by exploring the persistent causes of extreme poverty on the continent and posit concrete recommendations on how the AU might enhance inclusive economic, social, and environmental growth and development on the continent by 2030 and beyond.

Additionally, regional integration is part of International Relations theory. Integration has led to development in other regions like the EU. This is not the case in Africa. Hence, this research has found out that African integration needs to be focused on Economic integration as an outcome in the region. The product of such research contributes to the discourse under the International Relations Theory on whether regionalism directly impacts regional development in Africa, and if not, why, and what could be done to remedy this phenomenon. The relationship between integration and development is important to find out in the African context because there has been no previous evidence-based research clearly indicating whether the stagnant regional development on the continent is an outcome of regionalism under the AU or not. The dissertation has confirmed that regionalism can help spark a crew awakening for Africa’s regional economic growth and economic development.

Also, this research proffers recommendations on the attainment of sustainable development on the Continent under the aegis of the Africa Union. Therefore, it could spark further scholarly debate on regional integration theory in the African context. Such debate would lead to scholarly agreements and disagreements.

Finally, this research is important because the World Bank indicates that: “along with its direct cost in human lives, COVID-19 has unleashed a worldwide economic disaster whose shock waves continue to spread, putting still more lives at risk. Without an adequate global response, the cumulative effects of the pandemic and its economic fallout, armed conflict, and climate change will exact high human and economic costs well into the future. This suggests that the effects of the current crisis will almost certainly be felt in most countries through 2030. Under these conditions, the goal of bringing the global absolute poverty rate to less than 3

⁶¹ Constitutive Act of the African Union, 2000, e-source.

percent by 2030, which was already at risk before the crisis, is now harder than ever to reach”.⁶²

The above World Bank Group’s prediction makes this research compelling because it will provide African states an insight on how to reconceptualize continental integration to advance the continent’s achievement of sustainable development in the 21st Century and beyond.

After a successful defense of the dissertation, the researcher is undertaking substantive initiatives for the application of the research results. First, the researcher will find resources to publish the final dissertation as an academic peer reviewed book. This will make the research available to other researchers and scholars nationally, regionally, and internationally. Second, the researcher would seek an opportunity to officially launch the published academic work on the side-lines of an AU Summit to present the published work to the AU Commission and its organs near Abuja, Addis Ababa, and New York .

Third, the researcher hereby lobbies the Liberian Government, his home government, to pursue the implementation of the findings and recommendations of the dissertation that would be published. This means that the Liberian government would serve as a champion for the wider inclusion of the research results within the working mechanisms of the AU. The researcher will also lobby with the AU Commissioners that participated in this research as key informant interviewees to push for the inclusion of research findings and recommendations within the AU working processes to ensure that the recommended actions are acted upon in the best interest of the African Union.

Equally, the researcher will officially present the outcomes of the dissertation to sub-regional integration bodies like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on the continent and encourage them to push for the adoption of the findings and recommendations within the AU regional integration system. By so doing, debates and discussions of the research findings at national and regional integration forums, campaigns, and advocacy for the research findings at civil society events, some heads of state and government, AU partners, etc. will be carried out. This will be followed by a series of book launches across the continent and the globe.

Finally, the researcher would include the published work as a complimentary teaching material and promote awareness and advocacy in the academia. Finally, the researcher will urge other African and non-African scholars as well as global universities teaching African Studies and International Affairs and or Development to use the book as a text for courses focused on Africa’s economic growth and sustainable development. With all the foregoing, this research would become a success. Interestingly, this research did not focus on many other aspects of African

studies, Africa’s sustainability, and African International Relations. It is hoped that other researchers on African Affairs will do.

1.10 Conclusion

This easy is a summary of the PhD dissertation for Prof. Tom Kaydor, Jr. The topic for the PhD research is ‘reconceptualizing Africa’s regional integration for peace and sustainable development’. Chapter five of the UN charter focuses on peace, and security; and Chapter VIII on regionalism. The dissertation investigates how AU utilizes its authority to mitigate conflicts on the continent. The research evaluates how regional integration leads to economic growth and development in Africa.

Its’ four specific objectives are to: a) identify the benefits and challenges of Regionalism in Africa. b) ascertain why extreme poverty is widespread in Africa and propose what should be done through regional integration to alleviate the extreme poverty in Africa. c) find out the impact of ODA on Africa’s regional development and propose ways to strengthen the impact of aid on poverty alleviation and economic development in Africa, and d) propose what Africa should do to Achieve Sustainable Development. This research is Qualitative. Researchers use this method to explore meanings; investigate and study social phenomenon; or unpack meanings ascribed to activities, situations, events, or artifacts; and build a depth of understanding about some dimension of social life with detailed information from a small sample. Qualitative research is appropriate when one’s primary purpose is to explore, describe, and explain.

The research has established that unless the continent engages in deeper economic integration, regionalism will not produce regional development. It recommends that Africa should fully comply with the Maputo Declaration of allocating not less than 10 % of each country’s national budget to Agriculture to curb or alleviate extreme hunger and poverty on the one hand and attain sustainable development in the 21st Century and beyond on the other. The research also recognizes Africa’s efforts for being the first continent for developing its regional development goals called Agenda 2063 (“the Africa We Want”). The African sustainable development plan contains 7 aspirations with 20 objectives or goals.

Finally, for a peaceful and sustainable continent, the AU needs to implement the 1991 Abuja Treaty; fully arm, equip and support the African Standby Force to make and keep peace; Africa needs a United States of Africa under one army, border, government, foreign policy and one currency; the AU needs to ensure that 80% ODA in African states goes towards infrastructural development; constitute an AU sovereign fund for all Africans to contribute a dollar for infrastructural development on the continent; and appropriately manage the environment. AU should focus on agricultural productivity, value addition and provision of safe drinking water to address the extreme hunger, malnutrition, water issues, hunger, and poverty on the continent. To conclude, the AUC needs to become a Permanent Member of the UNSC because

⁶² The World Bank Group, 2020, pp. 1-2.

there is an urgent need for Africa to be represented at the UN Security Council as one of the blocs with veto powers.

1.11 Recommendations

- 1 The African Union Commission (AUC) needs to occupy a permanent seat on the UN Security Council to represent the whole of Africa on that global body that oversees peace and security at the United Nations. This might stop the unnecessary competition and reduce tensions amongst individual African states wanting to be on the UNSC as permanent members to represent Africa. Africa needs to and must be represented on the UNSC.
- 2 The 1991 Abuja Treaty needs to be fully implemented to promote the AUC to becoming a full economically integrated body.
- 3 Arm, fully equip and effectively support the African Standby Force to make peace and keep peace in all member states in collaboration with the security apparatuses of each African state on the continent to maintain peace and security.
- 4 To have a rising and sustainable Africa, a United States of Africa under one army, one government, one passport, one foreign policy and one currency, is desired.
- 5 The AU needs to make it a continental policy that 80 percent of ODA in African states must go towards infrastructural development and investment.
- 6 Set up an African Union sovereign fund to which all Africans or African descents or their states, on behalf of each citizen, should contribute a dollar for infrastructural development of the continent. For instance, this Fund could be used to fund infrastructure across the continent like the fast train between Addis and Djibouti that has had so much impact on transportation between the two states.
- 7 Appropriately manage the environment on the continent to ensure environmental sustainability.
- 8 Focus on agricultural productivity, value addition and provision of safe drinking water to address extreme hunger, malnutrition, and poverty on the continent.
- 9 If Africa must achieve the Agenda 2063 aspiration for "A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development" (Aspiration 1) as well as all others the continent needs to invest in modern agriculture for increased productivity and growth as well as exploit the vast potential of Africa's blue economy. In addition, action needs to be taken to address climate change issues and other environmental factors that pose a greater risk to the agricultural sector.
- 10 Merge modern health science on the continent with good, or acceptable transformed traditional African health systems to prevent and cure diseases on the continent and globally.
- 11 Harmonise Africa's educational system to allow mobility of teachers, professors, and students to focus on

integrated research on Africa's Development priorities, and

- 12 Adopt a common African Language for the official use of the continent.

To conclude, "the researcher considers total economic integration as the lynchpin for Africa's inclusive progress towards ending widespread extreme poverty and deprivation on the continent and initiating sustainable development in the region".⁶³ This dissertation has discussed regional integration, peace, and sustainable development in Africa. While it touched on colonialism under the OAU, it did not discuss or focus on the impacts of colonialism and neo-colonialism. It is hoped that other scholars will delve into those and other factors affecting the African continent.

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⁶³ Balassa, 1961.

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