



# Foreword

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The African Continent has a huge abundance of natural resources, a youthful population, human capital and an active citizenry. Within the institutions of higher learning, academics and researchers daily dive deeper and examine various issues that hold back the much-anticipated economic boom of our continent that will address poverty, inequality and underdevelopment.

If indeed Africa has 60% of the world's arable land and huge deposits of all kinds of mineral resources needed for industrialisation, manufacturing, production of high tech equipment driving modern communications and innovation, the questions posed are: why is Africa not food sufficient, why is Africa not a leader in modern technology, why is Africa still poor.

Slightly more than a decade ago, the African Union (AU) adopted its master plan, a blueprint for the next 50 years, Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. In effect they were proclaiming that the next 50 years will be years for rebuilding the economy of Africa, industrialisation, continental integration through regional economic communities, peace and stability, and building a hunger free and prosperous Africa.

African countries also participated in crafting, shaping, negotiating and adoption of the United Nation (UN)'s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and incorporated its goals and targets in their national plans.

This book, edited by the two distinguished academics, Siphumelele Duma and Rich Mashimbye and with numerous authors, is a welcome contribution towards understanding the challenges confronting our people but also making interesting recommendations for all stakeholders towards the resolution of the challenges as the continent implements AU Agenda 2063



and towards realising the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The book explores the intersection between the security and development nexus in Africa. It is an established fact that there are correlations between security and development. Unstable and conflict-ridden countries or regions are less attractive to investment. The populace remains in the clasp of grinding poverty and hunger. On the contrary, sustainable development brings peace and stability. These concepts feature predominantly in both Agendas 2030 and 2063.

The editors and contributors address both issues comprehensively in this book.

The UN system talks of a balanced approach to peace and security, human rights and sustainable development and makes a point that the three are interlinked and interrelated.

Four chapters in this book examine the state of regional integration in Africa. At the launch of the AU in 2002, the leaders of Africa emphasised the role of the Regional Economic Communities as the building blocks for a larger integrated continent.

Enablers of integration and connectivity, like physical infrastructure, especially road, rail, telecommunication and aviation, were to be given major priority to facilitate the movement of goods and services across frontiers.

The contributors highlight the progress made but also point out that even more effort is needed to deal with identified bottlenecks, fund shortfalls, and develop skills needed to unlock the potential of an integrated continent. They also point out that the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) needs extra oxygen to power the resurgence of Africa. Connectivity is essential to regional and continental integration.

The book further takes stock and reflects on the political developments in the various regions of Africa. The distinguished contributors look at the emerging phenomenon of military coups in Africa with a special focus on the recent upheavals in West Africa. They observe that the underlying causes of

these coups need more analysis as multiple factors may be behind these developments. Some point out that in addition to lingering colonial and post-colonial political arrangements, factors like youth impatience, lack of service delivery, poverty, unemployment, corruption and lack of good governance may have contributed to coup d'états. They also call upon those in power to respect the will of the people.

With a mere five years left before the UN convenes a summit to get reports of the performance of member states towards realising the goals and targets of the 2030 SDGs, the book looks at the prospects for African countries in achieving the said goals and targets. The contributors conclude that much more effort by African governments is needed towards meeting the expectations contained in the SDGs.

Regarding progress in the realisation of the roadmap as contained in Agenda 2063, the contributors focus on and draw lessons from the military coups in West Africa and the Sahel and recognise them as a possible impediment towards the achievement of the AU Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. They pay attention to Aspirations 3 and 4, as well as food availability, accessibility, utilisation and necessary initiatives to attain food security in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Although Africa has abundant natural resources, huge waterways, sunlight, arable land, a young population and a bulging middle class and intelligentsia, it still lacks the political will to deal with corruption, build strong institutions, improve governance, address legacies of colonisation, provide citizens with basic necessities like food, water, shelter, improved health systems and education, and address conditions that lead to youth uprisings. If the status quo remains, the Africa we want encapsulated in Agenda 2063 will remain a dream.

The observations and recommendations of the authors of various chapters necessitate close attention by policy makers, implementers and those charged with the responsibility to lead the people of Africa. Africa should harness the ample skilled human capital demonstrated by the contributors in this book.

Africa's future lies in the mobilisation and appropriate deployment of its abundant human resources towards peace, security, stability, human rights and sustainable development.

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