Sharm El-Sheikh Meetings…
Developing Arab-African Relations

Ambassador/ Salah al-Din Abdel-Sadek
Chairman of the State Information Service

*T*hanks to its civilizational weight and regional role, Egypt's policy is playing an important role on both the Arab and African levels. On both the historic and strategic levels, Egypt is an important bridge for the Arab-African relations, the matter which was translated in the activities of the Joint Meetings of the Arab Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament that were held in Sharm El-Sheikh, October 10, 2016 on the periphery of celebrating the lapse of 150 years on the emergence of the parliamentary life in Egypt. Such a meeting, the first of its kind among the parliamentarians, is considered a "political forum" to enhance the Arab-African relations on all the parliamentary and political levels.

Thereupon, "Sharm El-Sheikh" meetings send more than one message to the regional and international society that witness turbulent realities and unprecedented geo-strategic developments as follows:

First: Fostering the Arab-African relations according to firmly established "institutional" rules that were laid down by the representatives of Arab and African parliaments and peoples; away from the pressures of the political and economic crises that surround the works of the executive representatives.

Second: Drafting a "real vision" for the present and future of the Arab-African relations with the main participation of the peoples of both sides, thus guaranteeing its implementation along with overcoming the false "mental image" taken from both sides.

Third: Focusing the Egyptian efforts in the last years on hosting the African conferences and summits which search for a new role for Africa on all the political, security and economic levels. This could be represented in the Summit of the three Economic African Blocs, in the

Investment Forum in Africa, and in the Sahel and Sahara Defense Ministers' meetings, among others.

Accordingly, the Sharm El-Sheikh Declaration that was issued at the closing ceremony of the common session between the Arab Parliament and the Pan-Africa Parliament under the title "African-Arab Strategic Partnership: the Role of the Parliaments" was keen to highlight several issues concerning the Arab and African Action, salient of which are:

-Encouraging governments to activate and develop the African-Arab cooperation in order to meet their current challenges, especially as regards realizing comprehensive development and social justice. This should be done according to the objectives of the Arab-African strategic partnership.

-Fostering the parliamentarian relations through adopting the notion of establishing an African-Arab Parliamentary friendship group.

-Working together for creating an African-Arab parliamentary forum on the periphery of the official meetings of the international parliaments and the continental, regional and international authorities.

-Reconsidering the legislations and conventions on combating terrorism in a manner that goes in line with the emerging challenges; including the expansion of the terrorist organizations.

-Pushing forward towards realizing the Arab-African economic integration; being an integral part of the national security system for the Arab and African peoples.

Consequently, in an attempt to foster the parliamentarian and public efforts for developing the Arab-African action on various levels, the "SIS", through its publication "African Perspectives" is discussing the strategy of Africa's development known as (2063 Agenda) which the African Union had recently adopted; being a future vision for the African issues, where various African experts and researchers discuss several aspects on the Agenda in a bid to formulate an African-African vision that would express the concerns and problems of the continent.

Towards a Shared African Future

by Sameh Shoukry
Minister of Foreign Affairs

*E*ach year, Africa Day presents us with an opportunity to reinforce our unity, celebrate our diversity, and contemplate the challenges that face us as Africans. Over the past years we have watched Africa progress before our very eyes, from a continent plagued by myriad difficulties to a land of promise and prospects. In the Egyptian constitution, the document that defines our nation, Egypt's African identity is solidified. As Egyptians, we are proud of our African roots and share the dreams and ambitions of our African brothers and sisters. Today, Africa commemorates its efforts to unite and move forward, and looks ahead towards a future of mutual support, benefit, and growth.

On 25 May, 1963, Egypt became one of the founding states of the Organization of the African Unity (OAU) (which today is the African Union) by signing the founding Charter of the Organization of the African Unity. Fifty-three years later, Egypt remains committed to the primary values of the organization, and continues to attribute great importance to African cooperation endeavors. Egypt is one of the five African states that contribute 75 percent (15 percent each) of the annual budget of the African Union, and is among the leaders of African developmental efforts and initiatives, as well as efforts to establish and maintain peace and security.

Despite the strides taken forward, the last few years have been difficult for Africa; deadly viruses have spread across the continent and many conflicts burn on. Egypt strongly believes that stability is crucial for Africa to thrive. That is why we have given our active membership in the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) great priority, in order to do everything in our power to help our continent overcome the challenges it faces. Egypt takes the responsibilities of its membership in the AUPSC extremely seriously, and works diligently to ensure that the trust placed by the African community in our ability to contribute to regional peace and security is well-justified. Egypt has been heavily involved in peace negotiation processes across Africa, and our presence on the ground in conflicts is reflected by the

hundreds of Egyptian personnel integrated in peacekeeping missions throughout the continent, who protect African civilians and support national efforts towards economic recovery. In assuming such responsibilities, Egypt is careful to fully respect and adhere to the right of each country to make independent decisions regarding its internal affairs, a principle that holds unique significance in our continent.

We have also strived to ensure that Africa's voice reaches the international community, and that the continent's issues are given priority in international fora. Following Egypt's successful bid for a non – permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Egypt has become one of the three African States in the Council, and we have done our utmost to speak on behalf of Africa along with our African partners in the Council, and to bring attention to African needs and concerns. In this framework, Egypt also campaigned to chair the Committee of Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) during a critical point in global negotiations on climate change and the post-2015 development agenda, so as to guarantee that the needs of Africa will not be ignored. The impact of climate change represents an urgent and irreversible threat to human societies. This is especially true in Africa, with the effect of climate change on the Sahara/Sahel desert, the drying up of the great Lake Chad, and more severe and frequent droughts in Southern and East Africa. Such a threat cannot be allowed to escalate uncontested, and Egypt has worked and continues to work within the context of international efforts to mitigate the negative effects of climate change.

As we work together to bring about peace, security, and prosperity to our peoples, circumstances sometimes present us with unforeseen challenges which necessitate their own set of measures and efforts. One such challenge is the Ebola virus, which was widely discussed on the agenda of both the AUPSC and the African Union. Egypt was greatly concerned by the spread of the virus in West Africa and the devastation it brought to the people of the region, and provided donations to combat the phenomenon. Egypt also initiated the establishment of the Endemic and Communicable Diseases and AIDS Center in Africa, in order to ensure that our continent is better prepared to deal with such contingencies. Today, the Ebola crisis has been greatly diminished, and Africa is better-equipped to combat such diseases.

Parallel to our efforts to overcome the challenges facing Africa, we

have given great priority to developmental efforts seeking to bring prosperity to Africa and improve the livelihood of its peoples. Egypt currently chairs the African Union's Multilateral Sub-Committee, working side-by-side with African member states to develop partnerships with Non-African countries. The efforts of the sub-committee allow partners to mutually benefit from each other's experience and comparative advantages in order to overcome their obstacles. Egypt is also keen to share its experience with other African countries with the goal of mutual benefit and progress towards a shared vision. Egypt is currently in charge of the agricultural file in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), one of the most essential files for the continent, and one in which Egypt has valuable experience that can hopefully be employed for the benefit of the continent and its people. Most of Africa consists of fertile lands, and it is thus essential to develop our agricultural sector, which will have a tremendously positive impact on African economies and contribute to job-creation and growth. Egypt also endeavors to place its expertise at Africa's disposal through the Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development (EAPD), an affiliated body of Egypt's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The main aim of the agency is to offer assistance by Egyptian experts and consultants to other African countries, but it also grants humanitarian assistance to countries that suffer from droughts and famines.

As we look to the future, we must recognize that the prosperity of Africa is in the hands of the coming generations. All of our efforts are merely laying the groundwork, so that our youth will have a solid foundation to build upon and truly realize this continent's glorious potential. Consequently, the most fruitful investment we can make is in our youth and their education. Egypt is keen to offer scholarships to thousands of African students to enroll in Egyptian universities, some of which top university rankings in Africa. Our aim is to provide African students with the best education possible, so that they may return to their countries to benefit their nations with the knowledge they acquire. The true cornerstone for the development of the continent is the education of Africa's future generations.

Africa's history is rife with incomparable struggles, but it is these struggles and our ability to overcome them in the face of all odds that have truly come to define us as Africans. The exceptional challenges that we have faced and conquered

have endowed us with inimitable resolve and strength of character, and through it all we have persevered and progressed by tapping into that infinite resource that is so uniquely African: undying hope.

Today we remember our great triumphs and learn from our failings, and we contemplate current challenges and opportunities. But more than anything, today we look to the future with hope for Africa.

The Ideological Framework of 2063 Agenda

Dr. Bassem Rizk Adly Marzouk
Political Science Lecturer
Cairo University

*T*he African Continent is currently seeking to find the strategies and mechanisms that would guarantee full independence and realize sustainable development to all sectors and groups. The 2063 AU Agenda is one of the vital tools that the African states sought to use in order to reach such objectives and aims, as such agenda stresses the importance of fostering the foundations of mutual co-operation among the African countries and of providing an adequate climate for the positive political, economic and social transformations, thus leading to the creation of an African environment that would accept political development.

Despite the fact that the Agenda includes various African objectives, hopes and aspirations, which, if realized, will lead to a qualitative leap in a short period, yet the main problem lies in the difference between the reality and the expected; the matter which raises an important question: How can Africa realize the objectives and aspirations included in the Agenda? How can the material, humanitarian and ideological resources to realize such objectives be provided? What are the main challenges and hurdles that might obstruct the implementation of such humanitarian agenda? Answering such questions is inevitable to analyze the ideological framework governing such an Agenda through the following pivots:

First: The Effect of the Historic Ideological Patterns and Frameworks on the AU Agenda

 Many would consider that the collective African visions and orientations and the attempts of finding a unified African identity are the main ideological framework through which various African stances and developments can be explained.

Such visions express the self-identity which all Africans seek to identify.

In this respect, all the African ideological trends stress the importance of such visions. Furthermore, some consider that the advocates of such visions are the ones who control the African present and future, and the events and developments going on there, the matter which was obvious in the AU Con-

ference in Manchester, 1945, when African leaders and demands for independence started to appear. It was also obvious in 1963, upon the establishment of the OAU and at the outset of the 3rd millennium will setting the objectives of the millennium and the transformation from the OAU and the AU; one of the decisive visions that govern all the continental developments in Africa.

It seems that the 2063 Agenda offers an example to the continental frameworks that are affected by the same previously mentioned historic and ideological tributaries, as such an agenda highlighted the importance of the awareness of the historic inheritance, of the appreciation to the advocates of the African Unity, and of supporting the institutional orientations that target the African unity. It also highlighted the fact that unity should be the target which the African countries should seek to reach in the future.

In this respect, African leaders applied a vision aiming to realize "An integrated and flourishing Africa enjoying peace."

This Agenda had also called for a concordance concerning the shape of the continental government by 2030, stressing on the importance of supporting such an integrated vision by providing communication networks, transportation infrastructure, railways, maritime and trans-

portation logistics, gas, oil and water pipelines, communication and data cables, among others, in a bid to build a main infrastructure for the integrated continental entity that will express the universal status and effect of Africa.

Second: The Priority of Economic Development

Policies and notions of African leaders are still affected by the orientations that assure that the economic development is a priority over all other developmental aspects. This was obvious in most of the items of 2063 Agenda, where the endeavors of the African countries to fight poverty and achieve flourishment within one generation have been emphasized. This should be done through intensifying the social and economic transformations in Africa, and upgrading the infrastructure in a manner that would facilitate providing all the essentials of living for the Africans.

Through the AU Agenda, African leaders seek to make Africa an economic power through manipulating the personal potentials and capabilities, paying due attention to the sectors that constitute the locomotive of the economies of the developed states such as the transportation, energy, and telecommunications sectors, in addition to asserting the importance of establishing a continental free-trade zone by 2017 which

will be the means for doubling the African inter-trade by 2022.

The AU Agenda encourages building an African Capital market. It also highlights the importance of mobilizing and manipulating the African resources and of benefiting from the various experiences in order to build a unified African methodology that can effect a radical transformation in the continent; the matter that will contribute to creating an economically integrated continent that depends on the intensity of inter-trade, increasing the quota from international trade and building the international institutions that entrench such integration in a manner that would affect an overall growth and sustainable development.

Third: Peace and Stability

The AU Agenda raised the slogan "by 2020 all guns will be silenced" referring to the fact that Africa aims to set the foundations of real peace. This should be done through the mechanisms of peaceful settlement of conflicts and spreading the culture of peace and benevolence among the children and youth.

The AU Agenda had also stressed on the importance of maintaining security through abandoning the causes of conflict and wars, adhering to the values of coexistence and fraternity, elevating the moral and human values and preventing all forms of organized crime of drugs and human trafficking and arms trade, in a bid to guarantee peace and to protect the welfare of their citizens through a mutual defensive, security and foreign policy.

Fourth: Independence and the Ability to Transform

Through the AU Agenda, Africa seeks to effect an independence personal transformation through exploiting the advantages of the continent; thus rendering the agenda as a vision for the continent that would realize the objectives of its people relying on their self-determination. Thereupon, the agenda provides suitable environment and lays the foundation for the African common action.

In this respect, it paid due attention to the main incentives that help achieve the sustainable development of Africa.

In this vein, African leaders sought to merge the national plans with the continental objectives and aspirations as a means to assert the fact that all Africans have the same aspirations and objectives. They also highlighted the importance of the popular role in implementing and following-up this agenda in addition to the coordination between this agenda and the previous plans and programs. Furthermore, the AU believes that such an Agenda contributes to drafting the future of the continent on the long term.

<u>**Fifth: The First 10-Year Plan: Features and Objectives**</u>

The first 10-year plan covers the period 2013-23. This plan mainly concentrates on the economic aspect; paying due attention to the pioneering projects that constitutes the first category enlisted in the first 10-year plan of 2063 . Such projects are represented in the integrated network Agenda, the TGV High Speed Train, the electronic African University, drafting a strategy for the commodities, establishing an annual African forum, establishing a free-trade zone by 2017, adopting the freedom of movement of individuals, issuing an African passport, constructing the Grand Enga Dam, establishing an African electronic network, not to mention the importance of silencing the guns and adopting peace and security by 2020. Other projects include implementing the outer space program for Africa, establishing a one-African market for air transport and establishing continental African financial institutions are expected to be realized.

The second category of this plan includes what is know as "the short term priorities on the national level and developing the regional economic groups." This necessitates effecting a sustainable and comprehensive economic growth, realizing human capital development, stressing on the importance of agriculture development, providing job opportunities especially for youth and females, laying the foundations of social protection, developing females and empowering youth. All this should be implemented within the framework of entrenching the foundations of national ruling, developing the infrastructure, providing peace and security, applying the foundations of industrial transformations, paying due attention to science, technology, culture, arts and sports.

Africa in African Union's Agenda 2063

Dr. Abdo Bah
Institute of African Research and Studies,
Cairo University

*T*he idea of the 2063 emerged from the AU Agenda aiming to draw a route map for the African joint action during the coming years. This agenda is considered as one of the most significant visions and initiatives proposed to achieve a qualitative change in the African continent. Similar to the previous agendas, this one faces internal and external challenges, as well. When we tackle this agenda, in particular, I think it is necessary to highlight many key issues and answer some questions raised in relation to these issues like, for example: How the 2063 AU Agenda has been created? and What does it consist of? Then, evaluate the agenda compared to the other previous ones in terms of advantages and challenges.

The Preparation of Agenda 2063

On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the African Union in May 2013, formerly known as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) that was founded in 1963, the African political leadership ratified the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration to set a strategic vision aiming to achieve the aspirations of the African peoples in the next fifty years, i.e. 2013-2063, through a number of stages each of which consists of 10 years.

 In this respect, an extensive consultative process took place with the concerned African entities, including Youth, Women, Civil Society Organizations, the Diaspora, African Think Tanks and Research Institutions, Government Planners, Private Sector, the Media, inter-faith leaders, the Forum for Former African Heads of State and Government, African Island States and others.

The preparation of agenda 2063, also, included an extensive review of the African development experience on the three levels: national, regional and continental. It identified the existing challenges and available opportunities. In addition, it set the plans and work frames putting into consideration the priorities of development, in particular in the First 10 Year Implementation Plan. In terms of financing, the vision was mainly based on the importance of looking at strategies for Africa to finance her own development.

Agenda 2063 is presented in three key documents listed below:

- Agenda 2063 Framework Document that contains the vision for 2063, a comprehensive situational analysis of key issues, the goals, priorities, tar-

gets and indicative strategies, as well as proposals on "Making it happen" dealing with implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

- Agenda 2063 Popular Version presenting the Agenda in simple terms to facilitate ownership by the African citizenry.

- First 10-year Implementation Plan (2013-2023) which lays out the immediate priorities and is designed to kick-start the journey towards 2063.

Chapter	Content
Chapter 1: Introduction	Background Agenda 2063 Preparatory Process Overview of Agenda 2063 Framework Document
Chapter 2: The Vision and African Aspirations for 2063	African Aspirations for 2063 Conclusion - Other Scenarios
Chapter 3: Africa the Last Fifty Years and the Present: Progress, Challenges and Implications for Agenda 2063	Africa the Past Fifty Years (1963-2013): The Quest for Political Unity and Economic Emancipation Africa Today: Progress, Challenges and Implications for Agenda 2063 Lessons from Responses to Africa's Development Challenges at National, Regional and Continental Levels Overall Conclusion and Issues for Agenda 2063
Chapter 4: Agenda 2063: Goals, Priority Areas, Targets and Indicative Strategies	Conceptual Approach Foundation of Agenda 2063 Goals, Priority Areas, Targets and Indicative Strategies Overview of Agenda 2063 Flagship Programmes
Chapter 5: Critical Factors for Success, Potential Risks and Mitigation Strategies	Critical Factors for Success Risks, Threats and Mitigation Strategies Global Mega Trends and Forces
Chapter 6: "MAKING IT HAPPEN" – Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation, financing, Communication & Capacities for Implementation	Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements Financing Agenda 2063 Partnerships for Agenda 2063 Capacity Development for Agenda 2063 Communication Strategy for Agenda 2063
Annexes	Annex 1. Highlights of African Initiatives for Economic Growth and Transformation Annex 2. Summary of Broad Issues and Action Areas for Agenda 2063 Annex 3. Agenda 2063 Results Matrix National Level: Goals, Priority Areas, Targets and Indicative Strategies Annex 4. Agenda 2063 Results Matrix on Regional & Continental Level: Goals, Priority Areas, Targets and Indicative Strategies.

- **Content and Structure of Agenda 2063 Framework Document**

The Agenda consists of six chapters and four annexes as follows:

Also, Agenda 2063 is anchored on former African instruments: the Constitutive Act, African Union Vision, the 8 Priority Areas of the Solemn Declaration, African Aspirations for 2063, Regional and Continental Frameworks as well as Member States National Plans.

Evaluation of Agenda 2063

Agenda 2063 is considered a new initiative in the joint African work. It came 10 years after the transformation of the OAU into the African Union (2002-2013). It is regarded as a quantum leap of the African intellect towards the future aiming to accomplish the aspirations of the peoples of Africa. In this respect, I would tackle two aspects: first, what characterizes the Agenda and second, the challenges facing the Agenda.

Characteristics of Agenda 2063

As mentioned before, many initiatives preceded Agenda 2063, some of which emerged from the OAU and others from the AU. Agenda 2063 is based on such previous experiences. However, by reviewing the Agenda and comparing it to other previous African initiatives, we can notice that it is distinguished by the following:

- Enjoying a wider participation including the civil society organizations, regional groupings, academic institutions as well as African citizenry and peoples. In this respect, a simplified version was issued to facilitate the idea for the public.
- Being more specific as it set the objectives and strategies of the national, regional and continental levels in each period of the seven aspirations.
- Having a monitoring and an evaluation system to follow up every stage.
- Setting a strategy for Local funding sources, where it focused on national, regional and continental sources without dispensing with partnerships with non-African institutions.
- Coordinating all policies, since Agenda 2063 is based on the national, regional and continental initiatives altogether.
- Implementing communication strategy with the goal of engaging Africans from all walks of life, and the Diaspora to galvanize action in support of Agenda 2063, which made this Agenda more accessible than others.

Furthermore, the first 10-year priorities of the Agenda are all about essential continental projects, which are designed to kick-start the journey towards 2063. These include the following:

- Giving due attention to education as well as the formation of cadres and leaders to be able to face the difficulties and challenges of both the pre-

sent and the coming stages.

- Connecting all African capitals and commercial centres to a high speed transport network; especially railway and air transport, to facilitate the movement of people as well as goods and accelerate the growth of intra-African trade.
- Launching a common African Passport in July 2016, at the 27th AU Summit in Kigali, Rwanda which is considered as a step forward towards African integration and free movement.
- Establishing the continental free trade area to significantly accelerate growth of Intra-Africa trade.
- Establishing an annual African forum to discuss developments and constraints as well as measures to be taken to realize the aspirations and goals of Agenda 2063.
- Implementing the Grand Inga Dam Project to boost Africa's production of energy and generate 43,200 MW of power (PIDA) to support current regional power pools and their combined service to transform Africa from traditional to modern sources of energy and ensure access of the African citizenry to clean and affordable electricity.

Challenges of Agenda 2063

Agenda 2063 is facing a big challenge since the goals are huge while the capabilities are limited. Also, the previous African initiatives failed to achieve their goals on due date. May

be this is because of the wide gap between theoretical studies and practical application or to the lack of essential factors. In this respect, the challenges can be summarized as follows:

Political Will

This is the first thing needed in a joint African action. Although such will has increased lately, but still needs to be enforced to become consensus. On the other hand, African Heads of States and Leaderships need to cede some sovereignty in favor of implementing the regulations of the initiatives for public interest such as a continental free trade area, a common African passport and free movement. It is noteworthy that the political will of all African Leaderships form the AU will. If the first did not unite, the latter will not exist. And unfortunately, without a consensus political will, all the provisions of Agenda 2063 will remain theories in vain.

Trained Cadres

All projects of Agenda 2063 need trained manpower. The question raised here is: Does Africa has trained cadres or who could be trained to accomplish the huge projects of the Agenda on time? The researcher did not provide an answer to such a question because the lack of statistics. In general, Africa has human resources, some of which are trained. However, all of them need to be developed. Not to mention making use of the brilliant Africans of the diaspora.

Definite Time Schedule

Usually, the timeframe of the projects do not suit the potentials, and thus work is not delivered on time. The same obstacle faces Agenda 2063 with respect to some objectives such as silencing the guns in 2020, connecting all African capitals and commercial centers to a high speed train network, launching a common African passport in 2018 and establishing a continental free trade area in 2017. These projects need measurements and infrastructures that would take more than the time set in their schedules because there are issues that have to be resolved such as eliminating the causes of wars, combatting corruption and preparing cadres.

Project Financing

Although the AU Agenda includes a financing plan for its projects depending on African financial resources, yet the implementation of these projects needs unfamiliar measures and too much money for Africa to afford. For example, the process of peace keeping in some African areas needs other financing resources besides those of Africa as the International financial institutions always impose hard conditions. Therefore, more efforts have to be exerted to provide the money needed to finance the projects of Agenda 2063.

It is noteworthy that Africa is rich in raw materials, but they are cheap unless they are manufactured in Africa in order to add to their value and become competitive goods. This African wealth is found in three layers:

A layer under the surface of earth: it contains a huge unidentified amount of minerals, underground water, oil and gas.

A layer on the surface of earth: it consists of rivers, cattle, forests and arable lands.

A layer above the surface of earth: it includes sun rays and the wind, of which clean energy is generated.

The Socio-economic Dimensions
of the African Development Plan 2063

Dr. Sally Mohamed Farid
*E*conomics Lecturer, Institute of African
Research and Studies-Cairo University

*T*he African countries seek after achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Actually, they succeeded to hit their targets concerning some of these goals, in particularly those related with education, gender equality, empowerment of women and combatting AIDS as well as many other diseases. Africa, also, achieved a notable progress in maintaining peace and security and reinforcing the democratic institutions. However, there are still several challenges in Africa, such as combatting Ebola virus. Therefore, the African countries are trying, through the African Union as well as the new partnership for the development of Africa and the regional economic groupings, to carry out the African development plan 2063. In this respect, Agenda 2063 has been set in 2013 representing a development agenda for the next 50 years. On the other hand, the United Nations provide the High-level Committee on the development agenda after 2015 with the institutional support needed aiming to help Africa in achieving more sustainable development objectives.

The Economic Performance of Africa

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capita, as a part of the real domestic gross product, is considered the leader of African growth followed by fixed investment and government consumption. Moreover, total gross fixed investment and exports in North African countries witness some improvement.

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Africa is a country where good governance, democracy, respect for human right, justice and the rule of law prevails.

Africa is a continent that maintains peace and security.

Africa is a continent that has a strong cultural identity, heritage and common ethics.

Africa is a continent where the peoples lead the development by unleashing the potentials of women and the Youth.

Region	2013	2014	2015
Central Africa	4.1	5.6	5.5
East Africa	4.7	7.1	5.6
North Africa	1.6	1.7	4.5
South Africa	3.6	2.7	3.1
West Africa	5.7	6.0	5.0

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Africa enjoys the prosperity based on comprehensive growth and sustainable development.

Africa is an integrated continent that is politically unified and depends on the principles of African unity as well as the African vision.

Africa is a main player and an influential global partner.

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Ax 1/52, Africa aspires to become a prosperous continent that has the necessary means and resources to push the wheel of development through poverty eradication and socio-economic transformation aiming to provide a high standard of living for its peoples and ensure that every citizen receives quality educa-

tion and skills so as to achieve a knowledge society. It, also, looks forward to changing the cities and settlements into cultural and economic centers supplied with a modern infrastructure, where peoples can have access to the basic necessities of life including adequate housing, water and sanitation, energy, public services in addition to information and communications technology. Furthermore, it seeks to transform the economies structurally in order to promote shared growth as well as to provide adequate job opportunities. In this respect, modern agricultural techniques contributed to the increase of production and producshuhsx `r v dlkk`r `ccdc u`ltd+v glbg lm qdstqm bnmsqhatsdc sn m̀ shmm̀ k oqnrodqhsx `mc ennc rdbtqhsx-

Ax 1/52, the African countries will be among the best countries in terms of global quality in life management by setting comprehensive growth strategies, providing job opportunities, increasing agricultural production, increasing investments in the fields of science, technology and creativity, ensuring gender equality, empowering the youth and providing basic services including gd`lsg+nt sqhshnm+dct b`shnm+rgdltsdq+ v`sdq`mc r`nhs`shnm-

@lsgntfg @eqhb` bnmsqhatsdr v hsg ldrr sg`m 4$ of the global carbon emissions but it bears most of the burden of the global climate change. Therefore, Africa is eager to partici-

pate in the global efforts paid to lessen such climate change and to support the political atmosphere aiming to achieve sustainable development on the continent level. In this respect, Africa should speak with one voice and have a unified objective when expressing its position and interests concerning climate change. Also, Africa is adopting the equitable and sustained utilization and management of water resources to achieve socio-economic development and regional cooperation.

<u>Second</u>: Africa is an integrated con-
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Rhmbd 0852, the African countries have been seeking after the achievement of a comprehensive African unity based on liberation as well as political and economic independence. This political unity of Africa will be the culmination of the integration process which includes the eqdd l nudl dms ne odnokd+sgd drs`a, lhrgl dms ne bnmshmdms`k hmrshstshnmr `mc sgd `bghdudl dms ne dbnmnlhb hmsdfq̀ shnm- @mc ax 1/2/ there should be a consensus on the government and the continental institutions in addition to a free movement of people, capitals, goods and services. This would cause an unprecedented hmbqd̀ rd hm sq`cd `mc hmudrsl dms adsv ddm @eqhb`m bnt msqhdr sg`s v nt lc hmqdstqmannrs @eqhb`&r rs`st r

hmf kna`ksq`c d-

Ax 1/52, the necessary infrastructure to support growth, African integration, technological transformation, intra-trade and economic development will be set. This, also, includes high speed train networks, roads, maritime and air transport, hmenql`shnm `mc bnl l t nfb`shnmr sdbgmknkfx `mc clf hs`k dbnnml x-Rtbg hmeq`rsqtbst qd v kk q`hrd sgd @eqhb`m hmsq`-sq`cd eqnl 01$ hm 1/02 sn 4/$ hm1/34 and it will, certainly, boost the growth of African world-class companies in all sectors.

Third9 @eqhb` hr ` bnt msqx v gdqd fnnc fnudqm`nbd+ cdl nbq`bx+ qdrodbs enq gt m `mqhfgsr+it rstbd `mc sgd qt kd ne k`v oqdu`hk

Ax 1/52, Africa would have deepened the culture of good governance, democratic values, gender equality, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law. Also, the peoples of Africa would have access to courts and independent legislative authorities without fear, impartiality, corruption or impunity. So Africa will become a continent of institutions, where the citizenry participate in the achievement of political and socio-economic development. Also, there will be a leadership that would encourage transformation in all fields (political, economic, religious, cultural, academic, youth and women) on all levels of institutions domestic, regional and continental.

Fourth9 @eqhb` hr ` bnmshmdms sg`s

l `hms`hmr od`bd `mc rdbt qhsx

Ax 1/1/ sgdqd v hkk ad `cdpt`sd l dbg`mhrl r sn `bghdud od`bdetk rds, skdl dms enq chrot sdr hm @eqhb`-Sgdqdenqd+ @eqhb` `rohqdr sg`s ax 1/52 it would be able to deep root the culture of respecting human rights, democracy, gender equality, integration and peace. It, also, seeks to become a continent where its citizenry enjoy prosperity, safety and security. Moreover, it is expected to witness a notable improvement in human security as violent crime will decrease to a great extent and the continent will become free of armed disputes, terrorism, and extremism in addition to the violence based upon gender, drugs, human trafficking, organized crime, arms trade and piracy.

Fifth9 @eqhb` hr ` bnmshmdms sg`s g`r ` rsqnnf bt kst q`k hcdmshsx+ gdqh, s`fd `mc bnl l nmdsghbr

Ax 1/52, Africa aspires to deep root the comprehensive African unity. This includes common history, destination, identity and heritage in addition to the respect of religious pluralism and peoples' will. It, also, aspires that African renaissance would reach its peak where there would be a diversity in culture, heritage, language and religion. In this respect the ideals of African Unity are to be studied in all curriculums besides the cultural origins (heritage, folklore, languages, cinema, music, theatre, arts and Afri-

can creative arts). This will contribute to self-awareness and prosperity. Also, by this way Africa will regain its culture, heritage and works of art that have been stolen before. Moreover, Africa will become a continent where women and the youth play a pivotal role and considered as the engine of change. In this vein, mechanisms of dialogue have been set to communicate with generations to ensure that Africa is a continent that copes with social and cultural change.

Sixth: Africa is a continent where the peoples lead the development by unleashing the potentials of women and the youth

All African citizenry participate hm cdbhrhnm l `jhmf bnnbdqnhmf `kk ehdkcr ne cdudknol dms 'rnbh`k+ dbn, nml hb+onkhshb`k `mc dmuhqnml dms`k(. Ax 1/52, Africa aspires to become a comprehensive continent that embraces all where no child or woman or man would suffer from deprivation or exclusion based on gender, political affiliation, religion, race, residence or age. It will, also, give due attention to children and the empowerment of women so that women could play their roles in all fields. This is in addition to ensuring gender equality in all fields and the eradication of all forms of violence against women, girls and children which includes the harmful practices such as Female genital mutilation and child marriage. Moreover,

it will work on removing all barriers sg`s ghmcdq fhqkr `mc vnl dm enql fdsshmf `bbdrr sn gd`ksg `mc dct b`, shnm `mc nml `jhmf vnl dm nbbtox `s ld`rs 4/$ ne sgd dkdbsdc ot akhb onrsr nm `kk kdudkr `mc hm ansg sgd ot akhb `mc oqhu`sd rdbsnqr-

AX 1/52 the Charter of Africa Union will be completely implemented as regards the rights of children and the youth, where Africa is committed to develop their talents, eliminate unemployment and empower the youth so that they can get access to education, training, skills, activities, technology and money resources.

Seventh9 @eqhb` hr ` l `hmok xdq `mc ` mhmek dmshl kf kna` ko`qsndq

Ax 1/52 Africa is looking forward to becoming a mega socio-economics and political power since it is considered as a a main player and an influential global partner. In this respect Africa confirms the importance of being unified in face of the constant foreign attempts to divide the continent. It, also, calls upon the reformation of the United Nations and other global institutions so as to correct historical injustice since it is the only continent that is not represented in the AU Council.

Elements of Success

Sgd dkdl dmsr sg`s dmut qd sgd rt b, bdrr ne @f dnm` 1/52 are as follows:
- Sgd bnmshnu nt r m nahhy`shnm ne sgd @eqhb` modnokdr `H hmf sn ` bghdud deedbshud bnl l t nhb`shnn `mc

`v`qdmdrr `r qdf`qc r @f dmc`
1/ 52.

- The mobilization of African re-sources to finance and accelerate the transformation process.
- Setting a vision and a responsible leadership in addition to devel-opmental democratic institu-

tions.

- The Reinforcement of regional and continental institutions aim-ing to boost African Develop-ment.
- Highlighting the African values through self-reliance, cooperation and group work.

Egypt celebrates Africa Day

RAMADAN KURANY
Editor Manager of African Perspectives

*E*gypt's belonging to Africa transcends all traditional, historical and geographical dimensions. It is one of the main elements of the Egyptian "identity" that played a pivotal role in forming the cultural characteristics of the Egyptian personality throughout ages.

Egypt's "African" identity as well as its belonging to Africa continent is obviously asserted in the provisions of the new Egyptian constitution approved by 98% of the Egyptian people, i.e. 19 million, 985 thousand and 389 voters, which begins by describing Egypt as "the gift of the Nile and the gift of Egyptians to humanity". Blessed with a unique location and history, the Arab nation of Egypt is the heart of the whole world. It is the meeting point of its civilizations and cultures and the crossroads of its maritime transportation and communications. It is the tip of Africa on the Mediterranean and the estuary of its greatest river: the Nile.

In Article 1, the constitution, also, confirms on such historical values and principles by stipulating that the "Arab Republic of Egypt is a sovereign state, united and indivisible, where nothing is dispensable, and its system is democratic republic based on citizenship and the rule of law. Egypt is part of the Arab nation and enhances its integration and unity. It is part of the Muslim world, belongs to the African continent, is proud of its Asian dimension, and contributes to building human civilization".

By reviewing these constitutional provisions, we can notice that they come within a more comprehensive framework concerning Egypt's relations with Africa called "civilizational unity" which would explain Egypt's annual celebration with Africa Day. This year, in specific, witnessed distinguished and diverse activities, salient of which are:

A Comprehensive National Programme to Highlight Egypt's belonging to Africa

On the occasion of the Foreign Ministry's celebration of Africa Day, which takes place May 25 of each year, the Ministry launched a comprehensive national program to highlight Egypt's belonging to Africa, accompanied by an information campaign in the media and on the social networking pages and accounts of the Ministry to define Egypt's role in supporting African issues. The celebration of Africa Day this year is of particular importance since the

month of May coincides with Egypt's presidency of the Security Council, though its membership in the Council to represent the African continent during the years 2016and 2017, and also intersects with Egypt's representation of North African countries in the African Union's Peace and Security Council during the period from 2016 to 2018.

The spokesperson added that on this occasion the Foreign Ministry will organize an "Africa Day" ceremony on Wednesday, May 25, 2016, attended by the African diplomatic corps, the African community in Egypt, members and directors of African organizations and institutions working in Africa, senior officials and leaders in African work, as well as a group of representatives of universities, centers, bodies, agencies and companies involved in African affairs.

The Foreign Ministry will also raise the flags of African countries and the flag of the African Union with the Egyptian flag on the Foreign Ministry's building while lighting the building (facing the Nile) with the word "AFRICA" to celebrate the day. Moreover, embassies abroad will organize celebrations of Africa Day in collaboration with the African countries to which they are accredited.

On the media campaign launched by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Spokesperson Ahmed Abu Zeid said it will begin on Sunday, May22[nd], 2016, under the theme "Africa is a continent of struggle and hope", and will continue until May 25. He added the first day will be devoted to identifying the founding of the Organization of African Unity, the second to identifying institutions of joint African action; the third to highlighting Egypt's role in Africa, historically and currently; and the fourth to shed light on the most prominent African personalities and important contributions in support of African issues. Finally, the campaign will conclude with an article by Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry to be posted on the Foreign Ministry's blog to highlight Egyptian foreign policy concerns in Africa and the role of Egypt in support of African issues and its vision for the future of the continent.

Moreover, the Foreign Ministry coordinated on the national level an extensive program of 15 events this year to be held throughout the month of May in the framework of Egypt's celebration of Africa Day in cooperation with the Egyptian Parliament and the Ministries of Culture, Tourism, Youth and Sports, Higher Education, and the State Information Service, and in coordination with African embassies, the mission of the African Union and a number of concerned organizations

and associations. These events include "Here is Africa" at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University; the conference entitled "Africa: New Horizons" at the Institute of African Research and Studies; an "African Youth" celebration at the African Society, and the conference of the General Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce, as well as a number of sport, cultural, artistic and social activities and fashion shows with the participation of the wives of African ambassadors, young African youths and the popular teams of the continent's countries.

The Celebration at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science in Cairo University

Entitled "Youth of the Continent…Power of Change"

The Faculty of Economics and Political Science in Cairo University organized the event "here is Africa" for the second year, successively. This year, the event is entitled "Youth of the Continent…Power of Change", which the faculty described , in a press release, as a representation of the continuous due attention given by the faculty to continental interaction. In consistence with the scientific activities of the faculty this year, the event's sessions

tackled the proposals of the African governments as well as the regional and international institutions in dealing with the power of the youth since the Youth represent 65% of the total population of the continent.

The event witnessed the presence of a group of ministries including the Minister of Youth and Sports, the Minister of Immigration, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Minister for Industry and Commerce, the Chairman of the State Information Service, Dr. Abdallah Hamdok the Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Malonga Raphael the Ambassador of Congo Brazzaville in Cairo and the Dean of African ambassadors in Egypt. This is in addition to a number of ambassadors of African countries in Egypt and parliamentarians besides members of the parliamentary committees, the African Affairs Committee and the African Union Commission as well as the African Bank of Development aiming to propose their visions and projects concerning the Youth. The event, also, witnessed the presence of a group of entrepreneurs who became pioneers in business like the Young Entrepreneurs' Organization and the Nile Project to display their experiences in interacting with the continent's youth across borders.

State Information Service (SIS) participates in the Celebration "Here is Africa"

In the framework of the efforts paid by the State Information Service to support and boost the Egyptian-African relations on all levels, SIS participated in the celebration of "Africa Day", which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organizes on the 25th of May, every year.

In this respect Ambassador Salah el-Din Abdul Sadeq, Chairman of the State Information Service (SIS), confirmed the importance of the African dimension in the activities of SIS on both the domestic and foreign levels in recognition of "the African Identity of Egypt" and its civilization belonging to such great continent, which is considered as a pivotal element in the formation of the cultural characteristics of the Egyptian personality.

The Ministry of Youth

The Ministry of Youth celebrates a group of Youth Programs and Activities

The Ministry of Youth and Sports organized a big event under the title "One Continent…One Dream" in celebration of Africa Day, which concomitantly copes this year with the 53rd anniversary of the inauguration of the African Union Organization. This event witnessed the presence of the members of the African diplomatic corps and the African Union Bureau in Cairo, in addition to officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of the African Affairs and the cultural consultant of the Embassy of Chad who headed The African Union this current session. The event included a discussion session on Africa in the past, present and future headed by Dr. Sayed Flefal, Former Dean of the Institute of African Studies and Research and a member of both the Egyptian and the African Parliaments.

"One Belt…One Road"

By Dr. He Wenping,
Professor and Director of African Studies at
the Institute of West-Asian and African Stud-
ies (IWAAS),
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)
Sino-African Relations

*T*he Sino-Africa relationship has had three phases of development in the past six decades:
The first phase ran from the early 1950s to the late 1970s. During this period, both China and Africa focused on political development because of their newly gained independence. The aim of this bilateral relationship was political mutual support, where the new ideology of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism played a distinguished role.

The second phase took place in the 1980s up to the 1990s. During this period, both China and Africa reviewed such ideology and evaluated the economic benefits. In this respect, they realized the importance of both the economic and political benefits of the bilateral development relationship.

The third phase has begun since 2000 till present. It initiated by founding "the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) ", which was formally established at the 2000 Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Beijing in October 2000. President Jiang Zemin, Vice President Hu Jintao Premier Zhu Rongji of the People's Republic of China took part in and addressed the opening and closing ceremonies, also presidents of 4 African countries participated in, namely Algeria, Togo, Zambia and Tanzania, besides the Organization of African Unity (predecessor of African Union), in addition to 80 ministers from China and 44 African states and representatives of 17 regional and international organizations and leaders from business communities of China and Africa attended the meeting.

"One Belt…One Road" Initiative to strengthen Sino-African Relations

One Belt One Road initiative goes back to the idea of the ancient Silk Road that dates back to 2000 years ago, where the nations of Europe and Asia established many trade roads causing the exchange of cultures and that's how the main civilizations of Asia, Europe and Africa became connected.

When Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Central Asia and ASEAN coun-

tries in September and October of 2013, he raised the initiative of jointly building the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road. He, also, proposed the enhancement of dialogue, communication and trade exchange.

Accelerating the building of the Belt and Road can help promote the economic prosperity of the countries along the Belt and Road and regional economic cooperation, strengthen exchanges and mutual learning between different civilizations, and promote world peace and development. It is a great undertaking that will benefit people around the world.

Since 2013, objectives have been set aiming to achieve integrity among the countries of Europe, Asia and Africa in the economic field. On the geographical level, the initiative, also, represents how China aims to interact and integrate within the world economy. This is through the following:

- Setting a long-term route map Aiming Openness for cooperation Coordinating in a comprehensive way
- Seeking mutual benefit
- Establishing new financial institutions , such as Asian Infrastructure Investment bank (ALLB) and BRICS Bank
- Providing financial provisions for the Silk Road with about 40 Billion US Dollars

How is Belt and Road Initiative linked to Africa?

There are two links, one of which connects between the industrial structure amendments in China and the industrial development in Africa. While the other connects between the Chinese Belt and Road initiative and the revival and development strategy in Africa. Both links pave the way for more interaction between Africa and China.

Six projects in the fields of economy, finance, poverty eradication, environment protection, cultural exchange and peace and security.

Three networks: High speed train network, international and regional airlines.

More than half of the foreign aid provided by China will be directed to Africa and the limit of lending will be increased to 40 billion US Dollars.

Doubling the volume of mutual trade to reach 400 billion US Dollars and increasing total direct Sino-investments in Africa from 25 billion US Dollars up to 100 billion US Dollars by 2020.

Ten cooperation plans have been set during Johannesburg Summit(4-5 December 2015) covering the following fields:

Industry

Agricultural and food security

Infrastructure Development

Finance

Environment and agricultural development

Trade and investment

Poverty eradication

Medical care and general hygiene

Culture

Peace and security

Infrastructure… The Main Field for Sino-African Partnership

In order to realize economic development and improve the investment climate in Africa, the Infrastructure of the African countries should be upgraded; as such dilapidated infrastructure is the main hurdle that hinders the economic development in Africa.

According to a 2006 assessment that has been undertaken by the African Development Bank over the requirements of infrastructure in Africa "less than one third of the semi-desert African Countries has electricity. Only 56% of the African countries has clean water. Only one third of the Africans who live in rural areas live near roads. Only 4% of the Arable lands in Africa are irrigated, and in comparison with other remote areas outside Africa, less than quarter the amount of roads for every kilometer is paved." (Harry Broadman, Silk Road in Africa, the New Sino-Indian Borders, World Bank, 2006).

Investments in infrastructure helped boost the African economy through improving the conditions of roads, railways, sports centers, etc. Investments also contribute, in a way or another, in boosting the African economic integration.

On January 27, 2015, China signed an understanding memorandum for cooperation in the fields of the main infrastructure networks and industrialization with the AU. Moreover, within the strategic framework of "Agenda 2063", China will boost its cooperation with the African countries in the fields of railways, high roads, regional aviation and industrialization. China will also help improve the African integration process.

Furthermore, the Chinese financial commitments towards Africa had noticeably increased from US Dollar 1 billion in 2001-03, to US Dollar 4.5 billion in 2007; the year when China granted Africa a finance that is equal to the total sum of money granted by the G8 countries collectively, in order to upgrade the infrastructure of Africa. Currently, such a contribution is worth US Dollar 30 billion.

The Key Chinese Players:

- EXIM Bank (who offered the loan).
- China Development Bank.

Shareholders: including the SOEs (whether on the governmental level or the increasing number on the local level), and the private companies.

- China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC).
- China Overseas Engineering Group (COVEC).
- China National Electronics Import and Export Corporation.

ZTE Corporation.

There are various forms of funds, including commercial and concessional loans, investments, credits and grants lines, in addition to "resources for infrastructure arrangements."

Prominent Projects:

Kenya-Nairobi- Mombasa Railway line. The state-owned China Road and Bridge Corporation was granted the concession.

1st Phase: A line with a total length of 485 km has been extended linking between Mombasa and Nairobi.

2nd Phase: A line with a total length of 440 km has been extended linking between Nairobi-Malaba (Uganda).

Linking Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda and intending to extend a railway line to reach Ethiopia, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

China bears 80% of the total amount of costs: through a commercial loan with an interest rate of 4.1% over 5 years. Furthermore, the Chinese (EXIM) Bank will offer a waiver of US Dollar1.63 billion.

Challenges Facing the Chinese Investments:

- The employment of the local workers and the means of communicating together.
- The technical exchange.

Means of preserving the sustainable development in the infrastructure projects.

- The security risks (murder and theft).

The sustainability of the infrastructure programmes (related to the local ability on building Tazara railway, the effectiveness of the program itself, etc) and finally, the extent of maintaining and preserving the new roads.

Means of benefiting from the economic impact of the infrastructure works as regards the broader social objectives, such as finding jobs and improving the levels of education and the health status of the citizens, etc (exploring the job opportunities that will be generated from the infrastructure programmes).

Linking between the establishment of the infrastructures and the environmental protection.