# Pan-Africanism and the Right to Development in Africa: A Critical Analysis of Agenda 2063

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## Abstract

In 2013, after extensive consultations with stakeholders, the African Union (AU) adopted Agenda 2063 to address underdevelopment and coloniality in Africa. Agenda 2063 is a continental strategic framework that seeks to attain inclusive economic growth, integration, peaceful Africa, and self-determination and is underpinned by Pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism is an ideology set to attain national liberation, economic independence, and a united African continent. Therefore, Agenda 2063 seeks to attain the objectives of Pan-Africanism and calls for Africa's right to development. However, as per the *Second Continental Report on the Implementation of Agenda 2063* (2022), there is minimal implementation of Agenda 2063's First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (2014-2023) by AU members. Therefore, the paper seeks to critically analyse Agenda 2063 as a continental development programme. The analysis is twofold: on the one hand, it determines whether the aspirations of Agenda 2063 are realistic and attainable; on the other hand, it determines whether the implementation of Agenda 2063 will lead to attainment of Pan-Africanism. The paper uses a qualitative and analytical-explanatory approach to collect data.

**Keywords:** *Africa, Agenda 2063, First Ten-Year Implementation Plan, pan Africanism, right to development.*

## Introduction

On 25 May 1963, 32 mostly recently independent African countries came together in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to form the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The formation of the OAU brought the objective of Pan-Africanism of a united Africa to life. However, continental unity had to happen gradually through regional integration because the delegate at the conference rejected the submission by the Casablanca Group, led by Egypt and Ghana, to delink from the West and form the federation of African states (Gariba, 2015). Instead, the delegates accepted the submission of the Monrovia group led by Tanzania and Nigeria that called for regional integration (Bruey, 2017) because of their suspicion of Kwame Nkrumah's perceived designs to dominate Africa and to preserve their sovereignty (Ibrahim, 2013, p. 87). The regional integration process entails countries either from Southern, East, Central, or West Africa voluntarily joining together to pursue common goals in matters of economic development or security to the mutual advantage of all participating states (Asante, 1997, p. 20).

The continental unity was supposed to be a precursor to attaining Pan-Africanism objectives: economic independence and integration. In the OAU Charter and many other continental programmes, such as the *Monrovia Declaration*, *Lagos Plan of Action*, *Abuja Treaty establishing African Economic Community*, *Cairo Agenda*, and *New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD) economic integration and independence were identified as priorities, but they have never materialised. There has been a lack of implementation of continental development programmes by the OAU and African Union (AU) member states. The reasons range from a lack of political will from African leaders and the failure of the AU to ensure adherence by member states to a lack of funding (the AU dependent largely on external donors for funding) (Karbo & Murithi, 2018). Hence, the adoption of Agenda 2063 in 2013, which is underpinned by Pan-Africanism and the African Renaissance.

Agenda 2063 is a long-term strategic framework for the continent for sustainable development, inclusive economic growth, and structural transformation. The agenda derives from the 2013 AU 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration by heads of state and government, in which they committed to economic integration and development and a peaceful and secure continent (AU Commission, 2013a). Agenda 2063 came after mass consultation, and it is a fifty-year plan that is divided into five ten-year implementation plans until 2063. The implementation of the First

Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 started in 2014 and ended in December 2023, and the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan started in January 2024 (Meshashe, 2023). Agenda 2063 calls for the use of Africa's resources for its own development, self-reliance, and the creation of a conducive environment for development (AU Commission, 2015a). Thus, Agenda 2063 as a continental development programme makes provision for Africa's right to development (Ngang, 2017, p. 11).

The implementation of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan is a cause for concern, as AU member states have recorded slow progress in achieving the aspirations and goals, and many of the Fast-Track Projects are yet to be implemented. The Fast-Track or Flagship Projects ought to be implemented during the first ten years of the plan, and their implementation will mobilise and sustain the commitment of the African citizenry to Agenda 2063 (AU Commission, 2015b, p. 4). Beside the Guided Trade Initiative (GTI), there is yet to be the first trade between signatory countries under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), despite the free trade agreement becoming operational in January 2021 (African Policy Research Institute [APRI], 2023). This, together with non-implementation of previously continental development programmes, creates scepticism towards the successful implementation of Agenda 2063 and subsequently attaining the objectives of Pan-Africanism.

Accordingly, the purpose of this paper is to critically analyse Agenda 2063 as a continental development programme, which will help ascertain whether the aspirations of Agenda 2063 are realistic and attainable and whether their implementation would lead to the attainment of Pan-Africanism. This is done using a qualitative and analytical-explanatory approach.

## Understanding Ideas of Pan-Africanism

Initially, Pan-Africanism was a movement that developed in London (Akani, 2019, p. 1367). The first Pan African Conference took place in London in 1900, convened by the Pan African Association led by a Trinidadian lawyer, Henry Sylvester Williams (Adi, 2018, p. 19). The conference was in response to the slavery, colonisation, and exploitation of Africa by European countries. The second conference came years later, in 1919, in Paris after the First World War and during the negotiations for the Treaty of Versailles. Attended by a few delegates

from Africa, the conference drafted a Code of Law for the international protection of natives of Africa and demanded that the League of Nations supervise colonies to prevent economic exploitation by foreign nations, abolish slavery and capital punishment for colonial subjects who worked on the plantations of European colonial powers in Africa, especially in the Belgian Congo, and insisted on colonial peoples' right to education (Adajumobi, 2008). The demands did not call for the rejection of colonialism and the right to self-determination of the colonised people; thus, they were reformist at best.

The third conference followed in 1921 in London and the following month in Brussels, Belgium. In 1923, the fourth conference was held in London and Lisbon Portugal. The fifth one was held in New York in 1927. Throughout, African representation was small, and the conferences continued to denounce racism and imperialism in Africa, and delegates called for local self-government for colonial subjects (Adajumobi, 2008). However, this changed in 1945, when the pan-African conference was attended by African leaders such as Jomo Kenyatta, Kwame Nkrumah, Nnamdi Azikiwe, and Hastings Banda, who led the anti-colonial struggle in their respective countries.

The sixth conference abandoned reformism and called for the independence of Africa from colonialism, continental unity, self-reliance, and economic independence, and promoted the dignity of the black race (Akani, 2019). Moreover, for the first time, the Congress advocated for freedom from foreign domination and political independence that would be followed by complete social and economic emancipation (Adi, 2018, p. 126). The call for the attainment of political power first instead of a simultaneous and overlapping struggle for political and economic power became a miscalculation that led to neo-colonialism and the gradual integration of the continent.

The ideals of Pan-Africanism based on continental unity, self-reliance, and economic independence led to the formation of the OAU (Karbo & Murithi, 2018, p. 16). According to the AU Commission (2023), the OAU was the manifestation of the pan-African vision for an Africa that is united, free, and in control of its own destiny. Akani (2019, p. 1371) agrees that the 1900 events laid the foundation for the formation of the OAU/AU and other pan-African projects. Those who were involved in the 1945 pan African Congress in Manchester—Nkrumah and Azikiwe—were critical of the establishment of the OAU. However, the formation of the OAU never led to continental unity as envisioned by pioneers and proponents of pan-African vision because of

narrow nationalism by African leaders and a lack of political will. Hence the call to reconfigure Pan-Africanism to address coloniality.

The AU Commission (2013b) defines Pan-Africanism as an ideology and movement that encourages solidarity among Africans worldwide. It is based on the belief that unity is vital to economic, social, and political progress and aims to unify and uplift people of African descent (AU Commission 2013b). Harris (2004) concurs, he defines Pan-Africanism in terms of African solidarity, resistance, and liberation with characteristics that are political and cultural (p.20). Due to the divide and rule that characterised colonialism, continental unity, and racial solidarity (including with the diaspora), these are critical for the development and progression of the continent (Marasinghe, 1987, p. 5). Therefore, Pan-Africanism is an ideology for the liberation and development of Africa (Yimenu, 1975, p. 32). As a result, Pan-Africanism and nationalism are mutually contradictory (Jiang, 2021, p. 211). However, the unity of Africa has been slower due to regional integration since the formation of the OAU. This is due to a lack of convergence within and between regional economic communities (RECs) and a lack of harmonisation between RECs and the AU (Gumede, 2021a).

For the liberation of the continent and its people to take place, economic development is critical, especially given that colonialism was underpinned by economic exploitation and accumulation by dispossession, which led to underdevelopment and dependency. Accordingly, Pan-Africanism lays down the foundation for self-determination and economic emancipation and the need to carry out the black economic revolution (Kofi, 1976, p.214). According to Oginni and Moitui (2016), Pan-Africanism seeks to remove the footprints of colonialism on Africa's soil through economic and political emancipation (p. 41). This warrants the need to have the inalienable right to be fully sovereign over natural wealth and resources (Ngang et al., 2018, p. 7).

The sovereignty over Africa's resources for the continent's development is part of the full realisation of the right to self-determination, which refers to the right to development as stipulated in Article 1(2) of the Declaration on the Right to Development (United Nations, 1986). Moreover, the right to development originates in Africa as an assertion of emancipation from colonial rule, foreign domination, and external influence (Ngang, 2017, p. 3). The right to development for the continent can be traced to the sixth pan-African Congress in 1945, when attendees advocated for economic independence and the

formation of the OAU. However, the failure of continental unity has undermined Africa's right to development, which has led to neo-colonialism.

This has led to many scholars (cf. Daudu & Asuelime, 2019; Yimenu, 1975; Oginni & Moitui, 2016; Chimutengwende, 1997; Edozie, 2017) calling for reconfiguration and expansion of Pan-Africanism. They have argued that this reconfiguration of Pan-Africanism is necessary due to globalisation, neo-colonialism, underdevelopment, and the high jacking of the ideology by comprador bourgeoisies. There is a lack of political will among member states of the AU to implement continental development programmes, which they have submitted to multinational corporations. Most African states follow market-friendly economic reforms on the continent and a lack of harmony between regional economic communities and member states and the AU has resulted in the undermining of the pan-African vision (Okhosmina 2009, p. 94; Gumede, 2021a).

Accordingly, Daudu, and Asuelime (2019) argue that the failure to attain these objectives of pan Africanism has led to the idea of the African Renaissance to realise Pan-Africanism's aspirations of total liberation and unity among people of African descent (p. 163). Thus, the African Renaissance is seen as an extension of Pan-Africanism. To ensure the rebirth and unity of the continent, there is a need to reconfigure pan Africanism to survive neo-colonialism inherent in the capitalist, slave-driven and exploitative corporate globalisation being promoted in the 21$^{st}$ century (Oginni & Moitui, 2016, p. 39).

The reconfiguration of Pan-Africanism ensures that the ideology respond to globalisation and seeks the eradication of African marginalisation (Edozie, 2017, p. 11). As a result, reconfigured pan Africanism is based on people-oriented and environmentally sustainable development, self-reliance, economic and human rights, women's rights, freedom of the press and association, probity and accountability, transparency, democracy, a permanent liberation process, and checks and balances in the socio-economic system (Chimutengwende, 1997, p. 30). This evolution from the previous principles of Pan-Africanism takes into consideration that development ought to be sustainable for the future generation, women's rights should be guaranteed in post-colonial governments, and the need for democracy and transparency against corrupt tyrants on the continent. Chimutengwende (1997) further argues that this reconfigured Pan-Africanism would lead to the second

liberation struggle in Africa and stop the neo-colonial process on the continent (p. 25).

Edozie (2017) coined this a new Pan-Africanism that calls for democracy and economic development that is manifested through increased intra-Africa trade (p. 47). This will result in addressing economic marginalisation and democratic stagnation that had seen it reverse the gains of independence, which will elevate Africa to an equal partner globally (Lopez, 2013). According to Edozie (2017), in a neoliberal epoch, Pan-Africanism has become an important tool for resistance to the effects of neoliberalism in Africa (p. 147). Furthermore, this new Pan-Africanism is humanism, which promotes good governance and the rule of law (Oginni & Moitui, 2016, p. 47). The pan African objectives and Africa's right to development are reflected in Agenda 2063.

The description of Pan-Africanism above does not outline how liberation is going to be attained. Is there an economic system that the ideology advocates for to attain liberation? The reconfigured Pan-Africanism does not address this issue either. Therefore, it is inconceivable that the aforementioned objectives will be attained because Pan-Africanism has no clear and rational approach to the socio-economic problems faced by Africans. Even though it shares some traits with socialism, Pan-Africanism has not called for the taking over of the means of production by Africans for their own development. Therefore, Pan-Africanism has not defined a desired future that takes Africans away from capitalism, and its proponents do not frown upon black private ownership (Lawrence, 2023). Agenda 2063 as a continental development programme is not anti-capitalism but seeks to attain African economic development and structural transformation within a capitalist framework.

## The Brief Description of Agenda 2063

The adoption of Agenda 2063 by the AU in 2013 came on the back of underdevelopment, poverty, neo-colonialism, meagre economic growth, and less intra-Africa trade, which were exacerbated by a lack of implementation of continental development programmes such as the *OAU Charter*, *Monrovia Declaration*, *Lagos Plan of Action*, and NEPAD. According to the AU Commission (2015a), Agenda 2063 is premised on NEPAD. The AU Agenda 2063 is a long-term strategic framework for sustainable development, inclusive economic growth, and structural

transformation in Africa. As a vision and action plan, Agenda 2063 is underpinned by Pan-Africanism and the African Renaissance. As a result, it seeks to attain a united, prosperous, and developed Africa that is an equal player and partner on the world stage.

To attain this, the AU Agenda 2063 has seven aspirations that are divided into twenty goals and priority areas. Aspiration 1 seeks a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development (AU Commission, 2015b). Aspirations 2 and 3 seek to unite the continent based on the ideals of pan Africanism and the African Renaissance and create an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law, respectively (AU Commission, 2015a). While aspirations 4 and 5 want to attain a peaceful and secure continent and a strong African cultural identity on the continent, aspiration 6 focuses on youth and women as drivers of development in Africa. Finally, aspiration 7, which is the last one, calls for a continent that is a strong, united, resilient, and influential global player and partner.

The aspirations were further divided into 20 goals and priority areas. Goals 1 until 7 are under aspiration 1 and their focus is on the economy. They advocated for a high standard of living, skill development, structural transformation, infrastructure development, and sustainable development (AU Commission, 2015a). Aspiration 2 include goal 8-10 that advocated for the creation of either federal or confederate united Africa, the establishment of continental financial and monetary institutions and infrastructure development across the continent. Goal 11 and 12 are part of aspiration 3, and they call for democratisation of the continent with human rights, justice, and the rule of law entrenched and the creation of capable institutions and transformative leadership in place (AU Commission, 2015a). Aspiration 4 entails goals 13 and 14 that seek to preserve peace, security, and stability within the continent, and 15 calls for a fully functional and operational African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). Goal 16 is part of aspiration 5 and calls for an African cultural renaissance. For aspiration 6, there are goals 17 and 18, which call for gender equality and youth empowerment, respectively. The last two goals, 19 and 20, are part of aspiration 7, which wants Africa to become an equal partner in global affairs and that Africa must take full responsibility for funding her development. The last goal is critical because many continental development programmes have failed to be implemented because of funding. For instance, one of the reasons for the failure of the *Lagos Plan of Action* was a lack of funding, especially

from donor countries, because the objectives of the plan were contrary to their aims (Ake, 1996).

These aspirations are scheduled to be attained in a 50-year period, divided into five 10-year plans, and goals must be implemented within the 10-year period. The First Ten-Year Implementation Plan started in 2014 and ended in 2023. Each ten-year plan is divided into short-term, 2-3 years; medium-term, 4-5 years; and long-term 10 years (AU Commission, 2015a). In addition to the aspirations, goals, and priority areas, Agenda 2063 has Fast Track Projects, which are supposed to stimulate the implementation of Agenda 2063. The Fast-Track Projects entail the construction of the Grand Inga hydropower dam in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Integrated High-Speed Train Network; the establishment of Pan-African University, African Outer Space Strategy, commodity strategy, African continental financial institutions, annual African farming conference, the AfCFTA, and silencing the guns by 2020. All these had to be implemented in the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan period.

## The Critique of Agenda 2063 as a Continental Development Programme

Some of these goals and the targets that are set to be achieved are unrealistic, but they are mostly attainable with transformative leadership. The failure of continental development programmes stems from a lack of political will for the current leaders, weak institutions and bureaucracy, and over-ambitious targets (le Pere, 2016, p. 13; Gumede, 2021b, p. 5). Firstly, for instance, the goal of Agenda 2063 to eradicate poverty in one generation is unrealistic. The World Bank (2019) contradicts the AU Commission, claim that Africa could be home to 90 per cent of the world's poor by 2030. Therefore, as per Turner et al. (2015), the aim to reduce poverty to three percent by 2030 is unlikely (p. 2). This might be worse considering the impact of COVID-19 on the continent, which led to recession in Africa for the first time in 25 years (World Bank 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted trade and tourism in Africa, in the process undermining the fight against poverty. Secondly, Agenda 2063 aims to reduce income inequality and address unemployment, as well as build on shared prosperity through social and economic transformation of the continent. This would require a move away from market-related economic policies that have perpetuated an export-oriented economy. Most African countries are characterised by

an externally oriented economy; hence, intra-Africa trade only accounts for 13.8 percent of total trade in Africa, a decline from 16 percent in 2021 (African Export-Import Bank, 2023, p. 13). Neoliberalism in Africa has perpetuated the exploitation and marginalisation of the majority of citizens because of accumulation by dispossession. In addition, this has led to socio-economic problems such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment.

Thirdly, the call to eradicate conflict by 2020 that was extended to 2030 due to failure to meet the target is unrealistic without structural transformation in Africa. According to the AU Commission (2020), socio-economic issues such as poverty, economic exclusion, and marginalisation are some of the reasons that lead to conflict in Africa. Therefore, the call for silencing the guns (eradicating conflict) by 2020 without any meaningful efforts to address developmental issues in Africa appears to be a hollow gesture by African leadership. Without meaningful efforts such as addressing socio-economic issues, curbing illegal weapons smuggling in conflict hot spots by protecting the borders, democratisation, ensuring political and economic inclusion, the call to silencing the guns is unlikely to take place. This is visible in the spike of violence in various countries in Africa–South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, the DRC, and Central African Republic (CAR)—despite the adoption of Agenda 2063, which has the potential to negatively impact the implementation of AfCFTA.

Fourthly, the call for democratisation would require dealing with the incumbents that constantly rig the elections and undertake constitutional change to stay in power. Democracy in Africa has to go beyond elections and include popular participation or else democratisation in the current state of the continent is inconceivable. Democratisation would necessitate the establishment of strong and capable institutions and consistent action from the AU Commission to sanction leaders who illegally cling to power. Weak institutions undermine democracy, justice, and the rule of law and perpetuate corruption. Therefore, with the current comprador bourgeoisie in charge, the goals are inconceivable to attain. The fact that the AU is too weak and inadequate to deal with the continent's challenges (Mbeki, 2024) is not helping. Hence, the call to reform the AU.

Furthermore, most of the Fast-Track Projects objectives are overly ambitious and unrealistic. The call for the construction of High-Speed Train Network to crisscross Africa and the Grand Inga Hydropower Dam is unrealistic without access to funding. According to African

Development Bank (2023), Africa needs an estimation of US$130 and US$170 billion annually for infrastructure development, with a huge amount of that money needed for energy infrastructure. This leaves a substantial financing gap of US$68 to US$108 billion (African Development Bank, 2023). It is very unlikely that there will be funding since AU needs donors to fund their operations. There is no detailed strategy on how to fund these big projects from the AU or the leaders of governments and states and, as a result, some of these projects might not be implemented. For instance, in the 1970s, the OAU advocated for a similar project in the Trans-African Highway Project that was supposed to stretch from Mombasa to Lagos Highway via Uganda, the DRC, and other countries, but that project was stillborn because of lack of funding (Ndizera & Muzee, 2018, p. 152). As a result, of all 15 Fast-Track Projects only AfCFTA has recorded the most progress, with 54 members having signed the agreement and 47 having deposited their instruments of ratification as of August 2023 (Tralac, 2023). However, despite the AfCFTA coming into operation in January 2021, there has not been much significant trade under it besides the Guided Trade Initiative. The initiative seeks to fast-track trade under AfCFTA and includes eight countries: Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Tunisia (APRI, 2023). In addition, for other Fast-Track Projects, progress has been slow, and the AU Commission and AUDA (2022) have identified reasons such as inadequate financial and human resources as well as weak domestication of Agenda 2063 in AU member states as causes for slow progress (p. 3).

## The Non-Implementation of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan and its Implications

The successful implementation of Agenda 2063 and the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan is dependent on AU members and regional economic communities (RECs). Member states are supposed to domesticate the plan into their countries' national development plans. Moreover, member states are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating both the process and the outcome of the implementation of the plan (AU Commission, 2015a, p.58). Some of the functions include mobilising resources to launch, adopt, domesticate, implement, monitor and evaluate Agenda 2063 and develop policy guidelines on its design (Muigua, 2019, p. 4). Within member states, municipalities, provincial/regional governments, the private sector, civil society, and

labour, they all have a role to play in the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan. Regional economic communities, in collaboration with their member states and the AU, must facilitate the adoption of Agenda 2063 (AU Commission 2015a, p. 58).

For the short-term (2-3 years) period, member states must introduce Agenda 2063 in their respective parliaments, formulate focal groups or national advisory groups, establish the national planning authority, and define goals and targets to be country-specific (AU Commission, 2015a, p. 77). This is done because countries are at different levels of development; thus, each country receives policies space to formulate policy that suit its conditions and arrive at continental goals and targets (AU Commission, 2015c, p. 7). The medium-term and long-term years included capacity building, domestication of the plan into national plans, and implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan, respectively.

However, not all member states started adopting and planning at the same time. Some countries, such as Kenya, South Sudan, Morocco, Mauritius, Malawi, Equatorial Guinea, Burundi, and Cabo Verde, began the process late. As a result, they were not included in the first progress report on the implementation of Agenda 2063. This is illustrated in their low aggregated score i.e., Burundi has 29 per cent, Mauritania has 11 per cent, Equatorial Guinea stands at 22 per cent all these are off track and did not meet the 2023 targets (AU Commission & AUDA, 2022). The rest, Morocco stands at 37 per cent, Malawi 39 per cent, Kenya, and Mauritius both stands at 45 per cent and South Sudan at 46 per cent. Despite being better than the first group, their aggregated score is a cause for concern, and they did not reach the 2023 targets of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (AU Commission &AUDA, 2022).

A deeper glimpse illustrates that these countries and others such as Liberia, the Seychelles, Sierra Leone, and Namibia, are performing badly in aspirations 1, 2, 3, and 5. This is the result of the subpar performance regarding the goals. Most of these countries have failed to attain the targets for goal 1, a high standard of living and quality of life; goal 2, well-educated citizens and skill development underpinned by science, technology, and innovation; goal 4, a transformed economy and job creation; and goal 10, world-class infrastructure (AU Commission & AUDA, 2022). The failure to meet the 2023 targets for these goals will negatively impact the continent's development aspirations, especially AfCFTA, since the infrastructure backlog is a non-tariff barrier to

internal trade. Infrastructure development required skill development; thus, the attainment of goal 2 is also critical for intra-African trade and the large continental development plan.

These countries' performances, together with regional performances, East Africa stands at 53 per cent of the aggregated implementation score, Southern Africa at 50 per cent, Central Africa at 42 per cent, West Africa at 45 per cent and North Africa 39 per cent have led to a continental aggregated score of 51 per cent against the 2023 targets (AU Commission & AUDA, 2022). Aspirations 1, 3, and 5 show slow progress on the continental level, thus creating scepticism about reaching the 2023 targets of the plan. East Africa and Southern Africa's performance shows that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and East African Community (EAC) are the most integrated regional economic communities (UNCTAD, 2019). The slow pace of implementation of the plan might have negative implications for the implementation of Agenda 2063 and continental development.

The failure to implement the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan by member states and regional economic communities will undermine the structural transformation of the economy on the continent. The failure to transform the African economy will lead to further marginalisation and entrenched economic disparities that might be detrimental to the continent. Further marginalisation and exclusive economic growth might create a platform for conflict on the continent. According to AU Commission (2020), marginalisation, economic disparities and exclusion has underpinned conflict in many instances in the continent. Moreover, the failure to eradicate conflicts, as we have seen with the spike of clashes in various countries, will negatively affect economic growth and trade. Accordingly, conflict in Sudan, Sahel, the DRC, Somalia, and Mozambique has led to millions being displaced thus impacting production and free movement of people and capital. This will negatively impact the implementation of AfCFTA (Aina, 2021). The successful implementation of AfCFTA requires a complementary set of measures, with the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan playing a crucial role. Therefore, without its implementation, AfCFTA might not have the desired impact on the continent's development. The slow progress of the implementation of the Fast-Track Projects, including AfCFTA, will negatively impact the implementation of Agenda 2063 since they are supposed to engender its implementation.

The lack of implementation of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan is an indictment of the utterances of Mammo Muchi (2014) that

Agenda 2063 is a "pretext for African leaders to drag their feet". This is illustrated in the goal post-shifting and relegating African integration and economic development to 50 years ahead (Ndizera & Muzee, 2018, p. 152). This makes it conceivable that Agenda 2063 will be added to the long list of unimplemented continental development programmes.

## The Right to Development and Agenda 2063

The First Ten-Year Implementation Plan calls for transforming Africa's economy through beneficiation and value addition from Africa's natural resources (AU Commission, 2015a, p. 12). Furthermore, it advocates for localization of the economy through the implementation of the Commodity Strategy and the African Mining Vision (AMV) to industrialise and build a manufacturing sector in Africa that will lead to decreasing unemployment rates. Therefore, Agenda 2063 advocates for Africa's right to development. Agenda 2063 advocates for the full realisation of the right to self-determination and the inalienable right to full sovereignty over Africa's natural wealth and resources, as articulated in article 1(1) of the Declaration on the Right to Development. According to Pakati and Matthews (2018) at its core the right to development demands a human centred, holistic approach to the realisation of socio-economic and cultural rights, while attempting to address the underlying causes of poverty (p. 357). This approach is reflected in Agenda 2063, which calls on African states to unite to realise their renaissance and advance the continent's interests (Pakati & Matthews, 2018, p. 357).

However, issues such as corruption and conflict have a negative impact on Africa's right to development (Ngang et al., 2018, p. 6). Then a current crop of leaders has perpetuated corruption and instability in various countries through their power mongering and extending their grip on power via vote rigging and constitutional coups. Therefore, to attain the objectives of Agenda 2063 and pursue Africa's right to development, it requires transformative leadership rather than relying on the incumbents. According to Ngang et al. (2018), unless the numerous anti-corruption initiatives are complemented by credible political will, the right to development will have no meaningful effect on the well-being and standard of living of the people of Africa (p. 6).

Lack of implementation of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan has illustrated African leaders' failure to create conditions for the realisation of the right to development. The comprador bourgeoisie in

government have perpetuated market fundamentalism and policies that have led to austerity measures, privatisation (including government functions that saw the isolation of those that could not pay), and economic liberalisation that led to a massive influx of cheap products. For instance, International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditions for South Africa and Egypt (two of the biggest economies in Africa) to access funds include austerity measures and privatisation (Lewis, 2024; Bradlow, 2020). Ngang (2017) argues that effective implementation of continental development programmes remains problematic due, for the most part, to the dominant influence of foreign stakeholders that ensure safeguarding their interests. Therefore, he argues that achieving the right to development requires mostly sovereignty in domestic development policymaking (Ngang, 2017).

The right to development for Africa is reflected in Agenda 2063 and is attainable. Agenda 2063 seeks to transform and modernise African economies and end the unequal and exploitative economic relations between Africa and the global political economy (Edozie, 2017, p. 147). This call for change is made within capitalist framework that has ensured the continuity of coloniality in post-independent Africa. However, such a structural change is unlikely to take place under neoliberalism, and as a result, there is a need for delinking Africa from neo-liberal globalisation to ensure structural transformation and sustainable development. Delinking involves decoloniality and for Africa to stop being integrated in the global value chain as only the supplier of raw material but to industrialise and increase intra-trade by focusing inward. This will require strong and competent AU that is able to deal with continent's challenges.

## The Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan, 2024-2033

The Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan, 2024-2033 was adopted by the AU Commission in early 2024. This is the second ten years of the 50-year period of Agenda 2063, dubbed 'Decade of Accelerated Implementation'. The slow progress with the implementation of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan has made this second decade important to engender the implementation of Agenda 2063. The AU Commission (2024) has indicated that Fast Track Projects that were not implemented in the first ten years would be moved to the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan. The Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan

is fragmented between seven moonshots that are in alignment with 7 aspirations of Agenda 2063 and has 17 strategic objectives.

According to Meshesha (2023), in the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan there is space for greater focus on preventing violent conflicts, pursuing long-term global partnerships, strengthening horizontal relations of the regional economic committees, and investing in the potential of the AfCFTA. Furthermore, the inability of member states to transform their economies has also created a space for structural transformation of the economy. This is addressed in the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan and they claim it will address joblessness and diversification of the economy (AU Commission, 2024). Diversification of the economy on the continent will improve intra-African trade and ensure that Africa's contribution to the global value chain increases. Moreover, the spike in conflict in Ethiopia, Sudan, Sahel region and the DRC illustrates that the AU and regional economic communities were not paying attention to conflict prevention (Meshashe, 2023). This speaks to the failure to address socio-economic issues that underpin conflict in Africa. Therefore, there is a need for effective Continental Early Warning Systems (CEWS) and African Peace and Security Architecture to prevent and respond to conflict. The AU Commission (2024) has identified conflict, instability, and insecurity as risks and threats to the successful implementation of Agenda 2063 and attaining sustainable development (p. 11). Thus, the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan has prioritised peace and security since they are prerequisites for sustainable growth and resilient development (AU Commission, 2024, p. 15).

The AU Commission (2024) has identified the critical factors for successful implementation of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan, and they include a capable development state, leadership, societal participation, and strategic planning. The AU reform has been prioritised to reposition the intergovernmental organisation to meet the evolving needs of its member states and the implementation of Agenda 2063 (AU Commission, 2024). Transformative leadership has also been identified as a requirement to champion Agenda 2063 implementation across all levels.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper has illustrated that some of the objectives of Agenda 2063 are unrealistic and unattainable, while others will require transformative

leadership at the helms of the AU, RECs, and their member states to ensure implementation. The incumbents have demonstrated their comprador and intermediary nature through the slow implementation of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan. As a result, these comprador bourgeoisies lack political will to implement continental development programmes. This lack of implementation warrants the implementation of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan to address the spiking conflict on the continent, joblessness, and structural transformation. Moreover, the attainment of Pan-Africanism's objectives and Africa's right to development would require a change in the economic system and cannot take place within the capitalist framework as advocated through Agenda 2063.

The paper recommends that there is a need for a strong and capable AU to ensure not only the successful implementation of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan but also to address challenges that the continent faces. Therefore, there is a need for AU reform so that the intergovernmental organisation can reposition itself to meet the evolving needs of its member states and ensure that they adhere to continental development programmes and values (AU Commission, 2024, pp. 11-12). Some of these values include the rule of law and democratisation of the continent, which will lead to change in leadership and transformative leadership that is needed to ensure creating conditions for the realisation of the right to development in Africa. Lastly, harmonisation between RECs and AU and member states and the AU will create a spirit of cooperation that will lead to entrenching continental unity.

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