

African Union Agenda 2063: Dimensions, Goals, the Ideological Framework and Strategies

أجندة الاتحاد الأفريقي 2063: الأبعاد والأهداف والإطار الفكري والاستراتيجيات

Institute of Researches and African Studies – Cairo University

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ملخص

Summary:

Through this article, we will present a critical analytical vision of the AU 2063 agenda, which was recently launched as a developmental framework by discussing the stages of processing, the most important developmental dimensions, the applied objectives, the operational mechanisms and the conceptual framework of this agenda. To highlight the most important obstacles to their implementation.

Key Words:

Agenda 2063, African Development, African Youth, Terrorism in Africa.

من خلال هذه المقال، سنقدم رؤية تحليلية نقدية لأجندة الاتحاد الأفريقي 2063 التي تم إطلاقها في الفترة الأخيرة كإطار تنموي قاري، وذلك من خلال مناقشة المراحل التجهيزية، وأهم الأبعاد التنموية، والأهداف التطبيقية، والآليات التنفيذية، وسمات الإطار الفكري لهذه الأجندة، ولقاء الضوء على أهم معوقات تفيذها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أجندة 2063، التنمية الأفريقية، الشباب الأفريقي، الإرهاب في أفريقيا.

Introduction :

African continent is currently seeking to find strategies and mechanisms that would guarantee full independence and realize sustainable development to all states, sectors and groups. African Union (AU) 2063 Agenda is one of these vital tools that African states sought to use in order to reach such goals and aspirations, as such Agenda stresses the importance of fostering the foundation of mutual cooperation among African countries and of providing an adequate climate for a positive political, economic and social transformation, thus leading to creation of an African environment that would accept political development.

In seeking to understand this development Agenda we can analyze an important research problem and question about: what are AU Agenda goals? What are main dimensions, objectives and strategies of this Agenda? What are the main bases of the ideological framework of the Agenda? How can Africa realize objectives and aspirations included in this Agenda? How can 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 all these questions is inevitable to analyze many aspects of AU 2063 Agenda. That may happen by using System Analysis Approach.

1.Preparation to AU Agenda 2063:

During African Union celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of African Unity, in the summit of May 2013, AU issued a declaration Known as "SOLEMN" which included 8 main objectives of Africa, these aims consist: African identity and renaissance, Support the right of self-determination and combat discrimination and racism, The integration, Economic and social development, Peace and security, Democratic governments, Determination of African destiny, and African's stature in the world. To achieve all these aims, African Union set what is Known as "2063 Agenda" as a future strategy for all Africa, which was ratified at AU Summit January 2015 (*Ndou, 2013, pp. 15-19*).

All African leaders and peoples consider AU Agenda as a key basis for a long-term economic and social transformation and integration for African continent. So African Union Commission prepared and declared the first ten years plan, as a one of five plans for coming fifty years must be adopted by all African states and societies, so we consider the Agenda as the main strategy of African transformation at the next 50 years, and it is based on the accelerated implementation of post and current initiatives of African growth and development, like "Lagos Action Plan", "The Abuja Treaty", "The Minimum Integration Program", "Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PDIA)", "Comprehensive Agriculture Development Programme (CADDP)" and "New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)". This Agenda also

based on the best national, regional and continental practices in achieving development (*Umar, 20214, pp. 89-162*).

There are a number of reasons that motivated adoption of this Agenda, perhaps the most important ones are:

1. Change in global context towards greater communication and relations through the technical and technological revolution, which brought with it an economic and social transformation of a number of global economies, putting pressure on African leaders to adopt the same approach of change and development (*Achieng, 2014, pp. 61-62*).

2. Attempt to return to the commitment of the past development frameworks, AU Agenda is considered as a complementary plan to these frames which emerged in the African continent (*El Fassi, Aggad, June 2014, pp. 4-12*).

3. Africa is United and Strong: it is possible to say that African continent has been able to rally support to this Agenda through the frameworks of unity and integration that are now known at the continental and regional level (*Deghetto, Gra, Kiggundu, 2016, pp. 97-102*).

4. Investment and development opportunities in Africa: many evidences confirm that African continent is abounding of opportunities in investment and development aspects, that because of macro economy strategies and policies, rising commodity prices, the apparent decline in armed conflicts, appearance of "BRICS", and the inflow of foreign investments due to improve investment environment and laws in many African states (*Deghetto, Gra, Kiggundu, 2016, pp. 92-93*).

5. Political will: now in Africa, there is active political will to make a radical change at all levels, and there is popular support for this will (*African Union, January 2015, pp. 1-16*).

2. Pillars and Structure of AU Agenda 2063:

Agenda 2063 is considered a new initiative in the joint African work; it came ten years after transformation from Organization of African Unity (OAU) to African Union. It is regarded as a quantum leap in the aspirations and hopes of African peoples, so this Agenda consists of seven pillars, which were designed to achieve a sustainable development, these are (*The African Union Commission, September 2015, pp. 168-180*):

1. Africa enjoys the prosperity based on comprehensive growth and sustainable development.
2. Africa is an integrated continent that is politically unified and depends on principles of African unity as well as African vision.
3. Africa is a continent where good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and rule of law prevails.
4. Africa is a continent that maintains peace and security.

5. Africa is a continent that has a strong cultural identity, heritage and common ethics.
6. Africa is a continent where the peoples lead the development by unleashing the potential of women and the youth
7. Africa is a main player and an influential global partner.

As mentioned before, many initiatives preceded Agenda 2063, some of which from OAU and others from the AU. Agenda 2063 is based on such previous experiences. However by reviewing this Agenda and comparing it to other previous African initiatives, we can notice that it is distinguished by the following characteristics (*Adesanmi, 2015, pp. 1-5; Dr. Bah, 2016, pp. 15-18*):

- ❖ 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 evolution system to follow up every stage.
- ❖ 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 years priorities of AU Agenda are all about essential continental projects, which are designed to kick-start the journey towards 2063, as first 10-years plan covers the period 2013-23. This plan mainly concentrates on economic aspects; paying due attention to the pioneering projects that constitutes first category enlisted in the first 10-years plan of 2063. such projects are represented in the integrated network Agenda, the TGV High Speed Train, electronic African University, drafting a strategy for commodities, establish a free-trade zone by 2017, adopting the freedom of individual, 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 (*Deghetto, Gra, Kiggundu, 2016, pp. 96-99*).

Second category of this plan includes what is known 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 importance of the agriculture developments, 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 on entrenching foundations of national ruling, developing the infrastructure, providing peace and security, applying the foundations of industrial transformations in industrial transformations, paying due attention to science, technology, culture, arts and sports (*Gamerer, 2016, pp. 4-27*).

So we can mention that the most important **traits of Agenda 2063** are (*DR. Bah, 2016, pp. 15-18*):

- Giving due attention to education as well as formations of cadres and leaders to be able to face the difficulties and challenges of both presents and coming stages.
- Connecting all African capitals and commercials centers to high speed transport network; especially railway and air transport, to facilitate the movement of peoples as well as goods and accelerate the growth if intra-African trade.
- Launching a common African passport in July 2016, at 27th AU summit in Kigali, Rwanda which is considered a step forward towards African integration and free movement.
- Establishing an annual African forum to discuss developments and constrains as well as measures to be taken to realize the aspirations and goals of Agenda 2063.
- Establishing continental free trade area to significantly accelerate growth of intra-Africa trade.
- 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 African citizenry to clean and affordable electricity.

3. The Main Goals and Strategies of AU Agenda 2063:

AU Agenda includes various African goals, hopes and aspirations, which, if would realize, will lead to qualitative leap in a short period, especially with the existence of applied strategies in this Agenda, which may be summarized at:

- i. Africa aspires to become a prosperous continent, that has the necessary means and resources to enjoy the prosperity and comprehensive growth by pushing the wheel of development through poverty eradication and socio-economic transformation aiming to provide a high standard of living for all peoples, and ensure that every citizen receives quality education and

skills so as to achieve a knowledge society (*Dr.Zuma, January 2014, pp. 2-8*).

ii. Agenda 2063, also, looks forward to changing the cities and settlement into cultural and economic centers supplied with a modern infrastructure, where people can have access to basic necessities of life including adequate housing, water and sanitation, energy, public service in addition to information and communication technology (*Dr.Farid, 2016, pp. 20-21*).

iii. AU Agenda seeks to transform the economic 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 productivity as well as added value, which in return contributed to national prosperity and food security(*Dr. Farid, 2016, pp. 21-23*).

iv. Africa is eager to participate in the global efforts paid to lessen climate change and to support the political atmosphere aiming to achieve sustainable development on continent level. So Africa should speak with one voice and have unified objectives when expressing its position and interests concerning climate change. Also Africa should adopt equitable and sustained utilization and management of water resources to achieve socio-economic development and regional cooperation(*The African Union Commission, septembre 2015a, pp.14-17*).

v. Africa is an integrated continent that is politically unified and depends on ideals of African unity as well as the African vision. This political unity of Africa will be the communication of the integration process which includes free movement of people, establishment of continental institutions and achievement of economic integration. Africa should establish institutions, measures, laws, and infrastructure which facilitates the movement of peoples, capitals, goods and services by 2030, these tools should include necessary infrastructure to support growth, African integration, technological transformation and intra-trade and economic development, such as: high speed train networks, roads, maritime and air transport(*The African Union Commission, septembre 2015a, pp.40-45*).

vi. Through 2063 Agenda Africa would have deepened culture of good governance, democratic values, gender equality, respect for human rights, justice and rule of law. Africa will become a continent of institutions, and 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 (*Nkenkana, 2015, pp. 41-53*).

vii. Africa is a continent that maintains peace and security: by 2020 there will be adequate mechanisms to achieve peaceful settlement for disputes in Africa. There for Africa aspires that by Agenda 2063 it would be able

to deep root the culture of respecting human rights, democracy, gender and ethnic equality, integration, peace and security, and the continent will become free of armed disputes, terrorism, and extremism in addition to the violence based upon gender, drugs, human trafficking, organized crimes, arms trade and piracy (*the African Union Commission, septembre 2015b, pp. 14-17*).

viii. Africa in a continent that has a strong cultural identity, heritage and common ethics, so Africa aspires to deep root the comprehensive African unity and common destiny. It, also, aspires that African renaissance would reach its peak where there would be a diversity in culture, heritage, language and religion, so in all curriculums should be a part about the ideals of African unity. This will contribute to increase self-awareness and prosperity, in this vein, mechanism of dialogue have been set to communicate with generation to ensure that Africa is a continent that copes with social and cultural change (*African Union, septembre 2015, pp. 7-18*).

ix. Africa is a continent where the peoples lead the development by unleashing the potentials of women and the youth: 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. Agenda 2063 will give due attention to the participation of all groups in decision making to determinate the future of this continent. This is through ensuring gender equality, eradication of all forms of violence against women, girls or children and recovery all barriers that hinder these groups from getting access to health and education. This is may be achieved by implementing the charter of African Union(*African Union, septembre 2015, pp. 8-9*).

x. Africa must be a key player and an influential global partner: Agenda 2063 confirms the importance of have Africa as a major power in all fields at various levels, and of being unified in face of the constant foreign attempts to divide this continent. Africa calls upon correcting of the historical injustice since it is the only continent is not represented in the Security Council by a permanent state with the Veto Right(*African Union, septembre 2015, pp. 9-10*).

All these objectives and strategies were ensured by many elements as determinates for Africa success in achieving that. These elements include ((*Dr. Farid, 2016, pp.24-25*):

- Continuous mobilization of African peoples aiming to achieve effective communication and awareness as regards in Agenda 2063.
- Mobilization of African resources to finance and accelerate the transformation process in all Africa.

- Setting a vision and responsible leadership in addition to developmental democratic institutions.
- Reinforcement of regional and continental institutions aiming to boost African development.
- Highlighting the African values through self-reliance. Cooperation and team work.

4. The Ideological Framework of AU Agenda 2063:

Although AU 2063 Agenda includes macro applied aspirations and objectives of all African peoples, it is governed by many beliefs and determinates which are consisting the ideological framework of this Agenda, and this is framework can be discussed through the following pivots:

A. Effect of the historic ideological pattern: many would consider that effective African vision and orientation and attempts of finding a unified African identity are the main ideological base through which various African stances and developments can be explained. Furthermore, some consider that the advocates of such visions are the one who control African present and future, these visions were obvious in the conference of Pan Africanism at Manchester, 1945, it was also obvious in the establishment of OAU, 1963, and at the outset of the 3rd millennium goals which were settled by OAU, and the transformation from OAU to AU; one of decisive visions that govern all the continental development in Africa (*The African Union Commission, Septembre 2015a, pp. 15-16*).

It seems that AU 2063 Agenda is affected by the same previously mentioned histories and ideological tributaries. In this respect, African leaders applied a vision aiming to realize "an integrated and flourishing Africa enjoying peace", 2063 Agenda highlighted the importance of awareness and seeking to African Unity, and this unity should be the target which the African countries should seek to reach in the future (*Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2016, pp. 22-30*).

This Agenda also called for a concordance concerning shape of the continental government by 2030, stressing on importance of supporting such an integrated approach through communication networks, transportation infrastructure, and maritime and transportation logistics, among others, in abide to build a main infrastructure for an integrated continental entity that will express the universal status and effect of Africa (*Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2016, pp. 30-40*).

B. The priority of economic development: through AU Agenda, African leaders seek to make Africa an economic power through manipulating the personal potential and capabilities, paying due attention to the sectors that constitute. The locomotive of the economic of the development states such as transportation, energy and telecommunication sectors, in addition to asserting the importance of establishing a continental free-trade zone, which will be the

means of doubling the African inter-trade by 2022. All these policies and notions of African leaders assure that the economic development is a priority over all other development aspects. This is obvious in most of the items of 2063 Agenda, which confirms on importance of achieving flourishing within one generation through intensifying social and economic transformation in Africa, and upgrading infrastructure in a manner that would facilitate providing all essentials of living for Africans (*Ndou, July 2016, pp. 28-40*).

AU Agenda encourages building an African capital market. It also highlights importance of mobilizing and manipulating African resources and of benefiting from various experiences in order to build an African methodology that can affect the radical transformation in the continent, that will help in creating an integrated economically continent that depends on the intensity of inter-trade increasing quota from the international trade and building international institutions that entrench such integration in a manner that would affect an overall growth and sustainable development (*The African Union Commission Septembre 2015b, pp. 15-21*).

C. Peace, Security and Stability: AU Agenda raised the slogan: "by 2020 all guns will be silenced"; referring to the fact that Africa aims to set foundations of real peace among its peoples and states. This should be done through mechanisms of peaceful settlement of conflicts and spreading culture of peace and benevolence among children and youth (*Deghetto, Gra, Kiggundu, 2016, pp.97-102*).

AU Agenda had also stressed on an importance of maintaining security through abandoning causes of conflicts and wars, adhering to values of coexistence and fraternity, elevating moral and human values and preventing all forms of organized crime of drugs and human trafficking and arms trade. In abide to guarantee peace and to protect welfare of their citizens through a mutual defensive, security and foreign policy (*Security Council of United Nations, Septembre 2016, pp. 4-18*).

D. Independence and Ability to Transform: through the Agenda, Africa seeks to get an independent personal transformation by exploiting the advantages of African states; thus rendering AU Agenda as a vision for the continent. That would realize the objectives of its peoples relying on their self-determination. Thereupon, this Agenda provides suitable environment and lays a foundation for the African common action (*Le Père, 2016, pp. 18-20*).

In this respect, it paid due attention to main incentives that help to achieve sustainable development for Africa. In this vein, African leaders sought to merge national plans with the continental objectives and aspirations as a means to assert a fact that Africans have the same aspirations and objectives; they also highlighted an importance of the popular role in implementing and following up this Agenda in addition to coordination between this Agenda and previous plans and programs. Furthermore, AU believes that such an Agenda contributes to drafting a future of the continent

on the long term (*The African Union Commission, September 2015a, pp. 106-109*).

5. AU 2063 Agenda and Terrorism:

Terrorism is one the dangerous threats which face African states and peoples, and threatens relations within and among these societies. The extremist groups exploit the African environment which characterized by poverty, poor development, high foundation and manifestations of pluralism and weak religious culture, thus facilitating recruitment of young people. Therefore, many terrorist groups appeared in many African countries, like what is happening in North African countries, and what appeared also in Somalia, Uganda, Central African Republic, Kenya, the Republic of Sudan, Nigeria, Niger, Mali...etc. these militants terrorist groups are gaining strength from a number of internal and external parties, both financially and intellectually support (*Adriana Lins de Albuquerque, January 2017, pp. 15-48*).

African countries are trying to eliminate such extremists groups, and fight this terrorist ideology, but they realized that a societal confrontation alone would not be enough in Africa, it needed to confront terrorism at the intellectual, economic, security and social levels as well. So Agenda 2063 tried to pay due attention to youth in particular, seeking to empower them, and to integrate them into African societies. Agenda also tried to eliminate all manifestations of marginalization suffered by some groups within these societies, so as not to be an entrance exploited by extremist groups to spread their terrorist thoughts and ideology in Africa (*United Nations, 2016, pp. 2-5*).

AU 2063 Agenda is concerning with education as a corrective and development approach to the circumstances and life of African human being, through which is trying to establish and instill a culture of peace and tolerance inside African children and youth. This Agenda emphasized an importance of civic education, rejecting religious one which was a reason of emergence of many extremist groups, that is consistent with the containment of the Agenda a clear vision and emphasis on the importance of the search for common cultural identity that establishes and anchors the values of co-existence (*The African Union Commission, September 2015a, pp. 35-42*).

AU 2063 Agenda also emphasized that such attempts should be made with emphasis on an importance of popular community participation in political decision making, with the aim of creating what is known as social responsibility of peace and security, which provides these communities with the intellectual immunity against destructive visions that can infiltrate through the extremist views in African societies (*the African Capacity Building Foundation, February 2016, pp. 22-40*).

African countries, through 2063 Agenda, are trying to stimulate African self-will of transformation and building up economic growth, which

can contribute in preventing manifestations and forms of terrorist and organized crime in African societies, which will ensure safety, stability and protection of the interests of all citizens in the continent. The Agenda tries to create and find an institutional structure that enable states to work together to confront terrorism, and to counter the spread of terrorism thoughts and groups within Africa by many tools, where African states tried to neutralize a role and support of external parties, and to prevent the support of some African political systems to such groups, the continent will be able to achieve the aspirations of the AU Agenda, and to prevent the spread of such extremist thoughts and groups in Africa (*The African Union, Septembre 2015, pp. 8-10*).

6. Main Challenges Obstruct Implementation of AU Agenda:

Agenda 2063 is facing many challenges; we can summarize these challenges in the following points:

- ◆ The gap between the goals and the capabilities, where the goals are huge the human resources and capabilities are limited (*Dr. Bah, 2016, pp. 18-19*).
- ◆ Bad experience with previous initiatives: previous African initiatives failed to achieve the 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 (*Dr. Bah, 2016, pp. 18-19*).
- ◆ Political Will: although such will had increased lately, but still needs to be enforced to become consensus, without a consensus political will, all the provisions of the Agenda 2063 will remain theories in vain (*Dr. Bah, 2016, pp. 18-19*).
- ◆ Trained Cadres: all projects of Agenda 2063 need trained manpower. The question raised here is: does Africa have trained cadres or who could be trained to accomplish the huge projects of the Agenda on time? We sure that Africa has human resources; however most of them need to be trained and developed (*Dr. Bah, 2016, pp. 18-19*).
- ◆ Definite Time Schedule: usually, the time frame of the projects doesn't suite the potentials, and thus work is not delivered on time. The same obstacle faces Agenda 2063, all the projects need measurements and infrastructure that would take more than the time set in their schedules because there are many issues that have to be resolved first (*Economic Commission for Africa, 2016, pp.94-110*).
- ◆ Project Financing: AU Agenda includes a financing plan for its projects depending on African financial resources, foreign direct investments, the help of west partners and international financial institutions, all of these resources put an implementation of AU Agenda 2063 under many conditions (*Economic Commission for Africa, 2016, pp.94-110*).

Conclusion

Finally, we can say AU 2063 Agenda is a new continental development framework includes many aspirations and goals which designed to make the lives of African peoples and states better at political, economic, social, cultural and educational level. It is also applicable response to the demands, and it is ambitious vision and plan which designed to make radical changes in African present and future through the true understanding and consciousness of African history and experiences, and by motivation of popular participation, with an important role to external partners, and use of regional organizations. All of these factors will contribute in changing the status of African development, with new framework to deal with women, children, youth and derivate and excluded categories, that is will enable Africa to reach Sustainable Development.

Although African leaders tried to use all material, ideological, human and economic resources to obtain specific goals which are included in 2063 Agenda, and there are many thoughts are moving this political will, especially that African States are hoping to use this Agenda to face all forms and manifestations of terrorism in all African regions, but there are many obstacles and challenges which are facing the implementation of 2063 Agenda, that may eliminate the African ability to do all plans, goals and aspirations of this Agenda in time, beside external effects that may put challenges to prevent effective implementation of 2063 Agenda, in order to keep Africa a source of raw material, cheap labor force and oil without real development.

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