

*Letter from the Editor-in-Chief*

My Dear Friends and Colleagues:

We are once again bringing you a set of thought-provoking and cutting edge research on issues that are central to Africa's development. Making Africa central and relevant in global affairs has always been the journal's main objective. We believe that this platform will continue to accentuate the issues that matter to Africa's place in the world, at large. Our approach has been simple: to make Africa's struggle with development known to Africans and the world outside of Africa and to celebrate the successes and the gallant efforts of the positive contributors to Africa's development. We embark on this noteworthy cause through scholarship and intellectual discourse that scholars of Africa have deemed essential.



In this vein, we provide you with the 2010 Winter A issue of JSDA. In the political arena, the North African countries, Egypt, Morocco, and Libya, have shown the resiliency of people in demanding change for their development. These are lessons from the North African people. It is often bewildering to see, in modern times, leaders of the nations leave offices shamefully and in disgrace. There is no doubt that "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Dictatorships are failing in North Africa and the rest of Africa is watching. Hopefully current African leaders would take seriously the importance of democracy in governance. There is no place in the world for corrupt governments. The lesson from Egypt is summed up in this statement from Yahoo! News:

*There are no Mubaraks on the Forbes list of the world's richest people, but there sure ought to be. The mounting pressure from 18 days of historic protests finally drove Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, from office, after three decades as his nation's iron-fisted ruler. But over that time, Mubarak amassed a fortune that should finance a pretty comfortable retirement. The British Guardian newspaper cites Middle Eastern sources placing the wealth of Mubarak and his family at somewhere between \$40 billion and \$70 billion. That's a pretty good pension for government work. The world's richest man – Mexican business magnate, Carlos Sim, – is worth about \$54 billion, by comparison, Bill Gates is close behind, with a net worth of about \$53 billion (Rick Newman, February 11, 2011, p. 2).*

Some of the papers in this issue have focused on the significance of good governance, the rule of law, and transparent leadership. They have eloquently argued for attention to be paid to good governance. The launch of the African Union in Durban, South Africa nine years ago was a point in time when Africans thought peace and security in Africa was going to finally be realized. Today, it is a point of concern that Africa has not realized (completely) this dream. There have been some success, but these are few and far in between. The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) is supposed to handle the issues relating to conflict in Africa. Sustaining peace and security

in Africa is of great importance. Insecurity and chaos on the continent do not allow for sustainable development and they handicap economic growth. This issue of the JSDA has papers that link instability with the unsustainability of African communities. At the launch of the African Union in 2002, it declared 2002 to 2011 as the decade for capacity building in Africa. Educational, agricultural, environmental, economical, political, and socio-cultural efforts on the continent have been difficult for a number of reasons and this issue of the JSDA has made tremendous efforts to wrestle with these problems.

The problems emanating from harnessing natural resources are enormous. The African landscape is dotted with environmental problems that are the direct result of development attempts. The need for more stable and sustainable energy supply in the industrialized nations has resulted in the haphazard exploration and exploitation of natural resources in the developing countries. African countries have suffered as a result of the poorly planned and poorly executed exploitations of natural resources. Some of the oil pipe lines that were constructed with money from the World Bank have failed in places, like the Cameroon, and have caused serious environmental problems and human casualties. Many problems arise because environmental laws and regulations are weak and are hardly enforced and bank policies on construction are being violated. These policies are meant to protect natural habitats and indigenous peoples. In many cases, environmental impact assessments are not conducted for large development projects.

Africa's major cities, such as Lagos, Accra, Kumasi, Kano, Abidjan, Dakar, Tripoli, and Johannesburg, are experiencing high levels of pollution due to pollutants in the air. These pollutants are the direct results of urbanization, increased transportation, construction of business centers, factories, and industries. The degradation of water, air, and land ecosystems is quite troubling in a city, like Lagos. Some papers in this issue of the JSDA, such as Ajibola's, Mabaso's, Abdul's, Ayinde's et al., Simbarashe's, Aju's, and Chumhura's, all discuss different aspects of concern about environmental matter.

In the face of the entire environmental and economic decline, some African governments are planning to build nuclear power plants in order to meet their energy needs. The only two nuclear plants in Africa are in South Africa. Senegal has pledged to build a nuclear power plant by 2020. It is estimated that Algeria, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Tunisia, and Uganda are hoping to construct their nuclear power plants by 2020 in order to keep up with the growing demand for energy. South Africa might add at least six new power plants to the existing two plants in the country. These plants would be constructed in partnerships with the Western countries. Nuclear technology is being sent to Africa, which produces 18% of the world's uranium, from China, Japan, Italy, and South Korea (*Foreign Policy: Global Politics, Economics, and Ideas*, December 2010, p. 14).

The aim of these countries is to provide energy to the poor. This is certainly one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In order to enhance human development across Africa, it is imperative for the energy for the poor initiative to succeed.

One country that is steadily using oil revenues in building infrastructures for planned development is Equatorial Guinea. Investment in roads, ports, airports, and housing projects have increased tremendously over the past few years. The country is being developed strategically from the ground up. The comprehensive development plans creates jobs as the construction is being done. Primary industries help create secondary and tertiary industries, which enhance the creation of jobs. The local workforce is being engaged and the capacity to contribute to development is encouraged through appropriate education and training. The reconstructions of the basic infrastructures have enabled the prosperity of the nation. The beautiful thing that is happening in Equatorial Guinea is that the revenue that is being realized in the oil industry is being directed to creating a sustainable infrastructure development that would encourage economic growth and sustainability of the environment. A holistic approach to economic development is being undertaken in Equatorial Guinea. There is a step-by-step approach to development. The country is developing on its strength and it is engaging its people. Education of its people takes center stage by investing in health, investing in an excellent banking system, and developing its coastal regions in a strategic manner to respect the integrity of the environmental constraints (*Foreign Policy: Global Politics, Economics, and Ideas, Special Advisory Section*). The country has a new approach to sustainable growth, and the rest of Africa, especially the natural resource-endowed countries, have a lesson to learn here.

The papers in this issue amplify the development struggles of the countries of Africa, but more importantly, they offer solutions and ideas on the next steps in Africa's development or they expose the problems from local, regional, national, and global perspectives. We certainly hope that these articles are useful in the development efforts across the continent. Your comments are always welcomed. Thank you for your loyalty and support.

*Foreign Policy: Global Politics, Economics, and Ideas.* (2010). "Africa Goes Nuclear". December: 14.

*Foreign Policy: Global Politics, Economics, and Ideas.* (2010). "Equatorial Guinea: The Rebirth of a Nation". *Special Advertising Section.* December. p. 1-15.

Newman, R. (2011). *How Hosni Mubarak Got So Rich.* Yahoo! News. Retrieved from <http://finance.yahoo.com/news/How-Hosni-Mubarak-Got-So-usnews-3723955512.html?x=0>, on February 12, 2011

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