

THE 18TH STEVE BIKO MEMORIAL

LECTURE

**PAN AFRICANISM, CLASS AND THE STATE IN
SOUTHERN AFRICA**

by

Ibbo Mandaza

UNISA, 9th November, 2017

❖ The Chancellor of the University of South Africa, the
Honourable Thabo Mbeki,

❖ Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High

Commissioners here present, Honourable Members of
Cabinet and Premiers here present,

❖ Members of the Biko Family – Mrs Ntsiki Biko, Mr

Nkosinathi and Mrs Lebo Biko, Mr Samora Biko, Mr
Hlumelo and Mrs Sandisiwe Biko,

❖ Members of the Board of Trustees of the Steve Biko

Foundation – Mr Ishmael Mkhabela and Mrs

Mkhabela, Professor Bennie Khoapa and Mrs Khoapa

❖ Honourable Members of the Provincial Executive

Committees here present

- ❖ Chairman of the Council of UNISA, Mr Sakhi Simelane
and Members of Council
- ❖ The Vice-Chancellor of the University of South Africa,
Professor Mandla Makhanya
- ❖ Vice-Chancellors of other Universities
- ❖ Members of the Diplomatic Corps here present
- ❖ Members of the Academic Staff of UNISA and other
institutions
- ❖ Students of UNISA and other institutions
- ❖ Family members, my close friends and comrades from
the sub-region and beyond, including those from
Zimbabwe and here in South Africa
- ❖ Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

❖ All protocols observed

Let me begin by congratulating the Biko family for the honorary doctorate that Steve Biko has received posthumously this evening; and through you, President Mbeki, the Chancellor of UNISA, and Professor Mandla Makhanya, the Vice Chancellor of UNISA, I wish to congratulate and thank UNISA for this great honour bestowed upon Steve Biko. It is most deserved and, certainly, will have enhanced the stature of this great institution.

I thank you sincerely for affording me on this occasion this rare honour and privilege to present the 18th Steve

Biko Memorial Lecture today. More so, since I am also a contemporary of Steve Biko, along with some of the comrades here, one or two of whom, no doubt, were behind this invitation. Nepotism, perhaps, but I am delighted to be here nonetheless, for an evening during which I can also wax nostalgic about our role - and that of Steve Biko in particular who remains our indelible symbol - as student activists in the 1960's and 1970's.

Yes, I was part of that group that constituted the Zimbabwean offshoot of the Black Consciousness Movement in 1972, the same year during which I served as President of the Student Union at the then University

of Rhodesia. As such, I was invited by Steve Biko, and his team which included the likes of Ranwedzi Nengwekhule, Barney Pityana and Stringley Moodley, and Bennie Khoapa to the Conference of the South African Student Organisation (SASO), to be held in Turfloop in May 1972. Regrettably, I was not only refused an entry Visa by the South African mission in Salisbury, but also simultaneously slapped with a “Prohibited Immigrant” order. Incidentally, I was somewhat surprised to discover that the ban was still in place, some 17 years later in 1989, when, at the invitation of the Black Lawyers Association, I was to address their forum at the Holiday Inn, Jan Smuts

Airport. Thanks to my sister, Mojanku Gumbi, who was there to meet at the immigration desk at Jan Smuts Airport and spent some two hours or so negotiating on the phone with the authorities in Pretoria, I was eventually afforded entry but on the condition that my first visit to the Apartheid South Africa would be confined to the vicinity of the hotel at Jan Smuts Airport. So, I presented my speech, spent the best part of the day with my learned friends, and then back to the airport for the flight back to Independent Zimbabwe. No doubt, the invitation to the forum of the Black Lawyers Association was an echo of the aborted one to the SASO Conference in Turfloop, 17 years earlier; and,

likewise, it would have been the same Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) comrades who will have been responsible for my first visit to this great and beautiful country, even though far less ceremonious than today's occasion.

Forgive me for waxing nostalgic, but my association with the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) has been an enduring one : ever since my first telephone conversations with Steve Biko and others here in 1972; the re-union with the BCM comrades in Gaborone in 1977 when, thanks to Ranwedzi Nengwekhulu who was in the same department , I landed my first job as

Lecturer in the Department of Political Studies at the University of Botswana; my role, on the strength of my position as a senior bureaucrat in post-independent Zimbabwe, in facilitating the relocation of, and granting asylum to, several BCM members, including Mosibidi Mangena, who had fallen out with the Botswana authorities in the early 1980's; the invitation by the BCM/AZAPO colleagues for me to present the Steve Biko Memorial Lecture in Johannesburg on 11 September 2004; and, of course on this day, as I am again most privileged to honour and remember my brother Steve Biko in this 18th Memorial Lecture.

This has been a relationship developed on the back of our shared struggle for the liberation of Southern Africa, in the acknowledgement that all our liberation movements, including the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), have been part and parcel of that struggle that has brought us this far in our sub-region; and that, obviously, Steve Biko is no lesser a hero than the many heroes and heroines that have perished in, or survived, the struggle for freedom and political independence in Southern Africa.

I would have met Steve Biko in person in Botswana in 1977 were it not for his incarceration and subsequent

death at the hands of the apartheid killers on 12 September, forty years ago. Therefore, the murder of Steve Biko on 12 September 1977 marks both the historical watershed of those heady days of a liberation struggle which had now enveloped the entire Southern African region, including South Africa itself: between, on the one hand, the backdrop of the political developments of the 1960's and the early 1970's, including in particular, the intensification of the armed struggle in Zimbabwe as the north eastern frontier was opened in late 1972, the Portuguese coup in May 1974 and the subsequent attainment of political independence in Mozambique and Angola in June and

November, 1975, respectively, and the Soweto Uprising of June 1976; and on the other , the turning point towards the 40 years , from 1977 to this day , as we converge here to honour and remember him this evening, while reflecting on both the successes and failures of Post-Liberation Southern Africa.

Hence the title of my presentation today: **Pan-Afrikanism, Class and the State: An Overview of the 40 years since the murder of Steve Biko.** In doing so, I wish to preface my presentation with emphasis that Black Consciousness is a child of Pan-Africanism, particularly to the extent that the latter informed and expressed

itself through the African nationalist struggle against imperialist and colonialist domination. Pan-Africanism itself was broader in import, with its origins in the New-World Pan-Africanism of Marcus Garvey and W.E.B Du Bois, and subsequent influence in colonial West Africa. As J Ayodele Langley (1973), in his book, **Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa, 1900-1945**, states :

“With the exception of South Africa, West Africa was the only region in colonial Africa where a nationalist intelligentsia of lawyers, merchants, journalists, doctors and clergymen successfully sought to share political power with the colonial

ruler, and took upon itself the duty of disseminating political ideas and values” (p.1)

With the passage of time, (Pan African) ideas and organisations grew in the context of the relationship between Pan-Africanism in the old days and the new Pan-Africanism of New-World Afro-Americans, and thereby establishing Pan-Africanism as a global movement. Incidentally, some of us here were delegates to the 6th Pan-African Congress in Dar es Salaam in 1975, as well as the 7th Pan-African Congress in Kampala in 1994. We with pride, recall the theme: **Don't Agonise! Organise!**

Therefore, Pan-Africanism has to be understood in terms

of the historical, political and economic factors that also defined the process whereby Africa and Africans were relegated in the international division of labour, the European expansion that began in the fifteenth century and saw Africa “discovered” and (under) “developed” as a geopolitical concept within the global parameters of a voracious Caucasian onslaught; the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade through which Africans were dehumanized, pillaged and transported as mere commodities across the oceans; the colonial era during which the Mother Continent was balkanized, parceled out among the European powers at Berlin in 1884, and whole peoples dispossessed of their political sovereignty, economic rights and sheer capacity;

the current neo-colonial period during which, notwithstanding the gains made with the attainment political independence and the formal end of apartheid and attendant establishment of the nation-state-in-the-making, still find Africa and the Africans at the bottom of the heap of human existence and development.

Needless to add, as Angela Davis highlighted in the 17th Steve Biko Memorial Lecture last year, not only the “hidden” but also the overt “structural dimensions of racism” persist worldwide, along with the “economic, cultural and generally institutionalized forms of racism.”

Not least in the USA itself, and, it would seem, as partly a white back lash to the election of the first African President, Barack Obama. So, who would have thought, given the advances made on the back of the Civil Rights Movement in the USA, or the formal end of apartheid in 1994, there would be need for the “Black Lives Matter Movement” today in North America, or the recent racist affront in which the old South African flag was flaunted and its anthem recited in open defiance of a not so new South Africa?

It is a solemn reminder that Black Consciousness is far from being obsolete, prompting also that profound warning by Malcolm X in 1960:

“No matter where the black person is, he will never be respected until Africa is a world power.”

This, in brief, summarizes the goal of Pan-Africanism. But here is to contextualize this around the theme of this lecture, especially to the extent to which white settler colonialism and apartheid in Southern Africa gave rise to a Pan-Africanism, in essence not apart from the West African and African-American variants of it, but also subsequently requiring a protracted armed struggle which, in turn, mobilized and fed into the Pan-African movement itself, the OAU and its Liberation Committee, and the Frontline states of Southern Africa. Behind all this

is considered also the following: the enduring relevance of Black Consciousness in this historical conjuncture, particularly in Southern Africa; the imperative of deep regional integration in our sub-region, as both a reflection of the political economy of Southern Africa and a building block for the African Union and its goal of Pan-African unity and economic development; and, above all, the relationship between this class, the petit and comprador bourgeoisie, that inherits power at independence and with the formal end of apartheid, the African nationalist ideology and the State. This is the old debate as to whether the African nationalist bourgeoisie enterprise is both feasible and desirable in this post-colonial phase, or

what the ANC here in South Africa describes as the national democratic revolution. The latter, too, will be subjected to scrutiny, to determine both its relevance and utility in characterizing post-apartheid South Africa itself.

Now to a brief political economy of Southern Africa which developed historically, economically and, to some extent, even politically, on the back of imperialist colonialist domination on the one hand and, on the other, the liberation struggle which, by its very nature and conduct, required a supranational Pan-African solidarity across the

continent, through the OAU's Liberation Committee and the Frontline States, the outcome of which has been the SADC in particular.

Therefore, the foundations of contemporary Southern Africa are implicit in the following mission statement by Cecil John Rhodes, on the eve of the Berlin Congress (of 1884) which, as already stated, divided African among the European colonialists, but unleashing a combination of historical, economic and political forces which have since

then carved and shaped the sub-region:

I was in the East End of London (a working class quarter) yesterday and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches which were just a cry for 'bread! bread! and on my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism... My cherished idea is a solution of the social problem, i.e. in order to save 40 000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories

and mines. The Empire, as I have always said, is a bread and butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialist.

In short, it was on the back of Rhodes' dream of a British empire - "from Cape to Cairo" - that South Africa became both the launching pad for the colonization of the neighboring countries some of whom arrogantly carried his name, "Rhodesia", and the economic powerhouse around which the South African Customs Union (SACU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) revolve, accompanied by the legacy of unequal and uneven development, between and within each of the countries that constitute these organizations.

Yet, it is also true that, today, no country in this sub-region can account for itself without reference to the others; and South Africa in particular, and, to a lesser extent, also Zimbabwe, has to remember, always, that she owes this level of economic and social development, as much to the blood and sweat of her citizens, as to that of the millions of the brothers and sisters from the neighboring countries that today constitute SACU and SADC. Yesterday, it was mainly through the supply of cheap labour to the mines, farms and factories of apartheid South Africa and Rhodesia. Today, the entire region depends on South Africa as the market place; the supplier of goods and services, as evidenced by the

financial institutions, mining houses, industrial complexes and supermarket chains all of whom have spread their tentacles across SACU and SADC; and now, as the workplace for many an economic refugee, skilled and professional workers unable to find lucrative employment in their own countries, as well as traders and students.

This is neither an exaggeration of the level of interdependence between South Africa and its neighbors, nor a warning to the agents of Xenophobia among us. It is merely an acknowledgement of the ties that bind us,

historically, economically, politically and culturally.

As history informs us, and recalling in particular the words of Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution whose centenary we marked two days ago on 7th November, there is a dialectical relationship between imperialist/domination and resistance/revolution. Not surprisingly, the anti-imperialist/ colonialist struggles of the twentieth century drew inspiration from the Bolshevik Revolution: from Europe itself, to China, Vietnam and Cambodia in Asia, to Cuba and Nicaragua in Latin America, and to Africa itself. But it was in Southern Africa in particular that this struggle was played out from the 1960's onwards, delicately poised

in a Cold War in which the Western world stood behind apartheid and white settler colonialism, while the Socialist bloc, led by the Soviet Union and China, supported the liberation movements of South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Zimbabwe and Namibia. Therein grew the impression, but less the reality as will be illustrated shortly, that the liberation struggle in Southern Africa was based upon Marxist-Leninist ideology and its goal of a Socialist Revolution. At any rate, this was the form, but less the content, that inspired the younger generation of Southern Africans from the 1970's onwards, as thousands upon thousands of youths crossed borders to join the armed struggle which was being waged under

the liberation movements based mainly in Dar-es-Salaam, Lusaka, Maputo and Luanda.

As it has turned out, the liberation struggle of Southern Africa was less about a Socialist Revolution than an African nationalist quest to resolve its own concept of the National Question, to be resolved through the attainment of political independence, or the national democratic revolution, as some of you call it here in South Africa, as the foundation of the nation–state–in–the–making; and the attendant tasks of resolving such economic **questions** as the **land question**, an improved standard of living for

the working people, democratization of the education and health systems, resolution of the **gender question**; and in general, the restoration of the dignity of the African person after centuries of white domination.

Therefore, the race question remains a dominant category in any contemporary analysis of the African nationalist struggle, not least in the Southern African context, and given the complex intersection of race, colour and class, on the one hand, and, on the other the current conjuncture in which the Cold War has dissipated, the Socialist dream rendered illusive, and international capital, at least for the time being, reigning almost

supreme. All this has a significant bearing on our subject this evening, namely the relationship between Pan-Africanism and/or its corollary of African nationalism and Black consciousness, the class question which has tended to be concealed behind the race issue, and the State which is caught up in the complex but no less capitalist interaction between the comprador bourgeoisie, within and outside the State, and international capital. We will return to this shortly, but suffice to state, for the time being, that is bold and commendable that my younger brother, Blade Nzimande and the South African Communist Party continue relentlessly to remind us all about what might have been, had our liberation

movements been able to stick to the letter and text of Lenin's **State and Revolution**. Hence the relevance of the observations by Thabo Mbeki, during his address on the occasion of the centenary of O.R Tambo's birthday on 27 October 2017. He was stating only the obvious, if we acknowledge, which we must, that the African Nationalist mission is essentially a class project:

“The ANC contains within its ranks people who are absolutely contemptuous of the most fundamental values of the ANC, at whose centre is a commitment to serve the people. These are people who only see the ANC as a step ladder to enable them to access

state power for the express purpose of using that access for self-enrichment.”

And didn't Chris Hani remark as follows on the eve of the new dispensation, on 29 October, 1992:

“What I fear is that the liberators emerge as elitists who drive around Mercedes Benzes and use the resources of this country to live in palaces and to gather riches’.

Yes, I wish also to join you all in celebrating and remembering O.R Tambo on the occasion of the centenary of his birthday. No one who had the privilege to know this great man would fail to remember him as the warmest of human beings, the ultimate father figure, a rare

intellect. The more the reason we must recall his warning, in December, 1990, on his return to South Africa:

“The struggle is far from over: if anything, it has become more complex and therefore more difficult...”

And as he handed over the ANC at that first conference inside South Africa, he added:

“I have devotedly watched over the organization all these years. I now hand it back to you, bigger, stronger--intact. Guard our precious movement”.

I am grateful to Thabo Leshilo for this indelible reference:
I found it on his Facebook page on 27 October, on O.R's
birthday.

It is not enough that we should lament at the crisis we find ourselves in Post Liberation Southern Africa, not least when our class, the inheritors of state power, are so culpable as to be blind to the obvious causes of the current malaise. We have to be courageous and honest in retracing our steps, including a solid analysis of the nature and content of the struggle itself, its class character, the political and socio-economic realities attendant to this transition, and the spectre of globalization in this Post-

Cold War era. Without a sound analysis of the crisis, there can be no hope of resolving it. Tomorrow, some of us here meet at the Mapungubwe Institute which is co-hosting with the SAPES Trust an international conference on **Post-Liberation Southern Africa: Problems and Prospects**, to be held in Harare on the occasion of the SAPES Trust's 30th Anniversary which was, coincidentally, given O.R's birthday, 27th October, having been founded on that date in 1987. The main proposition herein is that it is more than opportune for a systematic audit to be undertaken on Post-Liberation Africa; and this must include the following: an interrogation of the romantic, if not also self-serving on the part of the liberators and their supporters

in the northern hemisphere, expectation that the struggle would necessarily yield better models of political governance than has been the case in the rest of post colonial Africa; an analysis of the relationship between the nature and content of the struggle in each of the five countries under scrutiny, on the one hand, and, on the other a political economy of each of the societies all of whom are characterized by continuities, as opposed to transformation, in the economic and social realms; and the consequent rise of a comprador class of leaders, in both the state and private sectors, and the hegemonic oversight of international capital.

As I have already alluded, we must transcend the tendency to lament at the apparent failure to fulfil the goals of the liberation struggle. Instead, we must interrogate the historical and ideological foundations of those goals and objectives, the economic and social realities inherited at independence and/or at the formal end of apartheid; and assess the strategic, technocratic and leadership requirements for a transformative agenda in the era of the dominance of international capital.

It is now more than four decades since the attainment of political independence in Mozambique (25 June 1975) and Angola (11 November 1975), nearly four decades in

Zimbabwe (18 April 1980), nearly three decades in Namibia (18 March 1990) and more than two decades since the formal end of the Apartheid in South Africa (27 April 1994). So, with the passage of time and, indeed, the blatant evidence of “failure” on the part of the Post-Liberation agenda right across the region, so, too, has the veil of mystery, awe and romance dissipated over the nature and content of the struggle itself. For example, can there be established a relationship between the pathologies of the struggle - including the pre-dominance of militarism and/or security over politics, brute force as a means of instilling conformity and blind loyalty to authority and leadership, “witch hunting”, abuse of

women and vulnerable groups, ethnic politics, etc. – on the one hand; and, on the other, in the political and economic pitfalls so rampant in the post-liberation era: a leadership given to impunity, a disdain for democratic and constitutional governance, the importance of national institutions, the separation of powers, accountability, and norms and values – leaders who are so predatory and compradorial by nature?

In conclusion, I would like to consider briefly this issue of this comprador bourgeois class that has captured the state in our countries and dominated our economies, in partnership with international capital.

Mao Tse Tung, in his “Analysis of the classes in Chinese society”, states that;

“A comprador, in the original sense of the word, was the Chinese manager, or the senior Chinese employee in a foreign commercial establishment. The compradors served foreign economic interests and had close connection with imperialism and foreign capital.”

Therefore, the origins of the comprador bourgeoisie in Southern Africa in particular, and Africa generally, is to be found in the nature and impact of white settler colonialism and apartheid itself which directly and

economically impeded and pre-empted the development of an indigenous national bourgeoisie. True to their class, African nationalists have tended to view such legislation as the Land apportionment Act of 1930 in Rhodesia, and apartheid itself in South Africa, as largely racial when, in reality, it was economic warfare wherein the indigenous people were reduced to classes of landless peasants, wage earners in the capitalist economy, and an amorphous petit bourgeois or middle class composed of school teachers, nurses, labour supervisors, journalists, lawyers, doctors, petty traders and educated elites generally. The combination of this historical backdrop and a relentless globalisation has virtually killed the prospects of post-

liberation economies producing a national bourgeoisie that would serve as an anchor around which to define both the national economy and the national interest. Whatever potential there has been, for such a class to emerge, has been reduced to a predatory and parasitic class of a comprador bourgeoisie that straddles both public and private sectors in post-Liberation Southern Africa as a whole.

Therefore, by definition, our comprador bourgeoisie is a class not rooted in production; on the contrary, it thrives on back handers, fat rewards for crooked contracts and shady deals, official corruption and looting of state coffers; not to forget the “casino economy” era in

Zimbabwe during which the comprador bourgeois class thrived through the agency of the Central Bank, but at the expense of the economy in general and collapse of the currency in early 2009. Or, here in South Africa, the complaints by Thabo Mbeki reference to which was made in the foregoing, the spectre of state capture and corruption.

By nature, the comprador bourgeoisie is a class in itself and for itself; it is bereft of a national vision nor national interest, mainly because it is incapable of conceiving such; and' more significantly, it is a class that lives for today, uncertain about tomorrow and hence the looting

becomes a frenzy. These are nothing less than thieves, says my Zambian brother, Gilbert Mudenda.

In all this, the post-liberation State becomes the theatre of comprador intrigue. As the inheritors in waiting, the African nationalists and their class associates were always easy prey for international capital in its quest for new representatives and agents to facilitate its enterprise in the post-liberation dispensation. So, “state capture” begins even before Freedom Day itself, in the role of such multinationals as Anglo-American Corporation, Tiny Rowland’s LONRHO, in the “compradorization” of many of the key African nationalist leadership. But perhaps, not surprisingly, it has been largely through the extractive

industries of Southern Africa that the comprador bourgeoisie has grown during this post-liberation period, expressing itself as it has, not only through the members of the political and military-security and bureaucratic hierarchy, and in collaboration with their counterparts in the private sector and in multinationals at home and abroad; but also in the apparent conflation between power, corruption, and wealth.

The \$15 billion diamond scandal in Zimbabwe is, perhaps, the most symbolic in this sad spectacle that has become a cancer in our sub-region, and yet could be only the proverbial tip of the iceberg for what is clearly an integral

component of the State, at least the securocrat one in Zimbabwe. To quote Ken Yamamoto:

“A President discloses that mines essentially owned by his government looted \$15 billion and the newspapers don’t even make it front page news with screaming headlines is a sign of a country that has lost its soul. With the stolen \$15 billion Zimbabwe could have provided its economy a huge bailout, funding refurbishment of railways infrastructure, construction of power plants, construction and expansion of national highways, a bailout to the sinking industrial sector, provided clean water in cities, funded alternative

agriculture and processing industries and invested in clean energy... What matters is that with the stolen \$15 billion, Zimbabwe could have provided its economy a huge bailout, funding refurbishment of railways infrastructure, construction and expansion of national highways, provide working capital to the sinking industrial sector, provide clean water in cities, fund alternative agriculture and processing industries and invested clean energy. It could also build at least ten power stations providing over 1000 MW of power for local consumption and export. It could also build hospitals and import the latest technology and

Mugabe himself will not need to fly to Singapore and Dubai for medical treatment. It's selfish to stash national wealth in foreign countries and then fly there for medical treatment. The stolen \$15 billion could transform Zimbabwe overnight, taking millions out of street vending back into the productive sector. Sadly, while he was touting ZIMASSET, Robert Mugabe did not tell Zimbabweans the secret he knew, that billions had been and were at that material time being siphoned out of the country. He only revealed this when he turned 92. The question that keeps nudging my mind is how do human beings become

so bland and lose their souls to such a point. How does Mugabe sleep well at night? How do his coterie of praise-singers and bootlickers live with themselves? How do you preside over such theft and keep a straight face? How do you disadvantage the 99% of the population and not bat an eyelid. What kind of people live between the two rivers – Zambezi and Limpopo? How do people continue to eat, drink, sleep, go to work, vend, or even make merry in the midst of such scandal.

So, the State has become the vehicle and agency for primitive accumulation and predatory conduct on the part

of the class that inherits it. This is what happens when a bourgeois State model is inherited but without a national bourgeoisie. Here, a comparison between our situation in Africa and that which prevails in the bourgeois democracies after which our own states are modelled. George Bush or Barack Obama serve as representatives of the national bourgeoisie in the USA, and on exit from the White House, return to the corporate world or, as in the case of Bush, to the oil company which the family has owned for more than 200 years. In Africa, you enter the State House either as a former school teacher, liberation movement bureaucrat or security aide, but with virtually nothing but the clothes

one is wearing; accumulate wealth in the course of your tenure as Head Of State, and in most cases, do everything possible to remain therein, for life, or risk becoming homeless, jailed or exiled, that is if you allow yourself to be voted out.

So, here are some anecdotes to our narrative before I conclude. When Kenneth Kaunda lost the election to Chiluba in Zambia in 1991, Mobutu of Zaire was heard to remark: “Kaunda losing the election? How? That's stupid!” Well we all know how the Mobutu regime ended, with him dying in exile in Morocco.

On Kaunda's part, here is a rare example of a democratic transition in Africa but also of the selflessness, on the part of that generation of leaders that include Nyerere, O.R. Thambo, Mandela and Kaunda himself. I had the opportunity to visit President Kaunda at State House in Lusaka in 1989, in the course of preparing the manuscript on the History of SADC. After breakfast, the President took us on a tour of the State House complex, including the golf course therein. At the end of it, I was left with the distinct impression that President Kaunda regarded State House as his very home, till his last day. Subsequently, I cautioned my colleagues some of whom are members of the Sapes Trust network but also the founders of the

Movement for Multiparty Democrats (MMD) in Zambia: in the event you win the election, I said, you might have to build a new State House for Chiluba and leave Kaunda where he is, or find a new house for the outgoing President. My remarks were met with scornful laughter: Kaunda has probably several houses at home and abroad, was the response.

Well, the reality was that Kenneth Kaunda had known no other home or house than the State House in Lusaka and the several state lodges scattered around Zambia. Were it not for a colleague who provided him shelter at a house in Roma township in Lusaka, the old man would have been

homeless until, brought to their senses, several years after his defeat at the polls in 1991, the government provided, him and his wife the residence in which he lives today. But don't forget how Chiluba tried to exile the old man, that since he was born in Malawi from where his parents had come to Zambia as missionaries in the late 1920's, Kaunda was an 'alien'.

I should add that the moral of the story about an outgoing President being threatened with homelessness has since not been lost in the neighbourhood. Where current incumbents only had erected the most expensive of private residences and mansions at home, but also, we are

informed through the media, he arranged for the purchase of outrageously pricey properties abroad, including here in South Africa.

CONCLUSION

So, given the backdrop of post-liberation Southern Africa so far, there is the inescapable conclusion that the African nationalist era, inclusive of the national liberation movements, have long served their purpose as the agency for the attainment of political independence and/or the formal end of apartheid. As a class project, it is both historically pre-empted and ideologically constrained from taking us further than we have come so far.

More than that, it has turned out to be naive, if not self-indulgent and downright presumptuous, to have expected that this class of leaders that inherited state power could have served as the anticipated vanguard, the substitute for the national bourgeoisie, through which to drive the national development agenda and enhance the fortunes of the nation-state-in-the making. It is an understatement to conclude that the post liberation phase so far has been a resounding failure, especially on the economic transformation front. Therefore, as in the rest of post-independence Africa, Kwame Nkrumah's dictum that "Seek ye first the political kingdom and all other things will

be added unto you”, now rings hollow in the face of the “pitfalls of national consciousness” that Frantz Fanon warned about already in the late 1960’s. So, even the ‘political kingdoms’ themselves have lost their gloss, increasingly tarnished by a breed of clueless leaders, mavericks and megalomaniacs. And so the mass our people, the **Wretched of the Earth**, as Frantz Fanon described them even as the hope and expectations for freedom were contagious in the 1960’s and 1970’s, remain largely disenchanting and almost helpless, in the face of States characterised less by the commitment to democratic governance and progressive economic and social development, than by crude and backward forms of

mass regimentation, as opposed to genuine mobilisation, mainly in the interests of the indefinite incumbency and veneration of the “Big Leader”.

What is to be done?

First, the need to reform the State in the context of political and constitutional reform generally. In doing so we need to take account of the dynamics in each of the countries of post liberation Southern Africa. Last year, just as the contradictions within the securocrat state in Zimbabwe were becoming sharper and the process of its self immolation was accelerating, some of us proposed the National Transitional Authority (NTA). This involved

the idea of a group of selected non-partisan patriots and technocrats taking over from the executive, operating as a Cabinet for a period of 2 years during which political and economic reforms would be implemented, and reporting to Parliament under a model representing the best possible separation of powers practice. On the economic front, this would include a Reform and Reconstruction Programme led by technocrats and experts and informed by the post precedents elsewhere in the world.

This was an ambitious proposal, one more likely at the stage at which the State has all but collapsed, internecine conflict has had its toll, and national security threatened

to the core, than when the incumbent government still has the will to go on regardless, and the formal opposition is more obliging and complicit than given to open challenge and confrontation. As one of our Elders (who will remain nameless, for now) remarked last year: “There is hardly any country in our sub-region which does not qualify for an NTA but, equally, not one State will buy the idea.”

But the idea of the NTA does include some of the key elements attendant to the much-needed reform of the State: progressive constitutions and constitutionalism; adherence to the principles and practices of the

separation of powers, including an accountable executive, a vibrant Parliament and a fiercely independent judiciary; restoration of national institutions, independent and non-partisan; and the respect of the rule of law, democratic discourse, and progressive social development.

A close examination of the problems that afflict the state in our continent generally points to the institution of the “Executive President’ as being at the very centre. This has produced the “Big Man” syndrome, all powerful, mostly unaccountable and given to impunity. Therefore, I would agree with Peter Anyang’ Nyong’o of Kenya who, in his presentation of the 4th Pan African Lecture at Sapes Trust

on 28th September, 2017, recommended the abolition of the “Executive President” in our constitutions as a critical first step towards the reform of the State. It is true that even the institution of Prime Minister can become a temptation for the abuse of power in the hands of a reckless leader. But, in historical retrospect and given current precedents, the potential for a Prime Minister to get away with it, is much less than in the case of the Executive President.

Second, the imperative of economic transformation. With respect to South Africa in particular, this raises the subject of the national democratic revolution, a term borrowed

from Lenin's "State and Revolution" and thereby implying the first but pre-requisite stage for the Socialist Revolution. As I have alluded earlier, the concept of the national democratic revolution is not only pretentious and self-indulgent on the part of our ANC comrades, but also historically, politically and economically out of sync with the realities of South Africa, except if it denotes the current stage during which there have been commendable advances made with respect to the institution of democratic discourse with the end of apartheid, respect for the rule of law generally, the separation of powers under which the executive has been

given a run for its money and, so far, the “Big Man” syndrome pre-empted.

So, the problem relates really to the economic realm in which the new dispensation has so far lacked the capacity to institute the required transformative programme. Clearly, the earlier strategy, which appeared to inform the Thabo Mbeki era, of trying to forge an alliance between the white bourgeoisie and a would-be emergent black bourgeoisie on the back of the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) Programme, appears not to have yielded the expected results; and, as a result, fed the latter (BEE) into the production mill of the comprador

bourgeoisie. So, the white bourgeoisie remains largely intact across the economy, not least in the agricultural sector where, given the historical and economic legacy of apartheid and the attendant urbanisation over the decades, there has not been as much pressure for the resolution of the land question as has been the case in Zimbabwe.

Herein lies the burden of history and the accompanying backdrop of an economy almost impervious to change and transformation, not only in South Africa but throughout post-liberation Southern Africa. In the face of this, and without the requisite policy interventions and strategies,

even that which my brother Thandika Mkandawire calls the **democratic development State** agenda appears illusive. However, the Malaysia experience, or nearer home, the Ethiopian and Rwanda models, can help to inform the kind of the Economic Reconstruction Programme that is so urgent in post-liberation Southern Africa, provided the principles and the spirit of the democratic developmental State are kept central. The latter, sadly, is largely absent in the Rwandan and Ethiopian models, with an emphasis only on a thorough-going and accelerated economic transformation programmes, led by a technocratic leadership and implemented by hard-nosed experts and technocrats.

Third, any national programme cannot be sustained on its own, especially given the current processes of economic globalisation in which economies of the world are regulated and structured from a single centre of financial capital. It therefore becomes necessary to re-envision the Pan-African Agenda in the context of increased and deeper regional and continental integration, which takes into account both the general Pan-African viewpoint for a continental unity but also examines the internal specificities of the different regions which could be utilised to implement meaningful integration.

I refer you here to the Sapes Trust's Colloquium of 2000 and the publication thereof, **Pan-Africanism and Integration in Africa**, edited by Ibbo Mandaza and Dani Nabudere (2002). I want to conclude with two references to this work.

First, Kwesi Prah's assertion that African neo-colonial states are the very contradiction of Pan-Africanism. He argues that they are neither nation-states nor nations. In his view, they are simply states, neo-colonial states whose political, cultural and economic structures have from birth been linked in imitation and subservience to the interests of the former colonial and other metropolitan powers.

Therefore, to base regional integration on these states amounts to no more than an assumption that there is a historical viability for the neo-colonial state as a departure point for African development, renaissance, or advancement.

I differed slightly with Kwesi Prah in the debate that engaged among the best minds that Africa has produced. I recommended, and still do, that SADC should now transcend mere economic cooperation in order to pursue “deep” integration, on the basis of a shared history, as I have outlined herein, and political solidarity, through

“Supranationalism” by which I mean Pan Africanism. And I quote.

“This is because Suprationalism and Pan Africanism here requires the need to transcend the arena of “national interest” because the latter will, in effect, only be enhanced through some sacrifice of the principles of sovereignty, in the pursuit of regional economic reciprocity. In this regard supranationalism is akin to deep integration; it is the pooling of sovereignty on a wide range of policy issues, which can be the basis of a political union or the Federation of Southern Africa, as a building bloc towards the realisation

*of the goals and objectives of the African Union,
and on the basis of which Africa can take its place
as an equal partner in the global community.”*

So, yes, there is light at the end of the tunnel, provided that all of us, especially the younger Africans on this continent and in its Diaspora, persist and intensify the struggle, subscribing thereby to the Pan-Africanism slogan, to which Steve Biko would have subscribed: **Don't Agonize! Organize!**

I thank you!