

CHEIKH TIDIANE GADIO

President of IPS, Former Foreign Minister of Senegal

Thank you very much, Thierry. Thanks for all the work you do organising events like this, where we can get together to discuss international issues, and thanks for including Africa, because that's not easy. We have participated in many international events where the word Africa wasn't even mentioned, even though it has a key place today in the fight for global security. At the Institut Panafricain de Stratégies, we point out that Africa is gradually becoming the epicentre of global terrorism. Apparently, many people do not realise that yet. Two years ago, the newspaper *Le Monde* published figures from a study finding that many of the world's 34,000 terrorism victims were in Africa, including over 6,000 people killed by Boko Haram, meaning it's much deadlier than ISIS for the people of the Lake Chad basin.

Africa has something we call the infernal square, with al-Shabab in Somalia, terrorist groups in Libya, AQIM and other groups in Mali and the Sahel and Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin. Terrorist threats and activities now directly target 22 African countries. Of the continent's five regions, only Southern Africa has been spared for the time being, and we pray that continues. Besides terrorism, Africa faces two other serious epidemics, or serious crises, in any case. The criminal economy, especially the narcotraffickers who have overrun the continent, overrun whole regions. And yet unfortunately we reduce the problem to a country like Guinea-Bissau, calling it a narco-state. That's an oversimplification to avoid facing the real problems.

We think narcotraffickers have infiltrated the governments and defence and security forces of many West African countries, changing the nature of our economy. You're also aware of the problem of arms trafficking and trafficking in human beings. The other major problem we have is the migration crisis, which is draining Africa's lifeblood. One day, somebody said that more young Africans will have died in the desert than in the Mediterranean. That's a chilling thought, but some people think it and have theorised it.

Africa has several conflict zones with very serious crises: the terrorism crisis, the criminal economy crisis and the migration crisis. Those conflict zones are Somalia, South Sudan, Nigeria, Libya, Mali, the Sahel, Nigeria and the Lake Chad basin with Boko Haram. In addition, we have what we call the bloc of the lasting crisis in governance: DRC, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau and CAR. Beyond those observations, the real problem worth discussing or deeply analyzing is this undeniable truth: Africa has no response to these crises. Put another way, let's say that Africa has no home-grown response to those threats and to the serious security crisis. The United States, the world's leading power, created a coalition of 60 countries to fight terrorism, a deep, serious, multifarious threat. But Africa as such has not shown any leadership on its own defence issues, and does not seem to have sized up the scale of the security challenge.

I think it's time for a paradigm shift, for Africa's friends and Africans themselves to speak another language. Some say things are looking up here and there in Africa, there are countries with a 10% growth rate, Africa is on the move, the economy is moving, etc. But they're overlooking that we have real problems. That does not help Africa. Being Africa's friend means being able to tell Africa the truth. A friend can criticise you. A friend has no right to attack you. If criticism sounds like an attack, it has been very badly worded. Africa's friends must see that its underlying problem is lack of leadership, lack of good governance and lack of vision.

Here is what we think at the institute: Africa's tragedy is a lack of strategy. Africa has none. Africa does not know where it's going. It started out with the Lagos Plan, one of the world's best development plans ever, but rather hastily put it aside and adopted the Abuja Treaty. A few years later, that was also pushed aside and the African Union's Vision and



Missions was taken up. That plan had the same fate as its predecessors. It was quickly replaced by NEPAD. After NEPAD, now we have Agenda 2063, an almost unprecedented agenda in the history of Humanity: Africa is giving itself until 2063 to solve all its problems! We often bitterly joke that people who sign 50-year plans must promise to be here in 50 years to see how they worked out. The plan is deeply problematic because Africa is giving itself a hundred years, from 1963 to 2063, to accomplish what South Korea did in perhaps two decades. In 1960, South Korea, Senegal and Ghana all had the same level of development. Today, South Korea's GDP is the same as the combined GDPs of 25 African countries in a common market that includes countries of North, East and Southern Africa. That's absolutely unacceptable.

That is why I am ending on this point: African countries should acknowledge that none of them, taken individually, has solved the basic problems of development. The agricultural crisis has not been solved, yet that is essential because sovereignty begins with food sovereignty. Education, health, infrastructure, an embryo of industrialisation, nothing fundamental has been solved in any African country taken individually. Nigeria, once the giant of Africa, which at one point boasted the continent's biggest economy, has been seriously weakened by the crisis you know about and by Boko Haram. Chad, which I praise in every international meeting I attend, made a sacrifice by going to Mali to make a contribution, by going to Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon to keep the Sahel region from collapsing. Chad has done a lot for Africa, yet its economy has almost been brought to its knees and it can no longer self-finance its operations. I am calling on the international community. It is incomprehensible that Chad, the only African country that took charge of security issues and made a commitment to the entire continent, has been punished by a lack of assistance, support and aid and finds itself wrestling with severe economic problems. If Chad collapses, the security crisis will spread to several African sub-regions. A strategic position will fall and all of Africa will be in trouble.

Those are, by and large, the points I wanted to raise. I hope I can go back to them.

Thierry de Montbrial

Thank you Tidiane. Thank you very much. That is exactly what we expected from your talk, because it has become sort of fashionable to say that, economically speaking, all of Africa is a little like Rwanda and the Singapore of the African continent, etc. There are indeed all the problems you mentioned. I think we must have the courage to recall them and I thank you for doing that.