



## ROBERT DOSSOU

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Now allow me to make a short introduction to our reflections. Then I will give you the floor. My introduction will end with a methodology. I won't give a complete introduction because it is in the brochure under workshop three. My prepared introduction is in the brochure. I will just highlight a few points and questions, especially since when I look to my left, to my right, behind me and in front of me, I'm impressed by the quality of those whom I have the very great honor of moderating.

I will be brief. As an introduction, I will simply say this: the 1990s saw the rise of great expectations in Africa, which came onto the international stage. In addition, Africa's Heads of State have grown aware of the need to solve all the old problems that were holding Africa back. They did two important things.

First, they adopted a set of legal instruments both at the level of the African continent itself and at the level of the Regional Economic Communities, bringing about a transformation of the Organization of African Unity and turning it into the African Union with a constitutive act more advanced than the OAU Charter.

Then they adopted instruments and charters of governance. I am not going to list them. The regional economic communities were not to be outdone, especially ECOWAS, a former Secretary-General of which I see in the room. Very advanced legal instruments have been crafted and are in force.

Through NEPAD, now the African Union Development Agency, African States have set up a system allowing them to share good practices. One of the hurdles holding us back is corruption and dysfunction of all kinds. Steps are being taken here and there. The question is whether they are relevant, effective and being implemented as effectively as possible. This raises a whole set of questions, one of which seems important to me: does governance within each of our States contribute to the weight of the continent as a whole? One question follows the other.

I therefore propose that our debates leave no stone unturned because we will not build Africa alone. We will not position the continent in relation to the international community's new poles, be they Moscow, Paris, Beijing or Washington, or terrorism.

I would now like to propose the following method. The preparatory papers we received listed the following speakers: President Sean Cleary, Minister of State Sheikh Tidiane Gadio, President Elisabeth Guigou, President Karim Lotfi Senhadji, Doctor and Ambassador Pierre M'Pelé, Professor and President Juliette Tuakli and President Aminata Touré. I propose giving the floor to these seven speakers in turn. Each speaker should observe the eight-minute time limit. I've done a little arithmetic. Since we're running late, we can reduce each presentation to five or six minutes, if the panelists agree. We will hear all the presentations and then open the floor for debate. Using the sheets of paper and the pencils that are available, you can write down the key points you want to make or that you've highlighted for a particular speaker. As I do not have the honor of knowing everyone, everyone can introduce themselves.

That is the method I am proposing. The panel agrees.