

## **SUB SAHARAN AFRICA INCORPORATED ( Inc.): THE RATIONALE**

### **3 SCENARIOS**

1. Stay in AFRICA and be a passive citizen and be only concerned with I, ME, AND my immediate family needs and asset accumulation, and wealth creation.
2. I am qualified and have work experience in global companies. Therefore live this country AND CONTINENT before it goes down the drain. It is very close to being another Zimbabwe.
3. Stay in Africa and let my VOICE be heard, become an active citizen in all matters that affect sustainable prosperity and growth (i.e. political,Leadership succession, delivery, excellence, zero tolerance – discrimination, crime, corruption), policy discussions realising that no policy is perfect and willing to judge a policy on its intentions and execution. Acknowledging that most policies seem to have noble intentions but are badly executed and we have allowed people who are concerned with self-enlightened interest to execute them.

### **WE CHOOSE SCENARIO 3**

If we choose 3. Then we must be willing to sacrifice, work hard, be active citizens and make our voices heard. We cannot stand by and allow our country to be stuck in politics, apartheid, nepotism, racial inequality and less focus on Competitiveness, Growth, Trade-offs, Culture of Meritocracy and Excellence, Delivery and Culture of Consequences. We, the young can no longer allow certain people to masquerade as our leaders and spokespersons and speak, act on our behalf when they do not have the ability nor competency to do so. 'Whenever Africans meet in places they will soon slide into a litany of our nations deficiencies, and there is a great danger of consigning a life and death issue to the daily routine of small talk). We should all challenge resignation, national bad habits cannot be left alone, if we do we resign ourselves to them at our peril' (Achebe C, 1983).

**We therefore propose to start a new political party (see *Manifesto SA Inc. 2027 coming near you soon*, Ghana Inc, Nigeria Inc, Rwanda Inc etc , SADC Inc, West Africa Inc, and one day Africa Inc.**

A call to all genuine, patriotic and thoughtful SA's to rise up today and reject those habits, which cripple our aspirations and inhibit our chances of becoming a prosperous nation through sustainable competitiveness: education, hard work, excellence, savings, zero tolerance (illegal activities- corruption, crime, incompetence, abuse of any kind,) productivity and growth that creates jobs and reduce unemployment below 10 percent. We have lost the twentieth century (education, excellence, meritocracy, efficiency), and we will not allow seeing our children lose the twenty- first and second, and so help us God and any name we choose to use and believe in.

## **Why not join the e.g. DA or ANC or small parties?**

Both parties have a legacy (negative opposition, selected few, or liberation movement) that will take long to improve. Relaunching both brands will require a huge investment, energy, resources of which time is not on our side. Both parties have too many political liberation activists that talk more the language of politics rather than language of business and competitiveness: efficiency, ROIC, productivity etc. Loyalty to comrades from exile or Robben Island or detainees etc seems to be the norm. Both parties have too many old people who turned to be risk averse. Singapore, Malaysia, Estonia, Finland, Croatia etc age -range of their presidents and leaders during the economic and political turnaround periods was/is 28-38 year olds. We are all-grateful to the liberation movement that helped put an end to apartheid, slavery, segregation, colonisation, and a decent average economic growth rate in some parts of Africa. But the next phase of the struggle: is all about sustainable prosperity for all and everything else will have to be linked to helping achieve prosperity for all. Therefore the comes a time when the liberation movements either relaunches itself and completely becomes more than just a liberation movement or give way to a new generation within or let a new party take over and carry the flag to dizzy heights.

The youngsters (youth leagues) in these parties have not risen to the challenge and most of them seem not to be competent enough nor relevant to their constituencies. Our elders, the freedom fighters are tired, they have been in this game for far too long and it is up to the young, gifted and competent Africans to take over and carry the flag to even greater heights. Globalisation waits for no country to catch up, the forces of globalisation move with or without us and we will end up a developing, emerging nation till eternity if not regress back to underdeveloped and submerge. When this happens, we who are young, competent, gifted, patriotic what would we say to the next generation, our kids. How do we become a gift to Africa and true sons and daughters of our motherland? Children should take over from their parents and be better than the standard set by their parents and elders. If all we do is chase money, materialism, power to camouflage our low self-esteem, seeking an illusion of power and importance through material acquisition then we have failed Africa.

Increase in standard of living, prosperity, and quality of life for all citizens is the real measure of a political party's relevance to society and its constituency (you be the judge!). ' The masses whose name we take in vain are not amused; they do not enjoy their punishment and poverty' C.Achebe: 1983.

## **MORE REASONS WE CALL FOR ANOTHER PARTY everywhere in Africa:**

### **The trouble with Sub Saharan Africa: including SA just in case we have forgotten**

#### **1. Quality of Leadership**

- “ The trouble with Africa is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the African character. There is nothing wrong with African land or climate or water or air or anything else. The African problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership” C. Achebe, (adapted).
- **Poor succession planning** – leaders start behaving like monarchy, desire to be kings for life; everyone wants to be a chief, always calling each other ‘Chief
- **Lack of a National Vision – Burning Platform** – not well articulated, not integrated, not linked to emotional heart strings, not personal, not clear how I will benefit and what will I need to sacrifice now for the future and next generation, not inclusive only designed by a selected few, overweight and no longer in touch few.
- **Lack of servant leaders.** Leaders who arrive early before their constituencies sits down, leaders who understand that they have been given a one in a life time opportunity to serve and not to be served. We find leaders who want to be worshipped, called by their unearned titles (just because you have been a political prisoner does not make you the most qualified, fit for the job).
- **Self-enrichment**, Selfish, Greed. Black Economic Enrichment, Black Economic Embezzlement, and Pious materialistic. We now have leaders and elders who taught us that hard work, intellectual rigour, knowledge, sacrifice, and zero fear of death, all these will one day get you political freedom. With such traits, we now know that political freedom was not easily attained. But post liberation we now have the same elders showing us that economic freedom can be easily gained through political networks, less hard work, zero business intellectual capital accumulation, zero risk in most cases, fronting and selling your soul and your children’s souls in the process. Some of these BEE deals have cemented slavery, dependency syndrome. We now no longer obsess with accumulation of intellectual capital, real transfer of skills and hard work. If you did not work hard for your money, you will waist it, overcompensate for low self esteem, knowledge that you got it easily, you will always recall the Sankomota song “ waiting for your name to be called, and your body is shaking with disbelief, for you know you never worked for it’
- **Corrupt.** If corruption at local level is rife, we all know that the fish gets rotten from the top. ‘If there is corruption in Africa, it is because the system under which we live in today makes corruption easy and profitable; we will cease to be corrupt when corruption is made difficult and inconvenient’

- **Inconsistent** – great leaders need to be consistent in the manner in which they make decisions. As a young citizen I judge my leaders on how consistent they are and whether the leader walks the talk or not. Clearly the Youth Political leaders are irrelevant, lack focus and inconsistent. In Africa our Presidents and leaders are able to dismiss people because they attended an unauthorised trip/conference, then not dismiss those who go to overseas trips with friends at the taxpayer's expense.

## **2. Forgetful**

Those at the top quickly forget their brothers and sisters at the bottom. They pay lip service to poverty and ' they shut down the lift or destroy the bridge or remove the ladder'

## **3. Vision not greater than Memory. Memory is greater than Vision**

Most of our leaders are products of liberation movements, have been tortured, have had their family members and friends killed. They live for political freedom and pay very little attention to economic, psychological and spiritual freedom in a country. Our leaders have an ability to allow scared hearts to overcompensate when designing policies without thinking about the unintended negative consequences of such policies or just simply ignore them. Their main aim being to ensure never again will there be exploitation, hanging (death penalty), slavery (migrant, domestic workers). What we then see is leaders and policy makers overcompensating for colonial, segregation, and apartheid pain and allow emotions to exceed pragmatism, innovative solutions.

We are grateful that our leaders helped us gain political freedom, and we think they have are now tired, drained and a new generation needs to take over and work hard to cement political freedom and move beyond politic of politics and start talking politics of business and obsesses with economic freedom that increases standard of living for all SA citizens not only a selected few. Maybe we should ask all our elders to retire soon and let the young, gifted, hardworking, innovative take over. However the competent, influential, hardworking, and intellectually sound elders will still have a place, they will sit and become advisers (Committee of Elders), play devils advocate, interrogate and push the country's agenda globally using their networks.

## **4. Poverty Syndrome and Dependency**

Imperialism, Colonialism, Segregation and Apartheid, greatest damage is the mind of the oppressor and the oppressed. Both suffer from what Fanon refers to as Superiority and inferiority complex. Our leaders are so used to AID and being told what to do by their new masters IMF, World Bank, Harvard economist that they cannot think for themselves and apply their minds in

solving their own countries problems the best way they know how. There seem to be a habit of wanting to please the West, even though global trade in unfair and unjust, seem to favour the West more at the expense of Africans. There is enough evidence that Asians are growing because they decided to think harder about their situation and apply methods that suit them best. When they succeed they get to be called exceptional cases and outliers. Gobachev in an interview: Commanding Heights once said that – ‘No nation can cut and paste another’s policy, reform’. The Afrikaners told each other that we are on our own; we must learn to pull ourselves by our own laces and not be dependent on others to do so for us.

## 5. Poor Communication

Travel around the country and ask all citizens what is the countries vision and burning platform and how are we going to solve it and how are we going to know we are successful, what is expected from me and what is my contribution in making this vision come true. You will get mixed messages. If the Vision exists then it is known by a selected privileged few and even those who are well read do not seem to know it especially civil society and business pillars. It seems as if those in politics know it but are self-fish to share with the rest of us mere mortals. South Africa needs a burning platform that will unite us all and clear communication on what I as a citizen will need to sacrifice to make this burning platform come to life. Most countries that are now growing consistently at levels that absorb labour are great at communicating their countries vision (Singapore, Malaysia, China, Finland, Estonia, Croatia etc). These countries came from a crisis (colonialism, cold war, dictatorship, etc) and galvanised their people towards a common goal best captured in the speech by The Government of Singapore (The Next Lap, 1991, p15):

*‘ External events can shake us as they have in the past. Nothing is certain; we have to keep trying **to stay ahead** in the race of nations. We must never forget the basics: **we have to stay united, work hard, save, look after each other, be quick to see opportunities and be vigilant. NO one owes us a living, we have to earn it**’*

## 6. Middle and Upper class illusion of success and Blindness

The middle class obsesses more with material acquisition and wealth creation. Finding ways to cement themselves in the class ladder and avoid at all cost to fall back and be a laughing stock of the already poor and spiritually and mentally defeated. These burgouises also abdicate responsibility of running a country to a selected few and forget that their wealth is intrinsically linked to the country stability and choosing the right leaders. If Zimbabwe collapses then all collapse with it, same for the rest of the continent. The middle and upper class are responsible for making sure that the right kind of leader and political party is in power. Responsible for holding people accountable.

‘ as a class , you and I and our friends who comprise the middle and upper class choose to be blind and we refuse to see what we do not want to see’  
Adapted from C Achebe (1983)

## **7. Lack Culture/Value System: Excellence, Meritocracy, Efficiency and Delivery**

The Former Prime Minister of Malaysia wrote a foreword to a book titled ‘ making Mistakes, Righting wrongs: Insights into BEE edited by Duma Gqubule, (pp vii). He wrote that they studied successful nations and trying to discover why they are successful, and their conclusion was that it ‘ was not race, skin colour, and any other physical characteristics, the real cause was the culture more correctly the value system. If the value system is right, then success will follow the main components of the value system are **ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORK, ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE (LEARNING), and SKILLS. The Japanese, Koreans, Chinese work very hard, take pride in their work, growth of self confidence, have a strong sense of shame regarding failure’.**

In SA and the rest of the continent we have no strong sense of shame regarding failure, we have come to accept not just tolerate mediocrity and incompetence. The past 10 years the new government made a terrible mistake of putting people in important positions of power because of their contribution to the struggle as if the men in the street did not also contribute and suffer. Both our presidents have had high tolerance for their comrades (‘Chief’). This breeds a bad culture that gets passed on to all department s and all levels of civil society including business. Clearly the civil servants are what they are because their leaders refuse to be what they should be or are not what they should be. All those who claim to have fought in the struggle, are now demanding high salaries, high positions at least now we know that the struggle they fought was for them not for all of us. We must pay them out through a Freedom fighter fund and maybe then we will start employing far more competent people and pay them market related salaries at least 10 per cent discount to private sector.If we claim to be patriotic and are full of National pride, love for one’s country and we care deeply about our country. ‘ a true patriotic will always demand the highest standards of his country and accept nothing but the best for and from his people’ Achebe, C ( 1983, p15).

## **8. Lack - Integrated Plan**

If you take all public servants performance appraisals, they lack culture of consequence, and are not integrated, not easily measurable and not linked to the overall countries vision “ better life for all” . Each department does as it sees fit but there is a lack of a clear. Integrated Human capital development plan, that forces the person in Social development, Housing, Education to work together towards a common goal and be rewarded as such. That forces one department to put pressure on another on slow delivery, as it will affect their bonus and variable pay.

## **9. Talk Politics of Politics not Politics of Business**

We still have too many political activists running a country and very few business minded people, who talk more language of business: competitiveness, growth, stability, productivity, return on capital invested etc. There is still too much focus on P (Politics) and less on E (Economics), the two need to be looked at hard simultaneously and politics should not rule a country. Political freedom is not enough to increase integration amongst all races, and increase zero tolerance on discrimination. Black people will not integrate but will have to assimilate to those who have economic power. Any race that its culture lack a high economic price tag and people see little survival in knowing such a race is doomed to be assimilated. People of the world now learn a Chinese language because it is linked to their survival and China now has an economic price attached to being Chinese. Whereas in the past people laughed at Chinese whose laughing now?. BEE or BB-BEE has not worked yet in bringing a large number of unskilled, illiterate to benefit in the countries economic factors of production.

## **10. Learning, Agile, Make Mistakes and Change Quickly**

How many policies in SA or rest of the continent have not worked but how long did it take our leaders to change them, apologise, acknowledge a mistake and come up with a new solution. Our leaders tend to be defensive, excited about intellectual debates, poetry, academia. Intelligence should deliver results.

**Reference and thank you:**

**Few authors have influenced this paper:**

- 1. C.Achebe – Trouble with Nigeria (should have been Trouble with Africa)**
- 2. Steve Biko – I write what I like**
- 3. Frans Fanon – Black Skin White Mask**
- 4. GIBS MBA students, classes, electives , lecturers**

**Sometimes we could not tell if we were just paraphrasing or infringing on copy rights but we tried to tell a story the best way I see it . But I think they will forgive us if all we are trying to do is make Africa better and deliver sustainable prosperity for all.**