

Challenges and politics of supporting democratisation processes in Africa: setting the scene

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Introduction

In this contribution to the conference, I would like to highlight some trends at the national level on the African continent. Since others will refer to developments at the macro AU level and at the meso levels of African regional organisations, I shall restrict myself to the national level.

I shall conclude this introduction by advancing a few suggestions about how, in my opinion, the EU can improve its delivery of democracy support to Africa. For this purpose, the first EU policy paper on democracy support, the *EU Agenda for Action on Democracy Support* adopted in the EU Council Conclusions of November 2009, whose agenda sets out the values, norms and central principles for democracy support, is an excellent reference and a welcome point of departure to improve the EU's performance in the provision of democracy support.

1. 'Second' liberation

In a recent issue of *Foreign Affairs*¹, John Githongo, former anti-corruption head in Kenya, wrote about the political dynamics in his country following the eruption of violence during the contested Presidential elections in December 2007. He noted that "Kenya could not grow its way out of this crisis economically ... After all, the Kibaki administration had successfully delivered improvements in education, health care, access to water, and basic infrastructure in certain areas of the country. But a legacy of broken promises on the governance front, the failure to deliberately and transparently craft an inclusive administration, and the ethnic insults hurled by leaders all served to make dignity more important than development in Kenya."

He concluded that "a government that had succeeded in delivering the hardware of development – schools, roads and growth – had failed to deliver on the software of nationhood. Ultimately, although the former mattered, most Kenyans valued the latter more. Indeed, had the 2007 election been a referendum on development achievements alone, it would not have failed as calamitously as it did."

The struggle for a new constitution, to replace the 'hybrid' constitution (which included institutional arrangements similar to the former colonial power) promulgated at the time of Independence in 1964, started in fact in the early 1990s. When Kibaki was elected in 2002 he promised to give Kenyans a new constitution in 100 days. In fact, Kenyans had to keep up the struggle for a new constitution for another odd 2000 days, experiencing the almost total melt-

down of the state resulting in over 1000 deaths and 300,000 Kenyans displaced, but finally had an opportunity to vote in a new modern constitution in a referendum on 4 August 4th 2010.

About 70% of the electorate came to the ballot, and two-thirds voted in favour of the new constitution. The majority support for this new 'social contract' between Kenyans and their state has provided substantial legitimacy for the new governance dispensation. At the same time, it has created tremendous expectation of a new style politics that – most likely – that will need to be managed well. I was fortunate to attend the constitution promulgation ceremony at Uhuru Park in down-town Nairobi on 27 August. Half a million joyful Kenyans gathered to celebrate this momentous occasion. It was celebrated as the second liberation in parallel ceremonies around the country. Interestingly enough, as I noted upon my return this important political milestone received little or no coverage in European media. Good news is no news.

This 'second' liberation is not unique to Kenya. It is not the only country on the African continent that is renewing its constitution, adapting balances in power and granting citizens fundamental rights. Mali is engaged in a constitutional review, as are Ghana, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Malawi is considering it, and so are others.

About fifty years after their independence, in the contemporary multi-polar world in which the set Washington Consensus on governance has given way to more context specific approaches, African states are returning to the design table to write their 'autobiographies' (as Albie Sachs, the former Constitutional Court Judge in South Africa has labelled it²) in (re)new(ed) constitutions that fit their own distinct experiences and aspirations. In all of these exercises, the trend is to enhance the separation of powers, to devolve government, to review electoral systems and to increase participation of women, young people and minority groups in the political process, and to include a Bill of Rights.

These constitutional review processes are by nature politically highly charged. The failed constitutional review process in Zimbabwe in the late 1990s provides important lessons as to the potential pitfalls of such processes. The Zimbabwean population voted the draft constitution down in a referendum in February 2000. The failed process brought the country to the brink of total collapse. It took a good eight years before a political accommodation was reached in the form of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in September 2008, which made a new attempt at writing a new constitution possible through a participatory process. This process is continuing under very difficult circumstances. While important agreed provisions of the GPA have not yet been implemented, the outcome of this latest attempt remains uncertain.

Both Kenya and Zimbabwe, but also Ghana and Mali also form interesting case studies as to how, within the context of EU cooperation on democracy support, the EU has responded to these important processes. On the basis of my personal experience in providing democracy support in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Ghana, there is scope for more responsive EU approaches.

The constitutional review processes are strategic windows of opportunity, since they offer real perspectives for democratic reform as outcome of national negotiation processes. If these processes are managed and supported well, they are likely to result in greater legitimacy and representation in the governance of the country. In addition, well managed participatory processes help to build greater levels of trust between key actors and sections of the population – trust that is needed for stability while impacting positively on nation-building.

2. Emerging democracies in Africa

Profound changes have taken place on the African continent since the fall of the Berlin Wall at the end of 1989, the first general elections in Namibia the same month, and the release of Nelson Mandela now twenty years ago. These changes over the last twenty years, which include the introduction of multiparty democracy, new economic policies and the introduction of new technologies, have not always been well understood around the world. Africa is often looked at in aggregate terms as one continent, a view also nourished by a focus on the integration process through the African Union. News is dominated by the well publicised failed states and the violent conflicts still raging in a number of African countries. Therefore, Africa is regularly perceived as a 'lost' continent, a continent where international assistance is seen to disappear in a black hole.

In contrast, when we talk about the Asian continent, we often speak about individual countries such as China, India and Indonesia. These are usually not lumped together with badly performing states such as Burma and North Korea. For sub-Saharan Africa, we should also take a much closer look at the performance of different African states. Dr Steve Radelet, in a book³ recently published by the Center for Global Development in the USA, has done just that. The findings produced in the book state that 17 out of 48 countries (plus 5 on course to join the 17)⁴ have actually performed very, very well over a sustained period of 15 years. I will refer to some of his valuable research in this introduction to illustrate the magnitude of changes taking place.

Take Ghana, where over the past 15 years average income has increased 40%. The economy is humming: investment has doubled, and so have exports. Ghana's primary school enrolment has increased by one third, life expectancy has reached 60 years, and the population growth rate has dropped from 3.5% to less than 2%. Poverty rates have dropped sharply from 50% of the population in the mid-1990s to less than 30% today. And Ghana has become a vibrant democracy, with competitive elections, a vocal press, better protection of basic rights, and stronger governance. Ghana is not perfect, but it is much stronger politically, economically, and institutionally than it was just 20 years ago. Trust among the principle political actors has increased significantly, resulting in the second peaceful alternation of power following the 2008 general elections.⁵

Consider Mozambique, where GDP has grown a remarkable 8% each year for more than a dozen years, one of the fastest growth rates of any country in the world. Average real income has more than doubled. Primary school enrolment has jumped from 42% to over 70%, the debt to GDP ratio has dropped from 330% to 40%, and poverty has fallen from 84% in the early 1990s to 64% today. Financial returns on investment have increased sharply, and foreign investment has jumped from 1% to 5% of a much larger GDP. Multiple peaceful elections (not all uncontested and with shrinking voter turn-outs) have gone hand-in-hand with improvements in a wide range of governance and democracy indicators.

Also Mali, which despite being a landlocked desert country has quietly achieved GDP growth of 5.5% per year since the mid-1990s. Infant mortality is down 25%, the primary school completion rate has doubled, and poverty has fallen by about one third. Mali, too, has established a thriving multiparty democracy with competitive elections, a free press, better protection of civil liberties and political rights, less corruption, and stronger governance.

In Tanzania, economic growth has averaged a robust 5.6% since the mid-1990s, leading to an increase in average incomes of 46% since 1994. Exports were just 11% of GDP in 1991; today they are more than 20% of a larger GDP. Meanwhile, external debt has been cut from 160% of GDP to just 30%. Infant mortality has dropped by 25%, and the population growth rate has dropped from 3.3% to 2.4%. Tanzania, like the other countries, has shifted towards democratic governance, with multiple peaceful elections, stronger adherence to political and civil rights, and stronger governance.

These achievements are impressive in and of themselves. The good news is that Ghana, Mozambique, Mali and Tanzania are not alone. They are part of a growing and dynamic group of emerging African countries – not the whole subcontinent, but nearing half of it – that are breaking away from their unfortunate histories of economic decline and political decay. They are defying the usual pessimistic storylines about Africa of stagnant economies, war, famine, deepening poverty, destructive political leadership and poor governance, as Dr Radelet observes in his book.

In this group of 17 emerging countries, incomes are up by 50% on average in real terms. Poverty rates are down nearly 20%. Health and education indicators are improving, and fertility rates and the rate of population growth are falling. Democratic accountability is on the rise, with improvements across a range of indicators over the past 20 years, including political rights, civil liberties, and governance. Some of these countries are small, others are large. But put in perspective, taken together these 17 countries are home to 300 million people, roughly the size of France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK combined.

These countries have achieved growth in per capita income of at least 2% per year for the last thirteen years, that is from 1996 through to 2008. Some grew faster and therefore as a group per capita growth averaged 3.2%. This per capita growth translates into overall GDP growth averaging 5.6% per year over the period. This is a very respectable rate of economic growth, particularly if we bear in mind that these same countries experienced zero growth in the preceding 20 years between 1975 and 1995. To put it another way, average incomes have increased by fully 50% in just 13 years!

The story is not just about economic growth, far from it. Poverty rates are falling, and falling sharply. The percentage of people living below the poverty line (that is, \$1.25 per day) dropped from 59% in 1993 to 48% by 2005, a huge drop for such a short period of time. Indicators of income distribution generally have improved rather than worsened. Overall health levels are generally improving, with the exceptions of those countries badly affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

In short, this progress represents an impressive turn-around and a clear break with the past. A break that appears sustainable even in the face of the worst world financial and economic crises which erupted in September 2008.

These positive developments should set the stage for our discussions in the coming days. Not that there is any reason for complacency – for even with such impressive decreases in poverty, the number of poor people is still far too high. And clearly, if the poor do not experience the benefits of democracy, the trust that Africans have in the new era of democratic government will gradually be eroded.

Institutions are still feeble, and mistrust amongst the political elites is still high. In fact, former Tanzanian president Mkapa, in a meeting with me not long ago, identified the lack of trust as one

of the greatest challenges facing Africa today. Corruption is still rampant, and there is too much unnecessary bureaucracy and patronage in the relations between the state, the private sector and citizens. There is a lot of work to be done to maintain the positive momentum of the emerging democracies while also providing appropriate support to reformists in countries currently at a political impasse, so as to bring them up to speed with the developments of the emerging democracies.

A recent study by the Afrobarometer implemented at the request of NIMD⁶, found - by comparing surveys conducted in 10 countries present today, in four rounds between 1999 and 2009 - that popular demand for democracy on the African continent is as high as it is elsewhere in the world. On average, 72% of the respondents favoured democracy. On the question as to whether the respondents harboured any nostalgia for any of the non-democratic systems of governance, on average 78% said “no, thank you”. In 7 out of the 10 countries, the percentage went up in the last count in 2008, indicating growing support for democracy.

What are some of the factors explaining the positive developments in these emerging countries? Dr Radelet identified five factors:

1. *The choice for and movement towards more democratic and accountable governments.*

The number of countries meeting basic standards of democracy in Africa has grown from just 3 in 1989 to 23 today. And this is not just about elections. The changes are deeper. There is greater adherence to basic standards of political rights and civil liberties, greater freedom of the press and more transparency and accountability. There has been a marked improvement in governance. There is less conflict and political violence, stronger adherence to the rule of law and lower levels of corruption. Together, these factors have come to provide a strong foundation for future economic and democratic development.

2. *More sensible economic policies.*

Essentially these amount to a better balance between the roles of the state and the private sector, stricter macro-economic and monetary policies, efforts to keep budget deficits and debts in check, investments in education (especially girls) and increases in agricultural production.

3. *The end of the debt crises, with major changes in the relationship with the international community.*

The end of the Bretton Woods consensus (one-size-fits-well) resulted in a much more contextual specific approach towards international cooperation. With this new approach, the ownership for economic policies and development planning through the Poverty Reduction Strategies Papers are supposed to have shifted back to the countries themselves. However, the reflex of a ‘reversed’ accountability – that is, accountability of governments to international partners rather than the domestic electorate – is still strong. Accountability of governments to their parliaments and to the citizens, the essence of democracy, remains an important challenge in the process to deepen and consolidate democracy.

4. *The spread of new ICT technologies creating new opportunities for business and political accountability.*

The availability of mobile phones and spreading access to internet throughout sub-Saharan Africa has connected people to information and knowledge in an unprecedented manner. It has empowered people in urban and rural areas alike to use their talents and energies more productively and many new initiatives in both the private, public and civil society sectors are

driven by the access of these new communication and information technologies. Connectivity equals productivity.

4. *The emergence of a new generation of policymakers, business leaders and activists.*

The Ghanaian-born scholar George Aietey labelled the new generation of Africans the 'Cheetah generation'. These men and women of the new generation are well trained professionals who understand contextual realities and seek to work within them to fundamentally change assumptions, paradigms, and ways of behaving in order to bring about change.

They are the new generation who are seeking to re-define a globalised Africa through democratic, transparent principles that translate into every sphere of life. They are not interested in African countries being seen as basket cases, but rather as stable, safe and prosperous communities where they can live and thrive, and that are productive members of the international community.

3. Elections and the Electoral Cycle

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War twenty years ago, elections have become the norm to legitimise governments, in democratising countries and in authoritarian states alike. Whereas the latter misuse elections mainly for external purposes rather than gaining legitimacy from their citizens, electoral misconduct within democratising countries is also rather common. The power of incumbency to tilt the playing field to sitting presidents to be re-elected, or dominant political parties to remain dominant, is only too familiar. Collier and Chauvet⁷ researched for the period 1975-2004 a total of 786 elections in 155 countries. Of all these elections, 41% were of bad quality and/or fraudulent and qualified as dirty elections, a substantial number. However, this also means that 59% qualified as clean elections.

Of the 558 elections in which incumbents stood, in 68% of these the incumbent won. It also showed that incumbents had an 81% chance of winning in dirty elections as opposed to a 57% chance of winning clean ones. In addition, based on statistical evidence, Collier found that a correlation exists between illicit tactics in conducting elections sharply reduce the incentives for the incumbent to attend to economic performance. Illicit tactics and dirty elections are so attractive for incumbents that they will be adopted unless there are restraints upon them. Ensuring a level playing field for elections, therefore, remains a key challenge for advancing democratic government.

Another aspect of organising dirty elections is that it undermines people's expectations of democracy, thus giving democracy a bad name. Elections are associated with democracy, whether they are clean or dirty. It is necessary that such expectations are put in perspective and people be informed that elections, although important for democracy, do not make democracy. Other research has established that alternation of power increases the confidence of voters in both winners and losers and hence in the democratic institutions.

3.1. Positive effect of elections

Research by Staffan Lindberg on elections in sub-Sahara Africa⁸, where the majority of states have organised 3 to 4 cycles of elections since the early 1990s, appear to indicate the reinforcing power of holding regular elections. The more elections have been held, the greater the civic freedoms of the population and improvement of the quality of democracy. Obviously, there are notable exceptions on this trend such as Zimbabwe and Ethiopia where elections so far have been used to consolidate autocratic rule. It is important to understand the political and

socioeconomic context in which elections are held in order to know if elections unfold in upward trends to democracy or downward trends and what are the entry points for strategic support to contribute to an upward trend.

The benign effects of the proper conduct of elections on good economic outcomes is demonstrated by Chavet and Collier⁹. In their research they found that elections have structural effects, significantly improving the overall level of policies. However, in contrast, this finding deviates in low income resource-rich countries in which rents (benefits) from resources for the elites – think about oil in Nigeria for example – increase the risks of dirty or fraudulent elections.

3.2 Electoral revolutions

In November 2009, the twentieth anniversary of the momentous fall of the Berlin Wall and the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia was celebrated. In fact, I should say Velvet Revolutions, because not only Czechoslovakia but also Poland, Hungary and the Baltic States transformed from autocratic communist rule into multiparty democracies. Since then we have seen a range of so-called colour revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine, Lebanon, Burma and also in Iran, not all of them successful, as you know. Timothy Garton Ash, the British historian and commentator, asked himself why we put an adjective in front of revolutions¹⁰?

Putting these Velvet Revolutions in historical context, starting with the landmark 1974/1975 Revolution of the Carnations in Portugal – the beginning of the Third Wave of democracy in the world – through to the ending of the Marcos regime in The Philippines, the Plebiscite in Chile in 1988 ending the dictatorship of General Pinochet, to the Velvet Revolutions in Europe, the landmark South African election in 1994 ending Apartheid, to the recent failed Green Revolution in Iran, he observed the contrast with the French revolution of 1789, the Russian revolution of 1917 and the Chinese revolution of 1949. These were violent revolutions in which one class of people overthrew the incumbent elites in the pursuit of utopian ideals. Their mode of operation was the guillotine and heads were rolling under the banner: the objective justifies the means. Revolutions are associated with violence, hence the need to qualify the electoral revolutions and to put adjectives in front of them.

In contrast, the Velvet Revolutions represent a totally different mode of operation, namely the round-table. These revolutions are pursued through dialogue, consensus seeking, negotiated regime change and social mobilisation. The non-violent means used became the determining factor for the objective pursued. And the choice for non-violence appears to relate to broadly liberal democratic outcomes. This is the new style of revolutions in which elections have become a catalytic moment.

Timothy Garton Ash reminds us that the characteristic of this new type of revolution is that it often takes a long time to succeed. During this time opposition organisers, but also those in power, learn from their own mistakes and failures, as for example the cases of Poland, Ukraine and Serbia, but also more recently Zimbabwe and Kenya show. Again, it underlines the need to see elections in their historical contexts, as one step in a longer struggle to obtain or to establish pluriform democracy. Also, the movement towards such catalytic moments arise from the conditions and the actions of people in the countries concerned. Democracy grows from within. External assistance, if and when strategically applied, can make a positive difference, but it can never bring democracy from the outside.

This new-style revolution has taught me that each election needs to be considered within its proper context. Even a failed election is another step on the bumpy road either to a future Velvet

Revolution (as for example in Zimbabwe and Kenya) or to the deepening of the democracy within the given country. And yes, the autocrats have learned their lessons as well and have become more adept in pre-empting transitions to democracy. But if we believe in the values of democracy, of democracy being the foundation for peace and prosperity, if we believe that these values are shared by people the world over, we cannot allow ourselves to become cynical, but we should become more strategic in delivering democracy support.

As the newest Nobel laureate for literature, Mario Vargas Llosa so eloquently and pertinent wrote *The person who is not prepared to fight for freedom, who is not prepared to defend her, takes the risk to lose her definitively*. I believe that the word democracy can also be used when Vargas Llosa talks about freedom.

4. The link between accelerated economic growth, deepening democracy and poverty reduction (development)?

The continued deepening of democracy is central to sustaining growth and development in the future. Or as Njeri Kabeberi, the dynamic Executive Director of CMD-Kenya, so aptly captured it: “Democracy allows energies for development, rather than fighting each other”.

It appears that the three dimensions characterising the positive developments of the emerging countries are connected in a virtuous circle. Improvements in one area help to support improvements in the others. In most cases the rankings in some of the international index scores (such as the Freedom House index and Polity IV) began to improve first, but the acceleration in economic growth and improvement in governance followed very soon thereafter. It is probably the case that the strengthening of democracy has helped improve the quality of governance, but improvements in the quality of governance almost certainly help to sustain democracy.

Similarly, the improvements in democracy and governance help when it comes to putting into place better economic policies that help accelerate growth, while the faster growth rates have helped deliver tangible benefits to citizens that reinforce the shift to democracy and better governance. Just as dictatorships, poor governance, and weak economic performance created a self-reinforcing negative cycle during the late 1970s and 1980s, democracy, stronger governance and improved economic performance have created a positive self-reinforcing cycle, with each supporting improvements in the others, since the mid-1990s.

The shift to democracy, greater transparency, and increased accountability has fundamentally changed the dynamic for the formation of public policies. Most of today’s leaders and technocrats are more responsive to their citizens and are more concerned about a wider range of development issues, broad-based economic growth, and poverty reduction than previous governments.

This emergence of stronger economic management in conjunction with the rise of democracy has been a surprise to some. Many academics and policy-makers continue to believe, unfortunately, that poor countries are not ready for democracy. Economic development first, democracy later is still a dominant paradigm. The fact that some of the poorest countries have sustained such political, economic and development performance, over such a continuous period, has defied conventional thinking.

Whereas it is easier for middle and high income countries to sustain democracy - although it is never easy under whatever circumstances - why should the voice of poor people not be counted? Why should someone who is not literate not have a voice and a vote? Is democracy not about

respecting all men and women equally? Attitudes stating that poor countries and poor people can wait until economies have taken off belong to the past. Mobile phones and increasing access to the internet have connected all of mankind and have given everyone a voice. This makes democracy imperative.

In April, I attended a meeting of the World Movement for Democracy (WMD) in Jakarta addressed by Indonesian President Yudhoyono, recently re-elected for a second term in fair elections in the world's third largest democracy, a nation of 240 million people. He basically validated the link I am highlighting in this introduction by stating, and I quote: "Indonesia's democratic experiment is relevant because for decades, we lived in an environment [he was referring to the authoritarian period under Suharto] which argued that we had to choose between democracy and economic growth. I do not wish to prejudge my predecessor. But I can tell you that such is no longer the case of today's Indonesia. Today, our democracy is growing strong, while at the same time, Indonesia is registering the third highest economic growth among G20 countries, after China and India (the largest democracy in the world). One of the reasons our democracy has held up," he continued, "is that it is completely home-grown."¹¹

Self-determined paths to democracy, locally owned roadmaps – that is precisely the principle underlying the new EU Democracy Support policy as formulated in the EU Agenda for Action on Democracy Support. Democracy can only be sustainable when it comes from within, is locally developed. For NIMD and EPD there are no blueprints, only respected partners who chart their own course towards democracy and development. Local ownership of the democratic reform agendas is the basis of our work.

5. The way forward in EU democracy support

This introduction has focused on the opportunities for providing strategic support to local processes of democratic reform. Referring to these opportunities does not mean that reform processes are either easy or smooth. There is no straight line in democratic development. As it has been described before, the road to democracy goes through the 'valley of tears'¹². Processes of democratisation are never without conflicts, but nevertheless necessary to reach more stable relations and democratic institutional practices.

5.1 It is for this reason important to stay with the process and to accept the long-term nature of these reform processes. One also has to be flexible to be able to respond timely when new twists occur in the reform process. An assessment is needed about the question as to whether the EU instruments are adapted to these requirements and, where they fall short, how gaps can be addressed.

5.2 Horizontal and inclusive national dialogue for democratic reform should be facilitated and supported to complement the many vertical dialogue platforms. At the same time, the potential benefit of national dialogue on democratic reform to link up with national development planning processes should be explored as the ultimate synthesis challenge. Conceptually, the horizontal national dialogue process is the missing link in the regular (vertical) official dialogues between EU and partner countries and in the country planning and programme/project funding actions. The relationship between Europe and our African partners would benefit if an in-between level of cooperation would be supported, aimed at facilitating national inclusive dialogues (with participation across the state, political society, private sector, academics and civil society) about an analysis of gaps in the democratic performance and the setting of nationally agreed agendas to deepen democracy. Such indigenous agendas would potentially inform both the official dialogue agenda (making these

potentially less confrontational) and the planning of delivery of assistance. In some of the emerging democracies in Africa, such horizontal platforms have recently been established through Centers for Multiparty Democracy.¹³

- 5.3 Recognising the fragility of most of the African states, democracy support should be holistically approached with a focus on inclusivity. The levels of distrust are still high in most societies, hence cooperation from abroad should aim to unify and become a factor in depolarisation. Institutions, procedures and practices need time to become well-rooted. This does not mean that pluriformity should not be encouraged, indeed it should be. But this should be done within the context of commonly agreed rules of the game (procedures) to avoid the use of violence in settling disputes.
- 5.4 In fact, support should always aim at enhancing the capacity to use the levers of democratic dispensations to settle conflicts of interest peacefully, in learning to disagree without becoming disagreeable. Hence, democratic development can also be assisted by investment in democracy education. No democracy without democrats. In this context, the focus should certainly be on the new ICT-literate generation of Africans.
- 5.5 The power of example is, in my experience, very strong on the African continent. Peer to peer learning has proven an important incentive in reform processes. Therefore, it makes sense to give priority to those countries that are performing well and to countries which are interested in following positive examples. Ghana, as at the time of its Independence in 1957, is once again playing a most useful role in this regard and its leaders are playing important roles in sharing experiences across sub-Sahara Africa. Both Ghana and South Africa should be encouraged to consider becoming democracy support providers at some point in time, rather than democracy support receivers.
- 5.6 The integration of democracy support in the development instruments (mainstreaming) remains a considerable challenge. Together with the implementation of the principles laid down in the EU Agenda for Action on Democracy Support, the EU may consider establishing an *ad hoc* EU expert group to become a catalyst in advising EU institutions about putting the principles of the Agenda for Action in the practice of delivering support.

The EU has a lot to offer on democracy support. It has brought together twenty seven countries, all democracies but all uniquely organised. It is an expression that democracies grow from within and are shaped by their historical processes, population composition, geography and other factors. All twenty seven democracies are challenged to renew themselves.

The roles of political parties are shifting – more direct forms of democracy are considered and tried, the influence of the electronic media has expanded, and national powers over key policy issues are in decline relative to powers of globalised institutions and companies. Governing democratically is not an easy profession today, but then it never was. For these reasons, Europe has a lot of experience on offer and can also share its current challenges.

The key lesson, however, is that we can only support our partners beyond Europe when we respect their responsibility to shape their own democratic institutions, procedures and practices.

Thank you!

¹ Foreign Affairs July/August 2010, *Fear and Loathing in Nairobi* by John Githongo, CEO of the Inuka Kenya Trust and Head of the NGO Twaweza in Kenya. Former Permanent Secretary of Governance and Ethics in Kenya from 2003 until 2005 when he was forced into exile.

² Writing Autobiographies of Nations, A comparative analysis of constitutional reform processes, NIMD, April 2009, ISBN/EAN 978-90-79089-08-6

³ Emerging Africa, How 17 Countries Are Leading The Way, Center for Global Development, 2010, ISBN: 978-1-933286-51-8

⁴ The 17 emergent African countries referred to in this introduction are: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The 5 countries at the threshold to join the 17 are: Benin, Liberia, Malawi, Senegal and Sierra Leone. Notably, both Kenya and Zimbabwe are missing from this group. Kenya has meanwhile promulgated a new modern constitution peacefully, while Zimbabwe is making some progress in that direction. If both countries implement the necessary political reforms, it is expected that their economies can pick up positive momentum quickly.

⁵ Supporting the Consolidation of Democracy in Ghana, paper by Roel von Meijenfeldt, NIMD, March 8th, 2010

⁶ Trends in Popular Attitudes to Democracy in Africa: Perspectives from the Micro Level, August 2009, NIMD paper prepared by the Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana)

⁷ Elections and economic policy in developing countries, by Paul Collier and Lisa Chavet in Economic Policy, Volume 24, Issue 59, pages 509 – 550 in July 2009

⁸ Democracy and Elections in Africa by Staffan I. Lindberg. - Baltimore, MD : Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006

⁹ Elections and economic policy in developing countries, by Paul Collier and Lisa Chavet in Economic Policy, Volume 24, Issue 59, pages 509 – 550 in July 2009

¹⁰ Timothy Garton Ash: Velvet Revolution: The Prospects in the New York Review of Books, Dec 3rd, 2009, Volume LVI, number 19

¹¹ Speech quoted in The Jakarta Post, Thursday, April 15th, 2010

¹² Quote of Lord Dahrendorf in Democracy, Europe's Core Value? by Van Doorn and Von Meijenfeldt (EDS), NIMD, 2007, ISBN 9789059721340

¹³ See NIMD website: http://www.nimd.org/page/centres_for_multiparty_democracy