Why the African States Fall Apart and Who is to be Blamed?

Nasir M. Ali

A researcher currently enrolling postgraduate program at the
Center for African and Oriental Studies
Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT – *Since its independence, Africa has been a region of political disorder, disintegration, ethnic conflicts and strife, civil wars, failing states, transnational crimes, such as terrorist networks, piracy, drug trafficking and others. This study examines the root causes of the Africa's post-colonial state crises and what went wrong after the African states managed to gain their political independence regarded by many as the 'illusion sovereignty', it questions why the African states fail one after another. The study does not list the Europeans as the only chief architects of the Africa's conflicts, crises, and state failures, but also underlines that the Western-trained Africans are responsible for the instability, chronic economic troubles, environmental risks and shocks, and the frequent state collapse. The conclusion sketches indigenous innovative strategy as a way forward that aims to address both internal and external challenges that face the Africa's states since their independence. This demands particular leadership characters and the institutionalization of the African indigenous knowledge, as Africans were better governance system than the European nation-states.*

Keywords – Africa, neo-colonialism, colonialism, conflict, governance, independence, Pan-African, state collapse

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1. INTRODUCTION

The origin of the frequent state collapses in Africa lie in the political, economic, and environmental problems aggravated by both weak governance institutions and leadership style as well as external actors (Abdalla, 2002; Alfred, 2008). Although the root causes of these factors vary from one to another, it has contributed its part in deteriorating the situation of the continent and led to be described as the most vulnerable and conflict-belt continent on the earth. As a result of these factors, forms of statelessness and fragility have emerged in Africa in particular the sub-Saharan Africa, which deepened societal insecurities, environmental problems and posed risks and threats to human livelihoods. While political instability, economic destitution, absolute and extreme poverty, communal violence taking place in many parts of the continent, small arms smuggling and proliferation have become prevalent in the continent since the demise of the Soviet Communism in 1991 (Chris, 1999; William, 2002; Makumi, 2004; Orogun, 2004; Paul, 2008). This has made sub-Saharan Africa to become one of the prime regions on earth facing serious challenges and uneven problems which greatly affected its citizens, states and the environment simultaneously. Due to this, it's worth mentioning that the sub-Saharan African states remain largely unequal societies: socially, economically, politically, and racially, while the gap between the rich wealthy and the poor weak have dramatically increased (Bruce, 2008). Apart from these sorrow circumstances, the sub-Saharan region has always been a region of global interest because of its geo-political and geo-strategic dimensions and the natural resources endowed.

The African countries since their independence remained among the least developed, the least industrialized on one hand, and the most successful producer of babies and conflicts in the recorded history on the other. All these attributes should be blamed partially to the colonial powers (Blaine, 1991; Abdalla, 2002; Makumi, 2004). To come close to the point, over fifty years after independence, Africa is back to square one; and there has not been an important progress in forging a new African approaches to tackle the multi-faceted challenges inherited from the colonial powers (Errol, 2008). Unfortunately, Africa is poor and still looking for servant leaders to save the continent from pervasive poverty[1], chronic diseases, and vicious cycles of conflicts either in ethnic or faith basis, to name a few. In this respect, post-independence African leaders should be blamed

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[1] The former Vice President for Africa, the World Bank, Mr. Callisto Madavo has stated that while Africa is a home of to only 10% of the world population, roughly 30% of the world's poor are Africans

for being hostages to their colonial masters and have never thought independently representing their fellow citizens, and meet the basic needs of the public to achieve better socio-economic and political policies.

One of the most distressing results of the Africa's independence was the unexpected future political conflicts which prevail across the continent (Abdalla, 2002; Bruce, 2008). Twelve of the forty-seven new African states, including the Congo, the Sudan and among others, have been crippled since independence by political instability and civil wars (Thomas, 1991). In many ways, the root causes of the troubled post-independence African states go back to the creation of the African states with the presence of strong colonial influence, unequal terms between the African independent states on one hand, and the colonial powers on the other, its subsequent evolution, which deepened the asymmetrical relations between the two that forged dependence relations for the decades to come and made the outcome uncertain.

The legacies of the *'illusion sovereignty'* of the 1960s served as the midwife of the Africa's protracted civil wars and its frequent state collapses that not only created a vacuum in the most sub–Saharan Africa in terms of authority and effective central governance structures, but also generated massive displaced persons within the region and beyond, environmental degradation, among others. Therefore, post-independence political crises which have the earlier dimensions blamed by many of the colonial powers[2] who left the African continent physically following the awakening of the African citizens, but remained politically, economically and socially in the form of what described by many sovereign and critical thinkers as a *'neo-colonialism'*.

In the economic front, the causes of the Africa's underdevelopment and backwardness are varied from one to another. Many states in Africa are weak and remained in an endless low economic growth and external debts which burdened the Africans; exacerbated by many years of political tension and civil war. Most available relevant literatures written by both African and non-African scholars in the field state that the central problem of the Africa's economic problems has a colonial root which severely damaged the subsistence food production of the African agricultural sector, and in return introduced cash crops. In Ghana, for example, cocoa was *'the people's industry'* and led to the emergence of a new influential group of prosperous trading and business interests. While in a similar way, cotton, coffee and sisals are widely produced in Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania respectively (Walter, 1973; William, 2002; Asfaw, 2008). Given the emphasis on this point, the pre-independence African economies were incorporated into the global capitalist economy dominated by the developed northern states which established a dependent relationship that continued after independence (Chris, 1999; William, 2002; Thomas, 2008). This, however, has left a negative impact on the poor Africa.

Political and economic issues are not the only two factors that make the African states to fall apart, but there are many other factors which cause or contribute the collapse, or in other words make the African states weak and prone to any conflict. These factors include: trade disparities between Africa and the developed world, the corrupted and careless leaders, the weak governance institutions, the knowledge and skill drain to the north, to mention a few. For instance, about 14,000 Nigeria Medical Doctors who were actually trained in Nigeria are in the United States. It was also estimated that African countries have lost some 200,000 scientists, doctors and other professionals in the north since 1980's, while about 23,000 qualified academic staff emigrated from Africa each year in search of better working conditions, where 10,000 qualified Nigerian academic staff are in the U.S. alone (Thomas, 2008; Aladegbola & Azeez, 2012). Therefore, one can never exclude these facts from the sources of the chronic fragility and the subsequent collapses of the African states if not the major sources.

This study examines three separate, but interrelated factors that cause or contribute the frequent collapses of the African states. These are: a) neo-colonialism which is the continuation form of the colonialism and prevails in the continent. This influences politics, socio-economic, and cultural aspects of the African states, b) the African leaders who are regarded as dark complexion with White Minds, or in other words puppets and servants for the colonizers, and, c) weak and fragile governance institutions. The latter should be regarded the legacy of the earlier two factors. This fragility has produced waves of conflicts and confrontations among the African citizens on ethnic basis. Therefore, building the capacity of the African

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[2] When an African state on the verge to collapse or collapsed, the Western powers who were regarded by many those who behind the collapse, mostly hesitate to intervene the situation as early as possible since they are the maker and breaker of everything being laws, initiatives and interventions in the world we are living today. One of the senior African Union officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity echoed that the UN United Security has underestimated several initiatives both from the African Union (AU) and its predecessor, the Organization for African Unity (OAU) to prevent civil wars and atrocities in Africa, this official mentioned the case of Somalia which is one of the longest running civil war in Africa, after the Congo. He argued that the UN Security Council has declined the proposal of the OAU in the early 1991 when the Somali state collapsed. The proposal was to intervene the situation as easiest as possible; the UN has declined to accept their proposal. Interestingly, this official has emphasized even that the level of collaboration and cooperation between the AU and the UN is not as strong as many may think. He argued that even the UN has fails to acknowledge whether it received the AU corresponds sent to the UN or not

states and its institutions will allow it in maintaining the rule of laws and provide its citizens' political, economic, and social protection from any form of threats.

2. AFRICAN STATES: FROM TRAPS OF COLONIALISM TO TRACKS OF CONFLICTS

The African continent has a history of authoritarian rules since most African countries gained their hard won independence from the imperial powers in particular the British, the French, the Italians, the Portuguese, the Spanish, the Belgians, among others in the early 1950s, sweeping through 1960s till 1970s. This political independence has never helped the Africans, but led them another vicious cycle of colonialism which mainly described by many scholars as *'Neo-colonialism'* while rejected by many leaders in Africa (Kwame, 1965; William, 2002; Thomas, 2008). For instance, the Republic of Guinea which became independent in 1958 under the presidency of Ahmed Sékou Touré voted against the neo-colonial arrangement known as the *'French Community'*. This was recorded as one of the best kept recorded history for Sékou Touré if not the only one (Human Rights Watch, 2007). The rejection made Guinea to become the only one of many former French African colonies to vote against though the French assimilated culturally not only Guinea, but also many similar French colonies in Africa and the world (Stewart, 2009). This was a heroic act both for Sékou Touré who was critical against the imperial powers and his country. The move has precipitated the deterioration of the French–Guinean relations which contributed its part the French to cease assistance to Guinea.

Indeed, Ahmed Sékou Touré was not the only African leader who opposed the post-independence colonial agenda, but there were many others, including but not limited to Gamal Abdel Nasser Hussein of Egypt, who bravely nationalized the Canal Suez in 1956 previously controlled by the British and the French (Cristina, 2004; Robert, 2007; Wolfgang, 2010; Michael, 2011). Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana who was one of the leading Pan-African figures and the founding fathers of the Organization of the African Unity (OAU) who were finally deposed by the Ghanaian military in 1966 with the help of the colonial powers[3]. Patrice Lumumba of the Congo who assassinated by the CIA with the assistance of the Belgians following his firmly rejection to bow the interests of the Belgians to exploit the natural resources of the Congo (Ibrahim, 2008). All these figures were Socialist-oriented, whose ideologies have never been interested by the West[4].

From the 1960s onwards, African states have been trapped into vicious cycles of conflicts either in the form of intra- or interstate. Though African leaders are responsible for what went wrong after independence and failed to break the cycles of insecurities in their respective states, on the other hand, its genesis has colonial roots. According to Ali A. Mazrui (2008) while the most lethal of all wars in post-independence Africa has been those fought between the Africans, the root causes of these wars lie in the white legacy. This could attributed due to the creation of political boundaries without giving attention and respect the cultures, traditions as well as the blood linkages among the African ethnic groups. For instance, as Martin Meredith (2006) has argued, in the Sahel, new territories were established across the great divide between the desert regions of the Sahara and the belt of tropical forests to the south – Sudan, Chad and Nigeria – throwing together Muslim and non-Muslim peoples in latent hostility. Although Africa is a continent of great diversity, African states have much in common, not only their origins as colonial territories, but the similar hazards and difficulties they have faced.

Under those circumstances, the geo-political interests and the geo-strategic location of the sub-Saharan Africa should be considered as one of the leading factors that made countries in the region to become the play ground of the Superpowers and serve as Cold War proxies which devastated the environment and led its citizens to remain in destitute and abject living conditions. Therefore, as a consequence of the massive maneuvers and the huge military equipments supplied to the arc-foe regimes of Africa from the Superpowers of the day had escalated the situation and made many states in the region on the verge to collapse, and many others fall apart (Bereket, 1980; Chris, 1999; Abdalla, 2002; Nasir, 2013). Though the East-West *'War of Ideas'* made the African states to serve as proxies. The Cold War has never been a *'Cold'* for Africans, but it was *'burning'*, *'painful'* and *'bloody'*, and wrecked the African continent economically, socially and politically. In connection with this, many countries are regarded as orphans of the cold war such as Somalia. In this respect, one may characterize this period as the major setback of the Africa's peace and prosperity, while it has caused the assassination or deposing of many African leaders and intellectuals who opposed the interests of the Superpowers of the day.

Despite this high degree of intervention and exploitation, the demise of the Soviet Union and the end up of the Cold War in the early 1990s has neither ended the international security dilemmas nor regional conflicts. In connection with these conflicts and security dilemmas in the continent, another war was transferred to Africa, the war against *'terror'*. This war was

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[3] Kwame Nkrumah lived in exile in the West African country of Guinea until his death in Romania in 1972
[4] Discussions with an academic and an African Political History scholar, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

shifted to sub-Saharan Africa by the Americans to secure and dominate the strategic gates of the African states and should be attributed to geo-politics and geo-strategic factors[5]. Following the statement of the American President George W. Bush *'either with us or against'*, the Africom[6] were established to fight the radical groups across the African continent, but this strategy has never helped the African states, rather precipitated the emergence of waves of radical groups spreading across the sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, the Al Shabab in East Africa, Boko Haram and Taureg fighters in Nigeria and Mali respectively, and the *Al Qaeda* operatives in North Africa known as *Al Qaeda* in the Islamic Maghreb. This war transferred from Afghanistan were described as one of the most serious and aimless wars that the African states have ever involved, which led many people to perish and displaced others[7].

3. WHY THE AFRICAN STATES ARE FALLING APART?

Africa had experienced chronic state crises in the wake of independence mainly linked to the imperial legacies which have cultural, social, and political dimensions. Nearly all Africa, suffered extreme consequences from unviable forms of political rule which criminalized both the state and the economy, the rapid increase of corruption, the promotion of ethnic rivalry, and the continuation of inhumane and unjust actions against minorities. This section examines the major causes of the Africa's frequent state collapses, the role of the African leadership elites as well as the legacies of the colonial imperials.

3.1 The Source of the Evil: Neo-colonialism

Following the independence of the African states in the 1960s, there were many African far-sighted intellectuals, though they were few in number, who critically underlined the imperial powers' intention to involve post-independence African internal affairs. For instance, Kwame Nkrumah has argued that the imperial powers will remain in Africa masking their faces and described this kind of engagement as *'Neo-colonialism'* though the term came into being earlier. Thus, Nkrumah has published his famous book '*Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism'* in 1965 and defined neo-colonialism "as the state in which the State is independent in theory and has its all trappings of international sovereignty. But on the other hand its economic, social and political policies are directed from outside" (Nkrumah, 1965; Ibrahim, 2008). In this regard, Nkrumah argues that this form of engagement is the most dangerous and the last stage of colonialism.

There is no difficult to say that the few African countries that escaped colonialism are victims of neo-colonialism and subjected to the old dependency relations. Nevertheless, one may describe the contemporary Africa as a neo-colonial enterprise and as mere *'flag independence'*. The jubilation and expectation of the public about that the independence would bring progress and development has not been materialized, but in return generated unexpected waves of intra- and interstate conflicts and economic destitute (Thomas, 2008; Aladegbola & Azeez, 2012). In this respect, the post-colonial states in Africa, become fragile and weak both economically and politically, vulnerable and volatile comparing to many post-colonial states in Asia and Latin America.

John Perkins (2004) in his book *'Confessions of an Economic HiT Man: The shocking story of how America really took over the world'* illustrates that the Western countries in particular the Americans exploit not only the African resources and politics, but also many developing world by giving small amounts of money in a humiliating ways in return support the U.S. proposals tabled at the UN forums. In line with this, one may strongly support Nkrumah's point of view emphasizing that the neo-colonialism is in its last stage. Though the African countries were given an abstract political independence, still, are under strong influence and control from its colonial masters (Errol, 2008). There are wealthy of examples to mention, for instance, the French colonies have unbreakable ties with Paris, Italian colonies with Rome, while the British protectorates and colonies have strong relations with London. This kind of neo-imperialism doctrine was described by many as control without

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[5] Discussions with an academic and a veteran Professor on History, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

[6] Ibid., 4.

[7] Before the America's war on terror, the people in Africa irrespective of religion and faith were fighting in ethnic line and power struggle. However, the America's intervention sparked suspicion and mistrust among the Africans on faith basis. There are growing number of religious-based radical groups targeting other faiths and spiritual identities. This is the outcome of the Bush's Doctrine '*either with us or against'*

colonialism[8]. This control one may translate it into forms of assimilation, for instance, the Algerians fought one of the bloodiest wars of independence of the twentieth century against the French domination, but the French influence is still present in some aspects of the Algerians ways of life.

Contrary to the argument of Fanon (1965) in his book *'A Dying Colonialism'*, colonialism is far from dying or vanishing due to the strong legacies and influences presence in the African countries inherited from the colonial powers (Ali, 2008a; Bulhan, 2013). The argument of Fanon was valued in the 1960s when the most African countries gained independence from their masters, but after the celebration and jubilee of the African states couple of decades later, the real image of the illusion political independence has emerged[9].

There is no doubt that the neo-colonialism is prevalent in the contemporary African political economy (Thomas, 2008). Therefore, one can never deny the presence of a neo-colonial form of intervention not only from the Europeans, but also from the Americans (William, 2002; Errol, 2008). This argument is true when we see what has happened in Africa for the past years. The neo-imperial powers had bombed Libya unilaterally without prior advice to the African Union (AU) and destroyed the economic infrastructures of the state, killing thousands and injuring others of the innocent Libyans who were never suffered during the Muammar al-Gaddafi's reign as they suffered during and after the barbaric NATO bombings in Libya. This bombing campaign was not only to help the Libyans, but also to exploit the oil resources[10] for one hand, and as part of omnipotence strategy aimed to dominate the strategic gates of the African continent which severely suffered in the Cold War era. The unwise and oil-mongering decisions of the West made Libya the safe haven of the radical groups operating in Northern Africa[11]. This kind of practice unveils the hypocrite, the ugly and the evil face of the Western policies and their practices[12]. Therefore, analyzing this kind of politics against the Africans, one may question if the so-called political independence or sovereignty of the Africans is real or mythical.

3.2 African *'Elites'*: Dark Complexion with White Minds

Africa has a long history of oppression and exclusion from opportunities perpetrated by the European powers that ruthlessly treated against the African people, and the subsequent destruction of the traditional institutions of the Africans which led the erosion of the Africa's indigenous knowledge[13]. Prior to the Scramble for Africa by the Europeans in 1884–1885 Berlin Conference, there were many African descendent activists, most notably, from the Caribbean and the United States of America advocated the rights of the Blackman (Asfaw, 2008). These figures include: Edward Wilmot Blyden who said the famous quote *'Africa for the Africans'*, Marcus Garvey, who popularized the Blyden's saying, W.E.B. Du Bois, among others.

Without exaggeration, there were many others emerged in the second half of the twentieth century, advocated and defended tirelessly the rights of the people of color across the world, these include: Martin Luther King, Jr, Malcolm X, Angela Davis, Frantz Fanon, Ernesto *"Che"* Guevara, among others. For instance, Ernesto *"Che"* Guevara has fought in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the former Zaire against what he called *'Yankees Imperialism'*. Ernesto *"Che"* Guevara was one of

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[8] Azeez Olaniyan and A. I. Aladegbola have discussed in their paper (2012) *"Political economy of the new slave trade in Africa"*, published by International Journal of Peace and Development Studies, Vol. 3(5), pp. 92– 97

[9] From 1970s onwards, the Western countries started to implement their post-independence strategies aimed to control the African economies, politics and resources together. This was in the form of aid and adjustments, for instance, massive debts were given and trapped to the African nations in return support the Western interests and agendas. In the 1980s, structural adjustment programs were introduced and imposed to the African nations, to name a few

[10] In an interview of Al Jazeera (March, 2011) with Dr. Cornel West, one of the America's most provocative and best known intellectuals has argued that the oil is the sole and the major factor that guides the America's foreign policy to the Middle East

[11] On 11 September, 2012 which was the 11th anniversary of the September 11 attacks in the New York Twin Towers, the State Department and the Pentagon. Heavily armed radical groups believed to be members of the *Al Qaeda* operatives in North Africa stormed to the America's Consulate in Benghazi, burned the building and killed the Consulate staff including the America's Ambassador to Libya

[12] If the Western countries are honest about helping the oppressed wherever they are in this world, why they were silent about what happened in Bahrain during the Arab Spring. Did the Bahrainians don't deserve to be protected and saved from the vicious acts of the ruling Royal Family in support of the Saudis, the Emirates, and some other Gulf States. This is showing the oil-led U.S. Foreign Policy to the Middle East, because already Bahrain and the other Gulf States' oil resources and reserves are in the hands of the Americans. Thus, any uprisings from the Gulf States whether it is seeking democracy or raising human rights issues are contrary to the interest of the United States and deserve to be cracked down, that is the real policy of the West to the Middle Eastern countries

[13] Discussions with an anthropologist, academic and researcher mainly focuses on pastoralist societies and traditional values in Africa and the Horn of Africa in particular

the greatest exemplars of the revolutionary 1960s, travelled to Congo to put his theories of guerrilla warfare to use helping the oppressed people of the Congo following the assassination of the Congolese hero Patrice Lumumba. Many regard Guevara the twentieth century's great revolutionary martyr (Richard, 1999). In a similar manner, Frantz Fanon was with the Algerian nationalists, those fought one of the bloodiest wars of independence against the French military (Frantz, 1963; Bulhan, 1985). Frantz Fanon has never given up publishing books and articles advocating the rights of the oppressed. There are many, but to name some of those publications is important, include: a) Black Skin, White Masks, b) Toward the African Revolution, and, c) The Wretched of the Earth, among others.

In fact, the leaders of Africa at independence had mostly not been adequately trained by the colonial governments and had limited experience of operating a governmental system on a national scale. The absence of skill and knowledge led them to fail to reconcile the inherited administrative institutions from the colonizers and the African indigenous knowledge and traditional governance systems existed before the arrival of the colonial powers (William, 2002). On the other hand, these leaders unfortunately failed to meet the needs and expectations of their citizens, while most of these leaders if not all, have betrayed the euphoria and the exhilaration of their fellow citizens and finally dissipated as many citizens felt that their independence doesn't bring any substantial change and difference from the colonial powers.

These leaders became authoritarian regimes, either in the form of one-party system, military regime, military socialist regime or civil dictatorship planned themselves to become presidents for life, though some of them were deposed by their militaries (Nasir, 2013a). Those leaders viewed weak state institutions as dangerous to the security of the state. Thus, emphasized on the capacity of the state's coercive apparatus to be used to suppress dissent and discontent among the socially and economically insecure citizens (Makumi, 2004). This has never helped Africa's state survival and its human security. But, led many African states to collapse or remain in a fragile state of affairs.

Not contrast to the above argument, the long-term rule of those tyrant leaders left an ineradicable mark on the African states and created a legacy of distrust and fear for those attempting to call their government to account[14]. Therefore, the frequent failures of the African states emanate from the absence of committed leadership with a national plan and strategy (Oyekan, 2009). This kind of leadership undermines the laws of the state, demotes the sense of collective ownership and finally produces weak and fragile institutional framework.

Indeed, the major curse of the African continent is not only the European powers who planted the seeds of future conflicts in the continent, but partially it is from the Africa's *'genetically modified leaders'* who are responsible for the agony and tragedy happening across Africa. These so-called African elites are Africans in color, but their minds and ways of thinking are fragmented and dominated by Western ideologies and dogmas (Mohamed, 2001; Bulhan, 2013). It seems obvious that the African leaders from the dawn of independence till recently, are the servants of the Western countries and can never oppose the demands and interests of those powers. In contrast, for instance, Congo slipped into civil war in 1961 less than a year when it gained its independence. Its Prime Minister, Patrick Lumumba was assassinated by the CIA following his brave position against the interests of the Western powers and inclination to the Soviets (Richard, 1999; Ibrahim, 2008). The beginning of the Congo's war on resources following the death of its nationalist is the first successful neo-colonialism litmus test in Africa.

African state leaders are, by and large, Western-produced elites and regarded as the tools of the colonial agendas (Mohamed, 2001). This statement is true in the Somali post-independence political context. In the 1960s, the ugly face and the social crisis, which was a colonial export, have emerged in the Somali society. This has served as a future political, economic and social agony that contributed its part the total demise of the Somali state institutions after thirty-one years. In line with this point of view, one of the Somali best known intellectual, nationalist and poet, Ahmed Ismail Diria known as 'Qasim', has argued that the colonial elements are present in the Somali society. In 1964, less than four years of the so-called political independence, the first Somali Government has failed to meet the basic needs of its citizens. This Somali prominent poet has questioned the sovereignty of the Somali post-colonial leaders and accused the colonial powers as the mentors of the Somali leaders[15].

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[14] The most conflicts happening in Africa if not all, are colonial legacies-driven conflicts aggravated by both weak leadership style and its greedy behavior coupled with fragile, irresponsible governance institutions

[15] Ahmed Ismail Diria 'Qasim', was not the only Somali poet who criticized post-independence Somali leaders, there were many who aggressively criticized the leaders in particular those led the State from 1960–1969 who were regarded by many as the root cause of the Somalia's future agony and tragedy. Following the overthrow of the Somali Government by the military on 21st October, 1969, there were many poets who supported and shown sympathy to the Army. Because many have criticized the first decade leaders as puppets and servants of the colonizers, and that is why the Army has attracted the attention of the public, and over hundreds of encouraging songs were composed and released promoting sense of nationalism and braving those who dared to overthrow those servants and puppets

Despite the critical stance of the African leaders at independence against the imperial powers, which deserve appreciation, on the other hand, there is a crude critique against the leadership style of the first generation of the independent African states as well as their successors. The most distressing political calculations adopted by those leaders, could be summarized in three main crucial points thus have had an adversary impact on the socio-economic aspects of the African citizens at large, these are: a) injustice practices in the African state politics at national, regional and local levels, b) unequal distribution of wealth and state resources among the citizens. As a common phenomenon in a continent ravaged by the practices of nepotism and favoritism, most of the African leaders if not all, introduced versions of policies by installing their ethnic group members or clan affiliates, close and extended families, and friends within the state system and empowered them to manipulate the state power and exploit the state resources, and, c) cracking down the political opposition figures which existed and widely practiced on the continent[16].

The Africa's problems created by both the colonial powers and the African leaders are not the conflicts and confrontations experienced by many parts of the continent for decades. But, there are many, such as the corruption which is a man-orchestrated endemic disease and prevalent in the continent, regarded by many as the habits of the African leadership. The term is widely described as an improper practice from a public official against a public property for individual purposes (Nasir, 2014). In this regard, one may describe the corruption not only as about manipulating the public funds, but is about putting irresponsible people in the prime positions, people who have neither the passion and sincerity nor the qualification and skills[17].

This kind of practice is crippling Africa's development and progress and made the governance institutions on the verge to collapse or fall apart. Interestingly, in Africa, it is observed that the blind who supposed to go after the sighted guides the sighted himself, the ugly and ignorant with arrogant character leads the wise, the unskilled directs the skilled, and those that are deaf defines the sound. To elaborate further, in the African states, the most disqualified figures occupy the crucial and sensitive positions for running state affairs. In Somaliland, a *de facto* independent state and the former British Somaliland Protectorate in the Horn of Africa, experiences similar practices with those other African states. For instance, in the current Somaliland Council of Ministers there are a number of figures that lack neither skill and knowledge nor experience in running state affairs, but they have close relations with the regime[18].

On the continent we are living today, most African states has been unable to achieve remarkable governance and decent economic performance, which is often enables to provide citizens with a minimum level of basic services such as education, health and security. Thus, African leaders have not only led their respective countries to economic growth since independence; but also failed to hold a single free and fair democratic election except few countries such as Botswana and Mauritius (John, 2008). One of the fascinating points to note is that Botswana has never had military coups due to its committed leadership which made Botswana a miracle of Africa though it has its own challenges and domestic problems.

One of the discouraging practices of the African leaders is the marginalization of minorities. Since independence, many African leaders have marginalized and disempowered minorities aimed to prevent any possible resistance against their rules. This unequal representation in the state political institutions has produced weak governance institutions, mistrust among the state citizens, violent conflicts and confrontations, and so on (John, 1986). In Africa, there are many concerns which critically underline the marginalization of the minority groups which suffer more than any other group. While marginalization of ethnic minorities is a major issue in every African state, thus, one may regard it as the major sources of the Africa's conflicts and crises and the consistent fragility in terms of security and state institutions.

Nevertheless, the responsibility of the Africa's protracted conflicts and crises rests on the shoulders of its leaders. The ill-fated African leaders are the evil, if not the source of the evil. To remain in power, these leaders have fragmented their citizens either in ethnic line or religious and beliefs wise (Abdalla, 2002; Oyekan, 2009). This kind of policies never helped Africans, but led many to collapse or on the verge to collapse, the Central African Republic, the South Sudan, Somalia's protracted state collapse, among others, are the best examples that explain the negative role of the African leaders in running their respective states.

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[16] The three factors indicated in the paragraph are the real and actual practices of the Africa's failed leaders who lack sense of charisma and national vision rather concentrating their efforts to exploit state resources, and that is why the African states are failing one after another

[17] This kind of practices are prevalent in many parts of the African continent and remain the major if not the sole challenge against Africa's decent way of development

[18] The current Somaliland Government led by Silanyo publicly denied the rights of the citizens who voted for him in 2010 election, the acts including: banning newspapers, nepotism which is prevalent in Somaliland, corruption, abuse of power, among others. All these irrational acts are from some ministers who misuse their positions

3.3 Weak Governance System

Africa's weak governance is multi-dimensional and disregards any single explanation. While some see the Africa's institutional incapability as domestic and an African generated problem, others see it differently and regard it as a colonial inherited misfortune. Indeed, the colonial rule was alien rule, superimposed from outside and established in the midst of functioning cultures. The colonial state imposed the administrative structure of an authoritarian state on Africa, which had its impact on the post-colonial state (William, 2002). This could be true in the Somali context which has a history of pastoralism accustomed to move from one place to another in search of pasture and water. Hussein Abdilahi Bulhan (2013) argues that the genesis of the Somalia's conflicts and the prolonged state collapse is a colonial imposed social crisis to the Somali society without considering the Somali social order.

In this regard, it is important to understand why many African countries are failing one after another, the root cause and the reasons why sub-Saharan African countries have generally performed poorly politically and economically since their independence comparable to post-colonial states in Asia and Latin America (John, 1986; Abdalla, 2002; Wim, 2010). There are many factors to mention, such as; policy failures, institutional weaknesses, political instability and civil conflict, among others. Paul Collier (2008) argues that the conflict is development in reverse while it damages both the country itself and its neighbors. Nevertheless, violence and extortion have proved profitable for the perpetrators.

There is no doubt that inclusive governance; responsible institutions and the rule of law are the precursors and the central driver both for sustainable development and stability. The rule of law is possible only in order and functioning state institutions. Hence, before enforcing the law, the government must establish order, yet unfortunately this has been seriously challenged in Africa over the last decades (Bruce, 2008). Since their independence in the 1960s, African states have not performed very well by maintaining high economic growth rates in comparison to the post-colonial nations in Asia, though the continent has abundant natural resources and can present economic prosperity based primarily on wealth from minerals and other natural resources endowed to the continent. This is true because most independent countries in Africa if not all, explicitly adopted the governmental form of their former colonial master and failed to materialize the traditional institutions belonged to the African people prior to the arrival of the imperial powers into Africa.

It deserves to note that the Asian countries are as diverse as Africa, but managed to maintain political stability and economic growth albeit years of financial crisis in 1990s. We cannot argue that those countries have not been colonized; in fact, they have been, as Africa and Latin America. The most fascinating point to note is that the leaders of the post-colonial states in Asia have managed to reconcile their traditional knowledge and institutions for one hand, and colonial architected state institutions for the other to co-exist. Thus, and in contrast to Africa, their traditional and religious identities have survived[19]. In Africa, according to Ali Mazrui (2008), the colonial powers destroyed old methods of conflict resolution and traditional African political institutions, and failed to create effective substitute ones in their place. Nevertheless, the society at large lost its traditional institutions which eroded by the colonial powers' intervention[20].

On the African continent, there is a need for economic growth and political stability, but, this needs commitment from stakeholders to ensure proper enforcement of the law and respect of the national constitutions, and the rights of the citizens including minorities with strong institutional framework. In this regard, according to Abdalla Bujra (2002) reforming the political system, improving and developing economic infrastructures, among others, are the major factors that could help Africa's states survival in the long-term.

4. RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES AND THE WAYS FORWARD STRATEGIES

African states in particular those in sub-Saharan Africa have remained in a conflict and political unrest and instability since their independence (William, 2002). This political instability with poor economic performance has been the outcome of fragile governance institutions exacerbated by weak leadership style. The inefficient leadership with dysfunctional governance institutions gave room external actors in particular the former colonial powers those had old colonial relations with their respective colonies. This multiple engagement both internal and external has never helped indigenous Africans. Therefore, this kind of practice should be regarded by many as the root cause of the Africa's lingering conflicts among the

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[19] Ibid., 13.
[20] Ibid., 13.

African diverse ethnic groups, economic problems and disparities, and institutional failures, and finally generates the total collapses of the state, among others.

To overcome all these challenges and problems facing the African states, the solution should be internally initiated and will require a number of sacrifices from the Africans by employing indigenous African approaches, these include: a) committed leadership free from external influence is necessary to be found in the African decision-making circles, but this is an uncertain possibility, b) bringing back the African expatriates those fled the ruthless rulers of the African states, c) establishing responsible governance institutions to serve the African citizens impartially and provide social services to those in need in the peripheries, and d) reconciling the various hostile identities across Africa, for instance, there are conflicts and confrontations happening in the Central African Republic between the Muslims and the Christians, the Boko Haram guerilla warfare in northern Nigeria, the current conflict and crisis in South Sudan, the atrocities taking place in Darfur since February, 2003. All these conflicts basically have ethnic or religious roots aggravated by the weak and the greedy leadership style from the Africans, though some those conflicts have colonial root. For instance, some consider the foundations of the inter-religious conflict in Nigeria as being laid during the colonial period when Christian evangelism in the Muslim emirates was eventually permitted (Bruce, 2008; Heather, 2009). From that period onwards Christianity and Islam became engaged in a battle for new converts among the pockets of non-Muslim communities.

5. CONCLUSION

Since their independence in 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, African countries had not enjoyed much success. The African continent, the second largest in the world has evolved from one of the poorest continents on the earth and became a symbol of political instability, uneven economic growth, international investment disparity and development. Thus, the major source of those uneven problems are not only from the incompetence of the African leaders, but also from the external actors in particular the colonial masters who spent several decades by interacting with those visionless and ragtag leaders to achieve their own national interests and maintain their omnipotence strategy and old dependency relationship. Primarily, though the Whiteman is behind all the unfortunate acts happening in Africa, much should be blamed for those who claim African citizens and remained ineffective, inefficient, and betrayed the ambitions and goals of their fellow citizens.

Without a doubt, African countries face governance and development challenges; the main challenges concern absence of strong institutions with effective economic and social policies, a grave violation of human rights, including minority groups, among others. In fact, there are some states such as Botswana and Mauritius which are widely viewed as an African success story with respect to governance and development progress. There are many other Africans, which went in the opposite direction.

To conclude, the African states, though politically and economically are dominated by *'genetically modified groups'* representing the interest of their colonial masters, on the other hand, Africa can achieve remarkable progress in the face of discouraging challenges. Its development challenges can be overcome through joint functioning traditional and modern, responsible governance institutions and good economic policies with committed leaders who are absent from the most African states.

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