



## ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES CONFERENCE DES EGLISES DE TOUTE L'AFRIQUE

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### **The Challenges of Democratic Transitions and Self Determination in Africa**

*“The Lord has told you, oh man, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)*

We members of the Executive Committee of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) meeting in Nairobi from 14 – 15 of April 2011, praise the Almighty God for His manifold blessings and the gift of life kept and transmitted by our ancestors from time immemorial.

After an intense reflection and prayer on the current political-economic dynamics in our beloved continent we are deeply concerned about the unfolding political scenario coming while both the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and the African Union (AU) are planning to celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in less than two years time from now.

When it was inaugurated on April 20, 1963 in Kampala, Uganda, the AACC was created for authentic African Christianity committed to Freedom and Unity. On the other hand, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), established on May 25, 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, aimed at promoting African unification and economic development while fighting colonialism and apartheid. There is no doubt whatsoever that the OAU mobilised African states and people within Africa and in the Diaspora to overcome colonialism and its derivatives. Therefore the two organizations shared the vision of a liberated, unified and dignified Africa.

An important milestone in addressing political domination was the transformation of the OAU to the African Union (AU) in 9<sup>th</sup> July 2002. After achieving full political independence and ending the dreaded apartheid system, the goals for which the OAU was formed in 1963, Africa needed to transform institutionally to better place itself for the new challenges of economic emancipation. Thus the AU aims at:

- accelerating the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
- promoting and defending African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;
- achieving peace and security in Africa; and
- promoting democratic institutions, good governance and human rights.

In the last decade or so, there has been a commendable level of democratization on the continent. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) initiated by the African Union under the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) was established to reinforce this process and will continue to be encouraged by AACC. We commend those governments who have acceded to this mechanism of review by their peers, which interrogates their progress made in the realms of economic, social, and political spheres. We encourage all African leaders to commit themselves to this process, as it is an African initiative to address African issues, without external interference.

However, we have witnessed a number of unconstitutional transitions where incumbents have forced their way or attempted to stay in office, despite defeat in the electoral process. The electoral processes

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AACC is a fellowship of 173 member Churches and Christian Councils in 40 African countries

La CETA est une communauté de 173 églises et conseils chrétiens dans 40 pays d'Afrique

**PRESIDENT:** The Most Rev. Archbishop Valentine Mokiwa **GENERAL SECRETARY:** Rev. Dr. André Karamaga

in many countries are still compromised by allegations of rigging with impunity, corruption and disrespect the will of the people and the rule of law. We have also witnessed an emerging trend of the creation of political dynasties in a number of countries. This as we have witnessed in the recent past has led to conflict, resulting in loss of life, destruction of property, and displacement of people. This situation creates opportunities for external forces to intervene in situations which should be resolved by Africans.

Since its inception, AACC has been engaged in promoting peace, freedom and dignity for every person through whom the image of God is seen. We remain determined to combat dictatorship and any resistance against democratic transitions and the misuse of power.

After colonialism and the cold war era, today, Africa is on the brink of the third phase of domination courtesy of economic instability created by the Structural Adjustment Programmes of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank of the 1990s. With ever increasing levels of poverty and being the only continent with massive untapped resources, Africa is fast becoming an economic battlefield of economically powerful countries. These battles are aimed at controlling resources such as oil, lumber, cash crops, and minerals such as coltan, gold and diamond among others. There is even encroachment on land where in some countries foreigners are alienating fertile land in the name of increasing food production in Africa.

Moreover, the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has brought new challenges to the dream of full economic and political emancipation of Africa which was first articulated by the 5<sup>th</sup> Pan-African Congress in Manchester, England in 1945. These new challenges are manifested in a trend that has been referred to in some circles as the “recolonization” and “repartitioning” of Africa, predominantly on two dimensions; political and economic.

The AACC Executive Committee is concerned that this new dominance which is all about economics and resources control, must stop as well as the new partitioning of Africa which undermines our own freedom and independence regained at very high cost. We therefore call upon the Church, all nations, people of Africa and the African Union to stand up firmly and protect the gains and the dignity of the continent.

As the AACC celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary during its assembly scheduled to take place in 2013 in Kampala, Uganda, under the theme “*God of Life, Lead Africa to Peace, Justice and Dignity*” the Executive Committee calls on the people of Africa, including those in Diaspora, to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with God.

14<sup>th</sup> April 2011  
Nairobi, Kenya

Archbishop Valentine Mokiwa (signed)  
President of the AACC

Rev. Dr. André Karamaga (signed)  
General Secretary of the AACC