

*31 May 2023 Pan Africanism Discussion*  
*PFPAD Vice Chair Alice A. Nkom Reflections*  
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2<sup>nd</sup> PFPAD Session  
Conference Room 4  
UN New York Headquarters  
United States of America

Ambassador Omar, thank you.

Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates and guests, global experts, Forum colleagues, the Secretariat, organisers, contributors, greetings everyone.

I thank you very much for the occasion to share my reflections about “Pan-Africanism for Dignity, Justice, and Peace”. Thank you very much.

I begin, by remembering that: “with each drop of water, a glass becomes full.”

A full glass of water being symbolic of any progress sustained in terms of, for example: (1) global reparatory justice; (2) transnational migration accountability; (3) recognising as well as addressing systemic and structural racism; and (4) having health access and wellbeing. Each point being an essence of our thematic discussion this week.

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As an African (born, living and working in Cameroon), when I first heard of Pan Africanism, my initial thoughts were optimistic and welcoming: a viable movement of Black People self-determining our liberations! Quoting from this 2<sup>nd</sup> Session's concept note: "Pan Africanism was and still is a global movement for the liberation of Africans and People of African Descent from colonialism, enslavement, subjugation, and systemic and structural racism."

I have two questions before I share my reflections, noting that the African Union is founded on Pan Africanism: (1) what will Pan Africanism look like in the 40th century for example? (2) How will 40th century Pan Africanism be sustained (fueled) by 21st century Pan Africanism? Indeed, it is significant to prepare our present and our future as much as possible.

In above regard, my concise reflections today (Wednesday, 31 May 2023) are from a legal purview, particularly, advocating for dignity, justice, and peace with specificity to the upholding of the rule of law as well as addressing impunity (be that locally, nationally, regionally, and/or globally).

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If there is no rule of law and, even where there is selective rule of law, citizens of any country are negatively affected in varying degrees and with varying consequences (for example, people in this conference room; people who could not afford the travel expenses to be in this room; groups who are marginalised including our Elders, persons with disabilities, youth, migrants, people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex; humans).

If anything, laws (principally, the rule of law pertaining to the protection of human rights for All — so nicely communicated via speeches, papers, conferences, meetings) emphasise that violence against Africans and People of African Descent, any people, is a violation of One's human rights especially since such violence places people at grave risk and within states of indignity and injustice — such violence which is a contradiction to dignity, justice, and peace; upholding the rule of law; and addressing impunity.

Pan Africanism is about addressing impunity; upholding the rule of law; dignity, justice, and peace. Thus, Pan Africanism is viable and necessary.

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Definitely, it is strategic for Africans and People of African Descent, to continue to join positive forces, with note of continuing to live our African values, for instance, dignity, compassion, peace, justice, kindness, love, respect, and forgiveness — values which We (Africans and People of African Descent) have held in the highest regard and practiced for centuries. We are able to work together and then some. Here, I mention the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement as another example.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the legal ramifications of perpetuating violence. It is simple: where there is admissible evidence in the Courts as per the rules of evidence, and where it is proven in the Courts that an injustice or injustices occurred, then accountability is essential — the most basic of human rights standards, as well as an added reasoning for applauding Pan Africanism.

At present, I am disheartened to see what is occurring globally with proposed and pending legislation against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people for instance.

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As a human rights defender, as a Barrister, such passed or pending legislation which is based on discrimination is opposite (counter) to continuing our African values.

There is so much that Mother Africa (our home), from the earliest of time, can teach all of humanity about non-violence also known as dignity, justice, and peace; upholding the rule of law; as well as addressing impunity. Specifically, world societies, by fulfilling human rights for All: (1) reduce the level of arbitrary arrests, detentions, and convictions; (2) facilitate community-centred discussions about human rights; (3) improve critical awareness about One's human rights; (4) ensure quality access to basic services like healthcare, housing, education, employment, as well as retirement; and (5) increase sustainability of this Earth.

Humbly, I close here with a further advocacy call to People of Pan Africanism; defenders of human rights, the world over; as well as to each of You, present in these corridors of the UN New York Headquarters — You who champion and uphold dignity, justice, and peace for Africans and People of African Descent, including our Elders, persons with disabilities, youth, migrants, people

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who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex;  
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I thank You.