

Only a Unified Africa Can Give Us Our Fullest Power: A Commentary by and Interview with Mafa Kwanisai Mafa

by

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Editor's note: The following interview is based on a request by Mafa Kwanisai Mafa to have the following commentary published. I responded, suggesting that an interview may better serve the purpose. Thus his commentary is presented first, and afterwards, I begin the interview.

Mafa Kwanisai Mafa (cdemafa@gmail.com) is a Pan-Africanist activist and writer based at the Midlands State University in Zimbabwe, he was born in Gweru, Zimbabwe in 1975. He grew up in the dusty township of Mkoba in Gweru (Zimbabwe). He has a background of Library, Information and Media. Inspired by Malcolm X, Che Guevera and Kwame Nkrumah he became an adernt advocate of Pan Africanism and anti-imperialist struggles from tertiary college up to date. He is a former student leader .He has founded the Zimbabwe Pan Africanist Youth Agenda . He has appeared on scores of local , continental and diasporan radio and television programs speaking about the Zimbabwe Land Question and the contemporary struggles against imperialist machinations.

He works with many Pan Africanist movements in his country, southern Africa, on the continent and globally. He is also an official representative of Zimbabwe on some Global Pan Africanist organisations .He also professes to a keen interest in anthropology, natural history, linguistics, African history, social justice, environmental issues, education and world peace. He is also developing a keen interest in writing, photography and film-making. He believes passionately in the economic and cultural advancement of African people, he believes the two are inseparable and calls for greater African ownership of African images and commodities related to African people. He encourages greater investment of the African Diaspora in the continent of Africa and the cutting of dependency from outside of Africa's cultural borders.

Commentary

Africa under Siege

Africans all over the world had an historic opportunity to make a significant impact on the direction of Africa, starting last week when African leaders met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This opportunity came during the most critical time of Africa since the 1960s, as the African Union Summit convened.

The AU, formed in 2001 to establish the long-delayed government of Africa, is the direct offspring of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) created in 1963. With very critical issues facing Africa, leaders have to decide how best to deal with problems consuming Africa from Cape to Cairo and from West to East Africa. African leaders need to, finally and immediately, establish a union government of Africa as discussed for the last century.

When will Africa be for the Africans?

Reactionary Forces

We see reactionary forces occupying Africa. America is placing American troops in 35 African countries. France is now in Mali to stop the Islamists, with American support of course. But does it matter to us whether the Euro-Americans or the Islamists occupy the land; both are known to be devils and destroyers of African culture.

And what shall we say about the African governments in cahoots with the imperialists or globalists? The African politicians appear in lockstep with the colonisers and crusaders seeking control of Africa's precious minerals. From neo-colonialism of the last decades, we see they are in the mood to make deals with the devil. After all, Kwame Nkrumah taught us neo-colonialism is colonialism playing possum.

African nations collaborating with the occupiers are in the tradition of those who sold us to slavers. In many of these nations, the former revolutionaries have turned reactionary, yes, in league with the devil. We can almost say no one in this African quagmire is without sin. Who are the good guys, the African leaders, the Euro-Americans, Arab Islamists, who?

Warzone

Africa has become a warzone without end. Nearly 3 million people have died in Congo in a four-year war over Coltan, a heat-resistant mineral ore widely used in cell phones, laptops and play stations and other strategic minerals. Eighty percent of the world's coltan reserves are in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Often dismissed as an ethnic war, the conflict in the Congo is really over natural resources sought by foreign corporations - diamonds, tin, copper, gold, but mostly coltan”

In an article titled “Why the US Won’t Help”, a Nairobi newspaper explained, ‘Right from the days of the Cold War, Western governments have been comfortable with a situation in which African regimes squandered meagre resources on the instruments of war, borrowing from the West to finance domestic consumption. The war in the Congo and the countries involved in it are a case in point’...

In 1998, the State Department licensed commercial weapons sales by US manufacturers to sub-Saharan Africa worth up to US\$64 million, on top of the US\$12m in government-to-government deliveries that year. These figures have quadrupled since 1998 and the region is no closer to stability than it was when Patrice Lumumba was assassinated by the US, French and Belgians in 1960s.

The hypocrisy of the US and Europe asking Africa’s political elite to develop and democratise while cutting levels of non-military international aid and increasing weapons and military training to the continent’s armies does not seem to have registered with African-Americans - neither those (Pan-Africans) who claim solidarity with the current crop of African leaders, nor those elected to public office.

Militarization of Africa

This lack of outspoken opposition to US militarisation of Africa, especially under the Obama administration, is inexcusable and attributable to the uncritical and unprincipled support of the Obama regime by African-Americans. Moreover, Obama’s policy of destabilisation and “democratic regime change” of governments it is at odds with suggest that there is little real commitment to developing human resources and a new “partnership” with Africa.

The US needs to redirect the focus away from strengthening military capacity, co-opting ethnic and national elites and more toward promoting human development in Africa.

The use of the contextual term “Arab Spring” to characterise the mass uprising of North Africans against the rule of despotic Arab elites is purposely and artfully crafted to discourage sub-Saharan Black Africa and its Muslim populations from emulating their North African counterparts while appealing to the “Anti-Arab” sentiments among many Pan-Africans and within the Black Diaspora.

War of Terror

ECOWAS and the African Union’s recent support of French military intervention in Mali and as US surrogate in Somalia, and elsewhere on the African continent are testimony to how eagerly Africa’s political elite are utilising the “West’s war terror” to secure their positions and prop up their power while ignoring persecuted and marginalised Muslim minority populations.

In countries like Nigeria, the US is on the ground supporting the Christian-dominated government’s “anti-terrorist actions” in the North of the country against an Islamic insurgency. In Somalia, the US drone war has spilled over into neighbouring countries, like Eritrea, Al-Yemen and has led to tribal unrest in Northern Kenya.

While the US and its European allies seemed appalled by the Muslim insurgencies in the north of Mali (consistently failing to mention that this crisis was long in the making and connected to the Western Europeans’ deposing of Libya’s Gaddafi and the silent collusion of Black Africa’s leaders), both the US and Europe are neither horrified nor outraged by events in the Eastern Congo.

The increasingly fascist posture of the sell-outs in occupied/neo-colonial "South Africa", that is in reality and historically a classic case of financial politicians selling out the heroic people of Azania; the role of rogue terrorist states such as Kagame's Rwanda and Museveni's Uganda; the rape of Nigeria by European and US petroleum pirates; the confusion of the numerically dominant parties in our beloved Ghana; the open and notorious embrace of imperialism by states such as Djibouti and Liberia, the hypocrites in Senegal and elsewhere... and the all assault to wipe out the revolutionary spark in Guinea-Bissau and destroy the PAIGC.

This latter is particularly important because it is the cadres of the PAIGC who have done the most at home to keep the light of Pan-Africanism and the general African Revolution from being extinguished by racist imperialism and neo-colonialism. And now it has become a key target in a war against this sovereign state that has always stood for Pan-Africanism. And remember Guinea-Bissau is being dismembered by the US front agency the United Nations organization, with the gleeful participation of ECOWAS.

Re-colonisation of Africa

As the world watches the current crisis in Mali and Algeria unfolds, we are witnessing the militarisation, re-occupation and re-colonisation of Africa by Western powers led by France, with some African co-operation.

By January 13, 2013, after being “petitioned” by Africans to save Mali from total conquest by al-Qaeda forces, the French government underwent a massive military strike operation to stop al-Qaeda advance across Mali and West Africa.

Their halt by French war machine is due to France’s high-tech combat aircrafts and highly trained and tested foreign operation ground force similar to those who invaded Libya and elsewhere.

The NATO troops now in Mali and other parts of Africa are involved in a worldwide and extended war zone from Asia to Africa. To most experts, unlike other nations under EU/NATO and al-Qaeda attacks, Africa is the most vulnerable and the ultimate frontier of wealth to continue empowering white supremacy in the world. The current crop of Africa’s corrupt, cowardly and compliant leaders are working against their own self-interests and have almost sealed the deal for Africa’s conquest by foreigners.

Serial Destruction

Fellow Africans, we are witnessing an unprecedented serial destruction of Africa with the recent attacks and destruction starting with Ivory Coast (2010), Libya (2011), and Mali (2012).

Other African nations are already under siege, with the great scramble for the re-colonisation of Africa for resources by very powerful but economically desperate nations in the world.

The stage was set in the 1960s with the planned neutralisation of Pan-African leaders across the African world. The serial attacks on Africa are all part of this renewed agenda for the final solution for African people by a unified Europe with some Arab states to ensure that white power “will never set” on the EU/USA empire, fixated on the control of Africa’s resources, to extend their power globally.

On March 17, 2011, the UN Security Council approved Resolution 1973 to “protect civilians” in the Libyan civil war. Two days later, French Mirages began bombing runs on Muammar Gaddafi's armoured forces and airfields, thus igniting direct intervention by Britain, along with Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Resolution 1973 did not authorise NATO and its allies to choose sides in the Libyan civil war, just to protect civilians, and many of those who signed on - including Russia and China - assumed that Security Council action would follow standard practice and begin by first exploring a political solution.

But the only kind of “solution” that the anti-Gaddafi alliance was interested in was the kind delivered by 500lb laser-guided bombs.

The day after the French attack, the AU held an emergency session in Mauritania in an effort to stop the fighting.

The AU was deeply worried that, if Libya collapsed without a post-Gaddafi plan in place, it might destabilize other countries in the region. They were particularly concerned that Libya's vast arms storehouse might end up fuelling local wars in other parts of Africa.

However, no one in Washington, Paris or London paid the AU any mind, and seven months after France launched its attacks, Libya imploded into its current status, as a failed state.

Within two months, Tuaregs - armed with Gaddafi's weapons cache - rose up and drove the corrupt and ineffectual Malian army out of Northern Mali.

Cheap Resources

France has major investments in Niger and Mali. At bottom, this is about Francs (or euros, as it may be). Some 75 percent of France's energy needs come from nuclear power, and a cheap source is its old colonial empire in the region (that besides Mali and Niger included Senegal, Mauritania, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Chad, Algeria, and the Central African Republic). Most of its nuclear fuel comes from Niger, but Al-Jazeera reports that French uranium, oil and gold companies are lining up to develop northern Mali.

Lest one think that this ‘development’ is good for the locals, consider that, according to the UN's Human Development Index, Niger is the third poorest country in the world. There are other issues as well.

Union Government

It is very important that our people be given the tools to build Pan-Africanism. This means embracing an ideology that is actually intended to facilitate the African Union government model advocated by Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah and many other true African patriots.

If you will recall the numerical majority of the OAU actually voted for Nkrumah's initial proposal for such a government, but certain cliques were able to garner enough votes against Pan-Africanism to prevent the majority decision from being put in place.

This is what Nkrumah had warned would happen when the imperialist created certain states in the period from '60-62 that is a deliberate strategy to inundate Africa with bogus "independent" states which would be their appendages inside of Africa... and as he warned these elements plus the treachery of Tanzania, Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire were sufficient to blunt the majority position.

Of course, Nkrumah was overthrown by the capitalist world led by the US and their main stooge the UK prior to the next OAU meeting, which was done to prevent any efforts to reintroduce the proposal for Union government.

Thus, as Nkrumah said, the only viable option was/is to fight back against the imperialists on a continental basis backed by the revolutionary forces around the world.

This is the only solution that will work, for as you see, the AU which betrayed Libya's less than ideologically and structurally coherent, but nonetheless, genuine effort to create a united African government and state, will NOT enable or allow any other forces to unite our people into one grand government, as they are what Nkrumah correctly described as financial politicians. What we might call hustlers and pimps on a grand scale and who have no interest in the African people period.

Racist Exploitation

Africa is riper for Pan-Africanism than ever before. Struggle is a prerequisite for consciousness.

There are very few countries in Africa, which have not seen violent confrontation for political power. The Caribbean has seen, and continues to see, its share of revolts and even in the United States and Britain, the African masses explode time and time again in violent confrontation against racist exploitation.

Everywhere Africans have demonstrated their willingness to confront imperialism "by any means necessary".

The necessity for real political power is persistently demanded everywhere by the masses.

The understanding that only a unified Africa can give us our fullest power is an article of political faith with our suffering masses.

In spite of all reactionary propaganda to the contrary - in a simple repeated phrase - the consciousness of the masses is rising even higher.

As a result of struggle, Africans worldwide have acquired, through their conscious students, all technical skills to make Africa self-sufficient in the immediate future.

Even reactionary African countries have acquired skills in nation building.

If we do not prepare to fight, we will lose and I mean lose everything.

Interview

February 12, 2013

IMZ: Greetings Mafa Kwanisai Mafa, and welcome to this interview.

MKM: Revolutionary greetings to you! Thank you so much for granting me this interview

IMZ: I am pleased and somewhat surprised by your February 11, 2013 notice sent via e-mail to JPAS, and perhaps to others wherein you mentioned that reactionary forces are occupying Africa, and that there is a need for African leaders to establish a union government of Africa, and other important Pan African issues.

In regards to reactionary forces occupying Africa, what do you think the masses should be doing or saying, as some African governments welcome former colonizers to manage conflicts?

MKM: Yes of course, we are witnessing the re-colonisation of our Motherland before our eyes. There is AFRICOM a US military project. While we are sleeping under our nose a full scale invasion is deploying troops in more than 35 countries, beginning with Libya, Sudan, Algeria and Niger by US Obama evil forces while they use "Arab Islamist Terrorist" as an excuse to recolonize, how many times do we have to warn Africa to wake up and defend itself against foreign invasions. The reason that they [the US government] give for their proposed physical invasion of Africa is bogus. They proposed to invade Africa on the basis of fighting something which they themselves created and continue to support." The Pentagon has set up an army brigade to be deployed to as many as 35 African nations to train local forces. The "Dagger Brigade" consisting of 3,500 combat troops will be assigned to the Pentagon's Africa Command, training indigenous state security forces to participate in military exercises from early next year. This is a first-of-its-kind brigade assignment and groups will be assigned to countries such as Libya, Sudan, Algeria, Kenya, Uganda and Niger. All of this is done without the consent of Congress or the American people. The groups are to travel from Fort Riley in the state of Kansas to a number of African nations in various stages to avoid any appearance of a large US military engagement. The brigade is to have drone capability. The Gospel of total unification and liberation of African by one of the greatest illustrious hero of Africa is still accurate and relevant even today but we know that the enemy will never allow this, that's why our leaders have been assassinated and deposed and replaced with imperialist lackeys, the same scenario is being orchestrated in Zimbabwe through the imperialist lackey Morgan Tsvangirai, to dethrone the revolutionary leadership of President Mugabe and replace him with these rabies infested lapdogs in the form of MDC .The masses should rise up like what they did in the Arab world and overthrow these African leaders who are selling African nations for thirty pieces of silver. Africa is for Africans, we can manage our own affairs without outside interference. Europe has its own fair share of problems to mind.

IMZ: In the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, you state that it is often dismissed as an ethnic war, when in reality; it is really a war about natural resources such as diamonds, tin, copper, gold, and coltan. I am in agreement with your assessment, especially when we learn that it is estimated that the Democratic Republic of the Congo has 64% of the world's coltan (columbite-tantalite) which is used in constructing modern electronic devices. How and when did this 'ethnic war' propaganda become inflated, and why do you think it is propagated?

MKM: Divide and conquer is the old tactic which the western colonial governments have been using and it's still in their arsenals even up to this day. They foment ethnicity, tribalism, divisionalism over lines of false consciousness and you turn against each other, and they give you guns to butcher each other whilst they rapaciously pillage, loot and rape the vast natural resources of the DRC. This "ethnic propaganda" is being inflated to give the false impression and illusion that Africa are still primitive and cannot not run modern democracies to justify interventions under the guise of humanitarian grounds and recolonise and plunder as they care for Africans who are killing each other.

IMZ: In your presentation you state that it has not registered with African Americans that the West is asking Africa's political elite to develop and democratize while they cut non-military international aid and increase weapons and military training for the continent's armies. Why do you think this is true; and what do you think can be done about it? And third, what particular crop of African Americans are you referencing in this discourse (elected officials, entertainers, religious leaders, etc.)?

MKM: Of course there is cry from our kith and kin for Africa to develop and democratize, but the western world through their economic appendages like the World Bank and the Breton Woods institutions, they prescribe economic solutions which render Africa perpetually dependent on them, and these policies do not develop economies of the dependent countries, so it true that non-military aid is scarce in Africa, the big aid you get is military, and they are very quick to train your army and give you weapons, that is what they are doing in Iraq, do the children of Iraq eat guns and ammunition? Those who claim to be the free world and champions of democracy are the ones who are killing people under the "war on terror" banner, and they are the ones supporting despots, and propping up governments of dictators as long as their interests are protected, to me that's their definition of democracy.

IMZ: In regards to the militarization of Africa, you state that there is a lack of outspoken opposition to the Obama administration which is attributable to the uncritical and unprincipled support of the President by African Americans. How did you come to that generalized conclusion, and what do you suggest, so that it (the uncritical and unprincipled support) can be corrected?

MKM: The ascendancy of a Black president is a public relations stunt by the capital of the USA which secretly run the country. They wanted to create an impression that America has opportunities for all regardless of your race, sex, creed etc., and they also wanted to give hope to all the downtrodden that the 'American Dream' is still possible. To me the election of Obama is cosmetic, being Black as he is, the same tendency of the USA system is still the same, and it will not change because you have elected a person of color or a gay, so the support which Obama got from African Americans was because of his color *only*, soon after being elected he sent troop to butcher the children of Iraq as a thank you to all those who celebrated with him. What is Obama doing in the face of systematic killing of Afro-Americans in his homeland by the state police? What is he doing about Gaza? Obama could be black on skin but he is very white inside!

IMZ: You mentioned the 'Arab Spring' and how it was purposely and artfully crafted to discourage people south of the Sahara from creating their own quest for change. How did you come to that conclusion, and why? I ask because I am trying to get to your ideological or personal reasoning, if you would be so kind to reveal it.

MKM: The use of the contextual term 'Arab Spring' to characterize the mass uprising of North Africans against the rule of despotic Arab elites is purposely and artfully crafted to discourage sub-Saharan Black Africa and its Muslim populations from emulating their North African counterparts while appealing to the Anti-Arab sentiments among many Pan-Africans and within the Black Diaspora. ECOWAS and the African Union's recent support of French military intervention in Mali and, as US surrogate, in Somalia and elsewhere on the African continent, are testimony to how eagerly Africa's political elite are utilizing the West's 'war terror' to secure their positions and prop up their power while ignoring persecuted and marginalized Muslim minority populations.

In countries like Nigeria the US is on the ground supporting the Christian dominated government's 'anti-terrorist' actions in the North of the country against an Islamic insurgency. In Somalia, the US drone war has spilled over into neighboring countries, like Eritrea and Yemen, and has led to tribal unrest in Northern Kenya. While the US and its European Allies seemed appalled by the Muslim insurgencies in the North of Mali (consistently failing to mention that this crisis was long in the making and connected to [NATO's] deposing of Libya's Ghadaffi and the silent collusion of Black Africa's leaders) neither the US nor Europe are horrified or outraged by events in the Eastern Congo

IMZ: In relationship to the 'Arab Spring' you also mention the 'war of terror' consisting of Africa's political elite who are utilizing the "West's war terror" to secure their positions and prop up their power; Muslim insurgencies in northern Mali; the 'increasingly fascist posture of the sell-outs in occupied/neo-colonial South Africa'; and finally, the hypocrites within the mix. How do we begin to address these issues, and why are they important in African world affairs?

MKM: If you followed the Arab Spring closely you observed that whilst the people were rising against their governments or monarchies, the authorities responded with brutal force to suppress the uprisings, the USA and its allies media made noise in countries which did not have their approval, especially in Libya, to the extent that foreign troops intervention and the UN Security Council. Syria was also taken to the Security Council but for those nations that had been historical allies of USA, the atrocities there were downplayed, and the media was not as loud. In Egypt, Bahrain people were being shot and killed just behind the cameras of CNN and BBC, but their cases were never brought to the Security Council and the killers were not arrayed before the international court of justice where the son of the late Muamar Kaddafi was brought before

IMZ: ‘Africa is the most vulnerable and the ultimate frontier of wealth to continue empowering white supremacy in the world’, I was stunned by that statement, yet with the rush to capture the vital natural resources of the planet, it requires one to think deep about the complexities of colonization and dominance. What has been the overall reaction (if any) to that assessment, and your companion statement that says ‘the current crop of Africa’s corrupt, cowardly and compliant leaders are working against their own self-interests and have almost sealed the deal for Africa’s conquest by foreigners’?

MKM: Like I said before, the CIA interests of US imperialism remove African leaders who stand in their imperial way and replace them with their compliant leaders, they do so through a wide variety of means assassinations, foment mayhem and disorder in that country until its ungovernable and propel their choice leaders to top positions under the coalition and unity governments, they form and fund political parties etc. and that is why you see that wherever they are vast natural resources in Africa, there is conflict, the likes of Mobutu Seseko is one good example.

IMZ: Overall, I gather that you spare no foolishness in reference to the needs of and treats to Africa with an special link to white world supremacy and a renewed agenda by the West and their collaborators to dominate Africa as a final solution. How did you develop such boldness of leadership, and how do you inspire others to recognize the challenges ahead?

MKM: Our people are amongst the poorest in the world, but in terms of minerals and natural resources, Africa is the richest continent in the world. We could go for a whole list of those resources, but to keep it short, we are now discovering that in Africa there are masses of oil reserves, masses of gas reserves and hydrocarbon reserves in general. Now as part of its AFRICOM mission, the US is actually seeking to have 25% of its oil needs catered for by the oil contained in West Africa alone. That is not to mention the oil that we know that exists in the east around Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, etc., and we could go for various other parts of the continent where there are now believed to be massive oil reserves. So oil is at the center.

IMZ: Towards the end of your exercise, you mention the work and Pan African vision of Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah. Do you think his work and vision has been overlooked as a possible solution to the challenges of Africa, and people of African descent around the world (and if so, why; and if not, why not)?

MKM: Kwame Nkrumah is best known politically for his strong commitment to and promotion of Pan Africanism and his continental vision of a United States of America is still relevant up to this day .There is unity and power in strength, one of the Primary aims of the OAU was to promote the unity and solidarity of the African states and act as a collective voice for the African continent. This is important to secure Africa's long-term economic and political future. But even after the death of Kwame Nkrumah that dream is yet to be achieved , OAU and AU have become talk shops .I also believe that the enemies of Africa who toppled Kwame Nkrumah are also working hard to make sure that Kwame Nkrumah vision of a united Africa will never see the light of the day. They really understand that when Africa which is endowed with all the wealth unites, it will be become a superpower and stand shoulder to shoulder with USA and other superpowers and it will never be bullied again and we will have the military might and all the resources will be used for the development of Africa. Pan Africanism is still being overlooked by the current crop of African leadership but the ideal of Pan Africanism is still alive. I believe our generation and the coming one will give more Gaddafi's and Mugabe's to assert Pan Africanism as a lasting solution to Africa challenges and problems. The dream of African unity is still relevant. But I feel the dream will continue to be a farfetched one as long as African leadership remains hypocritical. Practicing what somebody called "politics of appeasement" and double standards. The problems Africa faces are real and must be confronted realistically.

IMZ: Thank you for this interview, best of success in the development of the Zimbabwe Pan Africanist Youth Agenda, and in agreement with your final manifesto, indeed 'only a unified Africa can give us our fullest power'.

MKM: You are welcome comrade for giving us a voice, and I hope you will continue doing so not only for us, but for the rest of all progressive forces in Africa and globally. Keep up the good work, and Aluta Continua!!