

NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE AND GLOBAL INEQUALITY: MEANING, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract

General inequality in development between global North and South is identified as a major source of crises threatening global peace and security. North-South Dialogue is an approach designed to use summits, conferences, dialogues, negotiations, and meetings to achieve agreements, and programmes that can reduce this imbalance. However, analysts have argued that North-South Dialogue is characterized by words without actions based on the persistent socio-economic and political inequality existing between the two divides. This paper looks at the meaning and yardstick for classifying North and South. It shows the manifestations of this inequality and identified factors that contributed to it. We look at some of these dialogues and x-ray those problems that undermine North-South Dialogue from achieving its objectives. Insincerity in words and actions from both Northern and Southern participants is identified as a major setback for achieving the targeted objectives. For the North, national and business interests, selfishly perceived, are seen to have constituted major hindrances to the implementation of agreements and programmes reached in the dialogues. Again, corrupt practices, and poor leadership are spotted as major hindrances undermining South's strength in the struggle to reduce the gap.

Keywords: North and South, North-South Dialogue, Global Inequality

Introduction

The global environment is characterized by relations that cut across states, regions, and the wider North-South divisions. Gap in socio-economic, political and military developments between the North and the South has attracted reactions and dialogues seeking to address the prevailing imbalances existing between them. Persistent North-South inequality and factors responsible for it have been of immense intellectual dispute within the international scholarship. Also in dispute is the ability of North-South Dialogue to actually achieve a meaningful reduction in this imbalance. Scholars also want to know the propelling forces that underlie the relationship existing between North and South. For the Marxist scholars, North-South inequality is an outcome of the structural imbalance of the contemporary international economic order and the prevailing exploitation of one class by the other. For this group no other method can correct the abnormality than the fundamental transformation of the existing capitalist order. For the liberal school, North-South developmental differences lie within the inability of the disadvantaged South to raise its status to an appreciable level and this according to them, can only be achieved if the South imitates the North.

Whichever this argument goes, the nature of prevailing inequality between the two divides has questioned the significance of North-South dialogues that took places since the early 1970s.

For instance, there was a dialogue between the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Multinational Corporations on petroleum products' price adjustment in 1971. The discussion was targeted at guaranteeing South's control over price of petroleum products but it did not prevent subsequent manipulation of prices of the products by the North. Also the North-South dialogues on the G8, UN Security Council, and Non-Alignment Movement's platforms, which aimed at assisting poor countries, only produced at best words without actions. We had expected that reduction of inequality through North-South Dialogue could have provided friendly co-operation and interdependent benefits among comity of nations and in extension provide peace, security and order within the international system. Rather, the prevailing nature of the global environment, characterized by terror, socio-economic and political uncertainty and dwindling condition of the standard of living of the majority of the world population are of great concern to many minds.

This paper looks at North-South Dialogue and global inequality with the view to ascertaining the true situation. It identifies various factors that undermined the achievement of reasonable reduction in socio-economic and political developmental gaps existing between the North and South and how they have manifested. We as well analyze the likelihood of achieving reasonable reduction in North-South inequality through North South Dialogue with a view to understanding the political economy of North-South relations.

State of inequality between the North and the South has remained a problem facing North-South relations and in extension global peace and security. It has become an anti-peace monster that devours peaceful cooperation and interdependent benefits supposedly accruable from North-South interactions. Perhaps, this is so because the North has arguably continued to expand and consolidate its capitalist interests in the South. The disadvantaged South in the other hand reacts in opposition to these exploitative interests and practices. The North counters the response by the indirect use of the machineries of multinational corporations, international organizations and and/or direct military force to achieve its aims. Such North-South relations, as the Marxists argue, are not only antagonistic but as well anti-human. Many social vices occurring in the international arena are regarded as outcome of such imbalance and reactions. These range from terrorism, suicide bombing, human and drug trafficking, and other such glaring crimes against humanity. The situation does not provide room for positive friendship and assistance between North and South. As such the following questions come to mind:

1. What factors contribute to North-South inequality?
2. What are the challenges that undermine North-South dialogues?
3. What are the prospects of reducing North-South imbalance by North-South Dialogue?

Meaning and Yardstick for Classifying North and South

Our primary knowledge on Northern and Southern hemispheres is based on the geographical understanding of the terms referring to North-South poles of the equator. Far from this, our conception of North and South in this study is that which views the two divisions from socio-economic, political, cultural, and general developmental status of states. Though, most states of the north are from Northern hemisphere and in the other side less developed and dependent states are mostly, in the southern hemisphere, the division is not absolute in geographical sense. This is because while some less developed states can be found in northern pole, some countries of similar developmental status fall within the northern divide. Development based on the Gross

National Product and the general standard of living of the people is the major yardsticks for measuring the status of states in north-south categorization. Following the fall of the Soviet Union, which was commonly referred to as second world, many of its component states were reclassified as developing despite being geographically northern. At the same time, some countries previously considered "developing" such as the East Asia Tigers have joined modern first world having attained socio-economic and political growth and improved their standard of living. Australia and New Zealand despite their geographical locations outside the north are part of the developed northern category. In addition, the North has four out of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and all the G8 members. It covers the west and first world. In progression, as developed countries, they may become part of the North, regardless of their geographical locations. On the other hand, any country that does not qualify for "developed" status is in effect deemed to be part of the South.

Classification of countries based on their economic and developmental status started during the Cold War with the classification of the East and the West. The Soviet Union and China represented the developing east and the United States and their allies represented the developed west. Out of this developmental classification emanated the first world (the West), the second world (the East), with less developed countries constituting the Third World. As some of the second world developed and joined the first world and others joined the Third World a new classification therefore became necessary and led to North-South categorization. The first became the North and the Third World became the South. North comprised the following states: Canada, Japan, US, France, Denmark, Netherlands, Italy, Greece, Finland, Spain, Vatican City, Portugal, Norway, Russia, Taiwan, Israel, Singapore, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, China, Hong Kong, Oceania and other developed countries. Others, which do not qualify for the category, fall within southern divide.

The North is characterized by high standard of living, high literacy level, better security of lives and property (all things being equal), presence of infrastructural facilities/development, there is provision of better social welfare, ability to influence the trend of international socio-economic and political orders, strong immunity against vulnerability to external forces and powers, political stability, high science and technological prowess among others, high production capacities and availability of industries. On the other hand, the South is characterized by common colonial and neo-colonial experiences like external control and exploitation, dependence on western capitalist economy, external forces influence their socio-economic and political lives, lack of control over the trend and issues in international system, fundamental socio-economic and political policies of the South are shaped by international organizations, multinational corporations and foreign government interfere and influence their governments, majority of their population live in abject poverty, they have poor economic bases that produce only few primary agricultural products, low technological skill, low standard of living, political instability among others; poor leadership, corruption and mismanagement of resources, as well as absence of strong socio-economic and political institutions.

On the ideological front, the development geographers have argued that current concentration of the North-South divide as the main organizing principle for understanding the world has overlooked the role of inter-imperial conflicts among the United States, Japan and Europe. In such analysis, the North becomes synonymous with economic development and industrialization while the South represents backwardness, poverty and dependency.

North-South Dialogue composed of those conferences, summits, discussions, negotiations, and meetings between countries of the North and South hemispheres with a view to using agreements and programmes to addressing the inequality between the two developmental blocs. Such summits, as those of the G8, UN Security Council and Non-Alignment Movement typify the avenue for such dialogue where G8 member nations and some southern presidents, especially those of Africa hold talks as a way to solving some problems facing the continent or South in general. Political economy of international relations shows how the use of political, economic and military powers of the North influence and exploit the less developed South in what is known as imperialism of the South by the North resulting to dependency and establishment of trends that regulate international actions/invents. Britannica Encyclopaedia (2003) posits that international relations have been shaped primarily by the great powers, countries whose interests and capabilities transcend their own region and self-defense. Encyclopedia Americana (2004) concurs that the major actors in the international political system are interested not only on the protection of national interests narrowly conceived but in the multidimensional shaping of the international order in a way compatible with accelerated attainment of their objectives and principles. North-South dialogues as international relations that come in form of dialogues, talks, conferences, negotiations, summits can be understood from different dominant theoretical standpoints. Such dominant views in this area of study are important in understanding the issues under review.

Idealist Theory sees international relations as co-operation among nation states in the international system with the view to providing peace and order within the system. To achieve this, its proponents including scholars from Woodrow Wilson to Norman Agell encourage international laws and organizations as ways to strengthening cooperation and friendship among nation states. The theory is criticized for failure to explain why despite co-operations in the North-South dialogues, international laws and organizations like IMF, UNO, WTO and World Bank; inequality between the North and the South fails to decrease.

Realists argue that international system is in constant state of antagonism and there is no stronger actor above the states capable of regulating their interactions. States according to them are self-interested, power-seeking and rational, therefore pursue national security. They strive to attain as many resources as possible. According to the realist, there is a general distrust of long-term cooperation or alliance. The overriding national interest of each state is its national security and survival. Their levels of power derived primarily from their military and economic capabilities determine relations between states. As such Hans Morgenthau and E. H. Carr's conception of national interest requires constant accumulation of power for survival and security. To them, power is man's control of mind and action of others, and can be determined by examining the relationship between actors in the international system (Adeniran, 2007). Realist viewpoint contends that any cooperation between states is explained as purely incidental and, therefore, view international relations almost exclusively as struggles for power rather than struggles for order among nation-states. This notion explains why North-South dialogue often fails to address inequality among

states because developed states of the North always stick to retaining and consolidating their powers as means to influencing the economy of the South so as to facilitate their exploitation therein. The realist theorists identify struggle for power among states in their quest for protection of their national interests. Accordingly, they see balance of power as the solution formula for a stable international system.

The modernist view on international relations recognizes cooperation among actors in the international system but argues that states are not the only actors in the system. The theory recognizes multinational corporations and organizations as also major actors operating within the system. In their view, developing countries have to follow development models of the developed country for them to modernize and Third World social formation are not developed because they fail to follow developmental steps of the developed countries. The theory neither tells us the role of multinational corporations in creating North-South inequality nor explains why after much participation by multinational corporations in developing economies; and long standing developmental relations between North and South, the imbalance between the two divides still increases.

Another major view in international relations relevant in North-South Dialogue and inequality is the Marxist theory of international relations. This is because of its fundamental resourcefulness and high explanatory capacity in exposing the root, nature and outcome of North-South dialogue. It does not only trace North and South inequality to capitalist exploitation, but as well sees imperial tendencies, policies and practices of the North as the recurring influence for continue inequality despite dialogues. Marx and Engels had argue in *the Manifesto of the Communist Party* that the classification of the society into the bourgeois and proletariat classes has introduced antagonistic struggle in the process of social production. Accordingly, Marxist theorists see international relations as extension of this class struggle between the North and the South, the rich and the poor rather than cooperations among nation-states for maintenance of peace and order in the international system. Capitalist expansion at the monopoly stage in the 19th century has not only divided international system into the rich and the poor but as well economically exploited the South and developed the North. It is dominated by capitalist socio-economic formations that aid the subordination and exploitation of the South by the North rather than encourage dialogue to reduce inequality between the two divides.

Aja, in (Ejiofor, 2006) points out that class struggle has really become a global affair having taken the form of development and underdevelopment. The struggle explains the continued existence of inequality between the North and the South because the dominant North continuous to exploit the international system and dictates the pace and trend at which it moves. The theory is a useful instrument in explaining the root of inequality between the North and the South and reason for continuous existence of this inequality till this present day.

Eclectic Theory of International Relations

As we can see each of the theories above has a measure of strength and weakness and so should not be discarded or swallowed without criticism, rather we extract the potent or useful aspects of the theories and unify them into an eclectic theoretical framework capable of explaining issues associated with this study. This is especially in this type of study whose problem of research

has defies explanation by a single theory. Accordingly, we can refer to this theoretical unification as Eclectic Theory of International Relations.

This theory combines selected views from the Idealist, Realist, Marxist and modernist theories of international relations. It argues that yes, international relations involves cooperation, friendship and partnership among states, yet they are characterized by struggles for power and exploitation of the weak by the strong to protect national and business interests. This makes interactions in the system a struggle and cooperation for power in order to achieve targeted objectives. Struggle or cooperation depends on what the issue of interaction at hand demands. For instance, war could be a struggle to protect national interest while business partnership requires cooperation among partners in which the player that has better bargaining capacity dictates the tune. Notably, states are not the only actors in this struggle and cooperation rather multinational corporations participate actively, especially in the production sector of the global economy, and as such should be taken into consideration when discussing North-South Dialogue and Global Inequality. We recognize in the global production process, the existence of what the Marxists called class struggle. But it manifests inform of a struggle between owners of multinational corporations and their host countries whose citizens serve as the labour force. The former exploits the later in this power contest. This relation of production is of crucial importance in understanding North-South inequality. International organizations and individuals are not left out in international power contest as each is preoccupied with the achievement of what it conceive as its policy objectives.

We can see that each of idealist, realist or Marxist theories on its own could not have adequately explained the matter under investigation. They are each narrow to accommodate wider requirements of the issues of our study and as such cannot single handedly provide the explanatory strength needed to run our analysis. This explains the inabilities of their applications to solve the problems associated with inequality between North and South. Again, owing to the fact that the contemporary international system is not static, it becomes necessary for current changes in the system to be taken into consideration especially those relevant to our problems of interest so as to arrive at updated findings and solutions compliant with such problem under investigation. One of such changes in the international system is the fact that the complicated nature of today's international system/relations has required, in some cases, our type of combination of theories to be able to explain various aspects of the study. For instance, despite failure by the North to sincerely, encourage reduction of inequality, some states in the South are making impressive improvement in development outside North-South dialogue. China, Taiwan, Indonesia, South Korea, Saudi Arab Emirate are, for example, some notable states in this category. Again, having noted northern exploitation of the South, corruption in the south should also be put into consideration. An explanation of such development with either the liberal or Marxist theory becomes highly inadequate. It then requires the inclusion of an aspect of the modernist theory which requires the South to follow northern model to develop. This followership we warn, must be limited to those aspects that can improve the conditions of the South or advantageous to their national development. In other words, the South should emulate the successes of the North and shorn their mistakes and exploitations in other to reduce inequality between them.

Manifestations of North-South Inequality

Though, tremendous campaign has been mounted for the repositioning of North-South relationship, so as to better the lot of the South; evidence available shows that much has not been achieved. The obvious fact that most of the states that make up the south are not yet industrialized or make any relevant developmental breakthrough in their economies similar to the ones obtainable in the North is a manifestation of serious inequality. Poverty in this divide remains most visible that hunger and starvation are competing for supremacy. The dynamics of their socio-economic and political environment are still subject to external stimuli. They still do not determine the trends that shape their fundamental policies or in position to shape policies in international organization and multinational corporations to suit their interests. This has posed manipulative bottleneck to self-determination of these societies especially, as regard to the formulation of fundamental economic and political policies that shape the economies and lives of people of the South. We can discuss some of the manifestations of North-South inequality as evidence of the failure of the dialogues.

Difference in Economic Capacity (GNP)

We have a number of issues constituting economic manifestation of inequality. These range from the level of Cross Nation Products (GNP), the structure of the' economy, trade capacity and general economic capacity of the two divisions. The North still ranks very high in these areas relative to what obtains down south. For instance, the states in the North like the United States, Germany, France, Japan, Britain, Italy, have high GNP and industrial capacity. They produce varieties of tradable products and services sustained by diversified and strong economic structures. Unlike in the southern states where the entire economies are integrated and dependent on the international capitalist system in which they do not have control. Their internal deficiencies have joined with external manipulation and exploitation to create economic poverty and low standard of living of the people of the zone.

Inequality in Military Strength

Military strength of the North has continued to be a source of threat and intimidation to the South. Southern industrial capacity in the manufacturing of military wares is nowhere to be compared with what is obtainable in the North. The military establishment in Pentagon, USA for instance, has been a major strength of the United States in her international relations across the globe. The South is relative nowhere in military technology and production and has as such depended on the use of obsolete military weapon produced in the North to wage tribal wars, insurgency, and coup de' tat.

Disparity in Science and Technological Capacity

The North has used it technological advancement to place itself over and above the South in all spheres of their relations be it trade, information and communication, politics, organizations, production and what have you. Technological breakthrough of the Northern divide has facilitated globalization especially the information and communication technology. This has given the North a domineering status over the south in the globalization and interdependence process of this 21th century.

Inequality in Political and Legal Development

Development in politics is relatively very high in the North than in the South. One major differentiating feature of politics between the two dichotomies is the fact that the North is able to introduce the existing system of politics (democracy) within the international system and as well shape the system to match its culture. Institutions of politics in the North are shaped in such a way that they are compactable with the people's culture. For instance despite the reign of democracy, Britain is able to maintain its traditional leadership in the queen of England while the Prime Minister becomes the democratic head of government. Unlike in the south where traditional institution of politics were uprooted by colonial leadership in the name of liberal democracy. The conflict between culture and politics in the South is up till this day a major problem facing the South. Like in the political sphere, so in the legal system, methods and patterns are in the South alien in nature as imposed by colonialism. They conflict with the culture and traditional politics of the people.

Wide Gap in Social Status

From personality complex, to standard of living of the people, the North is higher rated than the South. People of the South are regarded as second-class citizens of the world due to their socio-economic and political statuses when compared with those of the North. Governments in most states of the South do not provide expected welfare to the people as is in the North and this has reduced the quality of life of the people of the South leading to inferiority complex when faced with the North.

Difference in Vulnerability to Economic Exploitation:

Socio-economic and political statuses of the North have placed it in a position where it exploits the South while the South's position makes it vulnerable to North's exploitation. The integration of the southern states into the international capitalist system controlled by the North made them vulnerable to northern exploitation.

Factors that Contributed To North-South Inequality

Leaders of the southern division have fundamentally blamed the contemporary international economic order rooted in capitalism as the basic creator and promoter of economic and developmental inequality between the global North and South. From Non-Alignment Movement, to African invitees to the 36th G8 Summits, speakers from the South, laid accusing fingers on the lopsided structure of the global economic system, which places the North above the South. Major economic institutions and corporations that hold the world economy are owned and controlled by the North. In addition to this, some other factors include the following:

Slave Trade: Trade on humans especially, the Atlantic Slave Trade was one of the earliest factors that lay foundation for imbalance between global North and South. Forceful transportation of able-bodied men and women from the Third World particularly, Africa deprived these societies of human labour as a major instrument for production. The trade provided the North adequate manpower for their agricultural production at the expense of the South. The slaves numbering

millions never came back. Their labour has continued to provide productive strength to the North while their absence has kept the South in sorrow, alienation, and deprivation.

Colonialism and Neo-colonialism: Imperialism in form of colonial and neo-colonial domination and control of the South by the North is one of the major factors that continue to promote economic disparity between the North and the South. In their quest for economic accumulation of global wealth beyond their borders, states in the Northern category have extended their expansionist tentacles through colonialism and neo-colonialism to southern economies due to decrease in profit rate and increase in business conflicts in the North. Conflict emanating from advanced competition among businesses in the North has ignited the quest for foreign investment in the South leading to imposition of foreign governments, and the use established economic structures to perpetuation exploitation in the South. These practices have encouraged the transfer of wealth in form of capital and material flights from the South to the North and have strengthened Northern economy and weakened the South's.

Globalization: It is also an aspect of imperialism. Globalization according to "Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics" is about the universal process or set of processes that generate a multiplicity of linkages and interconnections that transcend the states and societies, which make up the modern world system. This interconnection and linkages have enabled the North or economically developed states to extend their exploitative tentacles to southern economies and make the best drive for wealth accumulation in form of production, trading and services using transportation, information and communication technology to facilitate integration of southern economies to the metropolitan North. This process empowers the North and weakens the south into dependency on the North.

Multinational Corporations: Domination of production and sales of goods and services by multinational corporations within the global system has given the accumulative economic leverage to the North. It has not only empowered northern states and businesses parenting these corporations but has relegated the South to the productive and distributive backgrounds of the global wealth leading to inequality and disparity between the two divides.

International Organizations: Collection of states into international organizations has given the initiators of these organizations mostly from the economically developed countries the opportunity to shape fundamental socio-economic and political policies and practices of the global system to their favour. Domination of policies by super powers in these organizations has also helped them to subjugating the southern states to dependent followership instead of association based on corporation among states for mutual benefits. The organizations make policies that empower the North and weaken and make the south vulnerable to exploitation.

Unfair Terms and Practices of Trade: Trade policies and practices existing within the global market are not favourable to the states in the southern division. Removal of barriers and tariff as demanded and ordered by the Bretton Woods institutions has rendered southern economies vulnerable to international exploitation and unhealthy competition and domination of local industries. The policies and illegal economic practices have not only made southern states dumping grounds for finished goods produced by industrialized economies but has in addition made primary products and labour in the South cheaply available to transnational corporations.

Military Threats: Military capacities of the Northern states have served as instruments for coercing the South to behave the way North wants it to behave. This has made exploitation and influence of the economies in the South easy and inequality a reality. For instance United States' military strength, has positioned itself as police of the world system and enable her implement those fundamentals of her foreign policy decision and achieve expected objectives.

North-South Dialogues, Achievement and Failures

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the resultant end of Cold War between western and eastern blocs, Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has shifted its focus from attempts to prevent alignment with the east or the west to ways of reducing inequality between North and South. These efforts involve condemnation of neo-colonialism, protection of states sovereignty, fair price for primary commodities, fair terms of trade and most fundamentally, a call for restructuring of the international capitalist order which places the North above the South.

In response to NAMs demand, the North has unequivocally expressed her unwillingness to restructure the international economic order. Rather the North has adopted without serious implementation, some sorts of cosmetic approaches as ways to assisting the South in her development adventure. The perception of the North is that the current international capitalist order is not the cause of the disadvantaged position of the South. In stressing this point, the North maintains that some countries of the global south are economically growing and so it is an indication that the present international economic order can guarantee economic growth of the South without destabilizing the economic gains of the North. Lyman (1988) says it all in his response to Nigeria-US relations. He maintains that;

many in Nigeria feel there should be some fundamental changes in the international economic system; we feel some of these changes would destroy the very system that sustains our own development, as well which creates the potentials for others.

Nigeria-US relation is a typical example of North-South relations. Lyman's position is, therefore, the position of the North in relation to the South. To support his view, the Group of 8 industrialized countries (the G8) in their response to Africa's demand for restructuring of the international economic order argued similarly, that the present international economic order has

brought development to the North and sustained the global economy and as such should not be disorganized especially, when some countries of the global South are gaining economic growth indicating that under this present order, the South can grow developmentally.

In another angle, the Non-Aligned Movement has continued to present the disadvantaged position of the South to the United Nations Organization's General Assembly including the need to democratize the organization. According to Sandow Seidu Kpebu, the 36th G8 Summit in Ontario Canada June, 2010 was to recycle its old pledges to Africa. He argued that the summit would as usual recycle those unfulfilled promises the group has for some time continued to make without implementation. We should recall that the summit as usual invited some African leaders to what it called "Africa Outreach Session" of the summit. Analysts argued that G8 discussion with Africa amounts to words without actions. This is following the outcome of previous unfulfilled promises made by the group to Africa, which were mostly not implemented. This is so because even if the promises are implemented, they are not solutions to the problem of inequality and developmental backwardness facing the South. They cannot achieve meaningful repositioning of the South in the socio-economic equations of the 21st century globalization and interdependent world. Promises for foreign grants, HIV education and reduction of infant mortality rate in The Third World were some of the promises made by the G8. These issues even if implemented will not cause any fundamental change meaningful enough to reduce inequality between the two divides. They are too cosmetic to transform North-South relations or international economic order. The theme for the G8 Summit in Canada 2010 was "Recovery and New Beginning" Recovery was because of the recent economic recession that hit the West particularly the US. The theme showed that transformation of the prevailing international economic order considered by the South, to be a way to reduce the imbalance between North and South was not part of the agenda of the summit. Even, Third World leaders were kept out of the debate on global governance in several of these G8 summits.

G20, NAM, AU, and other organizations in the South have called for reallocation of voting right to member states in the IMF, WHO, World Bank and democratization of United Nations Security Council yet none has been done and there is no sign of hope in the near future. We should remember that industrial Super Powers particularly the US, and the European Union are controlling major percentage of votes in these organizations and have through these means dominated fundamental decision-making mechanism of the global system.

It is clear therefore, that though several calls and promises have been made regarding North-South inequality, yet nothing has been achieved through these dialogues, calls, demand and promises. The entire process has made mockery of the dialogues as ways of achieving at least reasonable reduction in the North-South inequality. It shows therefore that North-South Dialogue is not potent platform that can lay the foundation for development in the global South.

However, we are aware that countries of the North may have offered some useful monetary and material assistances to the South in form foreign aids, grants, loans and other humanitarian services like fight against malaria, HIV/AIDS, infant and maternal mortality, and refugee services. We are not discouraging such assistances or North-South Dialogue per say, rather our argument is

that foundation and progress of development in the South cannot be achieved based on North-South Dialogue without committed efforts by the South for self-development by using resources available to mobilize both foreign and domestic services in production of wealth in various sectors. Mutually benefiting foreign partnerships devoid of illegalities are encouraging, but all these have to be coordinated by domestic leaderships that are free from corruption and visionary poverty. We should bear in mind that no nation is "Father Christmas" but must always consider her national interest and survival first.

Problems that Undermined North-South Dialogues

North's Pursuit of her National and Business Interests Selfishly Perceived: One major character exhibited by nations in the international system is constant pursuit of national and business interests almost always selfishly perceived. As such, North's behavior to the South is characterized by first consideration to national interests conveyed by foreign policies. Interest in this category may include economic interest involving trade, production, finance; political interests like promotion of democracy and democratic environment; socio-cultural interests resulting to influences on the lives and cultures of the people of the southern region. These are with the aim to exploiting socio-economic, political and cultural environments of the South to feed their societies. Therefore, North-South agreements and programmes are undermined by vigorous pursuits of these interests antithetical to the development of the South. This is because effort to develop North is always almost opposed to the development of the South except where proven goodwill and friendship define relations.

Insincerity in North-South Agreements and Programmes: The pursuit of several national, business, group and personal interests by participants and official of North-South Dialogue has injected the state of insincerity in the meetings, conferences, summits, discussions and the resultant agreements and programmes of the North South Dialogue. These interests do not allow for sincere promotion of efforts that can improve economic imbalance between the two poles. Participants hold their national, business, group and individual interests at heart more than the need for economic balance which most of the participant from the North do not even see as worthy gesture. Their concern is mainly to give certain assistance to the South with corresponding benefits and not necessarily trying to bridge that gap that places them above the South. Participants make agreements they do not intend to fulfil.

Poor leadership and Corrupt Practices in the South

The South is trapped in a critical leadership dilemma, which has over the years remained a serious debacle towards its development. The process of attainment to state power in the South has been so crude and as such, has given room for the emergence of incompetent candidates. Attempts to secure political victories have complicated the essence of true democracy. This problem is necessitated by the unwillingness and inability of the leaders to rise up to their challenges, which

is the bane of true leadership. It has been a major hindrance towards the attainment of the desired millennium development goals, which is believed to provide a conveyor belt for narrowing the sharp developmental divide existing between the North and the South in developmental scheme. It is against this backdrop that the dialogue to address the inequality existing between the two becomes a far-fetched one. Achebe (1983) shares in this frustration when he argues that "the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership". Every other index does not constitute an encumbrance rather the type of leadership in the South is characterized by highhandedness and corrupt practices.

Prospects for Reducing North-South Imbalance through North-South Dialogue

Due largely to the importance of national interest to states and businesses, and the obvious reality that development does not go without the people, the possibility of achieving a reduction in the developmental gap existing between global north and south through North-South Dialogue is doubtful. This is especially so when you consider the rate and volume, by which public fund finds its way into private foreign accounts in banks located in those states expected to allow the bridge of gap between the North and the South. It shows signs of unseriousness and insincerity in the South as well as the North that receives such illegal funds for "safe keep." Leaders in the South maintain large sums of money than what most leaders of the North have in northern banks, yet they call for financial assistance as a way for meeting up with the North. It is contradictory and has no chance of success except there are changes of mind and actions. Even at that, foreign assistance cannot lay foundation for development of the South. Presence of multinational corporations serves as good example of a situation where despite huge economic productions going on in Third World societies, with surplus profit accruing there from; the suffocating poverty in such places shows that profit is for the metropolitan societies and not for the host countries. While the corporations export their profit, corrupt southern leaders extradite national shares of the profit in form of diplomatic baggage to foreign banks. The society is therefore, left with shouts for foreign assistance because that is where the money has gone. So, owing to the fact that there is competition among states in the international system and no dominant state will like to help the another to rise to its status, for fear of domination; it is doubtful if North-South Dialogue can reduce, at least to a reasonable level, North-South inequality.

We should also remember that great powers of the North never relied on any North-South Dialogue to develop their economies. The United States for instance fought colonialism and civil war, gained independence, isolated and united themselves; and engaged in capacity building that led to their eventual domination or hegemony of the contemporary international capitalist system.

Rev Jesse Jackson had argued that Africa deserves a version of Marshall Plan, reconstruction and assistance, similar to that given to post war Europe to recuperate from colonial rape legacies. Reconstruction, yes but without self-effort foreign reconstruction will never yield positive fruit if ever given. If inequality between North and South is to be reduced, it must not be through foreign aids because the super powers will never allow willingly, the system that sustains

their development to be restructured in order to reduce inequality. Cosmetic approaches like North-South Dialogues and whatever assistance that may accrue from there are immaterial in fundamental transformation of a developing state striving to find its footing within the international capitalist order or that which aspires for a change of the order. Any state that intends to act prominently within the system or the one that desires a change must fortify her domestic capacity, no child's play.

Conclusion

The idea that the North will ever dialogue and help the South reduce the inequality to a reasonable level is bleak. This because the North will first attend to her foreign policy requirements competitive with those of the South. Previous theoretical explanations to North-South Dialogue were each inadequate to analysis the case of inequality between the two divides. Eclectic theory of international relations combines useful aspects of these theories to provide workable explanation to the matter under explanation. Classification between the North and the South is determined by developmental status.

Recommendations

National and business interests of states will continue to constitute a major hindrance to international relations in general and global equality in particular unless an international institution strong enough to check the accesses of states desiring to swallow others in the name of protecting national interest is put in place. We therefore, recommend democratization of the United Nations to reflect equal representation and rights of all members. Officials of the organization should be voted into office internationally not as direct representation of states, with rotations of offices among regions and states. No government official serving or retired should be permitted to aspire for an office in the organization so as to curtail partisan government influence on the organization or its officials. United Nations so constituted could, to a reasonable extent, attend to nations based on their merits and laws guiding general behaviours of states within the international system. This will make developed states soft-pedal in their illegal, suffocation and super exploitation of the South. The organization will ensure fair play to all nations.

National governments of Southern division should gather their human and material resources, hire foreign services where necessary and domestic human resources and engage in self-development as a way to reduce the gap between North and South. Partnership and purchase of scientific and technological skills is quite encouraging while foreign assistance should only be taken without stringent conditions particularly at the time of emergency.

For poor leadership and corrupt practices of southern leaders, the people must engage bad governments in regime change struggles. Political struggle of 2011 North Africa have shown the way forward. United Nations constituted as recommended above will assist the people where and whenever the power of the autocratic government become uncontainable to revolutionaries but must first identify a violation of international law and be invited by the leader of the revolution.

Government officials so removed should face national and international courts of justice. Expenses born out of this assistance should be the responsibilities of the organization.

If these conditions are met, we believe that North-South inequalities will gradually be reduced to meaningful level and global peace and security improved accordingly.

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