as well as the policy choices made across the continent and those elsewhere. The methodology of The Brenthurst Foundation, where I have worked since 2005, is to employ the policy examples of high-growth economies as diverse as Vietnam and Costa Rica, Morocco, India, China, Panama, and Singapore. We have also sought to learn from the less positive, lower-growth examples, some of which are covered in this volume. Personally, I am always reminded of Churchill's maxim that 'We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give'. What Orwell might have referred to as 'aesthetic enthusiasm', I regard simply as ensuring that others do not repeat the mistakes of the past – not only their own, but those of others too. Or as the conservative columnist William Safire urged, 'Write what you see, because what history needs more of is first-person testimony.'[5]

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Had I heeded all the advice I received, much of it well-meaning, when writing this book, I fear that it would never have seen the light of day. As it is I persevered, determined to put across, to as wide an audience as possible, three main points: Africa has failed not because of external factors, though they have played a part, but because of weaknesses that I have tried to identify. Provided these faults are acknowledged, their consequences can readily be put right; and provided the mistakes of the past are learnt from, putting Africa right and achieving its potential may well not only be less complicated than we fear, but the results can come much quicker than we realise, and the transformation we all yearn for will take us all pleasantly by surprise. As Nelson Mandela reminds, 'Thinking is one of the most important weapons in dealing with problems'.

Greg Mills, Why is Africa Poor?, and what can Africans do about it?

2010

INTRODUCTION

You can't enjoy the fruits of
effort without first making the effort.
Margaret Thatcher

The main reason why Africa's people are poor is because their leaders have made this choice.

The record shows that countries can grow their economies and develop faster if leaders take sound decisions in the national interest. This is also true in those African countries which have performed well. Success in the global economy has not required a miracle, an elixir. It has not demanded the world provide special conditions to enable countries to prosper, in the form of trade or aid preferences. In the 'flat' world of globalisation

– characterised by the frictionless movement of people, capital, services, technology and goods – emerging economies have had unprecedented opportunities for growth and development. This should have been Africa's time.

In assigning blame to African leaders for not seizing these opportunities, it is also true that they have often taken decisions under difficult circumstances. No one disputes that leaders face big governance challenges in Africa. Yet in other parts of the world they are usually regarded as obstacles to be overcome, not as permanent excuses for failure.

In a half century of independence, Africa has not realised its potential.

Instead, its greatest natural assets have undermined its prosperity. Africa's youth, far from being a huge source of talent and energy to be harnessed, are regarded as a destabilising force because they are largely unemployed and uneducated. This is not only a threat to Africa's security. By 2025 one in four young people worldwide will be from sub-Saharan Africa. If they do not find jobs on the continent, they will seek them elsewhere.

Far from being the fount for development, Africa's oil wealth has served instead to enrich elites. For example, despite an estimated $400 billion* in oil exports over 40 years ensuring that oil revenues per capita rose from $33 to $325 from 1965 to 2000, the number of Nigerians living on less than one dollar per day rose from 19 million in 1970 (of a population of 70 million) to 90 million (from 120+ million).[1] Nigeria would have done better – by some estimates the economy would have been 25 per cent bigger – if the Niger delta had no oil. This is partly because an estimated 80 per cent of Nigeria's oil wealth accrues to 1 per cent of the population. Nigeria is not alone. Instead of being the fuel

* $ used throughout this book refers to United States dollars unless indicated otherwise.

for development, oil has tainted governance and accountability across Africa.

Far from being the world's breadbasket, Africa's agriculture potential has similarly been squandered. Despite many African states possessing natural advantages, 35 of 48 sub-Saharan economies were net food importers at the end of the 2000s. While East Asian countries have tripled agricultural yields and Latin Americans doubled theirs since the 1970s, Africa has lagged well behind, with its performance flat at best. Africa's share of world agricultural exports has halved since 1970 to under 4 per cent. Though agriculture was responsible for only one-fifth of the continent's economic output, by the end of the 2000s two-thirds of Africans, the majority of them women, lived in the rural areas and were dependent on farming for their survival. No genius is required to work out why Africa's farmers have performed so badly. Not enough time, effort and money has been invested in improving yields through extension services and better systems. It has not been an imperative for African governments.

After years of lagging behind, Africa's positive economic growth record in the 2000s illustrated that better choices can be made. This book points to different factors behind Africa's comparative 'success' in those ten years, but also explains why the continent still fell even further behind the rest of the world.

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'Everywhere in Africa is on the up. Some countries are going up quickly, others slowly. But they are all going up.' It was with this cheery assessment of a fellow passenger, a Swiss bottling manufacturer, on my mind that I landed in Rwanda to start a secondment in January 2008 as President Paul Kagame's 'Strategy Adviser'.

It was a grand title, an impressive new boss, and a formidable job, given Rwanda's violent and poverty-stricken history. Many South Africans, myself included, often complain that our transition has been difficult. 'Standards have declined,' moan many whites. 'Things are not changing fast enough,' counter black South Africans. Such strains lay behind the democratic change of order in South Africa. But Rwanda's genocide helped to put things into sad perspective. Over a period of 100 days from April 1994 nearly a million people were slaughtered by their compatriots on account of their ethnic origins. That was 10,000 people a day for 100 days. And since most of them were hacked to death using machetes, this involved an astounding mechanical effort and venal mindset, not to mention a level of organisation not normally associated with Africa.

The job I was tasked with in Rwanda was formidable in that the conditions which contributed to the genocide still existed: ethnic divisions between the minority Tutsi (around 15 per cent of the population of ten million) and majority Hutu, fomented by the policies of the colonial Belgians who infamously divided-and-ruled by introducing ethnic identity cards in 1932. If ethnicity was a principal fault-line of Rwanda, the pressure was provided by the economy. It was one of the most densely populated countries in the world, where people earned an average of $250 per annum – a poverty-stricken pressure cooker with a very deep ethnic fissure. Some would argue that the government of Kagame – outwardly efficient, disciplined and diplomatically polished – had only succeeded in pushing these divisions deeper still.

The Rwanda genocide is one of the more obvious cases where, after the end of the Cold War, African choices resulted in a massive loss of lives. To this event can be added Robert Mugabe's wanton destruction of Zimbabwe's economy in the name of land redistribution, if with the aim of retaining political control; Thabo Mbeki's refusal to acknowledge the link between HIV and AIDS, and the estimated 365,000 deaths[2] that have ensued; the 2005

famine in Niger; the war in Darfur which cost around 300,000 lives; and the fighting in Somalia, Guinea, Angola, Congo and elsewhere.

This book is focused mainly on the less obvious, yet insidious and often equally destructive, policy choices that have stunted African development. Although many Africans have preferred to lay the blame for the continent's predicament, and thus the solutions, at the door of outsiders, there is little that the external community can achieve without Africans' agreement.

When I arrived, Rwanda depended on the international donor community for around three-quarters of its government budget. I viewed my own role, at least in part, as a test case of the utility of external aid and advisers. Could we learn to spend money and use resources more efficiently? Or was the role of aid and advisers not primarily for development, but for other purposes?

There were plenty of examples in the region to study. The same United Nations which had flailed around so ineffectually during the genocide was, in 2008, managing the biggest peacekeeping operation in the world in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo, a vast territory whose history of despotic leadership and poor governance had sucked countless foreign players into its myriad problems. The UN's 'quasi-colonial'[3] mission had nearly 20,000 'blue-beret' soldiers costing around $1 billion annually. Its stated aim was to protect the Congolese civilian population from, among others, the remnants of the *génocidaire* forces which had fled Rwanda back in 1994, and to shore up the Congolese government. Initially I was drawn into understanding the Congo better for reasons of Rwanda's development. In contemplating Kigali's options for economic growth, it was possible to see Rwanda as a provider of banking, communications and other services to the region. But that prospect was unlikely to become reality so long as the Congo was unable to extend its writ over its territory. The more time I spent in the Congo trying to understand its perennial crises, the more circumspect I became of the policies pursued by ostensibly well-meaning outsiders.

If some of my time in Rwanda was spent puzzling over how and where Rwanda might usefully build its economy in a fragmented, volatile and poor region, a lot of my time was taken up reviewing the performance and structure of key development ministries and formulating a new, more efficient structure – the Rwanda Development Board, established in 2008. At the same time, I worked on expanding the number of tourist products – Rwanda had to have more to make and sell to the international community if it was to prosper. I also worked on finding the means to fix the national airline – since tourists needed multiple, reliable and affordable means to access the country's tourist offerings. In the course of this work, which took me into the region frequently, and caught me tripping over the tracks and trajectory of many a donor, foreign consultant and NGO, I was also able to see up close how a government operated and experience some of the inevitable tensions between personal, party, and public interests.

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My jovial Swiss friend was right about everywhere being on the up in Africa. Not only had African economies been growing at around 5 per cent for five years, but the record of democracy and human rights had been steadily improving over the past 20. But this had to be gauged against a long-term trend of very low economic growth and a rapidly increasing population. The World Bank estimated that Africa had to grow consistently at 5 per cent just to keep up with its own population demands, and over 7 per cent to make inroads into poverty. A variety of other statistics, with which we were regularly assailed in justifying higher volumes of aid, affirm this sorry tale.

On purchasing power parity (PPP; those adjusted for the cost

of living) figures as of 2009, Africans south of the Sahara were still the poorest people in the world, according to the World Bank, with an average annual income of $1,681 – 50 per cent less than the next poorest people of South Asia, and more than seven times poorer than Latin Americans. Africans had the lowest life expectancy worldwide (50 years, compared to the next lowest, South Asia, at 64), and the highest rate of infant mortality. This reflected consistently low real economic growth across the continent, and lack of economic opportunity for Africans, as well as a range of other problems including poor governance, high rates of conflict, and widespread corruption. Even though surveys show that wealth and happiness do not necessarily correlate (which is why Nigerians have in the past been ranked as among the happiest folk worldwide, as have Puerto Ricans)[4], Africa's economic growth was just 1.7 per cent in the 1980s and 2.5 per cent in the 1990s, well below the rates needed to address the continent's development backlog or, for that matter, achieve the average for low and middle-income countries.[5]

The way in which the world has preferred to deal with Africa's poverty and development challenges has been with increased volumes of aid. As will be seen, no country has developed solely through aid. Most of the donors themselves did not develop in this way. To the contrary: aid can have a rash of unintended and negative consequences which make development less, not more, likely.

The longer I stayed in Rwanda, the greater became my doubts; when doubt replaces certainties in the development and aid 'business', that's when the real problems begin. 'Was aid working?' I asked myself. I could have lived with the answer 'not very well', but worse was to come. As I sat on our porch in the suburb of Kibagabaga one winter morning, rich local coffee in hand, looking out over the slowly lifting smoke-filled haze of Kigali, nestled in the country's almost mystical thousand hills, the realisation dawned. Not only was aid not working; aid was doing harm across the continent and further afield. This realisation was soon popularly shared by Dambisa Moyo's volume *Dead Aid*, building on the work of others, including Robert Calderisi and William Easterly.

But there was a more profound, I believe, question increasingly nagging me about African development. Why had Africa failed to adopt the policies for growth that had proved successful in other parts of the developing world? Some of these examples, which are described in this volume, were well known to Africans and the development community at large. There was, after all, a whole industry (parallel to the aid one) that sought to identify and translate these lessons for others to learn from and apply.

I had been regularly told by government officials, and others apparently in the know, that 'capacity, capacity, capacity' was the reason for Rwanda's inability to translate good ideas and policies into development. On the other hand, Yoweri Museveni, president of neighbouring Uganda, compared Africa's failings to Asia's performance, proffering a more worrying explanation: 'Discipline ... the discipline of the Asians compared to the Africans'.[6] While some dwelt on the relevance of colonial or pre-colonial history, or on the challenges of African climate and geography, African leaders and their international supporters pointed to the very lack of contemporary external finances, including aid, as the key problem. As far back as 2000, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) argued for 'a doubling of aid to Africa', a call which was subsequently picked up and amplified by the High-Level Panel on Financing for Development, the Monterrey Consensus, the Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (the 'Sachs Report'), the Report of the Commission for Africa set up by the then British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and the World Summit.[7] But even the believers at UNCTAD were moved to qualify their

recommendation: 'Of course, even if aid were to reach these levels, there can be little doubt that a secure economic future for Africa will hinge on the effective mobilisation and investment of domestic resources ... [and] cannot be separated from the wider issue of choosing an appropriate development strategy ...' Or, as the aid activist and economist Jeffrey Sachs lamented in 2008, 'Despite the major G8 countries' promise to double aid to Africa between 2004 and 2010, aid from the donor nations has scarcely increased.'[8]

Yet, as the New York-based economist William Easterly points out, such 'big pushes' for international development spending are not new. From the end of the Second World War onwards there have been regular calls, from Harry Truman through to Tony Blair, to increase aid to end world poverty. In 1961, President John F Kennedy committed the United States to assist the world's poor 'for as long as it takes'. Most recently such efforts, as Sachs highlighted, focused on achieving the eight MDGs by 2015 which were identified at a UN mega-summit held in New York in 2000: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary school enrolment; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV-AIDS, and other diseases including malaria; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development. Hence the 'Make Poverty History' campaign to lobby G8 leaders at the July 2005 Gleneagles Summit on the back of Prime Minister Blair's above-mentioned Africa Commission report released three months earlier. The meeting at Gleneagles agreed to such a 'big push', committing to double world aid to Africa to $50 billion a year, and at the same time forgiving past debts. Yet no amount of money was going to 'fix' African states if their leaders continued to make the wrong development choices.

Very few Africans (or other recipients) will admit to making big mistakes. This might be because of Africa's turbulent and painful colonial history, when the sort of development plans attempted by the colonial powers were really little different in practical (as opposed to political) terms to those tried today. As Easterly observed in his development tour de force, *The White Man's Burden*, while there was a shift in language from 'uncivilised' to 'underdeveloped' and 'savage peoples' to the 'Third World' as part of a 'genuine change of heart away from racism and towards respect for equality . . . a paternalistic and coercive strain survived'. As a result, 'Soon was born the development expert, the heir to the missionary and the colonial officer.'[9]

What makes today's failures especially galling is that many of the African states receiving dollops of Western assistance are products of earlier attempts at state-building, when foreign templates of nation-statehood were imposed on complex patchworks of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, racial, and religious groups. Even though some former colonial subjects (in places such as Zimbabwe and Sierra Leone) may today yearn for that earlier, more prosperous era, a combination of colonial incompetence the arbitrary drawing up of African borders, and the chaotic and often bitter and violent processes of decolonisation and independence, all set the scene for what we have experienced in post-independence Africa.

This still does not explain why other countries in other regions have been able to better manage such differences, social fault-lines if you will, within their anomalous borders. Why, for example, the widespread extent of ethnic strife in the Congo or Nigeria, but not Brazil, which also has extreme poverty?

Moreover, lamenting the past has limited utility, particularly as it cannot be undone. It is also increasingly irrelevant to a new generation of African leadership and their youthful populations. As Lord Palmerston said of the Schleswig-Holstein Question, only three people understood it: 'One was dead, another mad and the third had forgotten it.'

Others such as Moeletsi Mbeki[10] have pointed to quality of

leadership as the key explanation for African performance. African leaders, he argues, 'sustain and reproduce themselves by perpetuating the neo-colonial state and its attendant socio-economic systems of exploitation . . .' As a result, 'Sub-Saharan Africa today consists of fossilised pre-industrial and pre-agrarian social formations, and therein lies their inability to grow economically.'[11] But why do African elites not see the obvious advantage in growing their economies and uplifting their people? And why do African electorates allow them to get away with bad choices?

The quality of leadership criteria has, for example, formed the basis for the Ibrahim governance index offering cash prizes based on its ranking of the continent's leadership.[12] Yet the \$5 million award was not made in 2009 and 2010. Few African leaders, as Robert Guest has observed, 'allow ordinary citizens the freedom to seek their own fortunes without official harassment. Few uphold the rule of law, enforce contracts or safeguard property rights' and 'Many are blatantly predatory, serving as the means by which a small elite extracts rents from everyone else.'[13] To be sure, the unseemly and hasty manner of decolonisation left most African leaders woefully unprepared to run their newly independent states. Their first years in power were often blighted by proxy Cold War conflicts, where the superpowers 'sanctioned corruption and tyranny as long as their interests were served'. This pernicious legacy helps explain some failures of leadership, but certainly not all.[14]

Modern Singapore's founding father, Lee Kuan Yew,[15] has been characteristically blunt in drawing the link between Africa's inheritance and its bad policy choices. 'I had received an unforgettable lesson in decolonisation, on how critical it was to have social cohesion and capable efficient government', recalled the former president, in contrasting the decline between Zambia at independence in 1964 and its situation just 15 years later. 'When the leader did not preserve the unity of the country ... the system soon broke down. Worse, when misguided policies based on half-digested theories of socialism and redistribution of wealth were compounded by less than competent government, societies formerly held together by the colonial power splintered, with appalling consequences.'

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Again: the primary reason why Africa's people are poor is because their leaders make this choice.

The tenets of economic growth do not demand a secret formula. To the contrary, as this book sets out, good examples now abound in East Asia and also increasingly farther afield in parts of South and Central Asia, and Central America.

The world has not denied Africa the market and financial means to compete: far from it. The modern era of globalisation – what the journalist Thomas Friedman[16] has referred to as a world made 'flat' by technology and market forces – has afforded unprecedented opportunities to billions in emerging markets. The varying abilities of governments to translate such opportunities into development and prosperity has accounted, in large measure, for the widening inequalities within and between countries. This has been a key reason why Africa's post-colonial development trajectory has fallen far short of its Asian peers.

It has not been because of aid per se, even though this thesis has gained currency.[17] Nor is African poverty solely a consequence of poor African infrastructure or trade access. Africa has enjoyed preferential access to international markets, but has still slipped behind because of its over-reliance on primary commodity exports. While much of Africa's infrastructure deteriorated and

lagged further behind that found elsewhere in the world, this has not always been the case. This book argues that there are often vested interests behind keeping this just so. More telling is why many African countries have avoided putting in place the correct policies and procedures to facilitate trade, which could have been done quickly, and required far less money than improvements to infrastructure.

Africa's poverty has not been because the necessary development and technical expertise is unavailable. It can be bought on the international market, just as many in Asia have chosen to do. It could even have been accessed for free via donors. Africa has, however, been highly possessive about the direction and control of its development, partly due to an innately sceptical view of outsiders, but also because it has been able to get away with acting in this way.

Africa is not poor because its people do not work hard. Their productivity is low because of various factors, including poor health and skills, inefficient land use, and chauvinism. Few if any persons worldwide could claim to work as hard (for less reward) than rural African women.

Nor is Africa poor because it lacks natural resources. Compared to Asia, it is a veritable treasure trove, from hydro to carbons to hydrocarbons. Yet, with few exceptions (Botswana is one), these resources have been used only to enrich elites, spread corrupt practices, and divert development energy and focus.

And Africa's people are poverty stricken not because the private sector does not exist or was unwilling to work in sometimes difficult settings. These people and companies do exist, though the private sector is often not 'private' at all, but rather an elite-linked system of rent seeking. Even where there is a degree of independence, government attitudes towards private businesses range from suspicion to outright hostility.

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If Africa's dismal economic performance could be put down to bad choices by African leaders, then we have to ask: Why have they made them?

A key reason is that Africans and the international community have allowed them to. The former typically believed they lacked the means to change the status quo, whereas the latter have been too ready to help them for reasons ranging from self-interest to altruism and pity.

African leaders have successfully managed, with the help of donors, to externalise their problems, making them the responsibility (and apparently the fault, too) of others. In response, the donors have lacked the tools or political will to manage the relationship and their money flows according to the democratic, reform and delivery record of the recipients.

Nowhere has this been more the case than with the many so-called 'fragile' or 'failed' states, which have frequently abrogated the responsibility to find the resources to rebuild their countries to others, though often not the necessary authority. Too often have donors stepped, unwittingly or not, into the shoes of the state and thereby weakened the already tenuous link of accountability between the government and its people.

That African leaders have been permitted to get away with ruinous, self-interested decisions can be attributed in large part to a relative lack of democracy (or to single-party dominance) in Africa. There has been little bottom-up pressure on leadership to make better choices, notwithstanding the encouraging growth of civil society in parts of the continent over the past two decades.

This apparent passivity in the face of dire leadership can, at least in part, be attributed to culture: neo-patrimonial 'big man' chieftain styles of rule, dispensing favours and using all manner of tools to bolster their rule, from traditional governance structures

to kinship ties and less palpable aspects, including witchcraft and the church. The system many African leaders have preferred thrives on corruption and nepotism.

But the cultural aspect has worked both ways – an uncomfortable fact that most scholars and practitioners have not subjected to sufficient scrutiny. Whereas African leadership has lacked the commitment to popular welfare displayed by many Asian leaders, Asian societies have in turn assumed a responsibility (and suitable mindset) to fill their part of the development bargain – the Confucianism aspect so often cited but so hard to quantify in East Asia's success.

Africa's relatively low population density has also played a role. Africa has historically lacked the critical mass of skilled people to participate in development, especially required in the cities, resulting in high labour costs and low economic growth. These conditions have been exacerbated by an 'urban bias' towards development choices, neglecting the rural areas. This choice was compounded (and perhaps encouraged) during the last 20 years of the twentieth century.

Africa's land holding structures have also been an impediment to entrepreneurship where they have hindered the collateralisation of land value through individual ownership and mortgage schemes. There has been little interest among the leadership of many countries for reform; and quite the opposite in Zimbabwe, where land has been seized and redistributed based on political allegiances.

The top-down imposition of states and borders on Africa's rich ethnic and sectarian tapestry by colonial powers has helped to institutionalise weak governance structures. These were both formed and maintained not by raising taxes and ensuring public goods, as with European state-building for example, but by international fiat from the colonial powers, through the Organisation of African Unity, to today's public alliance with the donors who have provided the major share of many African governments' expenditure.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, bad choices have been made because better choices in the broad public interest were in very many cases not in the leaders' personal and often financial self-interest.

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This book does not sidestep the difficult questions around African leadership, but its purpose is not to name and shame in a sideswipe of personalised insouciance. I hope that its main value will be in its proposals for improving this situation, in getting African leaders' incentives straight. The system is perverse because for the big men, all the incentives are there already.

Donors have a responsibility towards African development, not least since their actions have served, in the worst of cases, to shape the choices available to African leaders and alter their accountability to their populations. Donors can safeguard the international dimension. But this is not principally a book about how the West (or anyone else outside the continent for that matter) should engage with Africa, but rather about how Africa should engage with itself.

This book also shows that certain new pressures, including those of African demography and the global environment, will demand Africa's leadership to think differently about their choices. If they fail to do so, not only will their people get left further behind, but the continent could face further hardships and even widespread disaster. But just as this book argues that these choices are clearly identifiable, they are also only realisable by Africans. Whether they choose to do so, however, will also reflect whether the international community and their own people allow them to get away with not doing so.

A note about the volume's academic thrust. Understanding why policy choices are made (or not) involves the study of political economy: essentially, who gets what, when, and how (the core questions of the discipline of politics) in the context of scarcity (the issues or patterns of production and distribution in the setting of scarcity – the key questions of the discipline of economics).[18] Political economy is the battlefield for reforms. In setting out to answer how Africa might better access the drivers of economic activity – finance, technology and trade[19] – the book is thus about the political economy of development, and specifically how history and politics shape key African economic policy choices and vice versa. Or as Zwelinzima Vavi, Head of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, put it in 2009,[20] 'Politics is economics and economics is politics.'

In providing some answers to the conundrum of development, the book divides into six chapters and a conclusion.

Chapter One focuses on the way in which the global economy works, and what domestic policy choices it has demanded. Chapter Two offers an insight into what has made some countries successful in integrating with this 'globalised' economy. It makes the case about how leadership choices, and the capacity to follow them through, really make the difference to why some countries and regions have done well, and others have not.

Chapter Three highlights the African record, while Chapter Four shows why it is that African leaders have made these bad choices.

Chapter Five asks what the role of the outside world is in all this, recognising that the global aid regime, in particular, has often served to reward failure and to entrench the conditions that promote it. There is an external role, though only a secondary one, but this needs to be thoroughly rethought.

The African 'condition' is extremely varied, ranging from weak states to those diversifying their economies, big states and small.

Yet given that so much external effort is focused on intervening in fragile states to rescue humanitarian disasters and repair failed systems of governance, Chapter Six considers the record of the international community in recovering fragile states, in Africa and further afield, in establishing better practice in this regard.

The Conclusion assesses whether the odds are in Africa's favour, and identifies those areas where African leadership could make better choices.

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Nandan Nilekani's excellent volume[21] on India 'imagines' what the subcontinent could be by employing all its advantages and dealing with all its constraints. This book similarly considers what choices Africa will have to make to ensure positive change over a generation. At the heart of this endeavour is increasing the rate of economic growth. While development might not occur with growth alone, it definitely will not occur without it.

Countries which grow their economies at 6 per cent annually double their GDP every 13 years; those which increase their size at 7 per cent, do so every ten. Such is the beauty of compounding growth. And growth has been a stimulus to further investment. Of course, development is certainly more than just a few people getting richer. It also should encompass a narrowing of inequality and the creation of jobs. But the only sustainable manner in which employment can increase at the same time is by increasing the number of businesses and allowing entrepreneurship to flourish. And this requires vision and policies, sound bureaucratic and political process complemented by plenty of substance. In investigating the full spectrum of countries, big and small, from those with records of stability to those in the failed states category, this book shows where Africa has gone wrong, and in '*Imagining Africa*', how we can do much better.

One
THE DRIVERS OF GROWTH

Openness for us seems like a no-brainer, especially considering that a still-developing economy needs multipliers like trade to give our entrepreneurs the markets they need to expand and our price-sensitive consumers the widest possible choice of goods.

Nandan Nilekani

Carlos Mesquita has worked at the Mozambican port of Beira for 22 years, latterly as the port managing director for a Dutch multinational. A short, shaven-headed and highly energetic man, he joked that he arrived with a full crop of hair 'and look at me now'.[1]

He runs a *globalisation business*, one dependent on logistics, financing and trade. It is a globalisation business in a country that was, 20 years ago, the world's poorest and cut off from global networks.

Indeed, at first glance in 2009, the port was still decaying.