

## **Beyond Peacekeeping, Towards Stability**

The economic downturn is a watershed moment for global economic power relationships. Whether the world's major economies have passed through the worst of the crisis or whether this is the eye of the storm remains to be seen. What is now certain is that the established economies will be eclipsed by the growing economies of Asia and South America. Global markets will be more competitive as new companies from these growing economies enter the market place. European and North American companies are already struggling to compete with their Chinese, Indian or South American rivals. This is certain to continue.

It is inevitable that Western countries will lose market share. For the developed world it is vital that new stable markets are sought. Africa can no longer be written off as a problem continent which only captures attention through charity appeals. In the post-colonial world Africa has enjoyed many successes and has undoubtedly contributed culturally and economically far beyond the continent. But too much of the continent has been blighted for too long by conflict, famine and corruption. Africa has often been placed in the too difficult box. Politicians and diplomats have accepted conditions which would be deemed unacceptable elsewhere.

Well intentioned efforts at development have been sporadic and patchy in their success. When Africans have been left to get on and solve African problems they have been ill equipped to do so. More than half of the world's peacekeeping operations are in Africa. To a large extent Governments in the West, but also within Africa, accept that they will go on indefinitely. They are seen as problems to be managed rather than solved. In the new global economic environment this is unsustainable.

Security and political stability are a prerequisite for economic development. Peacekeeping needs to move towards long term stability and create the conditions which will allow for sustained economic development. Despite the courage of African peacekeepers they often lack the proper equipment, training and the political will to back them up.

Recognition of the importance of a stable and secure Africa has been demonstrated by the EU and the United States through capability enhancements and training. This is a welcome start, but more needs to be done to ensure the operations are fit for purpose and that the soldiers on the ground have the right capabilities. This should be driven by hard headed economic self interest. It is a first step in tapping the potential of the African market.

African Governments should support African companies in the provision of affordable equipment. This will drive economic development through jobs, innovation and defence exports.

What is required is a partnership between African Governments, the international community and industry to ensure that problems are more than

merely managed. The potential prize is vital not only to the people of Africa, but to the prosperity to countries well beyond its borders.

### **Unlocking Development through a Defence Industrial Strategy**

The African Aerospace and Defence Expo in South Africa is one of the most important global gatherings of the defence sector. Companies from around the world use it as an opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities to the increasingly important market of the developing world. It is also a showcase for the best Africa has to offer; a chance to demonstrate cutting edge capabilities from across the continent.

The ingenuity of African technology providers is recognised around the world and African companies have made great strides in recent years. However, Africa still has some way to go before it realises the full potential afforded by defence. AAD 2010 should be seen as a clarion call to drive economic development through defence through creation of Africa's first defence industrial strategy.

The economic development of the West went hand in hand with the military developments within nation states. Defence can contribute to the organisation of national industries, adds to education, skills and wider technological developments. The X-ray, ballpoint pens and the jet engine all arose through military innovations.

If this opportunity is to be achieved it will require organisation on a continental scale. National Government's and industry need to come together to identify African strengths and develop an African defence industrial strategy. This strategy must begin with a clear assessment of Africa's defence industrial base. It must determine the areas in which Africa can compete and identify the companies who are producing the requirements of today and the technologies of tomorrow. It should also be honest about Africa's weaknesses and where improvements should be made.

The strategy should assess Africa's requirements of the next 25 years and identify the areas of growth. This will include developing African solutions to African problems such as an approach to peacekeeping which emphasises training and equipment. However, this assessment of future requirement should expand beyond African shores by building partnerships and realising opportunities in other parts of the developing world.

Once Africa's defence industrial ambitions have been determined the strategy should consider the skills and technologies required to achieve them. It should determine what Governments and industry should do to ensure that engineering, high tech and management skills are spread across Africa. Assured skills will allow for the delivery of assured capabilities. They will also help secure greater levels of educational attainment which will also help attract inward investment in other sectors.

The strategy should also consider new and more innovative approaches to funding which take account of the needs of developing economies. A partnership of trust between governments and industry will allow conventional procurements to be supplemented with offset, counter-trade and barter funding.

Now is the time for national governments and suppliers to come together to ensure that Africa's capabilities are nourished, supported and that access to quality equipment and services are guaranteed. History has shown that this will not happen on its own. A clear continental strategy which transcends national borders is vital and that requires leadership.