



From Divided Pasts to Cohesive Futures

Today, the cohesion of multi-ethnic societies is at risk across the globe. Throughout history, to the present day, African countries have been facing this challenge. Historical inequalities and social division undermine cohesion and sow seeds of instability. How can Africa build a future where ethnic and other differences are a strength, a driver of growth and development, rather than sources of division and instability? Drawing together historians, economists and political scientists, each an authority on Africa, this book delivers a comprehensive study of that question through an exploration of the continent's divided histories, to understand where Africans stand now, and to reflect on how they might now work towards a more trusting society. Numerous case studies, statistical expositions and theoretical reflections bring conceptual clarity to the often poorly understood processes and contexts of social cohesion, not only in Africa, but across the developing and developed world.

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From Divided Pasts to Cohesive Futures

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Foreword

Divisions in a society – by ethnicity, race, and religion – have once again come to the forefront of the challenges that confront the international community. We now see greater incidence of conflict or tension, of differing scales and intensities, among people of different ethnic, religious, or traditional backgrounds in regions, villages, and communities in much of the world. Blaming globalisation for such divisions is short sighted. Religious extremism is deplorable and should be deplored. However, causes of social divisions are more complex and deep rooted.

How can we move forward to a cohesive society where diversity is not a cause of division, but rather a source of social enrichment and growth? It may be surprising to some, but the world has a lot to learn from Africa. In that continent, ethnicity evolved over centuries and diverse ethnic communities emerged to foster trade and commerce and as people migrated in response to climatic changes and in search of more fertile lands. The colonial regimes drew artificial ethnic boundaries solely to create their own administrative structures. With land having become more scarce and economic adversity severe, division among ethnic communities has become part of the social fabric in many parts of Africa. However, Africans have institutions and customs to manage conflicts that may arise from such divisions; there have been few major wars in the history of the continent. In contrast, in Europe, it took brutal wars that spanned decades to forge a more cohesive society. Indeed, African communities are naturally more multiethnic, multilingual, and multicultural than on any other continent.

This book draws together scholars of several disciplines, each an authority on Africa, to look back at history to see where we are now, to reflect on what the continent needs to make a transformation to where citizens live more peacefully with each other, and to conjecture what the future holds for its citizens. It reflects on what the world can learn from Africa to achieve cohesive futures. This book presents an

exceptionally holistic and yet cohesive multidisciplinary exposition on managing diversity in Africa.

Contributing to peace and stability is one of the core principles that guide development assistance of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Indeed, Japan's Constitution states in its preamble that 'We recognize that all people of the world have the right to live in peace, free of fear and want.' Thus, Japan has been a strong advocate of the protection of human security since the late 1990s, and it is now widely recognised that the international community has a responsibility to look after security of individuals, not national security alone. I strongly support this principle and will lead JICA to continue to make important contributions to peace and stability in the developing world.

It must now be evident to our readers that this book is a product of JICA's quest for peace and stability in the world. In October 2008, JICA Research Institute launched the research project 'Ethnic Diversity and Economic Instability in Africa' as one of its early initiatives. Recognising that the nature and consequences of interactions between ethnicity and economy critically depend on historical contingencies, political structures, constitutional designs, and economic circumstances, JICA drew together internationally renowned scholars in economics, history, political science, anthropology, and constitutional law from Africa, Japan, Europe and North America, to carry out this research. It was organised in collaboration with the Research Institute for Economics and Business Administration of Kobe University, and was led by Professor Hiroyuki Hino, former Consulting Fellow of the JICA Research Institute, Research Fellow of Kobe University, and now Visiting Research Scholar at Duke University and Visiting Professor at the University of Cape Town. The research was conducted under the guidance of the late Gustav Ranis of Yale University, Professor John Lonsdale of Cambridge University, and Professor Frances Stewart of the University of Oxford. This book is a sequel to the first publication of this project, *Ethnic Diversity and Economic Instability in Africa: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2012. I am grateful to Professors Hino, Lonsdale, Ranis, Stewart for their invaluable contribution to the project.

I believe that this book offers insightful reflections on and from Africa. It is my sincere hope that African governments and civil societies as well as international development institutions and indeed the

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Foreword

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international community will draw on the findings of this book in their respective efforts to enhance social cohesion in Africa and the world. On my part, I pledge that JICA will continue to make its contributions to peace and stability through development projects and research, in particular on poverty in disadvantaged areas and villages in sub-Saharan Africa.

Shinichi Kitaoka

President

Japan International Cooperation Agency

Acknowledgments

This book is the latest of several products from the research project, ‘Ethnic Diversity and Economic Instability in Africa: Policies for Harmonious Development’, which the Japan International Cooperation Agency Research Institute (JICA-RI) launched in October 2008 in collaboration with Kobe University Research Institute for Economics & Business Administration (RIEB). The project director was Hiroyuki Hino. In this project, JICA assembled a team of economists, historians, political scientists, and anthropologists from Africa, Japan, Europe, and North America, and organised a series of workshops in which members of the team contributed papers and deliberated on key issues. This book is a collection of the updated papers from those presented in the workshops, with a few papers added to make the coverage more complete. A first set of papers from the workshops was published in 2012 as *Ethnic Diversity and Economic Instability in Africa: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

We are most grateful to our colleagues in our team for remaining committed to the project for such a long time. We thank especially Professor Gustav Ranis, a leader and mentor of the team, who passed away in 2013. Sadly, another dear colleague and key driver of this project, Dr Raufu Mustapha, died earlier this year. Together they inspired many of the ideas discussed in this book – their contributions going well beyond the specific chapters they authored. We devote this book to their memory.

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