

Towards an Alternative Development Paradigm for Africa

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ABSTRACT Viewed from the economic and political prisms, Africa is known to have been wantonly marginalized both in the world economy and in the area of development. This marginalization, which is also a restatement of the underdevelopment of the continent or what some refer to as the development of the underdevelopment of the continent has found evidence in the increasing regression of the economy of the continent and its diminishing importance or relevance in the world economy, particularly to the industrialized countries. The statistics of Africa's role in the global economy make the point clearer enough. Africa's share of exports in world trade, for instance, which was 2.4 per cent in 1970, dwindled to 1.4 per cent by 1990. Even its share of non-oil primary commodities fell from 7 per cent to less than 4 per in the same period. The consequences of the foregoing grim statistics has found expression in crushing external debt burden, poverty, squalor, hunger and disease and general underdevelopment. This paper, based on the conclusion that Africa is being marginalized in the world economy and development, charted a course for an alternative development paradigm other than that based on the modernization theory or other grand development paradigms, models or strategies. The paper concluded that this alternative paradigm should draw largely from the post-modernism paradigm that accommodates the prevailing circumstances of the various environments.