

A Philosophical Review of Human Rights Stipulations as Guaranteed for Good Governance

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This article attempts a philosophical review of human rights stipulations as guaranteed for good governance across the world. Before doing so, since human rights as a philosophical topic raises a lot of concerns and questions that are still debatable, I would like to give a broad description of the metaphysics and anthropology of human rights.

Broad Description of the Metaphysics and Anthropology of Human Rights

The metaphysics of human rights dwells on the value judgment on human rights. It considers how human interests which are part of the natural world are carried over to human rights theory and practice. There is a philosophical investigation into the existence and knowledge-claims of human interests within the theory and practice of human rights. From the viewpoint of anthropology, some theoretical problems of human rights arise. They include the practical problems of implementation and protection, the various dimensions implied in the institution of human rights, and most significantly the challenges and dilemmas associated with the implementation of human rights in cross-cultural contexts. It has to be acknowledged that human rights theory and institutions are now used to address conflicts at various social and political levels. There are appeals from individuals and institutions for the protection of human rights of victims during intense and protracted conflict in diverse geographical contexts. Even seeking redress from violators of human rights stipulations makes use of human rights framework.

On the anthropology of human rights, there is the appreciative concern that globalisation has enabled human rights theory and practice to consolidate on international development and foreign aid, on gender equality, the protection of minors and the vulnerable,

truth and reconciliation commissions, civil society projects and community conflict resolution. No doubt also, questions regarding what constitutes a just society, what a civil society entails, the meaning and significance of social rights and social obligations, the various forms and contents of democracy, and lastly the rights of individuals and groups are part of the critical issues. All these are concerns in the current debates on the theory and practice of human rights.

Few Concerns about Human Rights Violations within Governance

In Nigeria, there are still apparent concerns over the violations of human rights due to the perceived autocratic tendencies of the Muhammed Buhari's Administration and its selective anti-graft war. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is still reckoned to have arrested people with alleged cases of fraudulent activity without due regard to human rights stipulations. In France, the burkini ban row¹ was considered a violation of fundamental liberties. In the same vein, the British government expressed uneasiness over the human rights act because it leaves the "UK authorities unable to deport criminals and suspected terrorists."² These appeals within governance are just the tip of an iceberg. There are many more of such appeals from individuals and groups across the world. But first, how has human rights stipulations as guaranteed for good governance been received in a world decimated by plurality?

¹ Debates raged in France "over women's rights and secularity since a string of beach resort towns in southern France banned the swimsuit in July and August of 2017. As a result, France's highest administrative court then suspended one seaside town's ban in the Mediterranean resort of Villeneuve-Loubet on the grounds it violated fundamental liberties. Later the administrative court of Bastia on the Mediterranean island rejected a request by the Human Rights League to annul a ban on wearing the garment in the Corsican resort of Sisco." (See Henry Samuel, "Corsica rekindles France burkini row as court upholds ban over 'security concerns' following beach brawl," *The Telegraph*, September 6, 2016, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/09/06/frech-prime-minister-slams-ny-times-for-false-depiction-of-musl/)(accessed 10.09.2016).

² Michael Wilkinson, "We will scrap Human Rights Act" *The Daily Telegraph*, Aug 23, 2016, 24.

Human Rights Stipulations in a World of Diverse Geographical Contexts

According to James Nickel, there is a widespread acceptance of major human rights treaties.³ Nickel also claims that many countries now use similar political institutions such as law, courts, legislatures, executives, militaries, bureaucracies, police, prisons, taxation, and public schools.⁴ Although globalisation, as Nickel observes, has diminished the differences among peoples, there is the effort of international governmental and non-governmental organisations to ensure that many countries are covered by international law.⁵ The perceived wisdom on the part of the international community is that rights and claims of peoples should not be “deemed to be conditional upon their being legally recognized.”⁶ Fagan states clearly that numerous countries of the world “wholly or partially exclude formal legal recognition to fundamental human rights.”⁷

Understanding the Stipulation of Rights as Basis of Human Rights

There are stipulated rights for a human being, whether male or female, young or old, and even children, including the aged, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped. These are protected irrespective of the person's sexuality, religion, culture, race and nationality. Some of the stipulated rights include: “a right to life, a right to choose; a right to vote, to work, to strike; a right to one's phone call, to asylum, to equal treatment before the law, to feel proud of what one has done; a right to exist, to a distinct genetic identity; to pronounce a couple husband and wife, and to be left alone.”⁸ Generally, there are

³ See James Nickel, “Human Rights,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, www.plato.stanford.edu/entries/rights-human/ (accessed 01.08.2016).

⁴ See *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ See Andrew Fagan, “Human Rights,” *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, www.iep.utm.edu/hum-rts (accessed 08.08.2016).

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Leif Wenar “Rights,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, www.plato.stanford.edu/entries/rights/ (accessed 04.08.2016).

other rights such as property rights, group rights, legal rights, constitutional rights, economic rights, employment rights, democratic rights, cultural rights, security rights, due process rights, liberty rights, rights of political participation, equality rights, social rights, sex worker's rights, rights of people living with disabilities, rights of people living with AIDS, homosexual rights, gay rights, children's rights, moral rights, privacy rights, publicity rights, intellectual property rights, proprietary rights, women sexual rights, and reproductive rights. These rights are not just prescriptions of tolerance; they are "justified claims to the protection of a person's important interests"⁹ irrespective of traditions, cultural norms, attitudes and practices. Justified claims simply mean a right which implies responsibilities, duties or obligations on other parties regarding the right-holder.

Alan Gewirth thinks stipulated rights are absolute, whereas Leif Wenar considers them to be conclusive within certain circumstances. In other words, in certain circumstances, some stipulated rights may be limited. For example, Etokakpan has a liberty right allowing him (Etokakpan) to do something only if there is no other person (Ekaette) who has a claim-right forbidding him (Etokakpan) from doing so. To this extent, can we say it is possible for rights to conflict? As expounded by Wenar, stipulated rights never conflict nor overlap in a given case. Rather, rights fit together like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle, so that in each circumstance there is only one right which determines what is permitted, forbidden or required.¹⁰ For example, the public's right to protest actually connotes the public's right to protest, unless the protest would cause serious risk to life or property, or would lead to the spread of a deadly disease. Another example by Wenar is the government's right to control what happens on public property, but not to the extent of stopping peaceful protest, unless the protest would lead to loss of life. Even those who prefer the view that there really are conflicts of rights suggests that we should speak of a 'defeated' right

⁹ Alan Gewirth, "Rights," *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, 2nd ed., ed. Ted Honderich (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 819 – 820 at 819.

¹⁰ See Wenar "Rights"(accessed).

as being permissibly 'infringed' (instead of 'violated'), leaving residual obligations on the infringer.¹¹ Whatever the objections one would hold as regards the possibility of conflicts of rights, the conclusion seemingly adopted is: "although moral rights are strong moral considerations, they are only *pro tanto* (*Only to such an extent, to this extent*)."¹²

For Ian Linden, the idea of a stipulated right "became the antithesis of the communal, an assertion of 'mine against yours', to be precise an absolute claim to power over private property—and over the self in the sense of liberty—rather than any practice of shared use."¹³ Linden reflects on the origin of the idea of *ius*, what is just, which he says began to be used in the Roman law sense of a "right over or to do something", then *dominium*, which he asserts was used in the canon law of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, most notably as a right to self-preservation. Today, the justification of stipulated right as it is protected by international law comes with the recognition of the right-holder as an agent who can demand acceptable reasons for any action that s/he claims to be violated. On this point, Nickel's explanation adds clarity; since Nickel believes there are a 'demand side' and a 'supply side' to a rightholder's claim. The demand side stipulates the rightholder's claim and why the claim should be fulfilled based on important reasons; the supply side considers the rightholder's claim as a matter of duty and what the duties are.¹⁴

Gewirth emphasises Wesley N. Hohfeld's¹⁵ four different meanings of a stipulated right which are claims, liberties, powers, and immunities.¹⁶ From Gewirth's reference to Hohfeld, I understand that claim-rights are the most important because they

¹¹ See Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ian Linden, *A New Map of the World* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd, 2003), 18. Ian Linden referred to B. Tierney, *The Idea of Natural Rights* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997) that gives an outstanding account of the history of rights.

¹⁴ Nickel, "Human Rights" (accessed).

¹⁵ It is believed to be named after Wesley Hohfeld (1879–1918), the American legal theorist who discovered them.

¹⁶ Gewirth, "Rights," 820.

entail correlative necessary duties. To make the idea of claim-rights fairly clearer, Gewirth proffers the general structure of a claim-right as “given by this formula: A has a right to X against B by virtue of Y.” According to Gewirth, there are four main elements in the formula: “first, the subject (A) of the right, the right-holder; second, the nature of the right; third, the object (X) of the right; fourth, the respondent (B) of the right, the duty-bearer; fifth, the justifying ground (Y) of the right.”¹⁷ This does not take away the fact that there are corresponding duties and responsibilities to one another, to families and to the larger society. Based on the understanding of the reasons for stipulated rights, the defining role of human rights is actually guarding people's capacity or ability to be educated to aim for a worthwhile life.¹⁸ This is a capacity that Griffin thinks is of paramount value, and that people value it even more highly than happiness.¹⁹

The Philosophical Discussion of Human Rights Stipulations in relation to Good Governance

According to Nickel, the four-part explanation of human rights stipulations is the attempt to cover all kinds of human rights including moral and legal human rights and old and new human rights.²⁰ The four features are: (1) human rights are rights, and so they also focus on freedom, protection, status, or benefit for the right holders; thus would be mandatory in the sense of imposing duties; (2) human rights are plural because human rights address a variety of specific problems such as guaranteeing fair trials, ending slavery, ensuring the availability of education, and preventing genocide; (3) human rights are universal; meaning that although universality requires several qualifications, people have human rights independently of whether they are found in the practices, morality, or law of their country or culture; and lastly, (4) human rights have high-priority. This past feature does not mean that

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ See James Griffin, *On Human Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 14-15.

¹⁹ See *Ibid.*, 27-44.

²⁰ See Nickel, “Human Rights” (accessed).

human rights are absolute; rather they are considered as matters of paramount importance such that their violation becomes a grave affront to justice.²¹

Other features that Nickel considers for human rights include: (5) human rights are very hard to lose either temporarily or permanently by bad conduct or by voluntarily giving it up; (6) human rights have the concern of modest standards. Though this is arguable, it allows for high priority within cultural and institutional variation, and leaves open a space for democratic decision-making at national levels. Furthermore, (7) human rights are stronger when considered as moral rather than legal. This is borne out of the fear of considering the insistence on human rights as legal to be fairly weak whereas their universal appeal guarantees their independent existence. To end this discussion on other features of human rights, (8) human rights have some sort of political function in international law and practice such that it would provide standards for international evaluations governments and the use of economic sanctions or military intervention.

Within current global governance, entrenching human rights stipulations has become a priority. There is the push for a moral ideal of equal concern for all human beings. However, this is not possible in countries with poor human rights record. Well, despite these setbacks, the international community still holds countries accountable for the treatment of their own citizens. However, under current conditions of globalisation, the international community uses coercive measures such as threats of economic or diplomatic sanctions and, in cases of gross human rights violations, military intervention.²² Besides, in current human rights practice, it is possible to prosecute leaders for human rights violations such as genocide or ethnic cleansing, irrespective of any recognition that they were acting as official agents of a state.²³

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Cristina Lafont, "Global Governance and Human Rights," *Spinoza lectures*, Royal Van Gorcum, 2012, 56, www.philosophy.northwestern.edu/documents/cv-resume/philosophy-people-lafont-cristina-lecturespressfinal.pdf (accessed 17.08.2016).

²³ *Ibid.*

The Considerable Efforts of the International Community to ensure human rights Stipulations in Governance

The achievements of the international community to promote and implement human rights matters in governance include the fact that we now have an International Criminal Court (ICC) (created by the Rome Treaty of 1998). The ICC is designed to prevent impunity for human rights crime, genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.²⁴ The UN also has a lot of agencies and courts, independent of its human rights treaties, to attend to continuous human rights abuses. Three notable agencies are the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)²⁵ which serves as a full-time advocate for human rights within the UN; the Human Rights Council²⁶ which addresses gross human rights violations; and the Security Council²⁷ which has “the authority to impose diplomatic

²⁴ Nickel, “Human Rights” (accessed).

²⁵ “The OHCHR coordinates the many human rights activities within the UN, working closely with treaty bodies, such as the Human Rights Committee, and other UN agencies such as the Human Rights Council. The High-Commissioner assists in the development of new treaties and procedures, sets the agenda for human rights agencies within the UN, and provides advisory services to governments. Most importantly, the High Commissioner serves as a full-time advocate for human rights within the United Nations. The OHCHR has field offices throughout the world.” (Nickel, “Human Rights”).

²⁶ The Human Rights Commission was a 56-member committee, authorised by the UN Charter, consisting of state representatives. The new Council's responsibilities include “promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights,” addressing gross human rights violations, making recommendations to the General Assembly, and “responding promptly to human rights emergencies.” The Council's other responsibilities include providing direct assistance to UN member states to help them meet their human rights responsibilities through communication, technical assistance, and capacity building. The Council consists of 47 members, elected directly and individually by the General Assembly with membership based on equitable geographic distribution. Council members serve terms of three years, with a limitation of no more than two consecutive terms. Procedures for Council membership are aimed at keeping countries with very poor human rights records off the Commission. (Nickel, “Human Rights”).

²⁷ “The fifteen-member body consists of 5 permanent and 10 elected members. Nine votes are needed to approve any measures. Any of the five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) can exercise their veto power to prevent a given action from succeeding. The permanent membership of five countries, with their veto power, is a clear concession to economic and military power within the Security Council.” (Nickel, “Human Rights”).

and economic sanctions, sponsor peacekeeping missions, and authorize military interventions in cases of human rights emergencies.”²⁸ There is also in place the United Nations Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review which reviews structural discrimination and promotes human rights norms consistent with public international law.²⁹ This review could also be described as a 'system of scrutiny and evaluation' adopted by the Council and its staff. Every UN member state is required once every four years report, evaluate, and discuss in the Council their human rights practices. Another acceptable organization whose role is well-established across the world are Non-Governmental Organisations³⁰ (NGOs) such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Commission of Jurists, the International Federation of Human Rights, Minority Group Rights, Doctors without Borders, and Oxfam. These organizations are extremely active at the international level in the areas of human rights, war crimes, and humanitarian aid.³¹ These international human rights NGOs attend and often participate in the meetings of UN human rights bodies and provide information about human rights situations through their reports and testimony. Having considered the efforts at the international level, there are regional arrangements in place.

The Responsibilities of Regional Union of Countries with particular focus on Africa

We must acknowledge regional arrangements to promote and protect human rights stipulations in particular parts of the world.

²⁸ Nickel, “Human Rights” (accessed).

²⁹ International Centre for Advocates Against Discrimination (ICAAD), www.icaad.ngo/upr-reports-combatting-structural-discrimination-through-accountability/ (accessed 29.07.2016).

³⁰ “The functions of international NGOs include investigating complaints, advocacy with governments and international governmental organizations, and policy making. Local activities include fundraising, lobbying, and general education.’ A lot of their work include information processing and fact finding, in which NGOs educate people about their humanrights and gather information regarding human rights abuses in violating countries.” (Nickel, “Human Rights”).

³¹ Nickel, “Human Rights” (accessed).

Three regions are thus far set up. They are Europe, the Americas, and Africa. These have declarations and conventions. No regional arrangement exists in Asia. However there exist the members of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)—an Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights created in 2009.³² The Arab League has an Arab Charter of Human Rights. As of 2013, Nickel says that Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Libya, the UAE, and Yemen have ratified the Charter. There is the belief that these regional arrangements would have a deeper understanding of problems, circumstances, and possible reforms of the regions. At this point, as an African, I would like to give more focus to Africa.

Africa has the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights. It originated in 1981 and was enacted in 1986. The African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights arose within the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) now transformed into African Union (AU). This charter “reaffirmed Africa's determination 'to promote and protect human and peoples' rights.’”³³ As of 2014, with 51 members of the AU, the charter obliges “ratifying countries to recognize the rights and duties listed and to adopt legislation or measures to bring them into effect (Article 2).” It also stipulates group rights—the rights of peoples.

The charter has two parts: part one sets forth rights and duties and the second part establishes safeguards for them. There is an African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights for the overall purpose of ensuring human rights (Article 30). To promote this significant charter, the AU established The African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights.³⁴ Criticisms against Africa's arrangement to ensure human rights stipulations in governance include the lack of

³² Ibid

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Operating in Arusha, Tanzania. “The first election of its eleven judges occurred in 2006. The Court issued its first judgment concerning admissibility in 2009. It issued its first judgment on the merits in 2013, holding that the government of Tanzania had violated its citizens' right to participate freely in government. In 2014 the African Court issued another ruling, this time against the state of Burkina Faso for failing to investigate properly the murder of a journalist.” (Nickel, “Human Rights”).

clear framework for the interplay of laws and regulations to protect human rights. We must admit the slow construction of mechanisms / actual practice to achieve her objective. In addition, there are enormous human rights problems coupled with non-cooperation by governments and inadequate resources.³⁵

Despite setbacks in Zimbabwe, Sudan, and a few others, a new wave of political reawakening is blowing across Africa. This is surely engendering a return to the full embrace of democracy. Authoritarian rule is no longer a fashionable mentality among the youths. Youths are now involved in civil society groups to support the evolution of the organs of a democratic society. What I hope for is a situation whereby magistrates and lawyers would be determined to uphold the rule of law, and that there would be an efficient, effective and adequately remunerated public service, an independent and transparent parliament, democratically elected and with a cadre of parliamentarians that are honest.³⁶ I also hope that trade unions, professional associations, human rights leagues, non-governmental organizations, women's organisations, youth associations, etc would be more interested and educated in human rights watch in governance.³⁷

Human Rights stipulations in relation to Good Governance in Nigeria

Nigeria attained A-Status for the provision and protection of human rights.³⁸ This was the grading report by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). The report highlights the fact that the Nigerian government has complied with human rights standard around the world. To this effect, it grouped Nigeria among 72 in the world, 25 in Africa and 4 in West Africa. The NHRC praised the

³⁵ See Nickel, "Human Rights" (accessed).

³⁶ See Amina A. Augie, "Human Rights and Good Governance in Africa: A Critical Nexus for Expanding Human Rights," *Africa Development Forum. ADF IV: Theme: Governance for a Progressing Africa* 11-15 October 2004, Addis Ababa, http://213.55.79.31/adf/adfiv/documents/speeches_and_presentations/amina.htm (accessed 06.09.2016).

³⁷ See *Ibid.*

³⁸ News item at 10am World news on Radio Nigeria on 06/12/2016.

Nigerian government for complying with international and regional treaties on human rights in governance. This news was greeted with joy. With this projection of good record in human rights compliance, I believe the hope of Nigerians hinges on “the search for good governance and development,” which Amina Augie says “is inextricably linked to the search for or revalidation of democracy.”³⁹ The greatest aspiration with such a scorecard from the NHRC is for a democratic culture to grow very well in Nigeria. Such a culture would entail enabling Nigerians to express a free choice on all matters affecting them. In addition, an operational institutions and appropriate political culture would have to be created and maintained. Lastly, “legislative institutions must exist to check the exercise of executive power and a genuinely independent Judiciary must exist to safeguard the civil liberties of the people.”⁴⁰

An Informed Context for Good Governance in the light of Human Rights Stipulations

After all the philosophical discussion and arguments about the provision of human rights stipulations and good governance at the international, regional (African) and national (Nigerian) context, my next line of analysis is about those elements that should be highly considered in good governance.

Governance is regarded as a concept that is familiar in political and academic discourse. The British Council describe governance as a broader idea than government. The Council states that “governance involves the interaction of the formal institutions and those in civil society.”⁴¹ Furthermore, governance is articulated as “a process whereby elements in society wield power, authority and influence and enact policies and decisions concerning public life and social upliftment.”⁴² To this extent, governance encompasses and transcends the idea of state, government, good government and

³⁹ Augie, “Human Rights and Good Governance in Africa” (accessed).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ “Understanding the Concept of Governance,” www.gdrc.org/u-gov/governance-understand.html (accessed 23.082016). This is the website of South Africa's National Party).

⁴² *Ibid.*

regime. Thus, the concept of governance has attained a wider meaning which must be factored into any fruitful public discourse.

The World Bank considers good governance to be “epitomized by predictable, open and enlightened policy-making, a bureaucracy imbued with professional ethos acting in furtherance of the public good, the rule of law, transparency processes, and a strong civil society participating in public affairs.”⁴³ Put simply, better governance requires political renewal. In this regard, corruption is certainly shunned from the highest level to the lowest. Thus, a good example is the hallmark of good governance.

It is believed that good governance is “the creative potential of politics, especially with the ability of leaders to rise above the existing structure of the ordinary, to change the rules of the game and to inspire others to partake in efforts to move society forward in new and productive directions.”⁴⁴ To contextualise governance in the discourse on human rights protection, Varun Saigal's idea of a functioning government as a resemblance of a human body is apt. The general principle emphasized in Saigal's book is that the functioning of government should resemble how the organs of the human body are well-networked and coordinated in their function.⁴⁵ Following this view, a comprehensive understanding of good governance can be gleaned from the harnessed experience of the Office of the High Commissioner, United Nations Human Rights. Reflecting on what good governance means, according to the High Commissioner, my impression is that good governance is a term that should be used with great flexibility because of the peculiarities of various geographical contexts. However sensible this view may seem to be: that great flexibility in the understanding of good governance bears an advantage; it does not necessarily translate into an effective actualization of good governance at the operational level. The difficulty has to do with the process of managing public affairs and resources well, guarantying the

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Cf Varun B. Saigal, *The Philosophy of Governance*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles, CA: The International Voice Tribune, 2011).

realization of human rights in a manner that is essentially free of abuse and corruption, and lastly, due respect for the rule of law. In this respect, key hallmarks of good governance are transparency, responsibility, accountability, participation and responsiveness (to the needs of the people). The High Commissioner leaves one in no doubt that good governance and human rights are mutually reinforcing. The vision around this view is that human rights stipulations should guide and be the performance standard assessment of governments and other political and social functionaries.

Conclusion

Some of the terms that constitute international relations language in the twenty-first century include good governance and human rights stipulations. The other related terms are democracy, justice, independence and the rule of law. According to Amina Augie, human rights stipulations and good governance are “intrinsically interwoven in that the latter cannot be achieved without respect for the former and human rights cannot be enforced and observed without good governance.”⁴⁶ Even though there seems to be no single model of good governance, the claims in this article is that human rights stipulations empower individuals to live in dignity, they strengthen good governance frameworks. Besides, human rights stipulations “promote checks and balances between formal and informal institutions of governance. They effect necessary social changes, generating political will and public participation and awareness; and responding to key challenges on human rights and good governance...”⁴⁷

My hope also is for Africa and my home country, Nigeria, to follow up on the Roadmap 2014–2017 formulated and adopted at

⁴⁶ Augie, “Human Rights and Good Governance in Africa” (accessed).

⁴⁷ UN Practitioners' Portal on Human Rights based approaches to Programming, “What is the relationship between human rights and good governance?,” www.hrbportal.org/faq/what-is-the-relationship-between-human-rights-and-good-governance (accessed 14.08.2016).

4th EU-Africa Summit in Brussels by African and European Heads of State and Government. Five priority areas were adopted. They are: 1. peace and security, 2. democracy, good governance and human rights, 3. Human development, 4. Sustainable development and inclusive development and growth and continental integration, and 5. Global and emerging issues. I do believe that Africans and Nigerians can make a difference to governance in the African continent. I also hope that Africa and Nigeria would comply with the African Peer Review mechanism⁴⁸ launched in 2003. Africans and Nigerians should continue to clamour for new approaches to good governance (especially political governance). Finally, in the light of the Africa-EU partnership⁴⁹ on shared values on democracy and respect for human rights stipulations, I yearn sincerely for there to be an adequate flow of communication between people and those who govern them.

⁴⁸ “The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is a mutually agreed African self-monitoring mechanism, to which Member States of the AU voluntarily accede. The objectives of the APRM are primarily to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, sustainable development as well as accelerated economic growth and integration.” (The Africa-EU Partnership, “Democracy, Good Governance and Human Rights,” www.africa-eu-partnership.org/en/priority-areas/democracy-good-governance-and-human-rights (accessed 14.08.2016)).

⁴⁹ “In the run up to the 3rd Africa-EU Summit in 2010, Africa and the EU created a Platform for Dialogue on Governance and Human Rights to help develop shared governance agendas. This inclusive and informal space for dialogue was meant to reflect the mutual commitment to enhance dialogue on Democratic Governance and Human Rights, with the objective of promoting these values and strengthening cooperation in this area for tangible improvements in the lives of African and European citizens. So far, the Platform has allowed for the formulation of shared governance agendas and recommendations that feed into political processes in areas such as the management of natural resources and freedom of expression.” (The Africa-EU Partnership, “Democracy, Good Governance and Human Rights”).