



AfroLeap-21 Podcast

“Africa Leapfrogging to the 21st Century”

***Making Africa an active contributor
and solution provider to the global
sustainability transition***

The Founder, Professor Desta Mebratu

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- **Chemical engineer** with a specialization in industrial environmental management & economics
- **Thirty-seven years** expertise on sustainable industrial development from shop floor to global level
- Took early retirement from the **United Nations in September 2016** to focus on teaching and research
- Continued providing **inputs to regional processes and reports** that focus on Africa
- Fellow of the **African Academy of Sciences** and other institute of advanced studies
- More information from LinkedIn, Google scholar, Research Gate, etc



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The Podcast

Sustainability as a systemic property

- **Striving to maintain the systemic function** is an inherent property of any ecological, economic or social system
- **Innovation and adaptive learning**, as a function of the system dynamics and feedback loops, are the intrinsic processes that ensure the sustenance of systemic function
- **Transformational change is required** when the ability to innovate and adaptively learn becomes impossible within a system
- **The persistent failure** to respond to the confluence of socio-economic and socio-ecological crisis is indicative of the need for transformational change

Why focus on Africa?

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Historically, Africa suffered from the **agricultural and industrial transformations** (slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism)



Humanity is currently standing at the cusp of major socio-economic transformation dictated by **complex socio-ecological and technological drivers**



Africa has higher **leapfrogging potential** due to its resource endowment, demographic dividend & late-comer advantages







However, transforming these **potential in to tangible benefits** would require new generation of leaders that are more forward looking and transformational

Why a podcast?

- **Concerned** by the Increasing complexity created by the confluence of the economic, ecological, technological and governance challenges
- **Frustrated** by the lack of progress despite decades of efforts at various levels to promote sustainability and sustainable development
- **Worried** that Africa could yet again be victim of the emerging socio-economic transformation, if it continues with business-as-usual
- **Hopeful** that Africa could be an active player in the global sustainability transition given its resource, demographic and geopolitical advantages


What are the key approaches?

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-  **Demystify the misguided perception** of Africa's development possibilities that is promoted by the dominant thinking and practice
-  **Promote better understanding of the complex** challenges and opportunities from systems perspective
-  **Provide empirical knowledge-based insights** on key policy issues to African policy and decision-makers
-  **Facilitate intergenerational dialogue** for cross fertilization of ideas and knowledge on core issues related to Africa's development

How is it structured?

➤ The podcast of AfroLeap-21 is mainly structured under the following three components:

 **Thematic episodes:** form the knowledge foundation of AfroLeap-21 Podcast by providing substantive knowledge and facts on critical issues

 **Topical episodes:** provide critical review and insights on major policy and strategy issues and continental process

 **Intergenerational conversations:** facilitate dialogue between senior experts and young African policy and decision-makers

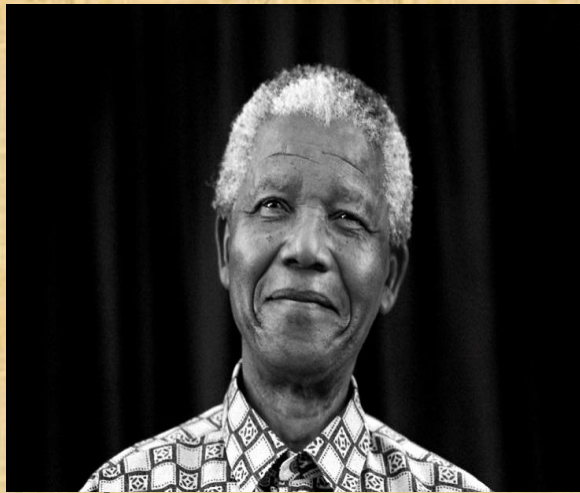
Who are the target audiences?

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- AfroLeap 21 aims at catalyzing transformational leadership **at all spheres of influence** including: political, entrepreneurial, environmental, technological and civil society
- The primary drivers of Africa's transition are the **African youth and young professionals** who are the principal architects and owners of the Africa we want
- AfroLeap 21 also aims to provide systems-based insights to **African political leaders and policy-makers** on regional and global issues that are of critical importance to Africa

How to be involved?

- **Shape the content of AfroLeap 21** by raising questions, making comments and suggesting topics or resource persons that need to be engaged
- **Continuously challenge the status quo** based on a systematic combination of the state-of-the-art knowledge with local values and insights
- **Be an active transformational change agents** by organizing yourself in study groups, chapters and/or networks
- Spread the information by **subscribing AfroLeap 21 and sharing** the link throughout your contacts and networks



**“It always seems
impossible until it gets
done”**
Nelson Mandela



For further information please visit
www.afroleap21.com or
email: info@afroleap21.com