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# ACRONYMS

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAU</td>
<td>African Association of Universities</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACHE</td>
<td>African Conference on Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>AISEC</td>
<td>International Economic and Commercial Sciences Students Association</td>
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<td>AiU</td>
<td>Albukhary International University</td>
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<td>ANIE</td>
<td>African Network for Internationalisation of Education</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>AUC</td>
<td>African Union Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>chief executive officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CODESRIA</td>
<td>Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa</td>
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<td>CPLP</td>
<td>Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>EGM</td>
<td>emerging global model</td>
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<td>EHEA</td>
<td>European Higher Education Area</td>
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<td>ERSA</td>
<td>Economic Research Southern Africa Activity</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EUA</td>
<td>European University Association</td>
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<td>GATS</td>
<td>General Agreement on Trade in Services</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>gross domestic product</td>
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<td>HEI</td>
<td>higher education institution</td>
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<td>IAESTE</td>
<td>International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience</td>
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<td>IAU</td>
<td>International Association of Universities</td>
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<td>ICTs</td>
<td>information and communication technologies</td>
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<td>IEASA</td>
<td>International Education Association of South Africa</td>
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<td>IIE</td>
<td>Institute of International Education</td>
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<td>IRD</td>
<td>Institute of Research for Development</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAFSA</td>
<td>Association of International Educators (formerly the National Association of Foreign Student Advisers/Affairs)</td>
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<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa’s Development</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>ACRONYMS</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCHE</td>
<td>Regional Conference on Higher Education</td>
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<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
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<td>SANSA</td>
<td>South African Network of Skills Abroad</td>
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<td>SARUA</td>
<td>Southern African Regional Universities Association</td>
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<td>SIFE</td>
<td>Students in Free Enterprise (now Enactus)</td>
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<td>SJTU</td>
<td>Shanghai Jiao Tong University (China)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPICES</td>
<td>spiritual, psychological, intellectual, cultural, ecological and socio-political</td>
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<td>STPRC</td>
<td>Science and Technology Policy Research Centre</td>
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<td>THES</td>
<td><em>The Times Higher Education Supplement</em></td>
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<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
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<td>US</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<td>WCHE</td>
<td>World Conference on Higher Education</td>
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INTRODUCTION:
MAKING INTERNATIONALISATION WORK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Piyushi Kotecha
Chief Executive Officer, SARUA

Worldwide, internationalisation is recognised as having increasing sway in academia. But what does it offer the process of transforming and revitalising higher education in the SADC region? Can it foster collaboration between institutions and build the research networks urgently needed to support indigenous knowledge production? Can it help academic institutions prosper economically and socially?

The 1967 Arusha Declaration provided Africa with the opportunity to formalise higher education co-operation and international exchange, three decades prior to the Bologna Process was launched in Europe in 1999. James Otieno Jowi, Director of the African Network for Internationalisation of Education, suggests that the region’s failure to implement the Arusha Declaration meant that an important opportunity was lost for higher education internationalisation on African terms. As a result, higher education on the continent has continued to fall further behind its Northern counterparts.

In June 2012 a SARUA Vice-Chancellors Dialogue was held in collaboration with the International Association of Universities, co-hosted by Eduardo Mondlane University and Lurio University in Mozambique. The event brought together higher education leaders and academics in the Southern African region as well as participants from Asia, North and South America, and Europe. This provided an important opportunity for role-players to explore questions such as:

- How can the terms for engagement in knowledge production be redefined in the global context? What constraints and opportunities are present?
- How can collaborative relationships between Southern and Northern counterparts be restructured?
- What intellectual space does internationalisation open up for scholarship in the South, for the South and of the South?
- What implications does this have for scholarship and capacity-building in Southern African universities?
- How can internationalisation support investments in research infrastructure and in systems of innovation?
There was strong agreement among the vice-chancellors that Southern African universities need to define their interests through proactive institutional engagement and secure partnerships on terms that are mutually beneficial. These partnerships may be within the region, across the southern hemisphere, or with institutions in Northern countries. Examples from Malaysia’s Albukhary International University and Brazil’s UNILAB demonstrate ways in which this might be achieved.

The promise of internationalisation

By definition, scholarship in higher education involves the robust exploration and exchange of ideas, theories and conceptual frameworks. Globalisation and ICTs have created the conditions in which university staff and students are able to engage more rapidly across the world than ever before, producing new imperatives and opportunities for collaboration amongst higher education institutions.

Various rationales are provided for increased internationalisation in higher education. These include preparing students to live in a world that is more connected in both cultural and economic terms, and the need for increased economic development and competitiveness. Internationalisation is seen as playing a key role in knowledge-building – within academia, and consequently in development (nationally and internationally).

However, internationalisation in higher education cannot be divorced from the wider geopolitical forces that shape the world. Power imbalances between Northern and Southern countries lie at the heart of relationships between scholars in developed and developing countries. These imbalances affect the focus and design of collaborative work, the resources available for such work and the roles played by academic partners in different parts of the world.

This presents an intellectual challenge to Southern scholars. Advancing the knowledge project from a Southern perspective involves grasping the opportunities arising from globalisation whilst simultaneously breaking new conceptual ground. But can working relationships be forged within and between Southern regions and between South and North, on different terms? Is it possible to take advantage of the opportunities presented by internationalisation to deepen research capacity and collaboration across Southern African universities?

The Southern African perspective

The reality is that co-operation between higher education institutions continues to take place on terms set by Northern partners, because of the wealth available in Northern countries and the dominance of Northern scholarship. The asymmetry of power and access to resources has produced a situation where knowledge generated in the North has become hegemonic, resulting in the particular being perceived as universal. Theory-building, conceptual frameworks and research methodologies are largely constructed through research undertaken in developed countries, and are informed by the values and world views in those societies. Higher education has also in certain respects become an ‘industry’, with the effect that internationalisation has (at least in some quarters) become a ‘competition in which commercial and other interests sometimes overshadow higher education’s fundamental academic mission and values’. IAU’s report, *Affirming Academic Values in Internationalisation of Higher Education: A Call for Action*, documents the problems that universities are facing, and warns that ‘Competition is in danger of displacing collaboration as the foundation for internationalisation’ (IAU 2012).
The SADC region (like other regions in Africa) does not have explicit policies on internationalisation that address the development of their higher education systems strategically and systematically. Internationalisation approaches by institutions and governments are influenced by ad hoc opportunities identified by countries and institutions in the North, often to the detriment of sustained, symmetrical partnerships based on regional, national or local research, educational and development priorities in Southern Africa. Leaders and decision-makers in higher education institutions and in government are not adequately shaping the internationalisation agenda according to the priorities of Southern Africa. This weakens participation in critical debates around global co-operation in higher education and contributes to the dominance of the European Union on key issues.

Unless higher education and government leaders are prepared to lead policy dialogues backed by strategic action, resources and mechanisms, these imbalances will remain. It is critical for leadership in Southern Africa to define what a proactive internationalisation agenda might look like from an African perspective.

**Looking ahead**

The Vice-Chancellors Dialogue engaged key role-players in higher education in discussing how internationalisation can help address some of the challenges facing Southern African universities by forging institutional, national and regional initiatives, and guiding the retention and development of academic talent.

Southern African universities need to be more assertive about defining their own interests when negotiating international partnerships with universities and donors in Northern countries. They also need to harness more opportunities to strike intra-regional and South-South agreements that can foster innovation and new knowledge.

If Southern African universities are to strengthen their academic programmes and respond to the need for higher education in their countries, they need to develop clear strategies for incorporating internationalisation into their operations in ways that benefit institutional development throughout the region.

**REFERENCES**

In recent decades, internationalisation has emerged as one of the defining issues of higher education globally. A vast literature has grown as scholars debate the conceptualisation, characteristics and challenges of internationalisation, and as they seek to unravel its rationales, realities and implications for universities and countries in various world regions. As might be expected, views differ widely on the forces that drive internationalisation, the activities that constitute it, the competencies it promotes, the values it creates, the processes that sustain it, the respective roles of key constituencies within and outside the universities, and its effects on the core functions of the higher education enterprise, namely, teaching, scholarship and service. Scholars are not agreed on the meaning of internationalisation because of the diversity and complexity of its rationales, activities, stakeholders and providers at the national, sectoral and institutional levels. In fact, other terms are used interchangeably with internationalisation including transnational education, borderless education, offshore education and cross-border education. Perhaps the most succinct and nuanced definition is that provided by Jane Knight (2003: 2; 2004; 2005: 13), who sees internationalisation as the ‘process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education’.

Equally contested are the forces that have given rise to the internationalisation of higher education. Emphasis is variously placed on the labour needs of globalising and liberalising economies and the development of knowledge societies; the rise of new information and communication technologies; and the massification of demand for higher education. These forces have given rise to unprecedented mobility of students, academics and programmes, greater diversification

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1 For a succinct overview of the trends in research on internationalisation in higher education see Kehm and Teichler (2007). They identify seven topics that have dominated research: mobility of students and academic staff; mutual influences of higher education systems on each other; internationalisation of the substance of teaching, learning, and research; institutional strategies of internationalisation; knowledge transfer; co-operation and competition; national and supranational policies regarding the international dimension of higher education. New trends include the mobility of programmes; the role of supranational organisations; the entry of international consortia and networks as new actors, and the geographical canvas now encompasses all world regions.

2 The growth of higher education enrolments is very uneven around the world (Altbach et al. 2009; Kotecha 2011). While the percentage of the age cohort enrolled in tertiary education worldwide rose from 19 per cent in 2000 to 26 per cent in 2007 and reached 30 per cent in 2010, in low-income countries it rose from a low of 5 to 7 per cent between 2000 and 2007. Africa has the lowest participation rates in the world. For Southern Africa the enrolment rate in 2010 was a mere 6.3 per cent, up from 4.2 per cent in 1990, despite expenditures that exceed averages for the developing countries. Clearly, Africa needs to massively raise its participation rates by providing more access that is equitable. This will require increasing the size and quality of the academic staff and improving their conditions of service, as well as increasing and improving higher education funding. In actual numbers, African tertiary enrolments rose from 2.7 million in 1991 to 9.3 million in 2006, and are projected to reach 20 million in 2015.
of providers, the privatisation and marketisation of institutions of higher education, and the emergence of new forms of transnational knowledge production.

Privatisation has developed in response to ‘excess demand’ and ‘differentiated demand’, and encompasses the rise of private universities, privatisation of public institutions and the exponential growth of for-profit institutions (Tilak 2008). Marketisation has entailed the corporatisation of university management, weakening of faculty governance, commodification of knowledge and commercialisation of learning. Many argue that this has led to the decline of academic quality, and shifts from the basic disciplines to professional education and from teaching to research in measuring institutional excellence (Altbach et al. 2009).

No less controversial are the challenges and consequences of internationalisation. For many, while internationalisation has opened new opportunities, it has also served to reinforce and reproduce unequal divisions in the political economy of global education. Moreover, it has engendered intense pressures for institutional competition and collaboration, convergence and fragmentation, and hierarchisation and homogenisation within and across national higher education systems (Bleiklie 2005; Powell & Solga 2008). Cross-border education also raises serious questions about quality control, the development and enforcement of quality assurance mechanisms, and transferability and recognition of qualifications.

Less disputed are the manifestations of internationalisation. Most obvious is the exponential growth in cross-border student mobility as students seek opportunities unavailable at home, the prestige of foreign qualifications, and to gain competitive employment advantage in the increasingly globalising knowledge economies. International students have become a critical source of income as financing of higher education shifts from state subsidies to cost-sharing and other private revenue streams (Sanyal and Martin 2008). The providers of transnational education and the range of activities are more diverse than ever. The former include traditional non-profit universities, new commercial for-profit providers and virtual universities. The activities encompass internationalisation abroad and internationalisation at home, and the delivery methods now include e-learning from hybrid courses to fully online courses.

The complexity and rapidly changing dynamics of internationalisation are now such that it is difficult for individual countries (let alone institutions) even in the most developed regions to maintain control (Van der Wende 2007). This makes intra- and inter-regional co-operation imperative, especially for universities and nations in the South. Historically, national and transnational educational systems have been firmly tethered to the asymmetrical international division of labour in which the developed countries have dominated the provision of models, services and knowledges. Consequently, students, faculty, institutional practices, intellectual paradigms and ideological influences have tended to flow from the North to the South.

In this paper, I intend to do four things. First, I will briefly explore the dynamics behind the growth of internationalisation in higher education. Second, I will examine the different regional dimensions of internationalisation. Third, I will outline some of the implications of internationalisation for different regions. Finally, I will share a few thoughts on how the knowledge project in Africa might be promoted. One of the objectives of this exercise is to decentre the hegemonic stranglehold of the Eurocentric epistemological order – to construct more empowering knowledges for the South and symmetrical forms of internationalisation in higher education. It will be argued

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3 The number of international students rose from 0.3 million in 1963 to 0.8 million in 1980, 1.2 million in 2000, 2.7 million in 2004, and 3.7 million in 2011 (Varghese 2008: 15; Hans de Wit 2012).
that the African academic diaspora provides a critical, if under-appreciated, resource in the process of decolonising and globalising African knowledges.

The contemporary dynamics of higher education internationalisation

The internationalisation of higher education is of course not new. Indeed, the ancient universities of Africa, Asia and Europe were designed and served as regional communities of learning and scholarship. But the bulk of the world’s universities were established in the 20th century – three-quarters of them since 1900 and half since 1945 – and they were largely national in scope and nationalist in orientation (Scott 2000). While in their ‘public life’, to use Martin Trow’s (1973) term, modern universities were confined to the national stage, in their intellectual role (or ‘private life’) they saw themselves in internationalist terms as producers of borderless knowledge. Internationalisation, some suggest, is bringing about the convergence of the private and public lives of universities. In other words, universities are recovering their ‘internationalist past’ (Gacela-Avila 2005).

The growth in the scale, complexity, and demands for educational internationalisation in recent decades is often attributed to the all-encompassing phenomenon of globalisation. Internationalisation of higher education is seen both as a consequence and a catalyst of globalisation. The concept of globalisation was popularised from the 1990s to capture the growing interdependence, interconnectedness and flows of all types across the globe. Some scholars seek to differentiate between globalisation as a process that erases national boundaries, and internationalisation that recognises and reinscribes them (Scott 2000; Altbach 2007; Kreber 2009). Distinctions are also drawn between globalisation and internationalisation as historical processes, and globalism and internationalism as ideological projects (Turpin et al. 2002).

As historians never tire of reminding us, the world has been globalising for a long time and there have been previous cycles of globalisation. However, the current moment of globalisation has its own distinctive features. It has emerged in the context of a world that is simultaneously post-colonial, post-Cold War, multipolar and neo-liberal, a world in which new information and communication technologies compress distances and redefine transnational mobilities. If globalisation provides the overall context in which the internationalisation of higher education is taking place, it is propelled by the massification of demand for higher education and the commercialisation of universities. Transnational education offers an important outlet for unmet and specialised demand in the rapidly growing developing countries with their bulging youthful populations, as well as critical financial and positional resources for the increasingly underfunded universities in the aging countries of the North.

But the motivations for internationalisation go beyond such developmental and demographic dynamics and the logic of supply and demand. They also betray idealistic, instrumentalist and ideological imperatives (Stier 2004). Thus various rationales have been advanced. Economically, internationalisation is justified as preparing students for careers in a globalised economy, enhancing national development and competitiveness, and as a means of generating extra institutional income. Politically, it is claimed, internationalisation can promote the understanding so essential for peace and security in the post-9/11 world, and the development of global citizenship. The socio-cultural imperative lies in the need to cultivate interculturalism, which is critical for the social well-being of multicultural societies. The internationalisation of teaching, research and service activities of universities, many believe, also enhances the quality of higher education by compelling institutions to rise to international academic standards.
Also crucial, and often permeating these economic, political, socio-cultural and academic rationales, is the consuming drive for international recognition and branding. Needless to say, the articulation of these rationales has shifted over time, and varies across countries and regions, as well as within countries at the institutional level. On the whole, the economic rationale seems to have gained ascendancy. Its proponents trumpet its benefits for countries and institutions faced with dwindling support from the neo-liberal state. Its opponents are prone to see internationalisation as a vehicle for exploitation and marginalisation of the poorer classes and of poorer countries. Critics in the South are particularly suspicious of shoddy programmes set up by unscrupulous providers from the North, and the negative implications of the regime of trade in educational services under GATS4 (Zeleza 2005).

At the national level, internationalisation currently tends to be largely justified in terms of its potential to develop domestic human resources to enhance national competitiveness, create strategic geopolitical alliances and economic relationships, promote income-generating and commercial trading opportunities, and for nation-building. Socio-cultural rationales often rank quite low. At the institutional level, emphasis is usually placed on the need to enhance the institution’s international profile and reputation, improve the quality of its programmes, raise the international and intercultural skills of students and staff, and as a means of generating badly needed income, developing energising linkages and networks, and strengthening capacities to deal with pressing global issues and challenges.

Clearly, emphases vary among countries and institutions depending on their histories, locations, resources, ideologies and ambitions. But it is safe to say that even when the political, cultural and academic benefits are proclaimed, such is the grip of academic capitalism that these rationales are often trumped by economic rhetoric and realities. In the North, universities have become increasingly commercialised, their administration corporatised, students consumerised, knowledge commodified, learning credentialised and faculty casualised. These trends reflect the growing importation of business practices, rhetoric and values into academia. In the US, this has translated into the exponential growth of business, vocational and professional programmes at the expense of the liberal arts (Stromquist 2007; Zeleza 2010). Professional and science education attracts international students, while American students abroad go for the humanities and social sciences, a reversal of preferences that underscores the hierarchies in international education between the North and the South.

The decline of public funding and the growth of the for-profit sector have reinforced perceptions and expectations of the financial benefits of recruiting international students, who in many of the developed countries are charged much higher fees than domestic students. Between 2000 and 2009, the number of foreign students worldwide grew by more than 75 per cent to reach 3.43 million, bringing billions of dollars to local economies. Countries in the North have been the main beneficiaries of the rapidly growing international trade in educational services. For example, in the US the 690,923 international students brought in $18.78 billion in 2009–2010 (NAFSA 2012). In Australia, education has become the country’s third-largest export industry, earning the country $18.6 billion in 2009–2010 (Australian Government 2012). Up until the end of the 1980s, Australia used to provide scholarships to foreign students. From 1990 the country moved aggressively from educational aid to trade in educational services, in which foreign students (many of them from poor countries) subsidised Australian students (Turpin et al. 2002). Other dominant OECD countries such as Canada and Britain have made similar transitions (Mallea 1998; Kunin & Associates 2009).

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4 The World Trade Organisation’s General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which became effective in 1995, extends many of the principles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to public services such as health, postal services and education.
Although some of the major countries in the South, such as China, are becoming important exporters of international education, most developing countries are deeply concerned by their unequal access to higher education markets, the negative effects of competition on domestic higher education institutions, the influx of low-quality foreign providers, and the potential for worsening of equity in access to higher education (Bashir 2007).

As more universities jump on the internationalisation bandwagon, they devise strategies and plans of various levels of ambition, complexity, scale and duration. Drawing up and implementing these plans requires commitment by top institutional leaders, buy-in from faculty, students and other stakeholders, establishment of clear monitoring processes, and allocation of adequate resources. Internationalisation plans are only as good as the extent to which they deliver a transformative education for students and promote faculty scholarly engagement. Few countries have achieved what the American Council of Education (2012) calls ‘comprehensive internationalisation’, which entails developing a co-ordinated and robust articulated institutional commitment, administrative structure and staffing, curriculum, co-curriculum and learning outcomes, faculty policies and practices, student mobility, and collaboration and partnerships.

Claims abound about the benefits of internationalisation for students’ learning and development. Internationalised curricula provide students with what is variously called intercultural sensitivity, competence, maturity or literacy, and global learning, consciousness, or citizenship (Braskamp 2009; Gacel-Ávila 2005). Others set their ambitions even higher and urge the creation of curricula and experiences that cultivate what Haigh (2008) calls planetary citizenship, which he regards as the only true counterweight to ‘Higher Ed. Inc.’ Incorporating the principles of education for sustainable development and for democratic citizenship enunciated by the UN and other progressive agencies, such an education can produce cosmopolitan planetary citizens able to cope with an interdependent, multicultural and environmentally vulnerable world.

When properly done, internationalisation can indeed help develop students’ cognitive skills for critical, comparative and complex thinking, cultivate capacities for cross-cultural communication, adaptation, flexibility, tolerance and empathy, and enhance their ability to recognise difference and deepen their understanding of themselves, their society and learning styles. However, intercultural competence is often not clearly defined or measured by institutions (Deardorff 2006; Crichton & Scarino 2007; Stier 2006; Stronkhorst 2005).

Designing such curricula requires academics who understand and value internationalisation in their teaching, research and service activities. Unfortunately, in many countries and in some disciplines, academics are untrained, unprepared and disinterested in internationalisation. Moreover, internationalisation is not sufficiently rewarded and the challenges of international research collaborations and development work are not always recognised and supported. Stohl (2007) believes that faculty engagement is the chief challenge for developing and sustaining internationalisation. Writing about the US, he documents how the country scores low on virtually all indicators of international knowledge, awareness and competence. The American public and students are notorious for their ignorance of world events and geography. Foreign-language enrolments and study abroad participation rates are abysmal and declining.

For academics in the US and many other countries in the North, internationalisation rarely goes beyond attending the occasional international conference, or haphazard academic tourist trips sponsored by their institutions that rarely get translated or incorporated into their teaching and research. The difficulties of generating and sustaining active faculty engagement are partly attributable to institutional barriers, including excessive bureaucratic red tape, limited financial support, cumbersome compliance procedures and variations in academic calendars (Dewey &
Duff 2009). The academics also bear some responsibility. Schuerholz-Lehr (2007: 181-2) was struck when writing on a professional faculty development workshop project at a Canadian university by how much faculty ‘struggled with concepts such as internationalisation, intercultural sensitivity, international education, global awareness and the nefarious overused concept of global citizenship’ (also see Schuerholz-Lehr et al. 2007). Clearly, faculty cannot teach global literacy when they are globally illiterate themselves. By the same token, students cannot be expected to become internationalised in their learning if their teachers are provincial in their personal experiences, professional interests and intellectual horizons. At the institutional level, then, the establishment of effective internationalisation programmes requires developing productive synergies between institutional priorities and individual passion, systemic and systematic planning and coordination. The challenges and opportunities of internationalisation are not entirely under the control of individual institutions. Universities operate in complex and rapidly changing national and international landscapes. For universities in the global South, the international landscape is especially challenging.

The regional dimensions of higher education internationalisation

Traditionally, the internationalisation of higher education entailed study abroad experiences, enrolment in foreign universities, student and faculty exchange programmes, and the enrichment of curriculum with foreign languages and subject matter through international and area studies programmes. Many of these activities continue and have accelerated. Several new processes and practices have also emerged. Altogether, contemporary internationalisation encompasses increased mobility of students and faculty; integration of international content in the curriculum and scholarship; development of inter-institutional collaborations and partnerships; and the provision of trans-border educational services that range from twinning to joint or double degree programmes, franchised and validated programmes, to the establishment of branch campuses and distance and online learning.

Increasingly the importance of both internationalisation at home and internationalisation abroad is being recognised as complementary (Knight 2005). Internationalisation at home encompasses, at the curriculum level, infusing international, global and comparative dimensions, foreign language study, and joint or double degrees; at the teaching and learning level, it includes actively recruiting international students and scholars and effectively using students and academics who have returned from abroad; at the extracurricular level, it encompasses encouraging international and intercultural events on campus and liaising with local diaspora cultural and ethnic groups; and at the research level, promoting international exchange programmes, conferences and seminars, joint research projects and publications, and building area and thematic centres. Internationalisation abroad includes the movement of people or providers, both physically and virtually, the delivery of programmes through linkage or partnership arrangements, and the establishment of international projects.

The range of actors and providers of internationalised education has also expanded. They now include traditional non-profit public and private universities, for-profit institutions, as well as universities and educational networks established by traditional corporations and new commercial IT and media companies, and professional associations. Besides the education sector itself, other key stakeholders include the state sector and the private sector. Each sector places different levels of importance on the various rationales outlined earlier and the activities, competencies, ethos and processes that define them (Quiang 2003).
The dynamics and implications of internationalisation vary considerably among different regions and countries depending on the history and structure of their higher education systems, their national and institutional resources, and their respective geopolitical locations and aspirations. Reports by the International Association of Universities (2003, 2005, 2010) clearly show divergent perceptions of the rationales and risks of internationalisation in different world regions. Generally, internationalisation processes and activities are mediated through and involve six sets of actors: international actors, bilateral actors, inter-regional actors, regional actors, sub-regional actors and national actors. Each category can be further subdivided, and the composition and relative power of the actors varies between regions and countries.

Globally, the international actors include inter-governmental organisations such as the International Organisation for Migration, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and various agencies of the United Nations (including the UNDP and UNESCO), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organisation; international non-governmental organisations such as the International Association of Universities and the International Association of University Presidents; private foundations that operate internationally, among them the US-based Ford, Rockefeller, Carnegie and Gates foundations; and international programmes such as the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE) that operates in more than 80 countries and sponsors more than 700 student exchanges every year, and the International Economic and Commercial Sciences Students Association (AISEC) that works in over 2100 universities in 110 countries and facilitates 16,000 international exchanges annually.

The bilateral actors include national development agencies and bilateral programmes. The dominant players are from the North. For African countries, the most important development agencies include the Canadian International Development Agency, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Swedish International Development Agency, and the US Agency for International Development. Bilateral programmes include the British Council, EduFrance, the German Academic Exchange Service, the Canadian International Development Research Centre, the US Institute for International Education that administers Fulbright and MacArthur scholarships, and the Swedish Agency for Research Co-operation. The leading inter-regional actors for Africa comprise government agencies such as the European Commission, inter-regional non-governmental organisations and networks such as the European University Association, the Association of Commonwealth Universities, and the Association of Universities of the Francophonie.

According to Eva Egron-Polak (2012), Secretary General of the International Association of Universities, a global survey shows the leading rationales are, at a global level, (1) ‘improve student preparedness’ (30 per cent); (2) ‘internationalise curriculum’ (17 per cent); (3) ‘enhance international profile’ (15 per cent); (4) ‘enhance research and knowledge production’ (15 per cent); and (5) ‘broaden and diversify source of students’ (9 per cent). For Africa the two leading rationales are points 4 and 1 (24 per cent, 19 per cent; for Asia and Pacific 1 and 2 (31 per cent, 17 per cent), for Europe 1 and 3 (27 per cent, 20 per cent); for Latin America and Caribbean 1 and 2 (39 per cent, 18 per cent); for the Middle East 1 and 4 (22 per cent, 22 per cent); and for North America 1, 2 and 5 (39 per cent, 17 per cent, 17 per cent). Similarly divergent are perceptions of risks of internationalisation. The top three threats worldwide are seen to be ‘commodification of education programmes’ (12 per cent), ‘brain drain’ (10 per cent), and ‘increase in number of degree mills’ (9 per cent). For Africa the top three are ‘brain drain’ (16 per cent), ‘overemphasis on internationalisation’ (14 per cent) and ‘loss of cultural identity’ (11 per cent); for Asia and Pacific ‘commodification of education programmes’ (16 per cent), ‘increase in number of degree mills’ (11 per cent) and ‘greater competition among HEIs’ (11 per cent); for Europe ‘brain drain’ (10 per cent), ‘commodification of education programmes’ (9 per cent), ‘overemphasis on internationalisation’ (8 per cent) and ‘greater competition among HEIs’ (8 per cent); for Latin America and the Caribbean ‘brain drain’ (17 per cent), ‘commodification of education programmes’ (12 per cent), ‘increase in number of degree mills’ (12 per cent) and ‘eliminate in access to international educational opportunities’ (11 per cent); for the Middle East ‘loss of cultural identity’ (17 per cent), ‘overemphasis on internationalisation’ (15 per cent), and ‘brain drain’ (12 per cent); for North America ‘commodification of education programmes’ (13 per cent), ‘too much focus on recruitment of fee-paying international students’ (15 per cent) and ‘none’ (11 per cent).

This schema is derived from Jaramillo & Knight (2005) who offered a detailed analysis of these actors and programmes for Latin American higher education.
Regional actors range from inter-governmental bodies such as the African Development Bank and the African Union, to regional non-governmental organisations such as the Association of African Universities and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, while sub-regional actors include organisations such as the Southern African Regional Universities Association and various regional programmes. At the national level, the most important actors comprise government departments and agencies (including ministries of education, international co-operation agencies, science foundations and councils, national export agencies, scholarship agencies, and quality assurance and accreditation agencies) as well as non-governmental organisations from university associations to international relations networks.

The internationalisation of higher education has accelerated in all world regions, although the primary driving factors and impact vary among and within regions. In Europe, internationalisation is inspired by two principal objectives: first, to promote student mobility within Europe and, second, to harmonise European higher education systems in response to globalisation and increase their attractiveness and competitiveness. These goals have been implemented through various programmes and agreements. The Erasmus Programme launched in 1987 is a student exchange programme that seeks to train European-minded professionals and foster common European identity and citizenship. The Bologna Process launched in 1999 sought to create an open European Higher Education Area to make higher education standards compatible and comparable among the participating states. In 2000, the European Union adopted the Lisbon Declaration, which aimed to ‘make Europe, by 2010, the most competitive and the most dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world’ (European University Association 2007).

Critics argue that the impact of the Erasmus Programme has been quite limited (1) because key actors do not agree on the rationales of the programme, (2) because student participation rates remain low and (3) because of the limited levels of involvement by academics and institutional support. The programme has not succeeded in reaching the target of 10 per cent of mobile students; in some years only 1 per cent of European students have taken part in Erasmus mobility schemes (Papatsiba 2006). The Bologna Process has entailed movement of the continental European higher educational systems, in which state control was pronounced, to the more market-orientated American system. The Bologna reforms have had mixed results.

Observers have noted that on the one hand the reforms have created more product variety, flexibility for students and greater transparency than before. But continental European universities have not yet succeeded in raising their global rankings because their employment markets continue to be relatively closed to outsiders, peer review mechanisms remain weak, and funding resources and formulas are grossly inadequate to the task of fundamental restructuring often envisaged (Jacobs & Van der Ploeg 2006). By 2010, Europe had certainly not achieved its ambitious goal of creating the most dynamic knowledge economy in the world and the Lisbon Declaration was revised beyond 2010 (European University Association 2007).

In Asia, the pressures of massification and the need to improve academic standards lie behind much of the impetus towards internationalisation, both in terms of importing educational services into the region and exporting students abroad, although the range of motivations is quite varied among Asian countries and has shifted over time. Asia is arguably the most active region in transnational education. It boasts the largest numbers of students studying abroad, and many of its universities are eagerly borrowing foreign (especially American) models of higher education (Shin & Harman 2009). Critics argue that this has ‘not only created a new dependency culture but also reinforced the American-dominated hegemony’, and they warn that ‘Asian states should be aware of the differences between policy learning and policy copying’ (Mok 2007: 438).
Among the policies and strategies that are being copied are the corporatisation and marketisation of universities, and international benchmarking and stratification of universities. This has resulted in greater competition among universities and efforts to focus resources on creating a handful of world-class universities, as evident in China’s 211 Project, 985 Project and its World Class Project that seek to catapult a few Chinese universities into the top ranks of world universities. Internationalisation of the curriculum and student learning is pursued through the expansion of student exchange programmes, introduction of English as a medium of instruction, and adoption of curricula and importation of textbooks from the US and other developed English-speaking countries (Huang 2003, 2006).

There are, of course, variations in the processes and patterns of internationalisation in Asia. Huang (2007) identifies three types: what he calls the import-orientated type, an import and export type and a transitional type. The first includes countries like Vietnam and Indonesia that import educational programmes and institutions from other countries, mostly from the West. The second applies to Singapore and Hong Kong that import higher education activities from Western countries, and at the same time export their higher education activities to other Asian countries. The final type refers to countries such as China and Japan that tend to import more educational services than they export, but are keen to export their own higher education services. Chinese universities have worked hard to attract foreign students to China; the number rose from 44,711 from 164 countries in 2000 to 265,090 from 194 countries in 2010. Several have established branch campuses abroad, and many more provide Chinese language and medicine and (increasingly) professional programmes. Confucius Institutes have proliferated.

These differences have resulted in the adoption of distinct government-regulated, market-orientated, and transitional approaches as manifest in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, respectively. The legal status of transnational higher educational activities also varies. Foreign institutions operating in Malaysia and Korea are regarded as part of the private sector. In Japan incoming programmes and institutions only received official recognition in 2005. By then, their legal status in China remained undefined but they tended to operate as separate programmes in national universities. In some countries foreign higher educational services are incorporated into national systems of higher educational provision, subject to national regulation and regarded as separate. They tend to provide preparatory education for local students for entry into national or foreign institutions. The variations in the forms of imported educational services range from branch campuses to joint programmes. In the Gulf region branch campuses of major Western (and especially American) universities, often concentrated in so-called university cities, are flourishing. In China, joint programmes exploded from 2 in 1995 to 745 by 2004.

In Latin America internationalisation has not enjoyed the same levels of national and institutional importance and support as in Asia, despite the fact that Latin American universities are modeled on European universities and the long tradition of elites from the region going abroad, especially to Europe and later North America for their education (Avila 2007: 401-2). Until recently the rate of student mobility from the region remained among the lowest in the world. Latin America also ranked quite low in the mobility of its largely part-time faculty, internationalisation of the curriculum and import of cross-border higher education services. This reflected the marginality of internationalisation as a priority for governments and universities in the region, lingering nationalist resistance to American hegemony and negative views of globalisation, which was equated to imperialism and dependency, and weak intra-regional networks of higher education collaboration and exchange. Consequently, there was little strategic planning and few resources were allocated to implement internationalisation activities. In fact, internationalisation was largely seen as an externally sponsored activity and a source of income rather than as an integrated and internally driven priority and process.
Many of the region’s leading universities did not begin establishing formal international academic exchange programmes until the 1980s, often in reaction to solicitations from foreign institutions. From the 1990s, the number of Latin American students studying abroad began to increase noticeably, American and European universities set up programmes or branches in the region, and intra-regional exchanges grew. The lead was taken by private institutions, which expanded and accounted for 40 per cent of enrolments by the early 2000s, or by increasingly privatised public institutions following the deregulation and decentralisation of the university sector (Holm-Nielsen et al. 2005). The regional preferences were split between Europe (favoured by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Peru) and the US (prized by Mexico). Thousands of agreements were signed but many were reportedly inactive. Intra-regional mobility remained unattractive and undeveloped. Also underdeveloped was internationalisation of the curriculum.

The main rationales for internationalisation in Latin America at the national level have included nation-building and repositioning in the global knowledge economy, improving national academic standards, and promoting regional connectivity and co-operation. At the institutional level, universities are primarily motivated by the need to improve academic quality and prestige. Besides the private–public divide, there are differences among countries based on their relative wealth. Altogether, internationalisation increasingly came to be seen as part of the efforts to elevate the management of higher education institutions by enhancing their accountability and incentives systems, improving their governance structures, and increasing flexibility for students, as well as a means of raising the capacity of the region’s universities for research productivity and innovation. While total investment in research and development in the region doubled between 1990 and 2001, it remained low by the standards of the OECD countries. Public universities showed a preference for international exchange agreements to improve research, while the private (mostly Catholic) universities focused primarily on student mobility.

The number of Latin American students studying in the US increased by 50 per cent between 1993 and 2002, while in 2002 alone the number of visiting scholars from the region in the US increased by 20 per cent. Growing mobility of students and faculty raised the spectre of brain drain and governments in the region introduced repatriation programmes, which were largely ineffective. The region was also unable to develop successful strategies to attract foreign students beyond those coming for language study. In short, reform programmes of Latin American higher education, which led to increased enrolments, institutional diversification and privatisation, and which encompassed greater focus on internationalisation, did not overcome the structural challenges of low academic quality, high social inequities, institutional fragmentation, inadequate funding and the relevance of university education for the needs of the labour market.

Above all, Latin America remained ‘peripheral to the international centers of knowledge production’ (Gacel-Ávila et al. 2005: 341). This is evident in the highly unequal flows of students from the region to the north, and of providers and programmes from the latter to Latin America. The providers include traditional universities and new commercial providers such as the Apollo Group (that owns the mammoth University of Phoenix), Sylvan International Universities, Oracle University, and Advent International and JP Morgan Partners that are buying or selling shares in local institutions. In contrast, by 2005 the region’s universities could only boast of a handful of branches and offices in the US and Spain. Their largest intellectual export, dependency theory, had long been engulfed by the globalisation paradigm.

The trends in Africa mirror those in Latin America. From the 19th century the region’s universities were largely modeled on European universities, and African elites trekked to Europe and later to the US for undergraduate (and increasingly postgraduate) education. While the vast majority of African universities were established after colonial rule as locomotives of national development
and intellectual decolonisation, they continued to display strong tendencies of extraversion in their practices, programmes, and paradigms; they remained trapped in the institutional and epistemic economies of Euro-American models and Eurocentricism. Ironically, decolonisation and the proliferation of national universities led to the dismantling of the colonial regional universities and weakened intra-regional connections and collaborations, while reinforcing linkages to the north.

The ideological and financial assaults against African universities under structural adjustment programmes in the 1980s and 1990s further weakened their intellectual and institutional capacities as academic infrastructures deteriorated and academic staff migrated to greener pastures at home and abroad, and many abandoned scholarship in favour of consultancies. At the same time, demand for higher education exploded, and the processes of privatisation of higher education accelerated with the rapid growth of private universities and the privatisation of public universities. Thus, from the late 1990s African universities, scholars, external donors and even governments agonised over the challenges facing African higher education and the need for renewal if the continent was to achieve higher rates of growth and development, and compete in an increasingly knowledge-intensive global economy (Zeleza & Olukoshi 2004a, 2004b).

The reform agenda centred on five broad sets of issues, in which internationalisation did not feature highly. First, there were vigorous debates concerning the philosophical foundations of African universities in terms of the principles underpinning public higher education in an era of privatisation; the conception, content and consequences of the reforms currently being undertaken across the continent; and the public–private interface in African higher education systems. The second set of issues centred on management; how African universities were grappling with the challenges of quality control, funding, governance and management in response to the establishment of new regulatory regimes; growing pressures for finding alternative sources of funding; changing demographics and massification; increasing demands for access and equity for under-represented groups (including women); and the emergence of new forms of student and faculty politics in the face of democratisation in the wider society.

Third, there were pedagogical and paradigmatic issues, ranging from the languages of instruction in African universities and educational systems to the dynamics of knowledge production – the societal relevance of the knowledges produced in African higher education systems and how those knowledges were disseminated and consumed by students, scholarly communities and the wider public. Fourth, the role of universities in the pursuit of the historic project of African nationalism (decolonisation, development, democratisation, nation-building and regional integration) was scrutinised. Included in this regard were questions of the uneven and changing relations between universities and the state, civil society and industry, as well as the role of universities in helping to manage and resolve the various crises that confront the African continent, from civil conflicts to disease epidemics to environmental threats. Another important issue was the part that universities have played – and can play in future – to promote the project of pan-Africanism.

Finally, and more tangentially, there was the question of globalisation, the impact of trends associated with the new information and communication technologies, the expansion of transborder or transnational provision of higher education, and trade in educational services under the GATS regime. Critical in this context for Africa is the changing role of external donors from the philanthropic foundations to the World Bank and other international financial institutions and multilateral agencies; the role and possibilities of South–South linkages; and the African academic diasporas as possible interlocutors of internationalisation for African higher education, as critical mediators in the globalisation of African knowledges and the Africanisation of global knowledges.
Thus, the flows of students and academics to – and the borrowing of institutional and intellectual models from – the North have dominated the historical patterns of internationalisation for African higher education institutions. The growth of transborder education through the establishment of European and American branch campuses, joint degrees and collaborative programmes has reinforced these trends. The providers include traditional Western universities, professional associations, global and multilateral agencies, international financial institutions, philanthropic foundations, and growing numbers of commercial companies scouting for profitable prospects in African higher education. As elsewhere in the world, the processes and prospects of internationalisation across the continent have increasingly been facilitated and structured by the new information and communication technologies.

As in other regions, the patterns of internationalisation among African countries and institutions vary according to history, resources, geopolitical positioning, and leadership at national and institutional levels. While the number of foreign providers has been growing in many African countries, it has declined in South Africa because of stringent regulations and accreditation processes for quality control. On the flip-side, in 2008 Egypt’s ancient university, Al-Azhar, became one of the very few African universities to open an overseas branch campus in Malaysia, and it announced plans to open branches in Thailand and China (Altbach & Knight 2007; Singh 2008). Egypt and South Africa are the leading continental destinations of foreign students. The numbers of international students in South Africa more than quadrupled from about 12 600 in 1994 to 64 784 in 2010, equal to 7.25 per cent of the total South African student body (Kishun 2007; IESA 2011). The majority, 46 496 (77.8 per cent of the foreign students in 2010), came from other SADC countries. This underscores the fact that ‘intra-regional flows are stronger than inter-regional flows’ (Varghese 2008: 15).

Hierarchies in the international political economy of knowledge production

International academic mobility, collaborations and cross-border provision remain decidedly unequal. In fact, in many ways internationalisation has reinforced historic inequalities. It stands to reason that since individual countries are positioned differently in the global economy, their understanding of what internationalisation means and its implications will vary. Flows of people and programmes; institutions and infrastructures; languages and literacies; and models and methodologies between the North and the South are unequal and uneven. Students from the south flock to the North in much larger numbers and stay longer than students from the North going to the South. Similarly, there are far more programmes and providers from the North in the south than the other way round. Internationalisation has also given English, followed by a few other European languages, global supremacy as the language of instruction and scholarship in a way that no language in the South can ever aspire to.

For a country like the United States, internationalisation does not require any fundamental restructuring of the institutional and intellectual foundations of its higher education system. Nor does the US have to be concerned about the imposition of inappropriate foreign models that may hamper its development as it sees it, or fear the loss of its highly educated people through brain drain. Surveys show that most white American students, faculty and administrators believe the US is culturally superior so that others, not they, have much to learn from internationalisation, which leads to foreign students facing the intolerance of what Lee & Rice (2007) call ‘neo-racism’. In contrast, for developing countries, the dangers of internationalisation are real.
Thus, although more American universities than ever claim to value the importance of internationalisation, this is not matched by levels of support for activities that are central to internationalisation. As shown in Mapping Internationalisation on US Campuses (American Council of Education 2012), the most comprehensive report on internationalisation in US universities based on a survey of 3,357 accredited, degree-granting institutions, only half of these institutions include internationalisation in their mission statements or among their top priorities. Overall, by 2011, 27 per cent had established international partnerships and collaborations, including 153 institutions that operated degree or certificate programmes abroad (or both), up from 101 in 2006; 43 institutions ran branch campuses; and fewer institutions than in 2006 (when a similar survey was conducted) required their students to take a foreign language. The number of institutions with an undergraduate foreign language requirement declined from 53 per cent in 2001 to 45 per cent in 2006 to 37 per cent in 2011.

Similarly, despite more institutions requiring undergraduate students to take courses that feature global issues and trends, the percentage of institutions that require courses that present perspectives, issues or events from countries outside the US declined. Institutional support for faculty international travel also declined and, while greater value came to be placed on recruiting faculty with international experience, such experience still accounted for little when it came to tenure and promotion. Only 8 per cent of institutions in 2011, the same as in 2006, had specific guidelines on international experience in promotion and tenure decisions. In short, while the US higher education system is widely envied and emulated, and American universities dominate global rankings, most American institutions have a long way to go to achieve ‘comprehensive internationalisation’.

The inequalities and challenges for countries in the South are exacerbated by the explosion of higher education providers, both domestic and international, which raises serious questions about quality assurance. Stella (2006) argues that in many countries national frameworks for quality assurance for cross-border higher education are not well developed, and international co-operation among quality assurance agencies is limited. Except for the larger emerging economies such as South Africa, China, India and Brazil, regulatory systems in many developing countries are not sufficiently developed to ensure robust evaluation standards. For their part, regulatory agencies in the North often ignore the activities of their universities when operating outside their national purview, which leads reputable institutions to provide second-rate education abroad, or rogue institutions to establish degree mill operations.

In fact, academic fraud seems to be on the rise (Hallak & Poisson 2005), aided by internationalisation and the Internet. It is particularly difficult to regulate the new providers of higher education services that are not subject to existing quality-assurance schemes. The rise of international and commercialised accreditation agencies poses its own risks. The UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education seek to assist providers and recipients to overcome these challenges. UNESCO has joined the World Bank to create the Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity (Altbach et al. 2009: xii).

One of the outcomes and instruments of internationalisation has been the rise of what Deem et al. (2008) call the emerging global model (EGM) of the research university. ‘World-class university’ invariably refers to comprehensive research-intensive universities. Mohrman et al. (2008) elaborate that this model has eight characteristics: they have a global mission; they are characterised by increased intensity of knowledge production; their professors work in team-orientated, cross-disciplinary, and international partnerships; they have diversified funding beyond government subventions and student tuition; they adopt worldwide recruitment strategies for faculty and students; they require greater internal complexity and infrastructure to promote research activity;
they forge new relationships and partnerships with government and industry; and they collaborate with international non-governmental organisations and multi-government organisations to support their activities. The development of the EGM is contributing to the decline of faculty involvement in governance, state control over universities and the power of national educational systems as arbiters of quality and even viability.

International competition is sanctified and reproduced through increasingly influential global ranking and league tables. The Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU) and The Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) produce the most influential global rankings. They issued their first reports in 2003 and 2004, respectively. The SJTU focused largely on research performance, while THES placed high value on institutional reputation and levels of ‘internationalisation’. Teaching and learning are largely ignored (Marginson and Wende 2007). The rankings immediately achieved prominence and set the terms of global competitiveness despite their limitations. The chase for higher rankings became particularly evident in Europe and Asia as the European Union and major Asian countries such as China and Japan scrambled to create world-class universities, and even to devise alternative ranking schemes. They sought to reposition themselves by improving research infrastructures, performance and assessment; promoting international research linkages and benchmarking; and restructuring along the models of the American and British ‘world-class universities’ that dominate the top rankings.

The power of rankings lies in the material impact they have in influencing flows of students, faculty and resources. Their effects on different institutions within and between countries have been complex and contradictory. Rankings have encouraged institutions to reorientate their behaviour, sometimes to change their mission and priorities, and even to manipulate data to raise their scores. Moreover, the valorisation of research has come at the expense of quality teaching, even as student tuitions rise to support the reputational aspirations of the universities. Humanities and social science disciplines lose out to the more prestigious natural sciences and marketable professions such as business and engineering. National segmentation and hierarchies have been reinforced as resources are channeled to a handful of institutions with potential for repositioning for the all-coveted world-class status. The favoured universities end up adopting the management and governance systems and styles of the much-envied marketised, privatised and corporatised US research universities. This forces the middling universities to follow suit in the mad rush to neo-liberal homogeneity in the name of globalisation, masking Americanisation wrapped in Westernisation.

It is easy to rail against global rankings, but they are here to stay. A productive strategy would be to engage the debate on how the rankings are framed, and for regional university associations to devise their own ranking systems that evaluate the educational activities they value the most. Efforts by UNESCO in this regard to develop principles and more comprehensive quality measures must be expanded and supported. Even more crucial is for universities in the South (including Africa) to develop internationalisation strategies that strengthen their knowledge regimes, interests and alliances.

Thus, the globalisation of higher education is evident in the rise of an increasingly integrated complex and contested worldwide system, which is simultaneously hierarchical, fragmented, and unstable. The global system of higher education is characterised by both co-operation and competition. At the same time, inter-institutional engagements and regional flows of educational

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7 Sall & Ndjaye (2007–2008) report a proposed African ranking scheme based on student and teacher mobility, co-ordinated teaching and research initiatives, communication in foreign languages, and usefulness to the community, which does not seem to have had any takers.
activities remain uneven and unequal even as new patterns emerge. The unequal distribution of research capacity, the dominance of the US and the supremacy of English structure the system. This explains why within the US the impact of global competition is minimal, while American competition at the top levels defines global competition. It also accounts for the fact that universities around the world generally seem to prefer linkages with American universities than with universities in their own regions to boost their prestige, while for elite American universities international linkages do little to raise their status. In short, many outside the US, and certainly most within the country itself, see the US as the global standard of higher education. Regardless of what models of internationalisation American institutions use, whether planned or opportunistic, US hegemony in global higher education currently remains unrivalled (Edwards 2007).

World-class universities compete for and attract top faculty and graduate students from around the world. Graduate students are indispensable for establishing and sustaining vibrant research programmes and profiles of universities and faculty (Horta 2009). In the great brain race, to use the title of Ben Wildasky’s book (2010), global universities are indeed reshaping the world, but not always for the good. Competition among universities as producers of positional goods traps many in a zero-sum game. To quote Marginson (2006: 4): ‘Given the absolute limit on the number of high value positional goods, there is an absolute limit on the number of high value institutions, and on the size of individual institutions within the prestige grouping.’

The winner-take-all market of positional competition, which is spreading from the US, undermines the educational enterprise as a whole as wealth comes to define prestige and quality, the unequal distribution of social opportunities intensifies, and holistic education is compromised as resources are diverted to select programmes with the greatest competitive potential in the international academic market. The danger for countries in the global South is that focusing their energies and resources excessively on global rankings, which are remarkably steady since the rankings were launched in the 1990s, is that they might end up sacrificing their role as catalysts of national development and intellectual leadership in their respective societies and regions, thereby foreclosing any possibilities of restructuring the global system of knowledge production itself.

Promoting the knowledge project in a globalising Africa

The pressures and imperatives of internationalisation cannot be wished away. The question for African higher education institutions therefore is not whether to internationalise but how to internationalise most effectively, to pursue internationalisation strategies that strengthen their internal institutional and intellectual capacities, qualities, reputations and competitiveness, as well as their potential to contribute to the historic and humanistic agendas of the African nationalist project. To pursue this multi-layered agenda most effectively, it is essential to develop internationalisation strategies that are simultaneously realistic and ambitious; realistic in so far as they should be anchored in concrete contemporary conditions, and ambitious in recognising and seizing opportunities in the rapidly changing landscapes of the global political economy and international education. SADC and SARUA (Kotecha 2011) are correct in recognising the lack of a clear strategic vision as a key limitation in enhancing higher education in the region.

Underlying any internationalisation strategy must be renewed commitment at the institutional, national, regional and continental levels to the revitalisation of African higher education systems by robustly defending, supporting, funding and reforming them. African internationalisation strategies must be double-pronged to promote, on the one hand, productive institutional engagements and, on the other, intellectual empowerment, and the production of knowledges for Africa’s renewal, for the African renaissance (Zeleza 2009). Institutionally, there is a need to
forge stronger intra-regional links, South–South co-operation, and connections with the African academic diaspora in the North.

Various regional programmes and associations exist throughout the continent that seek to promote internationalisation and regional collaboration. Africa’s challenge in the area of internationalisation, as in many others, is not the absence of initiatives, but of strategic planning and co-ordination. It is clear many national, regional and continental initiatives and programmes have been launched in recent years to promote the benefits and to minimise the risks of internationalisation, but they are hampered by poor co-ordination, inadequate resources and institutional capacities, and lack of strategic vision (Institute for International Education 2008; Tafera & Knight 2008; Jowi 2012).

There is a need to develop systems that are more comprehensive, integrated and robust. This would necessitate greater regional co-operation by creating regional standards, benchmarks, policies and regulations. The key issues and initiatives would need to include the creation of credit transfer systems; establishment and co-ordination of national and regional accreditation and quality control mechanisms; the promotion of regional research consortia and networks; mobilisation of industry and the philanthropic sector for funding support; increased investment in research and higher education participation in research and development; strengthening of graduate programmes and academic staff development; and the improvement of facilities and working conditions for academics and freeing them from the consultancy syndrome.

For historical reasons, Africa’s partnerships have tended to be orientated towards the former colonial powers of Western Europe, the US and Canada. The shift in Africa’s international trade towards Asia and the emerging economies needs to be followed by building new and stronger partnerships with the BRIC countries, especially China (since 2009 Africa’s largest trading partner), India and Brazil. A flurry of international conferences show that efforts are underway to forge new and stronger higher education and research partnerships between African and Chinese institutions and scholars. In 2011 alone, at least two major conferences took place, one organised by CODESRIA in March and the other by UNESCO in October, that brought together African higher education leaders and researchers (CODESRIA 2011; UNESCO 2011). Africa and India also seem keen to bolster their higher education partnerships (Sawahel 2011). However, these efforts are still in their infancy.

In order to pursue internationalisation that most benefits African universities and scholarly production, African higher education institutions and their leaders need to decide what knowledge interests they want to pursue, what knowledge regimes would be most desirable, and what kinds of knowledge alliances would produce these. African institutions should prioritise engagements that are most likely to yield intellectual dividends that help restructure and reorientate the construction, content, circulation and consumption of African knowledges. Weaning African knowledge systems from the suffocating grip of the Eurocentric epistemological order will require bold intellectual efforts that involve both the retrieval of Africa’s non-Europhone libraries and re-imagining knowledges for Africa’s future. The latter requires sustained futures and scenario

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8 Jowi lists the following intra-African initiatives, the African Association of Universities (AAU) Accra Declaration of 2004 on academic co-operation and mobility in Africa; AAU’s proposal to create an African Higher Education and Research Space for qualifications recognition, harmonisation of systems, and quality assurance; launching of the Pan-African University in 2011 (http://www.pau-ua.org/home.jsp); and establishment of regional university associations such as SARUA.

planning as well as developing imaginative and daring visions of the future and marshaling the collective political will to realise them – tasks that universities and academics are particularly well-placed to undertake.

The position of Africa as an object of study and as a centre of knowledge production remains precarious in the international division of intellectual labour. Research expenditures and productivity across Africa remain low, and below world standards. In fact, 80 per cent of research output in Africa comes from three countries – Egypt, South Africa and Nigeria. Decolonisation did little to dismantle Euro-American economic and epistemic hegemonies, partly because the nationalist assaults against it were compromised by structural adjustment programmes which devastated both African economies and universities, and embattled African scholars succumbed to the brain haemorrhage of the consultancy syndrome or the brain drain of migration to greener sectors at home or academies abroad (Zeleza 1997, 2003, 2007a, 2007b). African scholarship continues to be shaped by Euro-American intellectual paradigms, preoccupations and perspectives, and remains overwhelmed and impoverished by the universalistic claims of Western scholarship. It tends to derive its impetus not from deep engagement with the real of the local, but from ritual obeisance to the theoretical and methodological fads of Western scholarship.

The homage to Europhone knowledges is evident even among the most celebrated African philosophers of knowledge. In VY Mudimbe’s renowned books, *The Invention of Africa* (1988) and *The Idea of Africa* (1994), and in AK Appiah’s *In My Father’s House* (1992), the existence of non-Europhone African knowledges outside the colonial library is not even acknowledged, as Ousmane Kane (2011) has noted in his suggestive reconstruction of Africa’s Islamic library in the history of ideas. In addition to the colonial and Islamic libraries, any comprehensive project of retrieval and valorisation of African knowledges must incorporate the reconstruction of what some have called indigenous knowledge systems. This is to suggest that internationalisation that is not grounded in and nourished by African epistemic roots is likely to reproduce – indeed to reinforce – the production of mimic knowledges, pale copies of Western knowledges, of little value to Africa and of no consequence to world scholarship.

Clearly, the intellectual and developmental promises of the early post-independence years were derailed in much of Africa with the demise of the nationalist project that drove Africa’s historic pursuits for self-determination in all walks of life, including the academy and scholarship. As neoliberalism implodes in the aftermath of the Great Recession and Afro-pessimism gives way to Afro-optimism following rapid economic growth across the continent, new spaces are opening up for revisioning higher education as a public good and resurrecting the emancipatory imperatives of African scholarship (Zeleza 2008a, 2012a). However, it is not enough to pursue the quest for development within the national confines of the post-colonial state because of the very processes and projects of globalisation that have unleashed transnational flows and forms of interconnectedness that recast the enduring impulses of pan-Africanism.

It is in this context that the role of African academic diaspora comes into play. One of the key features of contemporary global migrations is the growth in the migration of skilled labour and professionals (Zeleza 2008b). The migration of African professionals (including intellectuals) is a product of conditions in both Africa and the North. Economic, social, political and educational developments in Africa have conspired to generate emigration pressures, while the skill-selective and wealth-selective immigration policies of countries in the North have offered opportunities for highly skilled Africans to migrate. The migration flows have been sustained by the intricate and intense educational networks that link universities in Africa and those in the North, the recruitment drives and inducements of various institutions and organisations, and the cumulative traditions of migration that have emerged as skilled migration has expanded.
Like international migrants from other regions, African professional migrants, including academics, have increasingly become part of transitional communities involved directly and indirectly in both home and host countries, in ways that have an impact on ‘economic and political processes in the sending and receiving countries and relations between them which may reinforce or challenge existing relations of power within and between countries’ (Hamilton & Chinchilla 1996: 198). The migration of African intellectuals to the North is an outgrowth of complex processes and movements within the continent, as well as the linkages and networks that have been established between educational institutions in Africa and the North, which facilitate and reproduce African academic migrations.

African states and institutions of higher education have tended to respond to the migration of African professionals, including academics, to the North in one of three ways. First, they bemoan the ‘brain drain’ and engage in mutual recriminations with the diaspora. Second, some have pursued the ‘brain gain’ option by encouraging the diaspora to return permanently. The third way is the ‘diaspora’ option that recognises the migrants as new diasporas, and efforts are made to build effective strategies of ‘brain mobility’ or ‘brain circulation’ between them and their countries of origin and the continent as a whole. The latter requires devising creative strategies for knowledge and skill circulation, the formation of national, regional and continental knowledge networks that facilitate brain mobility, from academic exchanges to consultancies and temporary return migrations.

Since the 1990s the formation of diaspora knowledge networks has sky-rocketed, jumping from a handful in the early 1990s, to 41 in the late 1990s tied to 30 different countries, to 155 by 2005, of which 51 were African covering 10 countries (Mahroum 2006). There are more continental networks for Africa than the other regions, a lingering tribute to pan-Africanism. Among the well-known networks and initiatives in Southern Africa are the South African Network of Skills Abroad (SANSA) established in 1998 through a co-operative venture between the Science and Technology Policy Research Centre (STPRC) at the University of Cape Town and a leading French agency for scientific co-operation, the Institute of Research for Development (IRD). In 2000 it was handed over to the National Research Foundation. Similar networks include the South African Diaspora Network established by the University of Cape Town’s Centre for Innovation & Entrepreneurship in 2001 with assistance from the World Bank Development Marketplace to develop knowledge and entrepreneurial connections between South African firms and well-connected and strategically placed individuals in the United Kingdom, and the Economic Research Southern Africa Activity (ERSA), which was established in 2005 to create a network of economic researchers based in South African universities and to expand and deepen economic research capacity in Southern Africa. ERSA runs several programmes including the Academic Visitorship Programme, Scholarship Programme, Economics Prize Programme and the Diaspora Fund.

The diaspora option needs to be based on a sober understanding of the mutualities of interest, that neither Africa nor the diaspora can succeed in this ruthlessly competitive globalising world without the other, that the diaspora will continue to be confronted by racism and denigration as long as Africa remains underdeveloped, and that Africa only stands to benefit and accelerate its prospects of development by maximising the contributions of the diaspora, by recognising that the diaspora constitutes a strategic asset possessing enormous social, financial and intellectual capital. The new diaspora is already the continent’s biggest donor, whose remittances exceed foreign direct investment and official development assistance, and it is the only constituency in the North that has a profound emotive and cognitive commitment to Africa’s social transformation – and the capacity to play a progressive role in that transformation. The historic diasporas have the political potential and propensity, demonstrated historically in struggles against colonial rule
and apartheid, to mobilise in support of a new civilisational compact between Euro-America and Africa. In short, diaspora African academics have an important role to play in brokering relations between Africa and the North.

It is important to underscore that the African diaspora is a complex community divided by diverse intellectual and ideological tendencies, some of which are clearly not beneficial for Africa. Nesbitt (2003) divides the African academic diaspora in the US according to its ideological inclinations into three groups: what he calls the comprador intelligentsia, the post-colonial critic and the progressive exile. Members of the comprador intelligentsia cynically use their Africanity to authenticate the neo-colonial and neo-liberal agendas of the international financial institutions; they are infamous for defending the global order and condemning African countries for corruption, tribalism and ineptitude. The post-colonial critics see themselves in a mediating role, as expert interpreters of the African experience to the West (‘explaining’ the African experience) and as transmitters of the ever-changing panorama of Euro-American perspectives to Africa. The progressive exiles seek to use their space of exile to develop a dignified pan-African identity by unabashedly promoting African knowledges and participating in the liberation struggles of both the diaspora and their countries of origin.

Undoubtedly, one could come up with other typologies based on disciplinary, methodological or research criteria. Whatever the classification, it is important to develop innovative and cost-effective exchange programmes that facilitate the engagements of diaspora African academics in the North and in Africa. African universities have established hundreds of international agreements with institutions in the North, but diaspora African academics have not always been as actively involved in these arrangements as they could be. There is a need to devise programmes that specifically target diaspora African academics, who constitute an important but under-utilised link in the mediation of knowledges between Africa and the North, in the globalisation of African knowledges and the Africanisation of global knowledges. The engagements ought to encompass all three critical areas of scholarly pursuit: teaching, research and public service.

Space does not allow me to elaborate on the structures and systems of engagement that can and have developed in promoting engagements between Africa and its academic diasporas in the North, a subject I have examined a length elsewhere (Zeleza 2004). Suffice it to say that I am currently undertaking a major project examining the processes, patterns, practices and politics of engagement between African diaspora academics in North America and African institutions of higher education that explores how African institutions and diaspora academics perceive and deal with each other (2012b, 2012c). Specifically, the project seeks to ascertain the nature, dynamics, forms and challenges of engagement between African-born academics and African universities in the three major areas of the academic enterprise – teaching and student advising, research and scholarship, and professional service and advocacy.

The academic diaspora has much to contribute in mediating most productively the internationalisation of African higher education, and in realising the decolonisation and globalisation of Africa’s knowledge project. Together with regional co-operation within the continent itself and greater collaboration between Africa and other regions in the South, it is possible to change the global terms of engagement in knowledge production, to strengthen the continent’s research capacities, to raise the quality and profile of African universities, and to bolster their contributions to Africa’s triple dreams of self-determination, development and democracy.
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DECOLONISING OUR UNIVERSITIES: A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

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During a recent conference entitled ‘Decolonising our Universities’ held in 2011 in Penang, Malaysia, questions were raised as to what we should now be learning about the world we live in from a more global perspective, rather than just from the perspective of Western Europe and the US. There is a need, it was argued, to ‘rediscover the suppressed knowledge of our civilisation and reconnect with our heritage’ – to ‘rediscover the wonders and heritage of China, India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt and other Eastern and African civilisations’ (Alvares & Faruqi 2012: xx).

Doing so will help to broaden the horizons, to better grasp why we understand the world the way it is, knowing full well how other cultures interacted with each other over thousands of years, and still continue to do so. Over-emphasising one point of view, namely that of Western Europe, has created stereotypes to a point of controversy, given the Eurocentric assumptions and generalisations made against other cultures.

The Guardian Weekly (26 Oct 2011), for example, reported a speech given in London in 1862, where one George Francis Train claimed that Africans were inferior to whites on the grounds that black people were incapable of blushing. When the American businessman went on to maintain that God had made Africans ‘the servant of the Anglo-Saxon race’, the audience cheered. But it was not just revealed religion that endorsed the belief in a hierarchy of ‘races’ with white Anglo-Saxons at the top. In What it Means to be Human: Reflections from 1791 to the Present, Joanna Bourke tells us that the issue was also ‘heavily debated by scientists such as Sir Charles Bell, Charles Darwin and others expert in physiognomy’ (Bourke 2011).

This attitude led to the development of racist ideologies that colour ‘science’ and its ‘objectivity’, and give credence to the framework of many divides based on the idea of ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ – a gap that can never really be closed as long as our minds remain colonised by the universities and their knowledge systems, which promote similar tendencies, no matter how subtly. There is therefore a need to reshape and rethink the construct of a university by first decolonising it. Otherwise we are left with little understanding and respect for other cultures, resulting in the same tendencies to stereotype and generalise, based on toxic Eurocentric provincial assumptions.
One way of breaking into this issue is to seek alternative non-Eurocentric paradigms. This is imperative as there is a need to complement what has been received from the West, and more importantly to correct the biases and prejudices therein. First, it would be instructive to try to understand the points of exclusion that must be addressed.

The problem of exclusion

One form of exclusion centres on the ideas, paradigms, aims and objectives relating to Eurocentric views. Take a recent example of what has come to be known as the Bologna Process1 with its overarching aim of creating a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) based on international co-operation and academic exchange. From the start it has a competitive element – ‘to match the performance of the best performing systems in the world, notably the United States and Asia’ – as though the ultimate aspiration is to promote what is European. In other words, it is setting as its main strategy a European heritage, traditions and values with respect to higher education in a global setting (Bologna Process 2007).

In 2001, in Prague, an emphasis on ‘Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area’ was added to the Bologna Process, giving it more clarity towards ‘increased collaboration between the European countries concerning the possible implications and perspectives of transnational education’ (Bologna Process 2001). The European Commission is said to be supportive of this, in order for universities to make their full contribution to Europe’s social and economic goals.

Overall, there is no doubt that the Bologna Process has brought about fundamental and dramatic change in higher education structural paradigms across Europe over the past decade. It was said that the Erasmus Mundus and Marie-Curie programmes (note that they are European icons – others are named after Socrates, Copernicus, Leonardo da Vinci etc.), for example, are highly successful, and both are said to be oversubscribed. In short, the aim to facilitate the mobility of students, graduates and higher education staff from around the world is gaining momentum in accordance with the objectives of EHEA.

To be sure, in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve 2009 meeting of ministers, among the 46 European countries participating, there were ministers or heads of delegation from 15 countries from Africa, Asia, America (North and South) and Australasia, forming part of the ‘Bologna Policy Forum’ – an extended version of the Bologna Process to include non-European universities as well. To date there are 47 participating countries in the Bologna Process, all of which are a party to the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe (Bologna Process nd). Kyrgyzstan and Kosovo have been excluded from joining the Bologna Process since they are not party to the European Cultural Convention.

For some, like Chris Lorenz, then Professor of History at the University of Leiden and the Free University of Amsterdam in The Netherlands, the ideas of reform envisioned by Bologna are the ‘managerial colonisation’ of higher education, and the current emphasis on knowledge as the basis for advanced economies represents universities as enterprises and academics as entrepreneurs (Chaddick 2008: 18–21).

Another exclusion is implicit in the choice of name ‘Bologna’ for the process, a reference to the University of Bologna where the gathering was held in 1999 (Bologna Process nd). The university

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1 See http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/.
located in the Italian city of Bologna, allegedly built in 1088, has often been regarded as the oldest university in the West, giving it an edge in making a case for Europe as the centre of education. It conveniently ignores the University of Qarawīyīn (or al-Karaouine) in Fes, Morocco, founded in 859, which according to UNESCO is the oldest university in the world (UNESCO nd). Fes is also located in the West, geographically speaking, but not in Europe.

Although one could argue that Fes is not part of the Western world, if only because it is not European, it cannot be denied that it is among the many early centres of knowledge that must have exerted influence not only in laying the foundations for European universities, but also for the intellectual traditions to flourish. Collectively, these early centres were instrumental in the emergence of the Renaissance in Western Europe, serving as beacons of modern education and knowledge, and marking the beginning of an intellectual renewal that was to shape European society for the next millennium. There were also other forms of universities, long before Bologna, in India, China, Africa and the Middle East.

The contention that arises from this is that the exclusive interpretations and assumptions supporting the emergence of the ‘Western’ paradigm pay no significant regard to the contributions of cultures outside Europe. It is a Eurocentric perspective.

We need to analyse these assumptions and discuss whether we can (re)build on them, or else search for a more appropriate paradigm outside Europe. What seems clear is that the model of the university today comes largely from the Age of Enlightenment – a system designed and conceived for provincial socio-political circumstances in Europe at that time, which caused almost permanent change in the scholarly community around it. Coupled with the Industrial Revolution in Western Europe, the Enlightenment project spread the Eurocentric pattern of thinking beyond its borders. It is not surprising that the schools and universities are structurally organised to resemble factories. Increasingly, the language and processes of the factory are gaining acceptance in today’s education.

This Industrial Age model needs to be interrogated and scrutinised, as it can become more and more elitist and exclusive (as was initially intended). Despite the cry for democratisation, the issues of access and equity continue to be of concern as universities are plagued with the rising cost of institutional fees and depleting public funds. Elitism is once again being pursued at the expense of disparities of opportunity, ever widening within countries, and even more so between countries – even within Europe.

**Eurocentric assumptions in universities**

A related idea is the projection of a kind of ‘world-class quality’, narrowly and Eurocentrically defined. For a start, the ‘world-class’ label assumes that there is only one world, with Europe as its centre, and that is based on the Eurocentric doctrinal stereotypes of ‘us’ vs. ‘them.’ That the quality is ‘our’ quality, meant as benchmark for the ‘others’, is the hallmark of this exercise. Failure to incorporate the principles of the European Enlightenment, for example, means that a university is less than world class, and sneered at as being ‘backward’. This effectively limits the diversity of how universities could be organised, perpetuating a one-size-fits-all model that is based on the Western experience.

Seen in this way, non-European entities are all framed into a subservient and inferior mindset. The Penang Declaration, ‘Another World is Desirable’, made this crystal clear: ‘Too many of them [non-Western/European universities] have become pale imitations of Western universities, with
marginal creative contributions of their own and with little or no organic relation with their local communities and environments. The learning environments have become hostile, meaning-less and irrelevant to our lives and concerns’ (Alvares & Faruqi 2012: iii).

We agreed that for far too long we have lived under the Eurocentric assumption - drilled into our heads by educational systems inherited from colonial regimes - that our local knowledges, our ancient and contemporary scholars, our cultural practices, our indigenous intellectual traditions, our stories, our histories and our languages portray hopeless, defeated visions no longer fit to guide our universities – therefore, better given up entirely (ibid.).

It is essential that we look for a new construct with a clear sense of purpose to complement (Dzulkifli 2010), if not transform, the existing knowledge structures, one that could accommodate and (re)validate the use of indigenous knowledge, wisdom and values within the higher education system. After all, the notion of ‘sustainability’ comes out of ancient wisdom inspired during the agrarian period, which is nurtured in a world that is holistic, ecological and deeply interconnected with many ancient cultures (as distinct from many modern cultures). It is by no means a post-Brundtland2 phenomenon. Unfortunately, we have lost the interconnections along the way as knowledge and universities were modernised and ‘enlightened’, causing serious gaps in the knowledge system that we have today. As in the ‘Flood’, the past was swept away completely.

In the absence of past wisdom, modern Western knowledge is quick to lay claims as the universal and superior alternative. Access to knowledge and technologies in the ‘periphery’ is only available through the writings produced and disseminated by the ‘centre’. This superiority and domination are largely perpetuated through the colonial education system and through willing indigenous elites. The rupture that it has caused pushes the academy further to fully commit to the Enlightenment approach and decouple itself from the existing traditional approaches. This can be likened to the first departure from the organic Egyptian discoveries by the Greeks, who preferred to move in the direction of ‘human reason’ detached from the human body and senses, and which the European Enlightenment later accepted as the basis of their ‘science’ and scientific disciplines (Luutu 2012: 91).

It would be difficult to imagine how sustainability can ever be successfully executed if the norms and values of the agrarian society, encompassing metaphysics, teamwork, respect and trust, are not properly instilled or internalised. This adds a new dimension to the question of what is the measure of a good (and especially a ‘world-class’) university. What is apparent is that most of the intangible measures have no place in the ranking and benchmarking exercises that are now captivating the minds of those who govern the universities.

Not only are intangible measures (such as teamwork, respect and trust) distinctly missing, but the crux of the measures tends to be Eurocentric, with mostly Anglo-Saxon bias. The organic links with local communities seem not to be important for a university to be successful, whereas traditionally the success of a university and that of the immediate community are closely inter-twined. Many ‘traditional’ universities are orientated to serve the lay community – cutting across cultures – unlike the businesses or industries of today. The change in linkages can be traced back to the colonial period, during which the uprooting of the traditional education system in the South primarily took place. We are bogged down with a paradigm that is not entirely relevant to the global South and its communities (Dzulkifli 2010: 3–4).

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2 The Brundtland Commission, also known as the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), sought to unite countries to pursue sustainable development together. The commission was dissolved in December 1987 after releasing its report.
The risk related to this is the homogenising (one-size-fits-all) effect at the expense of the cultural values and identities of those decolonised, highlighted by the often taken for granted assumptions in the discussion of the diversity and the purpose of higher education. As a result many countries continue to be deprived, especially those considered not economically viable (say with GDPs of five per cent or less of the global benchmark). Most of these countries are in Africa. Opportunities to study and participate in higher education in these places become very remote, because ultimately education is defined as a matter of economic feasibility (or economic expansionism), and is not interested in the cultural survival of the poor.

In other words, it depends on what the West sees through its eyes, interprets, and presents as a ‘product’ to be consumed by colonised minds. The production of knowledge is increasingly becoming as much a commodity of colonial exploitation as other natural resources. Linda Tuhiwai Smith suggests that ‘colonising knowledge’ of this kind involved not only collecting but also the ‘re-arrangement, re-presentation and re-distribution’ (Smith 1999: 62) based on Western world views and re-articulation.

For Jack Goody of the University of Cambridge, it goes even further, into a type of ‘theft’ (Goody 2006). In The Theft of History, Goody describes the pervasive Eurocentric or Occidentalist biases of so much Western historical writing. This includes the theft by the west of the achievements of other cultures in the invention of ideas like democracy, capitalism and even love. He specifically recognises the ‘theft of institutions’, such as universities, charities and city-states claimed to be unique to Europe.

In Renaissance: The One or the Many? (2010), Goody provides studies of Europe’s first medical school, the University of Montpellier, and the Arabic and Jewish contributions to the rebirth of that knowledge. More significantly, he addresses ‘one central historical question of the past millennium: does the European Renaissance deserve its unique status at the very heart of our notions of modernity?’ He ‘scrutinises the European model in relation to parallel renaissances that have taken place in other cultural areas, primarily Islam and China, and emphasises what Europe owed to non-European influences.’

There is still room to extricate higher education from the current tainted systems, and construct an alternative decolonised version within a wider scope of self-determination of what indigenous knowledge, wisdom and methodologies mean in relation to other cultural priorities and challenges. It is possible to contemplate a new concept of the university as part of a larger knowledge project. Restoring the university to its traditional roots is an imperative that must be prioritised so as to keep the organic links with local communities intact.

Where to go? Another world is desirable

The Penang Declaration states: ‘We are firmly convinced that every trace of Eurocentrism in our universities – reflected in various insidious forms of Western controls over publications, theories and models of research – must be subordinated to our own scintillating cultural and intellectual traditions. We express our disdain at the way ‘university ranking exercises’ evaluate our citadels of learning on the framework assumptions of Western societies. The Penang conference articulated different versions of intellectual and emotional resistance to the idea of continuing to submit our institutions of the mind and our learning to the tutelage and tyranny of Western institutions’ (Alvares & Faruqi 2012: iii).
It is often argued that Western approaches to education had at their foundations the theory of knowledge founded on Western philosophy and using Western epistemology. With this comes a set of values, orientations and conceptualisations that has different and competing interests with non-European approaches and viewpoints. This includes the use of language forms and structures that represent the Western world view, employing reductionist methods. Consequently, the models formed and developed are based on criteria more akin to Western ideals and cultural values, an insidious form of mental colonisation (Dzulkifli 2012a: 16–20).

One way to rectify this is to decolonise it by seriously considering the integration of indigenous knowledge systems at the institutional, national, regional and global levels. In addition, we need to appraise the existing knowledge system within the scope of sustainable development for the international community, and generate an informed critique. There is wide acceptance that conventional frameworks of higher education and development are unsustainable, and that the existing structure of knowledge generation (in the social sciences, in particular) does not lead to sustainable practice.

It is also important to examine current gaps in the support of sustainable education and to discuss alternative knowledge constructs, especially indigenous knowledge, to fill these gaps and achieve a credible target of integrating indigenous knowledge, wisdom and values with the Western knowledge base in order to complement the internationally endorsed directives relating to sustainability.

The ultimate goal is to embrace self-determination that goes beyond the realm of economics into the multiple realms of spiritual, psychological, intellectual, cultural, ecological and socio-political (SPICES) dimensions. The agenda must be transformational within a non-European and indigenous framework, and include world views that lead to decolonisation processes and outcomes (Dzulkifli et al. 2010: 106–109).

In summary, there is no need to imitate the existing model and practices when they are irrelevant to the demands of self-determination and the multiple realms of SPICES. We may need to restructure the assumptions, values, concepts and priorities in order to get rid of colonised and elitist minds. The Penang Declaration articulated different versions of intellectual and emotional resistance to the idea of continuing to submit our institutions of the mind and our learning to the tutelage and tyranny of Western institutions. Reclaiming what has been lost or distorted as part of colonisation is not a total rejection of all theories or findings or anything Western. Rather it is about centring our concerns and our world views, and then coming to know and understand each of these from our own perspective and for our own purposes. Similarly, it is not our role to insist that the richness of the Eastern and African traditions be incorporated into the Western system of learning, but to break with the notion of ‘West is best’ as part of the Western academic and intellectual hegemony.

The Penang Declaration encourages the restoration of the organic connection between our universities, our communities and our cultures. Service to the community, and not just to the professions, must be our primary concern. The recovery of indigenous intellectual traditions and resources is a priority task. It goes without saying that course structures, syllabuses, books, reading materials, research models and research areas must reflect the treasury of our thoughts, the riches of our indigenous traditions and the felt necessities of our societies. This must be matched with learning environments in which students do not experience learning as a burden, but as a force that liberates the soul and leads to the upliftment of society. Above all, universities must retrieve their original task of nurturing good citizens instead of just good workers. Good
universities are anchored in the community, and community knowledge is brought back into the universities, strengthening the nexus between communities, universities and the cultural context.

The case for Africa

Africa in this sense has much to offer. As Molefi Kete Asante reminds us:

the origin of humanity is on the continent of Africa and the first human societies where humans defined good and evil, justice and injustice, named days of the week, calculated the seasons for planting and reaping, elevated the ancestors, counted a woman’s time, established rules for relationships, identified the stars, practiced restraint and good neighbourly behaviours, and named the divine, were on the African continent. (Asante 2012: 38).

Europeans set up colonial schools that were intended to educate Europeans who were far away from their mother countries, and they felt the need to continue to pass down information that had preserved their societies in their original European habitat (Asante 2012: 33). Was it not Wilhelm von Humboldt who created a ‘modern European university’ and came up with the idea that ‘to have culture one must cultivate it, hence the need for a university’? This led to ‘the creation of institutions that could cultivate the mind and feeling, making European students more European, and Asian and African students imitations of the Europeans’ as if Europeans were universal (Asante 2012: 35). It becomes ever more obvious why those who want to be part of the Bologna Process must also be members of the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe [emphasis added].

In the African context, it is clear that education was a part of the religious scheme, because ‘there was no real separation between one’s way of life and one’s way of learning’. Schools of learning existed in ancient Africa and Asia long before the European university was born as a modern European institution. Europe has a different approach to life (Asante 2012: 36), based on the tragedy of the ‘original sin’, which is not essentially an African question. By the 18th century, the notion of the Enlightenment was keenly promoted – ‘that period when current European values were enshrined in their literature’ (Asante 2012: 37). Asante goes on to contend that ‘things were far worse than the benign picture of the Enlightenment might suggest to some,’ relative to some incremental advance for Europe; this period of European history ‘sanctioned all manner of perverted importance of the individual white man and caused that person to lay claim to a universalism that was non-existent’ (ibid.).

Asante points out that most African universities were established by Europeans to support the colonisation of Africa, the corporate interests of the Western world, and to make Africans replicas of Europeans, who would serve not the interests of their own people but those of Europeans (Asante 2012: 38). Recall the Berlin Conference of 1884, when 80 per cent of Africa remained under traditional and local control, and only the coastal areas were colonised by the European powers. By the time the conference was over (just three months later), the scramble to gain control over the other parts of Africa resulted in fifty irregular new countries ‘disregarding the cultural and linguistic boundaries already established by the indigenous African population.’ This unnatural new map of the continent was superimposed on one thousand indigenous cultures and regions of Africa. The so-called new countries lacked rhyme or reason, dividing coherent groups of people and merging together disparate groups who really did not get along (Rosenberg nd). The consequences can be seen more than a century after the tragic conference.

3 See also http://geography.about.com/cs/politicalgeog/a/berlinconferenc.htm.
In the words of HJ de Blij and PO Muller, ‘The Berlin Conference was Africa’s undoing in more ways than one. The colonial powers superimposed their domains on the African continent. By the time independence returned to Africa in 1950, the realm had acquired a legacy of political fragmentation that could neither be eliminated nor made to operate satisfactorily’ (de Blij & Muller 1997: 340). The same could perhaps be said about the education system of the colonised, especially in Africa. According to B Mukasa Luutu, Vice-Chancellor of Marcus Garvey Pan-Afrikan University in Uganda, ‘The colonial and post-colonial African university is a mirror image of the Western university model but like everything else that Africa has carried forward from that heritage, it remains stunted in terms of ideas and infrastructure ... these models of Western universities had proven completely unsuitable for Africa’s needs, but the governments compelling the case for transformation were themselves presiding over state and value systems very much anchored in the Western mould of things’ (Luutu 2012: 76–77).

It is not surprising that ‘Africa today finds itself in deep, multidimensional crises that requires carefully thought out solutions and response, if African rebirth is ever to be achieved. This is because these African universities were not constructed with an ethos of an independent Africa, but were modelled to imitate Europe in ‘nation-building’ and ‘modernisation.’ The suggestion is to ‘recapture that original meaning of humanity found in Africa, which Western scholars, beginning with Plato, in their hollow and lopsided search for material progress, abandoned’ (Luutu 2012: 77-78), so that the tyranny of the Western narrative can longer be superimposed on original thought from the cradle of humanity (Luutu 2012: 92).

The humaniversity as an emerging model

Today’s university seems to increasingly resemble the Cold War military-industrial complex of President Dwight D Eisenhower. The difference is that while the latter feeds into a ‘war for profit’ mode of operation, the former is geared towards ‘education for profit’. It too resembles the assembly-like production line of a factory, thanks to the Industrial Age.

The education-industrial complex operates in a mechanised world to churn out so-called ‘human capital’ as its product. This proves to be a new challenge to present-day universities as they undergo a major shift. As Elie Wiesel is quoted as saying at the 1990 Global Forum in Moscow: ‘It (education) emphasised theories instead of values, concepts rather than human beings, abstraction rather than consciousness, answers instead of questions, ideology and efficiency rather than conscience’ (Orr 1991). Similarly, Lorenz considers the Bologna policies as the ‘commodification of knowledge, the marketisation of higher education, the enlargement of scale as the primary policy to cut down costs’ (Lorenz 2006: 123–51). Putting this in the context of the Enlightenment and the influence of logic, critical thinking and evidence, Ken Robinson has this to say: ‘So it is that we came to think of real intelligence in terms of logical analysis: believing that the rationalist forms of thinking were superior to feeling and emotion, and that we could quantify intelligence and rely on IQ tests and standardised tests like the SAT to identify who among us is truly intelligent and deserving of exalted treatment’ (Robinson 2009: 37–38).

The time has come to reclaim the ethos of education that upholds human beings as valued members of the community, rooted in the virtues that nourish humanity globally (Dzulkifili 2012b). It is imperative to avoid the dehumanising tyranny of the Western narrative superimposing itself on original thought. In essence, this is the meaning of the metaphor of ‘the humaniversity’ where the central focus is beyond economic status, and on enhancing universal humanitarian values and human dignity globally.
A newly established charitable (not-for-profit) university in Malaysia, the Albukhary International University (AiU) has consciously adopted ‘the humaniversity’ as its tagline. This is in accordance with the university’s vision, mission and core values. The AiU aspires to become a model university as we progress into the 21st century. The vision and mission read as follows:

**Vision:** To become a model university characterised by high quality education and humanitarian values aimed at empowering underprivileged and disadvantaged students.

**Mission:** To provide to academically qualified students from underprivileged and disadvantaged backgrounds not only quality education for them to succeed in life, but also an education which will result in their valuing discipline, being caring and giving individuals.

The six core values are:

(i) Commitment to Excellence: We commit to build a culture of excellence in all we do.

(ii) Passion for Service: We commit to serve and contribute to the community and society especially the disadvantaged and underprivileged.

(iii) Respect and Trust: We encourage building and maintaining effective personal and professional relationships with each other.

(iv) Spirit of Learning: We believe our continued success lies in the opportunity each member has to learn, develop and grow.

(v) Teamwork: We promote inclusiveness that values personal and cultural diversity, and encourages everyone to support each other toward a common goal.

(vi) Integrity: We conduct ourselves ethically in all interactions and every aspect of our work.

Through its vision, mission and core values, AiU is committed to ensuring human dignity in line with the concept of *sejahtera* as the core ethos of the university. Translating this into practice, the AiU has a fully integrated pro-poor policy worldwide, based on the concept of *waqf* (charitable, not-for-profit), the same as that adopted by the first university in the world, the University of Qarawīyīn. Every student (up to 80 per cent are non-Malaysians, currently from 50 different countries) is totally supported to maintain the standards of quality while expanding equity and access.

With the vision and mission of the university ‘aimed at empowering underprivileged and disadvantaged students’, which ‘will result in their valuing discipline, being caring and giving individuals’, community engagement is considered vital to the university, and is compulsory for all students in AiU. Ultimately, the students are expected to ‘pay back’ to the community and be engaged with society upon returning to their home countries. This engagement will range from co-creating what has been taught at AiU, to putting in place projects that are beneficial in (re) establishing the organic roots with the local community.

To this extent the university has developed a ‘uniquely AiU’ trilogy of being ‘academically relevant – socially engaged – recreationally enriching’ as the basis of curriculum development to decolonise the university (SIFE 2012). This is supported by a customised campus-wide AiU Humaniversity Competency Framework, a comprehensive programme to infuse the core values of the university into all students, including leadership, entrepreneurship, and a number of related intangible skills.

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4 See http://www.aiu.edu.my.

5 *Sejahtera* is a vernacular Malay term that carries the concept of peace and harmony, cutting across a number of dimensions in a fine balance towards character-building.
The Competency Framework takes a long-term view, based on community projects meant not only to impart new skills and competencies to the students, but also to facilitate the application of skills in the exchange of knowledge and know-how with community members. The end-point is to create sustainable opportunities for members of the community by empowering them and drawing on their strength and talent, using resources available in and around the community.

Concluding thoughts

In April 2012 the best-selling pan-African magazine, aptly named *New African*, featured the headline: ‘Berlin again? How Europe is undermining African development’. The article (‘Will Europe underdevelop Africa again?’) is written by Prof Chukwuma C Soludo, a professor of economics who has served as the governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria and is currently chairman of the Board of the African Institute for Applied Economics. The article argues that, as with the Berlin Conference of 1884/1885, Africa is faced with the modern-day equivalent, showing ‘how Europe is tying the hands of Africa and condemning it to perpetual underdevelopment’ (Soludo 2012: 10–17). Only this time it is being done with the eyes of the Africans wide open, as free people under supposedly democratic government. Today they have a choice to avoid repeating the experience of 130 years ago.

In a sense, it is the same in the area of education: the choice is between decolonising African universities or being a source of ‘human capital’ and a market exclusively for the West. It is time to take that hard decision for the future survival of Africa, and for the global South.
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Brazil has a deliberate strategy to explore scenarios that were previously seen as irrelevant, and the creation of research and education centres connected to specific areas (geographically and culturally) is part of this new political, economic and cultural context.

For decades, Brazil seemed to have turned its back on its Latin American neighbours, so close and so far away at the same time. The Amazon region was seen by successive governments as a green desert that could assure the future of mankind, though devastated by unrestrained capitalism. At the very centre of the construction of its national identity, Brazil was silent about its past and present relationship with the African continent. In this new era, Brazil has initiated a broad dialogue that requires Brazilian intellectuals, politicians and civil leaders to innovate in order to build and re-build new fields of knowledge and new dialogue perspectives.

Three universities were created as part of the Brazilian government policy of expanding higher education, intended to fill specific innovative spaces. Although the three of them are facing abroad, they are also deeply linked internally, and committed to addressing politically and culturally overlooked aspects in our country.

These new higher education institutions are located in areas capable of promoting self-sustainable change, aimed at the development of interior regions of Brazil. Focusing on the relationship between local and international issues within the southern hemisphere, the new Brazilian attitude is to invest in the potential of its interior, re-building South-South relationships.

Within this context, the African continent has become a privileged region for Brazilian international relations. Africa's place in Brazil has always been dubious, either as an identification memory related to the county's large black population, or as a historical construction of the idea of nation and nationality. The construction of Brazilian nationality is linked to the notion of three races: Indians, Negroes and Europeans. The figure of the Negro enters into the narrative of national memory in relation to picturesque aspects such as music, food and dance, restricting the fragments of the so-called ‘black culture’. The need to go beyond these exotic aspects has led to numerous studies in recent decades, and created a new field of study, stimulating greater interest.
in the African continent. In Brazil, this interest in African Studies has been expanding sectors of Brazilian universities that develop research focused on the history of the black population in Brazil, its diaspora, and its past and present relationship with the African continent.

Brazil has always relegated to black Brazilians roles outside heroic narratives and governance. Furthermore, the trajectories of Africans and their descendants in Brazil are completely unknown. The historicity denied to black people in Brazil resulted in the well-known hierarchy, symbolised by physical phenotypes, stereotyped by skin colour, facial features and hair, making it difficult to understand the importance of the African contribution to the formation of Brazil. Implemented as an ideology (a way of thinking about the other), racist theoretical currents coming from abroad found fertile ground in Brazil, adjusting to the patterns of inequality existing in our country.

Brazilians’ recent memory of slavery contributes to the set of images that has perpetuated the representation of the African world as an inferior place on the social, cultural and political scales. On the other hand, contemporary Brazil is aligned to the positions of emerging countries in the fight against economic and social inequality and, internally pressured by social movements, has identified the need to pursue more knowledge of the African continent.

Within this context of globalisation, Brazil, as an emerging country from the South, encourages and promotes a new partnership with African countries. These new relations reflect in the discourse of solidarity co-operation, which ‘shall appreciate and support the potential for collaboration and learning between countries’. This new concept of co-operation involves the formulation of alternatives which will promote new bonds of partnership. The idea of horizontal co-operation has generally been defined as technical, economic and political co-operation for common development, and has limited application to academic co-operation. The same goes for the concept of South–South co-operation, which almost always includes the idea of political partnerships between developing and underdeveloped countries, and the need to strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations. To increase their bargaining power with the North, a group of developing countries builds a foundation of common interests. According to Baquero:

> De esa forma, a dicho objetivo, los países periféricos y semiperiféricos han sumado la cooperación técnica y económica, generalmente, bajo la perspectiva de compartir visiones críticas sobre la forma en la que funciona el sistema político y económico internacional (2011: 134).

Emerging countries, the new players in the international arena, are increasingly replacing the traditional North–South networks. In this perspective, Brazilian diplomacy invests in South–South co-operation as a global player. It is in this context of globalisation and international economic and financial crises that the search for solidarity co-operation in academic relations requires more than just introducing cultural and social aspects. When collaboration is within the university environment, the emphasis is on reconstructing knowledge from the North as an object to be questioned. From this point of view, the proposal is close to new conceptual and analytical frameworks, which need to rebuild the social sciences, strengthening ‘endogenous knowledge’ from the South. The search for an ‘intellectual sovereignty’ implies differentiated and balanced partnerships with both traditional and new partners. To follow this new practice, it is necessary

1 From this perspective, the discipline (or the set of disciplines) which is called African studies certainly does not have the same meaning as it does in Africa and in the West. In Africa, such studies are (or should be) part of a larger project: to learn about oneself as a way of transformation. African studies in Africa should not be content just to contribute to the accumulation of knowledge about Africa, a kind of knowledge that is capitalised and managed in the North, as happens with all other subjects of scientific knowledge. African researchers involved in African studies should have another priority: to develop, first of all, a tradition of knowledge in all disciplines that is based in Africa, a tradition in which the issues that will be studied will be triggered by African societies, and a research agenda determined, directly or indirectly, by African societies (Hountondji 2008: 149–160).

2 General Guidelines of the University of International Integration of the Afro-Brazilian Lusophony (Unilab).
to establish an open dialogue that pervades all levels of the societies involved. According to Bello:

en el llamado ‘mundo globalizado’ las potencias emergentes están jugando un papel cada vez más importante en el sistema internacional y los Estados africanos no escapan a ello, el quid de la cuestión es cómo desde el continente se enfrentan o sacan provecho inteligentemente del desafío que supone el espectro de oportunidades que brindan los actores en ascenso (2001: 124).

From this perspective, Brazil during the Lula da Silva administration has shown new interest in the emerging countries, where Africa – and especially Lusophone Africa – is privileged for multilateral co-operation. The Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), established in 1996 in Lisbon, takes a central role in Brazilian foreign policy as a forum for discussion with African countries. The organisation has as general objectives: a political and diplomatic co-ordination between its member states, particularly to strengthen its presence in the international arena; co-operation in all fields, including education, health, science and technology, defense, agriculture, public administration, communications, justice, public security, culture, sports and media; and the implementation of projects to promote and disseminate the Portuguese language. Triangular co-operation, including partnerships with the North, is widely developed in Brazil, in order to create a complementarity of South–South co-operation that does not overlap with the already consolidated North–South co-operation. Brazilian international and domestic partnerships should always work to share knowledge between the parties involved.

In the African perspective, this co-operation needs to:

pasar en las estrategias de integración regional de la defensiva a la ofensiva, mediante lo que Herrera (2010:93) califica de ‘integración alternativa’ o de ‘versión africana del Alba’, una integración basada en la mejora de las condiciones sociales de los pueblos y en el fomento de los intercambios Sur-Sur (Kabunda, 2011: 60).

A series of actions has converged with this intention of knowing and making known the knowledge about African countries. The creation of positions for lecturers of African History in Brazilian universities and the enactment of laws that make the teaching of African themes mandatory in Brazilian elementary, middle and high schools are examples of such actions.

From the perspective of broadening the relationship and the knowledge about Africa and Asia, the project of an internationally integrated university arises. The University of the International Integration of the Afro-Brazilian Lusophony, Unilab, according to the law that created it has as its objectives: to provide higher education, to develop research in several areas of knowledge, and to promote community extension. Its institutional mission is to educate people in order to contribute to the integration between Brazil, African and Asian countries, as well as Portugal, promoting regional development and cultural, scientific and educational development. Unilab seeks to become a new centre of excellence and integration of these countries through science and culture – an area for co-operation, accumulation and mutual sharing of science and technology, for an exchange of cultures and for promoting sustainable development.

The main goals and objectives developed by the international community for education served as a reference for the Implementation Commission of Unilab, and can be found in the following programmes and documents:

* Education for All (EFA): at the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtiem, Thailand) in 1990, 155 countries committed to education for all by the year 2000. In April 2000, the World Forum in Dakar postponed the commitment made in Jomtiem for 15 years (to the year 2015).
• Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): during the meeting of the Millennium Summit, organised by UN in New York in 2000, leaders from 191 countries formalised an agreement to improve the state of the world population by 2015 in terms of income, education, health, environment and gender. Regarding education, the goal is to ensure that by 2015 all children complete primary education.

• The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) of the African Union (AU) reiterates various agreements already adopted, and added a commitment to ‘promote networking between specialised research and higher education institutes’ (paragraph 117).

• The Action Plan of the Second Decade of Education in Africa (2006–2015) was adopted by the Ministers of Education of the AU in Maputo in 2006, and has among its priorities the improvement of education quality, training and professional development of teachers, expansion of higher education, promotion of mobility of teachers and students, and gender equality.

• The Abuja Declaration, adopted at the First Summit of South America–Africa (SAA) held in Nigeria in 2006, makes specific mention of the role of education for development, and calls for the use of exchange and co-operation programmes, including the formation of universities and inter-regional institutions for education and research.

• The Regional Conference on Higher Education (RCHE 2008), held by UNESCO in Cartagena, has as its focus the definition of lines of action to the priorities of Latin America and the Caribbean over the next decade, seeking a more democratic higher education, geared to the social demands and to economic and sustainable development of countries. There was emphasis on the need to strengthen South–South co-operation, particularly with African countries.

• The African Conference on Higher Education (ACHE 2008), held by UNESCO in Dakar, adopted the same theme as that proposed for the World Conference on Higher Education: the new dynamics of higher education in the 21st century. The debate highlighted the importance of meeting the demand for higher education, giving priority to the expansion with socio-academic relevance through solidarity co-operation with other regions of the world.

• The World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE), held by UNESCO in Paris in 2009, discussed the new dynamics of higher education and research to promote social change and development in the next decade. In this context, Africa has been a central theme. The conference stressed the social responsibility of countries around the world in promoting research and education as primary tools for the development of the African continent.

Unilab is a higher education institution with a research, teaching and extension role in the specific reality of the Baturité Hills in Ceará, but also within the context of solidarity co-operation with countries that have Portuguese as their official language, and other countries in Africa and Asia. Locally, Unilab’s function is to address the profound social and economic inequalities in northeastern Brazil and the Baturité Hills. The signs that identify territories of poverty and lack of basic infrastructure also approximate the tasks needed to promote socially sustainable development in priority areas (such as agriculture, public health, education, energy and public administration). It is important to emphasise the relevance of education as a tool for the process of sustainable development. Educational indicators in the region where Unilab is located demonstrate that universal basic education has not been achieved and that the quality of basic education is below the desired levels. Shortcomings are also apparent in the available higher education. It is of great significance to the socially fair and sustainable development of the region where Unilab is located that the institution works closely with other institutions, both Brazilian
and African, in order to contribute to improving basic education on both sides of the Atlantic. This contribution will take place through the promotion of research, education of professionals, and through the development and use of information technology and communication applied to education, in the context of solidarity co-operation with governments and civil society, intermediated by higher education institutions.

Regarding the student body, Unilab now has about 700 students, including 89 Africans from Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tome e Principe, and 72 Asians from East Timor. Although all students at Unilab are from countries in which Portuguese is the official language, the learning of English is encouraged. An English club has been established, creating a space in which students can learn English as well as aspects of the culture of Anglophone countries. There is also a project to bring English-speaking lecturers to Unilab. As they work on their research projects and teach classes, they will use the English language to communicate with colleagues and students, allowing for more opportunities for our students to learn and improve their language skills.

The effective practice of internationalisation at Unilab, in terms of its routine and dialogues, can be described as solidarity co-operation, which means the construction of partnerships in actions and projects, sharing the same visibility with African and Asian partners. Solidarity co-operation allows closer approximation of the parties involved, as a two-way process. The perspective is to exchange and share knowledge and technology, instead of a simple unilateral transference. This concept must permeate all actions of Unilab in relation to its African and Asian partners. Accordingly, the mobility of the professionals involved is quite important, contributing to the local knowledge of the countries involved and strengthening the exchange of experiences, knowledge and technologies. The construction of solidarity co-operation will take place in the form of research and extension projects. The action of solidarity co-operation aims, above all, at bringing communities together which face similar challenges, and pursuing solutions that can be shared.

Co-operation at Unilab is realised through three types of projects:

1. Comprehensive projects, whose main feature is the constitution of networks between public education institutions, research institutes, international organisations, government agencies, civil society and others. Internally, these are projects led by several structures within Unilab.

2. Thematic projects, which result from research groups not yet fully consolidated, but with projected growth along African and Asian partnerships. These might become the foundation of future co-operation activities in Unilab. Professors, researchers, technicians and students will become the main actors of international co-operation through thematic projects. The research groups will determine the main characteristics of international co-operation in Unilab.

3. Specific projects are projects that do not fit either of the above categories, and focus on points not yet covered by the other two types of projects. They are projects of shorter duration which may eventually lead to thematic or comprehensive projects.

Parallel to the idea of internationalisation, mediated through solidarity co-operation, it is important to define integration, which comprehends a mobility system that with its own dynamics guarantees the articulation that promotes the new worldwide and continued relationship among several communities: African, Asian, Brazilian and Portuguese. The mobility system provides for the circulation of faculty, students, researchers and technicians from Unilab and from the other countries involved in the partnership. As far as student mobility is concerned, five phases are
considered: (i) selection of students, (ii) preparation of students, (iii) monitoring, (iv) return to the country of origin and (v) insertion into the world of labour. Teachers’ and technicians’ mobility is based upon the relevance of projects in African countries, so that they are inserted within a strategy of international co-operation.

The international and local relationships promoted through the mobility system should have, as a premise, the identification of strategic areas for the development of the African and Asian partnering countries, as well as the region of the Baturité Hills. Lecturers and researchers from these countries will take part in the exchange of knowledge and technology, within comparative studies that analyse local and regional issues in the Baturité Hills and in the other countries involved. It is extremely important that other countries participate in the exchange of knowledge in loco, to guarantee the internationalisation and the quality of higher education. In order for that to happen, the mobility system must provide support for the flow of Africans, Asians, Brazilians and Portuguese who will together build the networks of higher education, economically, culturally and politically.

The intercultural dialogue within Unilab will be assured by the exchange of students, professors and technicians, who will have the opportunity to experience diverse social contexts and the construction of knowledge through such contact. This experience is likely to affect behaviours and stereotyped images about the cultural universe of African and Asian countries, influencing how interpersonal relationships are established within Unilab. At the same time, having contact with Brazilians in their countries of origin will be an essential part of the preparation of Africans, Asians and others to live in Brazil.

In order to understand the political and economic changes needed in countries marked by profound social, economic and political inequalities, old concepts such as ‘development’ and ‘co-operation’ must be redefined in the light of a new reality that includes globalisation, migration and cultural diversity. When the term ‘development’ is revisited, it is apparent that the term is still embued with powerful ambiguities; on the one hand it points to a promising future, while on the other hand it is rooted in existing relations with groups of nations exercising their hegemony. For many regions in the world ‘the end of formal or political colonialism in its strict sense did not mean the end of the social, cultural and, therefore, political colonialism in a comprehensive sense’ (Santos 2008).

The practice of knowledge that allows for an intensification of the will to change corresponds to the construction and creation of new knowledge emerging in the South–South relationship. The new meaning of the word ‘development’ is based not only on per capita income and the purchasing power of individuals, but also on other dimensions. We believe in more complex criteria that can measure not just economic development, but the quality of life and individuals’ fundamental freedom, a tool that allows for a good quality of life (Sen 2000). When dealing with the development issue, one should not ignore its relationship with culture, always mentioned by intellectuals, politicians and civil leaders, as a bridge to build the interaction among peoples as they share their perception of themselves and explain habits that seem strange to the other (Falola 2003).

In the new dynamics among the countries of the South, Brazil moves from receiving help through international co-operation, towards sharing co-operation in the search for solutions to similar problems. From the official discourse, based upon solidarity, the Brazilian position is to emphasise the South–South relationship as a dialogue capable of building strategies and methodologies that bring both Brazilian and foreign interests together, strengthening the exchange and production of knowledge. The question here is whether or not there is a significant difference in this
relationship with African and Asian peoples and nations, when compared to the relationship with northern countries.

In Unilab, the focus of co-operation is centered on educating Brazilian, African, Asian and Portuguese students. To perform this function, there is a concern with demands from the countries involved, aimed at constructing axes around which programmes will be structured. The internationalisation of education in Unilab, centered on the perspective of solidarity co-operation, aims to democratise knowledge, considering each partner’s peculiarities, and avoiding the homo-geneity of globalisation. The questions raised by higher education, whether they are local, regional or global, must set several contexts of participation, so that the participants are distinguished, ensuring the right to equality at all levels.

This new international order is related to a fundamental feature: the growing prominence of culture in the emerging order, through great consciousness of cultural pluralism, directed by the more frequent movement of populations and fomented by cultural hybridisation, personal (transcultural) contact and electronic communication. As a consequence of all these changes, a new reflexive consciousness of the ‘others’ is seen and, for this reason, there is a new emphasis on identity and difference (Fraser 2002: 8).

Mudimbe explains:

The殖民ising structure, even in its most extreme manifestations – such as the crisis of South Africa – might not be the only explanation for Africa’s present-day marginality. Perhaps this marginality could, more essentially, be understood from the perspective of wider hypotheses about the classification of beings and societies (1988: 6).

In a projection of the future from this new order, the prospect is, on one hand, of a recognition of political contestations and, on the other hand, of a new understanding of social justice, which in addition to economic issues of income distribution, covers issues of representation, identity and difference.

New opportunities from the South, innovating in this current order of globalised migration and acknowledging the centrality of the concept of culture, seek an alternative concept of contacts in the South–South relationship, with partners seen as subjects capable of participating equally as peers in this local and international partnership.
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AFRICA RESPONDS TO INTERNATIONALISATION: REDEFINING THE TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN SCHOLARS WORLDWIDE

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Introduction

The changes that have taken place in higher education globally over the last few years can be referred to as a revolution (Altbach et al. 2010). One of the main developments has been the emergence of the knowledge society and the rise of internationalisation as a central issue in higher education. Globalisation and internationalisation are today major drivers of change in higher education systems globally (Knight 2008). In recent years, internationalisation has attracted considerable debate and gained a central position in the key activities of universities, and has even become a value in itself (Olson et al. 2006).

For Africa, internationalisation has grown in complexity, especially because of its varied interpretations, a diversity of rationales, activities, implications and consequences (both intended and unintended). Resulting from these complexities, there has recently been a growing quest to rethink and develop a shared meaning of internationalisation.

There is, however, little doubt that internationalisation is a dynamic process within a very turbulent and rapidly changing global environment, and one whose impacts vary within different contexts. Its main rationales, drivers, benefits and risks also vary from region to region (Jowi 2010). In Africa, these developments manifest themselves differently from other parts of the world as a consequence of Africa’s historical, social, economic and political context. It is interesting to discuss how African universities and scholars engage with their counterparts in other parts of the world in the growing knowledge society, and what the consequences are, or what they could be.

Knowledge partnership for development

Internationalisation has led to growth in interdependence, interconnectedness and mobility across global communities, making global challenges and achievements transcend national boundaries (Koehn & Rosenau 2010). It is not surprising that sustainable solutions to emerging global
development problems cannot be found through efforts and resources confined within one locality (McArthur & Sachs 2009). In this evolving context, partnerships across national and disciplinary boundaries are rapidly emerging as the dominant model for organising international research and development (King 2008).

In recognition of the complexity of contemporary development challenges and the importance of knowledge application, emphasis is increasingly shifting towards more collaborative and transdisciplinary knowledge networks (Escríegas & Lobera 2009:10). This has substantially widened and redefined the traditional boundaries and manifestations of international development (King 2008). Universities and their boundary-spanning partnerships and networks are increasingly considered as critical instruments in contemporary development thinking and practice, particularly with respect to the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction in developing countries (King 2008; World Bank 2009; McGrath 2010). In other words, the knowledge of development and the development of knowledge have been fundamentally reconfigured and fused together.

**African universities and the knowledge society**

The growth of the knowledge society in tandem with internationalisation has impacted on higher education with profound effects (Altbach et al. 2010). The production, utilisation and dissemination of scientific knowledge through innovation and entrepreneurship has gained more importance than ever before (Salmi 2003). This is mainly because the knowledge society thrives on the massive creation, manipulation, consumption and dissemination of knowledge and ideas. Knowledge has therefore become central to national economies, institutions and even individuals, and is the chief currency of the modern age (Oyewole 2010). Due to their core roles in knowledge processes, these developments have far-reaching impacts on higher education worldwide (Teferra & Greijn 2010).

Africa's higher education systems are comparatively recent and are perhaps the most marginalised in the world (Teferra 2010), lying at the periphery of the knowledge society. Africa remains the least important region, but probably the one most affected by these new developments. In this context, African universities face considerable challenges in generating, accessing and disseminating knowledge, making it even more difficult for them to make any meaningful responses not only to the challenges in their environments but also to the developments posed by globalisation and internationalisation.

This is at a time when, for any nation or region, global competitiveness depends largely on capacities to create, develop, consume, package and disseminate knowledge (Altbach et al. 2010). This lopsided global knowledge and innovation system, with its centre in the industrialised world, is not desirable and has to change. While the 1990s were characterised as the lost decade for Africa's higher education, recent years have witnessed several developments to reposition Africa's higher education in the knowledge society. Several areas of progress have been noted, but there are significant obstacles, including a rapid expansion in number and diversity of institutions, programmes and students.

African universities were mainly a product of internationalisation in its colonial form, and contemporary manifestations of internationalisation present mixed realities to Africa. While other regions have engaged with internationalisation for some decades and made it an explicit, co-ordinated and strategically focused activity, Africa still engages with internationalisation as
an ad hoc and marginalised activity with little strategic approach and limited support, leading to varied consequences.

The greatest conundrum confronting African universities in the 21st century is how to become relevant to local needs and social realities while simultaneously responding adequately to the opportunities and risks of globalisation. New patterns of transnational co-operation have emerged and played a significant role in strengthening African higher education, particularly through academic and support staff development, and student and staff mobility.

These patterns of transnational co-operation contribute to the internationalisation of higher education in Africa, and have the potential to offer immense opportunities for the development and revitalisation of Africa’s higher education (Jowi 2009; Shabani 2010), particularly considering that most African countries have substantially cut down on public spending on university education due to decades of widespread macroeconomic and fiscal instability (Aina 2010).

A context of inequalities and asymmetries

Despite the recent proliferation of North–South partnerships and networks, African institutions are increasingly recognising that internationalisation and transnational partnership building is not without its own significant challenges and constraints (Jowi 2009: 272). Most African universities lack the baseline scientific and research capacities and infrastructure required to collaborate on a more equitable footing with their partners in the developed countries. Africa is still lagging far behind in terms of public expenditure on research and development as well as with regard to knowledge production capacities (Aart & Greijn 2010).

Hence the historical knowledge divide between the North and the South remains wide, with the new realities of internationalisation exacerbating rather than reducing the gap (Zeleza 2005; Aina 2010). Transnational partnerships between Africa and developed countries will continue to be characterised by these traditional inequalities if such efforts are not based on ethical values. In fact, the 2009 global survey of the International Association of Universities (IAU) reported that no major world region considers Africa among the top-priority regions for future collaborations, demonstrating the deepening marginalisation of Africa on the global knowledge landscape (IAU 2010).

These realities demonstrate that African universities still face monumental challenges in their efforts to embrace internationalisation, build effective and mutually rewarding partnerships, and integrate themselves into the competitive global knowledge economy (Teferra & Knight 2008). The permanent movement of African professionals and scholars to the developed countries, which further weakens Africa’s battered knowledge base, is also a result of these global inequalities and imbalances.

At a more fundamental level, North–South partnerships have been critiqued as reproductions of the traditional patterns of economic and geopolitical dependency (Samoff & Bidemi 2004; Aina 2010). Some observers have raised concerns regarding the invisibility and peripheralisation of African voices in the global conceptualisation and praxis of internationalisation and partnership (Oyewole 2009). This calls for the Africanisation of internationalisation as a new trajectory that seeks to empower African universities to reconceptualise internationalisation in their own terms, and to formulate a distinctively African internationalisation and development agenda. This Africanised internationalisation agenda will be directly connected to the analysis and understanding
of real African development challenges and specific priorities (AU 2008) as articulated in the 

As home to the largest number of developing countries in the world, Africa faces a multiplicity of 
drawbacks in its engagements with internationalisation. Teferra (2008) reckons that Africa engages 
with internationalisation from a comparatively weak position, characterised by its turbulent 
history and its economic and political context. This is coupled with contemporary challenges, 
including inadequate funding, rapid expansion of the sector, weak governance structures, quality 
concerns and poor regulatory mechanisms, which make Africa more vulnerable to global forces 
(Mohamedbhai 2003; Sawyerr 2002). The impacts of these challenges can be felt at individual, 
institutional, national, regional and international levels.

Other negative outcomes have included the imposition of wrong policies, adoption of inapplicable 
educational models, manipulation of research agendas, intellectual property concerns and feelings 
of superiority from development partners, leading to varied negative outcomes in different country 
systems. Historically, in most cases these relations have taken advantage of Africa’s weaknesses 
and challenges, and are characterised by undertones of superiority that do not give African 
institutions their rightful place. This at times has led to a view of internationalisation as a form of 
recolonisation of the African psyche, or an escalation of Westernisation.

The unfair, unjust and inequitable world order needs to give way to mutual partnerships. The 
international community should play a complementary role that supports current efforts in Africa 
by fostering a context for reciprocity, equity and transparency in partnerships. Partners from 
wealthier nations should use their programmes and resources to increase the training and 
programme-building opportunities of African universities.

‘Moving the centre’ through intra-Africa initiatives

Internationalisation in Africa has been to a large extent externally driven, making the West the 
centre (or the main driver) of internationalisation in Africa. Africa has to position itself as the centre 
of its own internationalisation agenda. The emerging global realities in international education 
in recent years have compelled Africa to take deliberate steps to engage with the realities of 
internationalisation and the demands of the knowledge society.

The starting point is to foster internationalisation amongst African universities through 
collaborations, exchanges and the development of supportive frameworks to strengthen Africa’s 
capacities to deal with its own circumstances and develop a viable platform for international 
engagement. This could prompt a move from Africa being a bystander to becoming a real player 
in the global knowledge society. The continental efforts spearheaded by the African Union aimed 
at creating and strengthening Africa’s Higher Education and Research Space (AHERS) have 
focused on revitalisation of the higher education sector (AUC 2011), epitomised in the *Second 
Decade of Education in Africa* (AU 2008).

The African Union Commission (AUC) views regional integration as a key and intermediate step 
towards integration of African countries into the global economy. Bringing convergence to the 
continent’s higher education system (which is diversely structured along geographical, colonial, 
linguistic and structural lines) is therefore important. These developments have led to the revival 
of the Arusha Convention, which was drawn up in the 1980s and aimed to harmonise academic 
programmes in Africa for enhanced collaborations, quality assurance, structural convergence, 
compatibility, recognition and transferability of degrees across borders (AUC 2011).
The African Union emphasised that Africa’s development ‘will require partnerships not only with local and regional actors and stakeholders, but also with the universities, businesses and governments of the developed world’ (NEPAD 2005: 21). It therefore calls for the development of dialogue, networks, co-operation and partnerships between African higher education and public, civil society and corporate sectors (ibid.: 9).

These developments have led to the establishment and implementation of the Pan African University (PAU), with its centres spread across Africa, as one of the ways of enhancing collaboration and co-operation between African countries in targeted areas within specialised regional centres. The main focus is on research and postgraduate training (AU 2008) in fundamental and development-orientated areas. The promulgation of the Accra Declaration and its quest for increased opportunities for academic co-operation in Africa (AAU 2004) led to the establishment of the Mwalimu Nyerere Student Mobility Programme in 2007 to promote internal student mobility (ACP 2009).

The growing interest in intra-African higher education co-operation has also been reflected in the agenda of regional university organisations, which now foster intra-regional academic exchanges and partnerships, as is evident within the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) regions (Mulumba et al. 2008; Kishun 2006). The rise of South Africa and Egypt as preferred study destinations in Africa, the development of new centres of excellence and the emergence of research networks within the continent are additional positive indicators. These new developments are important in providing Africa with a platform from which to explore international engagements, as well as contributing to internal developments.

Renewed interest in Africa’s higher education

Over the last two decades, higher education in Africa has attracted increasing attention at national and international levels. Governments, multilateral development agencies and policymakers are acknowledging the critical importance of universities. Higher education in Africa has historically enjoyed significant levels of support from various bilateral and multilateral sources, in addition to the equally substantial recurrent public investments at national level.

In 2009 alone, sub-Saharan Africa received US$720 million in education lending, making it the second largest recipient of World Bank lending for education after the Caribbean (World Bank 2009). International partnerships have become one the biggest sources of support for the revitalisation of African higher education. Between 2000 and 2010, five US-based private foundations supported 638 partnership projects in Africa, at a total cost of $400 million (Lewis et al. 2010). During the same period, a number of leading inter-governmental agencies, including USAID and the World Bank, were projected to invest another US$590 million in support of 239 collaborative projects across the continent, while the top ten leading OECD bilateral donors financed approximately 270 projects at a cost of several million dollars (Maassen et al., 2007: 12, 74).

Similarly, since 2000, the AAU has been implementing the ten-year Renewing the African University Programme at a cost of US$5 billion, and (since 2005) the Core Programme valued at US$20 million (Mohammedbhai 2008). These examples provide a glimpse into the existing levels of international support to higher education in Africa. These multi-level partnerships among African universities and stakeholders are anchored on the outcomes of the two UNESCO World Conferences on Higher Education (UNESCO 1998; 2009) and more recently, the Africa–Europe White Paper (EUA 2010) which calls on universities in Africa and Europe to ‘integrate development co-operation into the overall internationalisation strategy’ (ibid.: 21).
Higher education relations between Africa and Europe are long-standing, and have been shaped by key policy documents and agreements including the joint Africa–EU strategy, which provided long-term frameworks for co-operation. The historic Africa–EU Summit in Cairo in 2000 recognised the importance of higher education and research in tackling the challenges of Africa. EU mobility schemes such as the intra-ACP programme are enhancing student exchanges within Africa through the Nyerere scholarship programme, the Pan Africa University initiative, and the new developments towards harmonisation and tuning of degree programmes in Africa. In addition to these, the Africa-US higher education initiative (including the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa) has made significant contributions. Emerging countries in Southeast Asia and South America are also establishing strong collaborations with higher education in Africa, and China-Africa co-operation is gaining momentum. These initiatives are already impacting on Africa’s higher education sector and strengthening relations between African institutions and those in the respective world regions.

Developing the current and next generation of scholars

The first generation African scholars, who mainly trained abroad and who made the higher education sector in Africa flourishing and creative in the 1960s and 1970s, have mostly left the scene. While Africa cannot produce all the expertise it requires domestically, the capacity to attract and retain foreign experts is also dismal. Within an increasingly competitive global economy, the basis for sustainable prosperity relies increasingly on a well-educated and productive human capital.

African universities have found internationalisation attractive, especially for institutional strengthening and enhancement of capacities for research and knowledge production (Jowi 2010) in specialised areas (Shabani 2008). The demand for talent to maintain competitiveness and replenish the national intellectual pool is growing, leading to what Wildavsky (2010) refers to as the ‘brains race’. This is escalated by unprecedented interconnectedness of social and economic systems, the information revolution and new possibilities for international travel.

Training talented young researchers, especially at doctoral level, is crucial for the development of institutional and national research capacities, particularly at a time when most of Africa’s leading scholars reside outside the continent and the pioneer generation is ageing. African universities have the daunting task of developing and retaining their best talent at a time when mobility of talent is poised to grow (Sehoole 2011), and graduate training and retention is not keeping pace (Mihyo 2008).

The declining capacity for teaching, research and knowledge production in most African universities is directly connected to inadequate levels of academic staff and the absence of comprehensive and sustainable staff development policies and funding. The staff recruitment and development equation in Africa is made more complex by the lack of a clearly-defined and shared framework of skills and knowledge that the academic workforce should possess in order to effectively discharge their teaching, learning, research and community service functions.

Staff development and the reproduction of a future academic workforce for Africa’s higher education are beginning to receive increasing attention in both academic and policy circles (World Bank 2009). This new trajectory is driven by efforts to strengthen research capacity and create a sustainable pool of academics who can secure the future needs of Africa’s higher education and development. Sustained staff development programmes and policy frameworks are critical, not only as a response to the ageing of the current African academic workforce, but also as a remedy to the perennial threat of the brain drain. The menace of ageing faculty and the chronic
shortage of academic staff with PhD training have made it difficult for African universities to replace staff or to expand the capacity and quality of teaching and research (Hayward 2010).

The development of the next generation of African academics through increased opportunities for quality doctoral training has therefore been identified as crucial (IAU 2011; Hayward 2010) to scaling up Africa’s intellectual capacity (Sehoole 2011) and reversing the brain drain (Mohammed-bhai 2008). Due to several constraints (and especially due to the conditions prevailing in the university systems) the number of outstanding postgraduate programmes in Africa is still quite low, but there are indications that this is beginning to change.

**Research capacities and knowledge production**

Research and innovation is another frontier for international academic exchanges, partnerships and engagements. African governments spend less than 0.3 per cent of their gross national product on research. These are the lowest levels globally. In addition, Africa has the lowest ratio of researchers per million inhabitants in the world. Notably, while the numbers of researchers worldwide moved from 5.8 million in 2002 to 71 million in 2007, sub-Saharan researchers remained an insignificant 0.6 per cent of this total. While it has about 12 per cent of the world’s population, Africa contributes a meager 1.5 per cent of global research publication annually (Oyewole 2006).

New developments, including the transformations through information communication technologies, can be utilised to change this situation. There are now huge volumes of information that academics and students can access in different ways. The shift to online publications, such as the African e-journal project, is providing new opportunities to disseminate African research in an economically sustainable way and with a wider reach. Enhanced partnerships and collaborations both within and beyond the continent, which is now a priority for African institutions, should be an avenue for generating innovative capacities for social and economic development (EUA 2010).

**Stemming Africa’s brain drain**

Academic mobility manifested itself in Africa long before the establishment of formal higher education institutions (Kishun 2006), and contributed to the development of capacity for pioneer African universities. In subsequent years, Africa’s best brains have moved en masse to the developed economies, eroding the capacities of African universities to generate knowledge (Ogachi 2009) and to ensure self-renewal.

Brain drain has caused leading African scholars to move to developed countries and loses Africa close to 20 000 professionals annually (Mihyo 2008). It is estimated that one third of Africa’s scientists live in developed countries at a time when Africa needs them (Teferra 2008). This has eroded institutional capacities and led to shortages of expertise in key sectors (Tettey 2009).

African students have become the world’s most mobile, with one in every 16 African students studying abroad (Kishun 2006), and most not subsequently returning to the continent. Some African countries (such as Cape Verde) have more students studying abroad than in their own national system (Teferra 2008), while Africa hosts very few international students (Varghese 2009).

African governments and universities are therefore advised to transform the brain drain menace into a powerful spiral of ‘brain gain’, by creating and strengthening networks with the African
The diasporic network approach enables highly-skilled African academics and professionals based in the industrialised north to undertake collaborative research, share and exchange knowledge and resources, and build mutual capacities with counterparts in Africa without necessarily relocating physically or permanently to Africa (Rizvi 2007; Teferra 2010).

**Transformations in ICTS**

The deepening of the knowledge economy means that ICTS have become the backbone of the organisation of economic and knowledge production systems worldwide. The capacity and quality of access to ICT infrastructure increasingly defines the level of economic competitiveness and prosperity of countries, organisations and individuals in the knowledge-based economy.

In higher education, the increasing emphasis on internationalisation, transnational research collaboration and global competitiveness have meant that universities in different parts of the world are under growing pressure to strengthen ICT infrastructure as a critical tool for promoting the quality and impact of their teaching, research, development outreach and institutional governance. African universities still face significant barriers in their efforts to exploit ICTS for learning and research.

Despite the steep and significant challenges facing African institutions there are recent trends and initiatives across Africa that represent substantial opportunity and potential for reducing the digital divide and strengthening the position of African universities in the development and management of ICT infrastructure and connectivity. The rapid transformations in information communication technologies are opening new opportunities for African universities and societies, for research, collaboration and instantaneous communication. Although there are still deep inequalities in access and usage between Africa and other parts of the world (Ayoo 2009), ICTS have provided new avenues for academic engagement. Africa is, however, still very fragmented on different fronts (including infrastructure, connectivity and capacities) which may slow the progress being made.

**The shape of things to come**

The world of higher education is undergoing unprecedented transformation on a daily basis, presenting more complexities for higher education in Africa. Although the future remains uncertain, a number of things are probable as Africa continues to engage with the realities of internationalisation.

One new development is the growth that is now evident in different sectors of African societies, including economic growth, democratic governance and achievements in education and health. If sustained, these could have an impact on the role of Africa in global affairs, including higher education. The tremendous expansion of Africa’s higher education sector and the rapid growth in enrolments is poised to push the continent closer to the knowledge society.

Changing global demographics would be favourable to Africa if turned into an opportunity. Africa has one of the world’s most youthful populations, which is an inestimable resource if equipped with requisite knowledge and skills, and which could transform global knowledge relations.

It is also almost certain that internationalisation will grow in importance and scope, thus presenting even more implications to Africa’s higher education. As it gains ground, its opportunities and
risks need to be responded to. Establishing policies, strategies and realistic frameworks to respond to these new developments will therefore be of utmost importance.

The growing intra-Africa collaborations are crucial for further exchanges and collaborations aimed at strengthening research, sharing resources, and providing more study opportunities, as well as improving Africa’s capacity for self-renewal and the realisation of enhanced internationalisation on the continent. Related to this is the fact that internationalisation is increasingly taking a regional dimension, both globally and within Africa. According to IAU (2010), African universities prefer to collaborate amongst themselves, as is the case in other world regions. There is evidence of growing inter-university activity with supportive policies and frameworks within the respective regions of Africa. While this may mean that relations between African universities will be strengthened, it could also mean that Africa’s dismal role in the global knowledge landscape persists as a result of further isolation.

The ICT revolution has hit Africa profoundly, including the higher education landscape. While there are still many bottlenecks (mainly on access and the costs of bandwidth and hardware) it will influence Africa’s position in the networked society inestimably in the coming years.

As the hallmark of internationalisation, academic mobility is not only poised to grow globally, but also with the increasing involvement of Africa. The number of globally mobile students is projected to grow from the 3.7 million students in 2012 to 8 million by 2020 (Varghese 2008). African students will constitute a significant part of this, with many of them engaging in mobility within the continent.

New developments in Eastern Asia and South America (and especially the role of China, India, Japan and Brazil) are beginning to influence the future of international education in Africa. The China–Africa Co-operation established in 2000 has expanded in scale and scope to be one of the new types of strategic partnerships in addition to the escalating growth in trade between China and Africa.

As cross-border provision of education grows, commercialisation of higher education services could, if unabated, lead to more threats to the education systems of Africa, especially in the many countries with weak regulatory frameworks and where local capacity is low. This may also compromise the quality of programmes and the reputation of institutions, which may in the end jeopardise local relevance and undermine the contributions of these institutions.

While the emergence of the different types of university rankings has accelerated competition between universities globally, they caught African universities flatfooted. While they may not be realistic for African universities to aspire to in their current situations, they have shifted the focus and the priorities of a number of African universities towards elusive goals which most of them may not meet (Mohammedbhai 2008).

The economic recession facing most developed countries is impacting on development cooperation, and thus on support to Africa’s higher education. Budget cuts are already derailing activities in a number of international initiatives in the higher education sector. Africa has to make deliberate efforts to strengthen its higher education sector and also make it attractive for future international collaborations. Internationalisation can no longer be sidelined in the overall strategic planning process or policy development (Olson et al. 2006). It is becoming central to almost all university activities and therefore needs to be planned for and accompanied by realistic strategies.
Conclusion

There has never been a time in the history of Africa's higher education when internationalisation was more important than it is now. Africa's greatest asset is its human talent, which has to be harnessed and invested in at all levels of education. Information and knowledge are the great levers of Africa's sustained development, and thus the essence of higher education. More benefits will be obtained if emphasis is put on equitable access, quality teaching and research, supportive infrastructure and partnerships both locally and internationally.

New developments in Africa's higher education, including intra-Africa initiatives, provide opportunities for African universities to determine their roles and agenda in both local and international engagements. The endemic challenges and risks associated with the system and its internationalisation efforts need redress. Important will be stakeholder responses to mitigate brain drain and utilise the potential of Africa's diaspora.

Africa's largely ad hoc approach to internationalisation could lead to even more adverse effects (Jowi 2010) if not accompanied by realistic policies, strategies and resources. However, the growth beginning to be realised in different sectors of African societies, and the unfolding global environment, could offer exciting opportunities if Africa were to position itself as the region of the future growth. This will require a clear analysis of the pitfalls and perils, and the development of frameworks to reap the benefits and negate the dangers. Africa may also need to urgently determine and create its competitive advantages, which it can use as frontiers for internationalisation accompanied by policy frameworks.

Africa has little option but to respond to these realities and turn internationalisation into an opportunity for growth. The call for global responsibility and a rethinking of internationalisation led by the IAU is therefore timely. How will Africa respond? Times change, opportunities come and go and circumstances are not repeated. This could be a time for Africa to take its place. In a world of tremendous changes, Africa has high hopes of growth, requiring a new sense of responsibility and mission. This will involve adapting to new developments, setting new goals, and adopting new approaches to internationalisation, which could open new prospects for strategic co-operation.
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WHERE HAVE ALL THE VALUES GONE?
RETHINKING THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Eva Egron-Polak
Secretary General, IAU

Introduction

The most recent International Association of Universities (IAU) policy document concerning internationalisation of higher education is entitled Affirming the Academic Values in Internationalisation of Higher Education: a Call for Action (commonly referred to as The Call for Action). But before outlining this document, it may be useful first to explain the rationale for undertaking this initiative of rethinking the concepts and assumptions underlying internationalisation, to provide some information about the process that the IAU followed to draft the document, and to highlight a few of the actions that the association, together with others, expects to undertake in order to turn the Call for Action into concrete steps forward.

IAU rationale for rethinking internationalisation

First of all, a small step back in the history of the association. IAU was created to pursue what could be called the ancestor of higher education internationalisation - namely international co-operation - among institutions of higher education and research worldwide. This was the raison d'être of IAU at its initial founding in 1950, when some 150 university presidents from all over the world came together in Nice, France. It has continued to be at the heart of the association’s mission since that time.

The exponential growth in the scope, spread, type and intensity of internationalisation policies, approaches and activities that we have witnessed over the past two to three decades has also brought about new terminologies. Internationalisation became a catch-all concept, and a word that has come to define a tremendous variety of activities.

1 Paper based on a power point presentation, 22 June 2012, Maputo, Mozambique.
The internationalisation of higher education, and thus the discussion and study of this process, has had various focal points – mobility schemes and exchanges, joint study programmes, cross-border or transnational education, preoccupation with the impact of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) on international education, internationalisation at home, and others. These and other related issues became, and still are, high on the global higher education agenda, and as such became a top priority for IAU, especially in the last decade or so.

The association has elaborated several normative policy statements on internationalisation of higher education. Starting in 1998, for the first World Conference on Higher Education at UNESCO, IAU prepared a statement that focused on international co-operation and partnerships as the most essential vehicles for internationalisation. Entitled Towards a Century of Co-operation: Internationalisation of Higher Education, this was approved by the General Conference of IAU held in Durban, South Africa, in 2000. In 2004, in collaboration with several other associations, IAU adopted at its General Conference in Sao Paulo, Brazil, a statement that focused on ethical issues in cross-border education. Under the title, Sharing Quality Higher Education Across Borders: A Statement on Behalf of Higher Education Institutions Worldwide, it was a partial response to the threats of increased commercialisation of this type of activity. Without doing so directly, it also highlighted how GATS and the discourse of trade in higher education were colouring and impacting on the internationalisation of higher education. Finally in 2012, IAU, working with the IAU International Ad Hoc Expert Group on Rethinking Internationalisation, produced the Call for Action which will be presented in this paper.

IAU is always seeking to be of concrete assistance to its membership and so, to accompany the 2004 statement, a companion document – a Checklist for Good Practice – was prepared and is available online, along with all the statements. It was designed as an instrument that all institutional partners could use when preparing their international agreements and cross-border initiatives, to help ensure that they complied with a set of principles of fairness and mutual respect.

Research is the second major set of activities that are part of IAU’s portfolio of actions on the internationalisation of higher education. Monitoring trends and gathering evidence at global and regional levels, so that the policies and advocacy positions the association adopts are based on a solid footing, prompted IAU to begin gathering data. Since 2003, IAU has been conducting and publishing global surveys on the internationalisation of higher education. In the first two editions, in 2003 and 2005, the reports were authored by Dr Jane Knight. For the third edition, published in 2010, IAU called upon an advisory committee to review the questionnaire, and the report was written by Mr Ross Hudson and Ms Eva Egron-Polak.

These surveys are unique in their global reach and have become a valuable resource for institutional leaders, scholars and policy-makers, and have grown quickly over time. They are often cited and critiqued and have become a well-known flagship publication of IAU. In the 2003 Global Survey, analysis was based on a sample of 176 completed questionnaires, of which 9 per cent were from Africa. This survey focused exclusively on IAU members. In the 2005 Global Survey, the sample had more than doubled to 525, of which 6 per cent were from Africa. The main reason for this increase was that IAU sent the questionnaire out to approximately 5 000 universities from around the world that had an email account. This was also the case in the 2010 survey, which is based on completed questionnaires from 745 institutions, of which 6 per cent were from Africa. In the 2010 survey, higher education institutions (HEIs) from 115 different countries took part, making this the most geographically comprehensive study so far.
Evidence-based rethinking of internationalisation

The findings of these global surveys are too numerous to detail here. However, a few of the findings should be highlighted in order to demonstrate the timeliness of the rethinking process. First of all internationalisation, as a policy in higher education institutional reform and planning, has been consistently rising in importance. It is no longer a marginal focus of interest to a few solitary individuals. Rather, it has become of central importance for most HEIs worldwide, including those in Africa (see Figure 1). Second, internationalisation is a highly top-down policy, with higher education leaders cited as the most important internal drivers. In addition, the level of seniority of the person responsible for internationalisation has risen, and many are at the level of Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Vice-President. Third, and perhaps unsurprisingly, lack of funding was cited in the most recent survey as the most important internal and external obstacle to increased internationalisation, and this was the case in every region of the world.

Lack of financial support was not cited among the top three obstacles in 2005, so clearly the economic crisis is having an effect on higher education institutions. Given the importance of access to resources for determining the ways in which partnership and collaboration agreements are negotiated, funding becomes an even more critical dimension in the rethinking process. Finally, all three surveys point out the continued importance that mobility, and particularly student mobility, plays in internationalisation policies. This somewhat narrow perception of internationalisation constitutes another reason for rethinking internationalisation, because mobility remains limited and highly unbalanced worldwide, and as it is a high-cost, labour-intensive aspect of internationalisation it is unlikely that it will grow substantially in a climate of budget cuts.

Questioning of the ways in which internationalisation is unfolding, however, stems most importantly from the fact that divergent views and perceptions persist among HEIs in different world regions about the rationales, the benefits and the risks of internationalisation. Furthermore, a trend is developing towards a rather exclusionary selection of partners, manifested mostly (but not only) in the geographic priorities selected by HEIs for their international collaborations.

The fundamental rationales for engaging in the process are shown in Table 1 below. At the aggregate level, it is clear that the top priorities are preparing students for life and work in a more internationalised or globalised world, internationalising the curriculum, and the pursuit of prestige and status. When these findings are disaggregated regionally, we note that African institutions are different to some extent from others, in that they cite as the most important rationale for pursuing internationalisation the strengthening of research capacity and the
production of knowledge. The focus on students is present in African HEIs’ internationalisation policies as well, but at a much lower level of priority.

These different interests in pursuing internationalisation must be considered and addressed in collaborative efforts and partnerships if all participating institutions are to share in the benefits. Furthermore, the pursuit of reputation and prestige (second top rationale for European universities) requires serious consideration. Prestige is often equated with positioning in rankings, and this may mean that many institutions (in Africa and elsewhere) will not be seen as valuable potential partners. The implications for brain drain, and the importance that North American institutions place on diversification of source of students, must also be borne in mind as the attractiveness of these universities remains high and the demand for access to higher education in Africa still outpaces the capacity of African institutions.

### Table 1 Trends and regional perspectives: Divergent views on rationales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationales for Internationalisation</th>
<th>World</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Asia and Pacific</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Latin America and Caribbean</th>
<th>Middle East</th>
<th>North America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve student preparedness</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalise curriculum</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance international profile</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen research and production</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broaden and diversify source of students</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IAU 3rd Global Survey

A second area of divergence concerns the perception of risk. While there is fairly strong consensus around the positive nature of the process of internationalisation, there is a healthy level of scepticism as well. The general consistency of the findings with regard to perceptions of risk is, at the aggregate level, crystallised mainly around the commercialisation or commodification of higher education, the brain drain, and the increase in numbers of ‘degree mills’ or poor quality providers (see Table 2). These findings show, however, that there is a difference in magnitude of this perception of risks, with the brain drain, unsurprisingly, being the top preoccupation in Africa, where the commercialisation of higher education is not seen to be even among the top three risks. This may be due to the fact that the private higher education sector is viewed as an essential response to the demand for access to higher education.

Also striking was the large number of respondents who chose not to respond to this question. Although there were African institutions that did not respond, the majority of the non-respondents to this question were from Europe and North America, where the response ‘none’ was also quite frequent. African HEIs least often indicated that no risks accompanied the process of internationalisation. As the adverse effects of internationalisation are frequently mentioned by leaders of higher education, and anecdotal references are very often made about the uneven level of the field on which internationalisation is developing, this divergence of views and the persistence of some of the risks acts as a strong impetus for continuous and careful analysis. Clearly, assuming the positive nature of the internationalisation process is no longer possible, nor should it be taken as a given.
Table 2 Risks of HE Internationalisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risks of Internationalisation</th>
<th>World</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Asia and Pacific</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Latin America and Caribbean</th>
<th>Middle East</th>
<th>North America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commodification of education programmes</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brain drain</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in number of foreign degree mills</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over-emphasis on internationalisation</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater competition among HEIs</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elitism in access to international education opportunities</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of cultural identity</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much focus on recruitment of fee-paying international students</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
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<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overuse of English as a medium of instruction</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homogenisation of curriculum</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing gaps among HEIs</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing gaps among country and regions</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IAU 3rd Global Survey

Because of the potential negative effects, but also for the opportunities that it can bring, the findings with regard to the geographic priorities identified by the HEIs in the IAU Global Surveys are worth underlining as a reason for rethinking internationalisation. Table 3 shows clearly the importance of intraregional co-operation in internationalisation on the one hand, and the influence that Europe has gained on the other hand. Europe has now overtaken North America as the top priority region for higher education institutions in other parts of the world. It is noteworthy that three of the world’s regions, including Africa, place their own regions above all others as priority in their internationalisation policies.

A more disturbing message comes through in Table 3, when it is noted that the regions of Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean are not identified among the top three priority regions by institutions in any other region. Such geographic targeting, when coupled with the already noted finding that reputation and prestige-seeking is among the top reasons for internationalisation, points to the conclusion that internationalisation is perhaps becoming more elitist and narrowly focused. For African institutions, the findings with regard to geographic priorities underline the imperative to strengthen intraregional networks, and South–South collaboration more generally. At the same time, it reinforces the need to promote a far more inclusive view of internationalisation, one that excludes no regions, especially not leaving out some of the most dynamic and most populated regions of the world.
Table 3 Geographic Priorities in Internationalisation Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Area</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Asia and Pacific</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Latin America and Caribbean</th>
<th>Middle East</th>
<th>North America</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia and Pacific</td>
<td></td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>2nd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and Caribbean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No geographic priority</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IAU 3rd Global Survey

Important shifts in higher education

In the complex and rapidly changing world of higher education, the last decade or so has seen certain shifts or transitions that, though not as stark as portrayed here, are nevertheless turning into important trends which characterise aspects of internationalisation strategies and activities.

The following are worth highlighting:

- a shift from international co-operation for capacity-building to co-operation or alliances to beat the competition.
- a shift from offering students access to locally unavailable programmes to seeking access to the best brains worldwide.
- a shift from partnerships of solidarity to strategic partnerships.
- a shift from seeing higher education co-operation as the pursuit of soft diplomacy to internationalisation as an instrument in the pursuit of national/regional economic competitiveness.
- a shift from a search for diversity of perspectives and world views to a search for prestige, status and improved rankings.

These shifts warrant our attention. When internationalisation processes pursue goals that are couched in these new realities, it is possible that the process will not bring about improvements in the quality of higher education, or create an enriched learning environment, or facilitate research on issues of global importance. These shifts are also clearly among the main issues that IAU, together with the IAU International Ad Hoc Expert Group on Rethinking Internationalisation (the Ad Hoc Group), wished to illuminate and address by undertaking the rethinking of internationalisation exercise, and developing the IAU Call for Action.

The IAU call for action

The process has been a highly collaborative one. It began at the IAU 4th Global Meeting of Associations of universities (GMA IV) that was in Delhi, India, in 2011, where a core of the now much larger Ad Hoc Group came together and decided to explore some of these issues collectively. The resulting Call for Action mentioned at the start of this paper is the product of much reflection and consultation with inputs from all parts of the world, including from Africa. The CEO of
SARUA, the Executive Director of ANIE, and the Secretary General of AAU participate in the Ad Hoc Group and provided feedback on earlier drafts of this document.

The Call for Action, while recognising the multiple benefits of internationalisation and underlining that it is a means to an end rather than a goal in itself, also notes that strategies adopted by HEIs often pursue objectives that deviate from stated goals. The goals of internationalisation are most frequently linked to the improvement of academic quality, teaching and research by integrating an international dimension into the curriculum, research and service functions of the university, in accordance with the Knight and de Wit definition most frequently used. Among the benefits most often cited, broadening everyone’s perspectives, enriching global networks, transforming attitudes and diversifying the sources of knowledge are prominent, as is the potential for improving higher education leadership, management and services by learning from others.

At the same time, though, the Call for Action acknowledges that the internationalisation process has diverse, and at times negative, consequences that may be both unintended and avoidable. Moreover, it underlines that the undeniable benefits that internationalisation brings are, regrettably, often not shared equally by all participants in the process. In light of the importance that internationalisation has taken, the IAU felt that these potential negative impacts could not be ignored. The approach that was adopted by the association, in agreement with the Ad Hoc Expert Group, was to re-focus on academic and ethical values, and seek to place these once again at the centre of the process of internationalisation. In this way, the Call for Action aims to denounce potential and real adverse effects of internationalisation, and point to ways in which HEIs can redress the situation.

After stating this fundamental purpose, the Call for Action underlines the dynamic nature of the higher education sector and of internationalisation as a concept. Both are largely shaped by political, economic and social forces, but also by past and current local conditions, though the most important force shaping current internationalisation trends is globalisation, which affects this process just as it shapes all other interactions between nations and groups. The combination of all these factors and others defines the goals, purposes, capacities, approaches and even actors engaging in the internationalisation of higher education.

Just as it notes the numerous benefits of internationalisation, the Call for Action also addresses some of the adverse effects of internationalisation, especially as the current global context is creating situations in which international competition is increasingly taking precedence over international collaboration. Among these adverse effects, for example, is the homogenising impact brought about by the prevalence of English as the single most important language in higher education. Despite the need for a common language of communication, the Call for Action notes that the spread of English needs to be compensated by efforts to maintain and use other languages in higher education.

Another adverse effect that is of some concern around the world has to do with the potential loss of institutional diversity when competition for status, fuelled by rankings, appears to impose a single model of excellence on HEIs everywhere. The persistent concern with brain drain and its devastating impact is noted in the Call for Action as a consequence that, while perhaps not entirely avoidable, could be mitigated by proactive efforts and constructive policies and programmes that would make it far more attractive for scholars and faculty to return to their home institutions.

Underlying most of these negative consequences and potential adverse effects is the asymmetry in access to human and financial resources among the institutions that engage in internationalisation
and collaborative partnerships. Such imbalances are real and often lie at the heart of the resulting asymmetry of benefits and risks which have been described above. It may not be possible in the foreseeable future to create a level playing field for all the partners in internationalisation. Nevertheless, in order to ensure that internationalisation remains a positive force of change in higher education, it is imperative that ways be found to introduce more equity and more inclusive approaches into the design and delivery of internationalisation programmes and activities. This is where innovation and efforts need to be called for at all levels.

The IAU is an organisation of institutional members, and although it adopts advocacy positions that can be influential for government policy, the primary community to which it addresses itself remains higher education institutions and their leadership. For this reason, the Call for Action urges HEIs to embrace a number of values and principles, and to make every effort to carefully balance academic, financial and other goals in their internationalisation strategies.

The Call for Action lists 12 values and principles that HEIs around the world need to consider, including:

- a commitment to academic values, scientific integrity, ethics and social responsibility including at the global level;
- placing academic purposes at the centre of all efforts;
- creating international academic communities to address global problems;
- reciprocal benefits, respect and fairness as the basis of partnership;
- innovation to address resource differences;
- commitment to cultural, linguistic and institutional diversity; and
- continuous monitoring of impact (positive and negative).

Moving forward: what next?

The purpose pursued by IAU and the Ad Hoc Group is really about the actions and changes that the Call for Action may bring about in institutional practices. It is, first and foremost, a kind of wake-up call and an exercise in awareness-raising. Since the IAU Executive Board’s approval of the Call for Action, it has been given wide dissemination among IAU members and among the members of other organisations such as ANIE, the Canadian Bureau for International Education, the European University Association, and many others.

The Call for Action is also being presented in multiple forums around the world. Before the end of 2012, it will have been presented at international conferences in the UK, USA, France, South Africa, Australia, Canada, Ireland and, within the framework of SARUA, in Mozambique, not only by IAU but also by members of the Ad Hoc Group. The Ad Hoc Group has agreed to continue its work in order to ensure that the Call for Action is translated into concrete actions, both at their own institutions and organisations and also more globally. It has already been translated into French and Spanish and a translation into Arabic is underway.

It is clear that numerous actions will be needed for the Call for Action to be implemented or, more importantly, for internationalisation policies and activities to integrate fully the values and principles that it enshrines. IAU hopes that institutions will adhere to the Call for Action, and that associations of universities will encourage their members to do so. For its part, IAU will pursue several paths. As it prepares for the 4th Global Survey on Internationalisation, the Advisory Committee that will assist in the review of the questionnaire for the data collection in 2013 will explore how best to ensure that the issues raised in the Call are reflected in the questions,
so that deeper analysis of the impact of internationalisation can be undertaken. ‘Rethinking Internationalisation’ will also be discussed during the IAU 14th General Conference (27–30 November, Puerto Rico) and the Call for Action will be presented to the general membership of the association at that time. Also prepared for approval by the IAU General Conference, the new Guidelines for an Institutional Code of Ethics, developed by IAU together with the Magna Charta Observatory, also refer to some ethical considerations that must be kept in mind when engaging in international collaborations. Thus IAU is drawing a link between these two new documents. IAU’s Internationalisation Services, which include the Internationalisation Strategies Advisory Service, webinars, workshops and other services, will be used to promote and fully integrate the Call for Action’s principles. Finally IAU is developing a web-based resource on this topic.

Advocacy is required in order to influence government policies and to alert policy-makers to the core issues of the Call for Action. For this reason IAU will be sharing the document with UNESCO, the OECD, and other inter-governmental organisations. In this regard, IAU has been invited to take part in a new European Union Expert Group on internationalisation, and will certainly ensure that the European Commission is made aware of the Call for Action and, more importantly, of the concerns that led to its preparation.

In the final analysis, the highest responsibility for developing internationalisation that embeds academic values and promotes equity, justice, solidarity and global responsibility lies with the higher education community at all levels. For this reason, IAU will invite its member organisations, partners, and the Ad Hoc Group members to consider developing a set of institutional guidelines that would be helpful to institutions in the preparation of internationalisation initiatives.